

The
Begonian

July/August 1997



Shirley Miller

The Begonian



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American Begonia Society

Founded January 1932 by Herbert P. Dyckman

Aims and Purposes

To stimulate and promote interest in begonias and other shade-loving plants.

To encourage the introduction and development of new types of these plants.

To standardize the nomenclature of begonias.

To gather and publish information in regard to kinds, propagation, and culture of begonias and companion plants.

To issue a bulletin that will be mailed to all members of the society.

To bring into friendly contact all who love and grow begonias.

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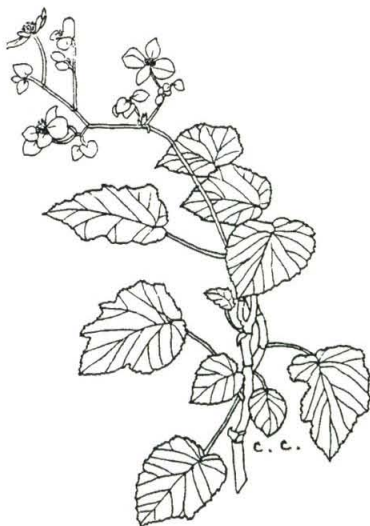
American Begonia Society - P.O. Box 471651, San Francisco CA 94147-1651

Membership - Subscription, dues, circulation inquiries, and address changes: John Ingles, Jr., 157 Monument, Rio Dell CA 95562-1617; (707) 764-5407.

Cover: Water color of rex leaves (B. 'Silver Helen Teupel') by **Shirley M. Haw**, 680 Quaker St., Bristol, VT, with computer altered background version.

Back: **Begonia Tuberhybrida 'Nectar'**, a Blackmore and Langdon hybrid grown and photographed by **Phil Wright**, Victoria, Australia

In This Issue



B. 'Dearest Mae' drawn by *Constance Cole of Palos Verdes, CA*

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If you took pictures at this year's Convention in Houston, make sure to make extra copies to share with fellow members that were unable to attend. Send them to the **Editor as soon as you are able so they can be included with the **Convention Coverage** in the Sept. issue.**

Quick

Check your mailing label. If it reads **9/97 or 10/97**, your membership is about to expire. Please renew! We don't want to lose you.

Around ABS



The following two items were in the San Jacinto branch newsletter-

1. Spotlight on Begonias: Our VP, **Lawrence Pope** is pictured in "Spotlight on Begonias" holding a soon to be prize winning B. 'Jekyll and Hyde' rhizomatous begonia in the May/June issue of **Texas Gulf Coast Gardening**. The article by **Mike Peters** announces the ABS Convention and invites the public to attend Saturday and Sunday.

Great picture, **Lawrence**, of you and your well grown plant. We are pleased you were featured in this magazine.

2. "Beguiling Begonias": If you missed reading **Kathy Huber's** article, "Beguiling Begonias" in Friday, May 2nd edition of **The Houston Chronicle**, you missed something wonderful; a great story of our **San Jacinto member, GEORGE MACIAS**. **WOW!** There's **George** with a smile as large as all those wonderful begonias, pictured in full color. And embodied in the article is a great lesson on growing begonias. What an honor for **George** and his wife, **Imogene!** What great advertisement for our local branches and **ABS!**

We are proud of you, **George**, and of your growing skills and sharing attitude.

(I'm not sure which newsletter I stole, I mean borrowed this info from) Re: the continuing question of **giant whitefly**. **SUNSET Magazine** gives this recipe: **Dr. Bronner's Peppermint Pure-Castile Soap** (beloved of backpackers since the hippie era). Use **5 table-spoons** per gallon of water. Follow

immediately with a spray of ultra-fine horticultural oil. Repeat- both sprays four times at four-day intervals. This sounds pretty tedious but if that is what it takes I guess it's worth a try as I've seen some horrible results of their work. This recipe came from **Ander-son's La Costa Nursery in Encinitas**. We've been there and seen that it is a very beautifully taken care of place. I assume everybody knows that detergent is not soap. so there is no substituting in these sprays that call for soap.

From John Ingles: Any branch desiring a Zip Code list of members in their area can get one free of charge by contacting me at 157 Monument Rd., Rio Dell, CA 95562

Passings

The month of March left the **Jacksonville Branch** and **ABS** mourning the loss of a good friend, collector, and hybridizer, **Ed Harrell**.

Ed collected a form of **B. sericon-aura** a few years ago on a trip to Costa Rica.

He provided Thelma O'Reilly needed research information on that species from that collection trip. The thick-stemmed group was his favorite and his hybridizing was done, manly, with begonias within that classification. At least one of his hybrids, **B. 'Kentucky Star'**, is in the begonia collection at Fort Worth Botanical Garden. Whenever Ed entered his begonias in shows, either local, regional, or national, we all knew his entries would receive the highest awards. Ed was a charter member of the Jacksonville Branch and a former president, having held that office several times.

Coming Events



Westchester Begonia Society Annual Show & Sale

"Why We Love Begonias"

July 19 & 20, 1997

Westchester Christian Church

8740 La Tijera Blvd., LA

Sat., July 19 - 9 am to 5 pm

Sun., July 20 - 12 pm to 4 pm

Doug Frost Branch Show and Sale

"A Love Affair with Begonias"

University of California
Irvine Arboretum

Sat. July 26 - 10am to 5 pm

Sun. July 27 - 11 am to 4 pm

Palos Verdes Branch Show and Sale

South Coast Botanic Garden

Sunday August 24

9:00 am to 4:00 pm

San Francisco Branch

Tanforan Show and Sale

Tanforan Shopping Center

August 23 and 24

Annual Business Meeting/ Sacramento Branch

Show and Sale

September 6th

Banquet will be held at the

Clarion Hotel

Call Ann Salisbury for specific details

To have items included make sure to send a press release

Submissions



I appreciate all the articles and photos that I've been receiving over the past few months. Make sure to keep up the good work. I am running out of **Grower Spotlights**, however. All of you have fellow members in your clubs with beautiful gardens, maybe even it's you. Get that camera out and start snapping some photos and jot down a few notes about them. You don't have to be an expert photographer, I can crop and fix most photos as long as they're at least in focus. It would be great if you were an excellent photographer, though. More is always better as far as photos are concerned so I have lots to work with.

I still want articles on all the topics listed in previous issues. I'm still waiting to hear from hybridizers about their methods.

Remember to send items to my new address.

Brad Thompson
2436 W. Lomita Blvd. #1
Lomita, CA 90717

Quick Tip



Keep sending your Quick Tips to:

Maria Holmes
760 W. Lomita Blvd. #144
Harbor City, CA 90710

MariaHolmes@worldnet.att.net

The Art of Proper Staking

by Brad Thomspson

Over the years, I have attended many shows and have visited many growers homes. The two items that most growers have a hard time grasping is **how to properly stake** and **when they need to**. I have seen some very creative staking, I must admit, but have seen many examples of improper staking, and many plants that might have won an award if the plant had been staked. Ideally, it would be best if all begonias could be grown without needing any staking but we all know there are plants that will not conform to how we want them to look. This is especially true of many species begonias, who's ancestry has prepared them to survive in the wild, not to grow symetrically in a pot. The following information should help you learn the basics of proper staking.

1. When to stake: Most of you already know those plants that eventually needed staking by the end of the growing season. Instead of waiting until they're already falling over, put the stakes in early and train the plant as it grows. This will give you the best results. If you plan on taking that plant to a show later in the season, wait until then to trim the stakes back to the proper heighth. If you're growing tuberous begonias, they nearly always require staking to keep them from breaking in the wind. Put the stakes in when you put the plant or tuber into its permanent growing spot, so you'll avoid

accidentally running the stake through the tuber. I learned about staking tuberous the hard way during the first year I attempted them. I had a garden party at my house and I was very proud of one particular tuberous begonia that was perfect in every way. **Mary Sakamoto** was looking at the plant and marveling on how great it was, as did all the other growers that attended, but mentioned that I should stake it because it was tall and the wind could break it off. As we stood there, a little breeze blew by and snapped it off at the pot. Now I know Mary jinxed that particular plant but I did learn to stake them after that.

2. Why to stake: Before you decide to stake, you have to have a purpose in mind. Do you want to tame the wildness, make it show worthy, or just provide it with some support to keep branches from breaking. You might even want to be creative and create a standard. All of these are sound reasons for staking a plant. Some of the species grow as if their ancestors were used to leaning on neighboring plants for support. They seem to have weak stems and though they sometimes grow up nice and straight, they fall over or spread apart the minute you move the pot to another location. Stake these plants before you move them and you can maintain their shape. This is true of many hybrids also. I've helped people move their collections and have also seen this situation with plants brought to a show. The plant was beautiful where it was but the minute you moved it, the stems went every which way. Staking would have avoided this problem. I'm a firm believer in less is better so I personally try to keep my plants shorter and compact so they don't require as much staking. I still have many plants that won't conform and I do stake when necessary.

3. What to stake: Any begonia

that you want to grow in an upright pattern that is more than 18 inches tall or that has inheritantly weak stems. Many canes and shrubs fit the criteria. Especially stake any plant that meets these conditions that is going to be transported to another location. It may seem sturdy but after jostling in a car, you may have many broken branches. It's better to be safe than sorry.

You can also use staking as a means for repairing a plant with a problem. An example of this is basket begonia that has had some die off or some other problem that has left an empty spot. If the plant has enough extra growth in the surrounding areas, you can gently pull some branches over to fill the empty spot and secure them with a stake. In about a month you can remove the stake and the branches will usually stay in their new location. I have won best in show with a basket begonia repaired in this manner earlier in the same year.

4. How to stake: Stakes are supposed to be used in such a way that they support the plant without being overly obvious or detract from the looks of the plant. Two things that will help you attain this is using **the proper stakes** and placing them in **the proper place**. The green bamboo stakes work the best because of their similarity to the begonia stems themselves. An additional tip that I learned from another grower was to place the stakes out in the sun for a few days to bleach them out. That way they attain a more natural coloring instead of the bright green they are initially which may stand out too much with some varieties of begonias.

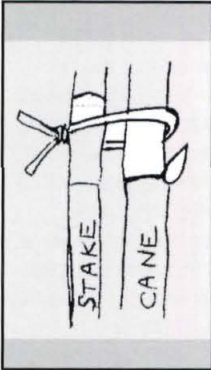
The second item is the actual placement of the stakes. If at all possible, the stakes should be pushed into the soil on the back side of the stems to be staked. This serves two purposes; it hides the stake behind the stem of the plant and also interferes

less with the growth of the plant. Each stem of the plant should have its own stake and the stake should be placed at a natural angle for the variety you are staking.

Tuberous begonias can be staked with stakes that are straight up but most other begonias will need the tops of the stakes to angle slightly outwards to allow room for the inner stems to grow. If you are going to stake the plant, all of the outside facing stems should be staked but you may not need to stake all of the inner stems. With many varieties, the outside staking will support the inner growth without individual staking of the inner stems. I always start staking with the outside stems and then decide later about the inner stems. If the plant is very tall it may be wise to stake all the stems. Try your best to space the stakes evenly around the plant so the plant will be full and symmetrical.

As I said before, it is best to put the stakes in when the plant is just starting to grow, but then again we don't always get around to what is best. I'm sure all of us have staked a plant during the week of the show. *(Well, I haven't, but I'm sure some of you have.)* Sometimes, you may have a plant that you waited too long to stake and the stems have already fallen over and then bent upwards again towards the light. *(Again, I haven't, but I'm sure there are growers that have.)* You can sometimes get begonias in this condition back into shape again. You have to be gentle and some stems may break off but since you already let it go so far, you really don't have much to lose in trying. It is best to let the plant go pretty dry so the stems will be more pliable instead of crisp and brittle. Place a stake behind the stem to be corrected and firmly tie it at the base. Gradually work your way up the stem, pulling it to the stake and tying it every few inches until you have the entire stem tied up. The tip will be the hardest

because of the crook in the stem but can usually be bent enough to tie it straight. Use as many ties as necessary and then remove the extra ones later when the stem is adjusted.



How to do the actual tying is another important factor. This should also be as invisible as possible. The green twist ties are the most common and blend the best. The wider green plastic ties might also be acceptable

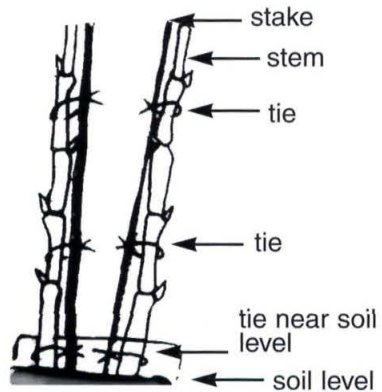
but they are less attractive. Another common type is a brown paper covered tie which might work well for some plants and I've even seen raffia used as tying material. It doesn't matter that much, as long as the material you use doesn't detract from the looks of the plant. More important is where and how you tie the stems. You should make sure to place your first tie as close to the soil line as possible. This tie should be fairly tight so the stake doesn't move. Not doing this is the most common staking mistake that I've seen. If the stake isn't secured firmly at the base of the stem, the stake can pull out of the soil when the plant is moved or in wind. I can't tell you how many times I've seen plants with ties only at the tips of the stakes that fell completely apart during transit. They would have been better off not staking at all because the bottoms of the stakes that came out of the mix tore the plant up.

You should use a minimum of three ties per stem; one at the base, one in the middle and one below the tip. Those three places are the most important but you may need more ties, preferably every 6 inches or so. As I said before, the base tie should be fairly tight. This

part of the stem is usually woody and isn't going to increase much in size so you don't have to worry as much about strangling the stem with too tight of a tie. As you move up the stem, leave the ties looser so there will be room for the stem to grow.

I know some of you are going to ask what to do if the stem has branches on it. Most times the stake on the main stem will be enough to support the branches also without additional staking. If they seem too weak they you will need separate stakes for them. Secure the stake at the base of the main stem to secure it and angle it with the natural growth of the branch. If your plant is as full and lush as it should be, all of this staking will not show. If it does, then your plant just isn't ready to show yet, but you'll have it ready for next year.

Now that you know all about staking, you have no excuse for not getting your plants to shape up.



The drawing above illustrates the proper placement for the ties and stakes. The stems are shown without leaves to make the process easier to see. Notice that the stakes are placed on the back side of each stem and that a tie is placed near the soil for added stability.

Show News



Equally as impressive as the “pros” were the large number of new members presenting healthy, clean, beautiful begonias. All this was despite Oklahoma’s even-more-daunting-than-usual winter. **Barkley Branch** is famed for great shows, and this one was no exception.

by Tamsin Boardman

At the **Barkley Branch** April 18-20 **Gene Salisbury** made a clean sweep of top honors, taking **Best of Show** with **B. ‘River Nile’**; **Showing is Sharing**, with 45 entries; and **Sweepstakes**, with 13 blue ribbons. He also won **Cultural Awards**, with Begonias **‘River Nile’ (97 points)**, **‘Nao’ (96)**, **‘Passing Storm’(95)**, an unnamed Dorothy Caviness hybrid (95), **gehrtii (95)**, and **schmidtiana(95)**.

Lest it sound like a one-man show, **Cultural Awards** also went to **Diane Horne** for B. ‘Peridot’ (96) and **Linda Clemons** for Begonias **leprosa** and **‘Kristy’** (both 95; **‘Kristy’** also took the **Hanging Container Division**).

Division winners included:
Diane’s B. ‘Peridot’ (**Contained Atmosphere**)
Linda’s B. ‘Lois Burkes’ (**Cane**), and B. ‘Fern Richardson’ (**Best Southwest Region Hybrid**);
Gene’s B. *alleryi* (**Shrub-like**) and **‘Nao’ (Rhizomatous, Unusual Surface)**

The Judges were **Mary McClelland**, **Maurice Amey**, and **Tamsin Boardman**.



Gene Salisbury’s Best in Show winner; B. ‘River Nile’. Photo by **Ann Salisbury**.



Members of the **Florida West Coast Branch** entered a display at the **Florida State Fair** in Feb. that won **First Place**. Several individual members also entered individual plants, most winning blue ribbons. **Bob Koeler** with B. ‘Fountain of Youth’, **Charles Jaros** with B. ‘Morning Sun’ and **Dale Sena** with B. ‘Hot Tamale’ were three of those members who won **blue ribbons**.

Have You Ever Wondered Why?

Have you ever wondered why it seems like we keep going over the basics in print, year after year, even though the methods don't seem to change much? Well, I've tallied up some reasons with their appropriate percentages.

About **50%** of us saw some articles about the different topics and of that **50%** only about **50%** of us read them. **Now we're down to 25% left.**

Of that **25%**; about **70%** didn't follow the instructions or put the methods into practice, **10%** thought they knew better ways, **10%** didn't remember what they read, and **6%** didn't care.

All totaled that leaves only about **1%** of us that saw the articles, read them, considered them, and put them into practice. And of that **1%**, I bet not one of us can remember what we read last year or the year before.

Well, hopefully, all of us will do a **100%** better about this from now on.

Quick Tip



Most begonias that are fragrant are only fragrant in the morning and usually only the female clusters. Get up before noon and do some smelling.

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8 Glen Terrace, Bedford, MA 01730-2048.

Growing Organic or; Just the Dirt, Please

by Tamsin Boardman

At home in the rain forests of South America, on the dry plains of South Africa, or perhaps on the rock ledge under a waterfall in Sumatra, begonias cling to life in the most precarious of spots in tiny pockets of soil. Perhaps "soil" is too fancy a name, for often a tiny patch of debris is all that anchors the roots to their posts.

That's why shallow pots and good drainage are what's recommended for growing them, despite sometimes heated disagreements among begonia lovers as to other factors.

Some months back I asked if anyone had found a truly organic "soil" suitable for growing begonias - every one I had tried worked great with most other plants but eventually packed too tightly to grow begonias. This necessitated a lot of re-potting, and got quite expensive. There's been no response, no magic bagged solution. But perhaps the solution lies in mixing the compost "soil" I was using with other materials, particularly those mentioned below.

John Howell of San Antonio, Texas (who is not, incidentally, an organic growing fan) is impressed with a new mix of ingredients that drains better than anything he has ever tried. He mixes 30% lava sand, 30% cedar ash, 30% recycled material (*the peat-based*

potting soil he sterilizes between uses), and 10% packing foam "peanuts". John waters every day, and reports no drainage problems and no root rot using his new mix.

John also puts the cedar ash and lava sand down as top dressing in his flower beds, and reports a decrease in pests and diseases. He is able to tell with a glance when the soil is dry because the lava sand, dark red when moist, turns lighter in color when dry. Best of all, his begonias are happy whether potted or in the garden.

What are these ingredients? Lava sand and juniper ash (*also known as cedar ash and cedar fiber*) are leftovers. Lava sand is what's left after lava rock is broken up into increasingly smaller rocks. Juniper ash is left when cedar or juniper trees are ground up; it's used as bedding for dogs, cats, and other small animals, in stalls for horses, as greenhouse flooring material - all because of its insect-deterrent and moisture retention qualities. John credits it with repelling nematodes, too. Both are available at places that stock organic gardening supplies; you may be able to find the cedar fiber in larger quantities for horse stalls.

Both materials drain well. What's really interesting is that they also help soil maintain humidity. That's a seeming contradiction that **John** can explain - he's an engineer, scientifically inclined. The thing to note is that it works both ways, a very handy coincidence for begonia growers. These are ingredients you might benefit from trying, to improve drainage and soil health for your begonias.

While we're on potting mixes, there have been quite a few attacks on the use of perlite, especially since the

seminar given by **Tim Anderson of Daisy Farm Nursery** at the **1993 Miami Convention**. Hey, **Tim**, explain it for all of us who missed your talk - please?

Note: Make an exception for tall-growing canes and thick-stems: in shallow pots they fall over. How do they remain erect in nature? Some are held upright by leaning on a bigger stronger plant, like a tree; others can't fall over because their roots are completely entangled with those of other plants, or because they're held up by growing

between rocks. Others just fall over and root as nodes touch the ground, a good survival technique. Mother Nature has lots of little tricks.

(Would you like to tell about an organic method you use for growing your begonias?)

Write to:

Organics
P. O. Box 69
Bluff Dale, TX 76433



And why is this man smiling?

Well, if you could grow **B. 'Orococo'** like this, you'd be smiling too. This smiley guy is **Bob Golden (Redondo Beach, CA)**, who, along with his friend **Iris Bird (who drives from her house in Diamond Bar to visit their plants)**, started seriously growing begonias only a couple of years ago. I would say they are becoming expert real fast. You can expect to hear more about these two in the future, hopefully, they will let some of the other growers win some trophies this year.

Begonia Spotlight

*B. gracilis var.
martiana*

by Phil Wright

Prior to this year I had only a passing interest in this species but I received some bulbils from the USA which I attempted to grow on bottom heat in and around late July and early August but after putting on one or two small leaves suddenly went into dormancy. Probably the length of daylight is all important. Subsequently, I obtained a small tuber and some further bulbils from **Ted Williams** in South Australia. The tuber was placed on bottom heat in late September in normal growing media

The bulbils I treated differently, I half filled a tray with propagating mix and covered this with a half inch of sphagnum moss, thoroughly soaked, and left for a couple of hours on bottom heat at 21 degrees C. I then scattered the bulbils over the surface of the sphagnum. Nothing happened until the first week of December as new leaves started to appear on the tuber and it grew rapidly. The bulbils all started to pop through the sphagnum and subsequently then transferred to 2" pots. The tuber was eventually put into a 7" pot and its photograph appears with this article. The bulbils were transferred to 4" pots and are growing away but I have not let them flower this season but have grown them on for the tubers.

I even got three of the bulbils from the US to grow in late December and these are not being allowed to flower either. Evidently, **B. martiana** may not start to grow until December and the seeds, if obtained, might take up to 90 days to germinate. Currently the main stem of the plant is 3 foot (1070 mm) tall and the three branches are 2 ft 6 inches (760 mm) tall. It is said that it's difficult to get this species to branch but this plant has been in very high light with my tuberous hybrids. It's a delightful plant to behold and very eye catching. I just hope that other members will grow this plant in the future.



The difficulty was trying to gather information about *B. martiana* and finally I went back to the **Begonian, March 1967**. No mention of it has been made since, except a photograph in an edition of the **Begonian** as the winner of the Maurice Kane Trophy as the best tuberous in the show. They indicated it was the show stopper.

It's funny and sometimes tragic that a species such as this is not grown or talked about more, no wonder some are lost to us! The color is in the deep rose coloring even tending towards a lavender shade under my light but is light pink in shadier conditions. Our **New Zealand** friends said it was always full of mildew but I have no trace of it on this plant. Propagation is by seed or bulbils which sit like a small bunch of grapes at each leaf axis.

OTHER DESCRIPTIONS

The standard Begonia references (*available in the ABS Library*) files of the **Begonian** and materials turned up by the **ABS Research Department** fill out the picture of *B. B. martiana* and its varieties.

Bernice Brilmayer says in her "**All About Begonias**" that this "near hardy" Mexican tuberous begonia will take a good bit of sun and that its tubers are oddly cream-coloured, thin skinned, and nearly round. Tubers are planted with the old stem scar on top. Bulbils are gathered in the fall stored in a cool dry place and planted early the next year. The plant should be grown in brightest light for a compact shape.

Tubers should be dug in the fall as they will not winter over outside even in California, **Rudolf Ziesenhenn**e warned in a **1940 Begonian**. Old tubers may deteriorate because of the thin skin and the bulbils should be planted in the Spring. Some have found that the

bulbils are slow to start.

Single rose-pink flowers grow in pairs from the leaf axils, close along erect stalks as in a hollyhock. Lower leaves are quite round but upper leaves taper to a point according to **Bessie Buxton** in **Begonias and How to Grow Them**. In partial garden shade, *B. martiana* will bloom a long time. Dormant in winter, it is more useful as a summer garden plant like other tuberous begonias than as a hothouse plant

Charles Chevalier wrote in his **Les Begonias (Belgium 1938)** that *B. martiana*, and its hybrids and varieties, flourish in any exposure there, even full sun, if accustomed to it from an early age - becoming bushier and more beautiful than in a cool shaded greenhouse. But in a well-lighted cool house, they will grow to tall "bushes" covered with flowers two or three months of the summer.

A plant grown from seed attracted attention at the **1950 ABS Show** because of its beauty and contrasting habit. It was pictured on the cover of the **November, 1950 Begonian**, and that issue quoted from a detailed study of the species by **Rudolf Ziesenhenn**e in the October, 1940, **Begonian**.

Mrs. Buxton's book also includes a photograph, and the 1967 **Breck's of Boston** catalogue shows a small picture in color with a description of "*old-fashioned charm... showy spires of four petal, shell-pink begonias, with bright golden-yellow centres - flowering on miniature hollyhock-like stalks*", and forecasting twelve to twenty-four, one to one and a half inch blooms, on each two and a half foot stalk. It stated that several stalks were possible from each tuber.

HISTORY

Begonia martiana, named for

German collector **K F. P. von Martias**, was discovered by **Ferdinand Deppe** in Mexico in 1828. A mountain plant growing in lava beds at an altitude of 5000 to 8000 feet, it was introduced by **P. Neill** of Edinburgh in 1899, and reintroduced by **Lemoine** in 1889. Two pronunciations are in use, **marty-ANE-ah** and **mar-she-AY-ah**.

Chevalier stated that *B. martiana* was a more interesting and more often grown form of *B. gracilis* (also called "Holly-hock Begonia"), but that some botanists recognize *B. martiana* as a separate species. He identified the plant called *B. martiana* by **Link and Otto** as the one **A de Candolle** called *B. gracilis* var. *martiana*. **Mrs. Buxton** also listed it as *B. gracilis* var. *martiana*, though others call it simply *B. martiana*.

Mrs. Brilmayer describes it as tougher than *B. gracilis* and **Helen Krauss** in *Begonias for American Homes and Gardens* said it is similar to *B. gracilis* but lacks the crenate leaf margins and fringed petals. **Chevalier** says it has a more bushy look, stronger and shorter stalks branched from the base, and larger (two inch) dark pink flowers

B. gracilis itself, also a native of Mexico, was described in the *Begonians* of February, 1966, (with photograph) and May 1962. **Thomas Macdougall** found it growing on steep rocky slopes in Mexico, at 7000 feet in "well drained poor soil with some humus", with part shade but not directly under trees, in a cool climate".

HYBRIDS

Several hybrids have been derived from **B. martiana**, but the one turning up in current catalogues is **Leslie Woodruff's** 1941 hybrid **B 'Ivy Ever'**. *B. martiana* was the seed parent, with *B. limmingheiana* (sometimes called

glaucophylla scandens) as pollen parent. **B. 'Ivy Ever'**, pictured on the **August 1954 Begonian** cover, is an evergreen, everblooming trailer. It has many drooping stems from the base, and **Mrs. Krauss** says the branches develop from large buds that at first glance appear to be bulbils. Leaves are heart shaped, with shallow lobes, a glossy dark green metallic purple between veins. Flowers are about two inches pink and close to the stem. **F. J. Bedson** reported in *Successful Begonia Culture*, that his **B. 'Ivy Ever'** grew continuously, without noticeable rest, remaining green at a temperature down to 45 degrees F. The tuberous habit of the seed parent had been lost in the hybrid. Some growers noticed a tendency to rest sometimes, however.

B. 'Winter Hollyhock', another **Woodruff** hybrid of 1941 from *B. martiana* and *B. socotrana*, was different from *B. martiana* only in shorter growth. **Mrs. Krauss** reported a **Woodruff** catalogue said it had bright pink flowers during winter and could be propagated by bulbils and cuttings.

Crossing **B. gracilis** var. *martiana* with **B. racemiflora** 'Rosea Grandiflora' produced **B. gracilis** var. *martiana* 'Racemiflora' for **Lemoine** in 1884. **Chevalier** described it as a vigorous hybrid with a "more compact bush" and red stalks and pink flowers".

From the same cross came *B. gracilis* var. *martiana* 'Grandiflora' with green stalks and large carmine-pink flowers, considered one of the loveliest of the group. **Mrs. Buxton** said it is much larger than the original species and, under good conditions, will grow to tall hollyhock size, five to eight feet, requiring stakes. Pot grown, it is smaller.

From seed of 'Grandiflora'. **Lemoine** raised *B. gracilis* var. *martiana* 'Pulcher-

rima' which **Chevalier** described as compact, with thinner and darker red stalks, smaller leaves of purplish bronze green, and large almost round flowers of carmine-pink.

Rudy Ziesenhenné noted that **Worth Brown** had used *B. martiana* in tuberhybrida breeding. **Frank Reinelt's** cross of *B. martiana* with a large, apricot, camellia form, tuberous begonia was the beginning of the apricot shades in hanging basket begonias.

RELATED SPECIES

Chevalier also lists ***B. gracilis var. diversifolia***, introduced from Mexico in 1939, differing from the others in having more stalks, pale green, and as much as 12 - 39 inches tall. He reported several hybrids with tuberous begonias had been produced but lost. Some of these species and hybrids probably have gone out of cultivation with time, and others have been confused with similar ones, probably accounting for the variations in plants listed under the same name. Perhaps *B. gracilis* or varieties of *B. martiana* are sometimes offered as *martiana*.

Exotica 3 carries a photograph on page 301 labelled *Begonia gracilis diversifolia* (*B. martiana*) and one on page 378 as *Begonia martiana* in the trade

(**Phil Wright** is Editor of ***Begonia Australis***, the journal of **The Assoc. of Australian Begonia Societies**.)

If you would like to write to him, he can be reached at **74 Railway Place, Victoria, 3340, Australia**. Phil also took the photo of ***B. gracilis var. martiana*** which appears at the beginning of this article.)

Answers to the Puzzle

44. apex
 43. node
 41. family
 39. obovate
 37. bearded
 36. oblique
 33. variegated
 32. habitat
 30. deciduous
 27. pseudo
 26. humus
 23. dormant
 20. prostrate
 19. diffuse
 17. panduncle
 14. germination
 13. tuberous
 11. classification
 9. inflorescence
 8. ferrarium
 6. bract
 5. photosynthesis
 4. succulent
 3. chlorosis
 2. ovate
- Down**
- correct)
 47. anther (stamen fits and is almost
 46. indigunous
 45. foliage
 44. axis
 42. compound
 40. floriferous
 38. petiole
 35. rhizomatous
 34. cordate
 33. variety
 31. simple
 29. scandent
 28. macro
 25. adventitious
 24. sinus
 22. fertile
 21. midrib
 18. epiphyte
 16. nerve
 15. sport
 14. glabrous (no bald doesn't fit)
 12. cultivar
 10. nomenclature
 7. pubescent
 1. chlorophyll
- Across**

Help Available from ABS

These services are available to all ABS members. For names and addresses of department heads, see page 159. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope when you write.

Members at Large: Members who do not belong to branches are represented at Board meetings by the Members-at-Large Director. MAL members receive a quarterly newsletter and work on projects by mail

Back Issues: Back issues of the Begonian, also current issues for branch use at shows, etc.

Bookstore: Books about Begonias! And more! Write for complete list.

Judging Department: Certifies accredited judges through judging schools and correspondence course.

Nomenclature Department: Monitors newly published findings on Begonia names. Handles official international registrations of new Begonia cultivars and publishes registrations. Gathers information about and assigns numbers to unidentified species.

Research Department: Works on problems relating to begonia culture.

Round Robins: Members exchange information about begonias and their culture through packets of letters that circulate among a small group of growers. There are dozens of these packets, called flights, on many specialized subjects.

Seed Fund: The Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund offers seed of begonia species and cultivars by mail. New acquisitions are discussed in the Begonian.

Slide Library: Write Slide Librarian for list of slide programs and videos.

Member Input Opportunities

Conservation Department: wants lists of species grown by members

Nomenclature Department: wants photos and information on "U" numbers members are growing from seed.

Research Department: solicits suggestions on projects and participation in research.

Seed Fund: seeks donation of seed and photos of plants grown from Seed Fund seed.

Slide library: requests individual slides of begonias as well as complete slide programs.

Participate. You can make a difference.

ROUND ROBIN NOTES



by Virginia Hamann
Round Robin Director

#13 CANES: Flushing pots with Epsom salts about once a month with 1 tsp. to gallon of water, helps take fertilizer salts out of **Cynthia Bishop's (CA)** plants. Citric acid can also be used. **Eleanor Calkins (CA)** uses sweater boxes to start cane cuttings, leaf wedges are started on trays, then baby plants are transferred to sweater boxes covered with plastic wrap. Wet the edges of the box to make the plastic wrap stick tight.

#1 GENERAL CULTURE:

Three sets of utility stands 36" wide X 5' high look mighty nice in **Lois Schneyers (MI)** glassed in porch. Orchids, gesneriads, and begonias are flourishing. **Elaine Ayers (OH)** likes to start rhizomatous leaves in the spring. However, she put down leaves in December. Random cuttings of leaves and cuttings were placed in large plastic containers under lights, they rooted and put out nice plants. To quote **Elaine**, "*which goes to show, when you think you have the answers down pat, the plants get to prove you don't!*"

B. leathermaniae, is hard to grow for some, no more than three leaves at a time and not pretty. **Mabel Corwin (CA)** has grown it and reminds members that species don't make beautiful plants. Hers seldom had more than three leaves and two stems at a time. Cutting

back does not force new growth.

#20 PHOTOGRAPHY: A diffuser in front of the flash might get rid of hot spots on photos is good advice from **Daniel Haseltine (ILL)**.

82 GENERAL CULTURE: To dry out an over-saturated plant, **Mary Simon of Ohio** forces paper toweling into the pot between pat and plant leaving some toweling on the outside it wicks the water from the root ball change toweling when saturated. She also places the wet root ball on newspaper lined with lots of paper towels and gathers the edges around it. When saturated, she changes the papers. Gray winter weather prevented bloom on many cane begonias.

#8 TUBEROUS BEGONIAS:

Howard Siebold(WA) reminds members to test against a control group of plants when using a new growing method, such as mixing 1 part bleach to 10 parts of water to treat tubers. He said he was not sure what the treatment was for, perhaps to prevent fungal growth. *He also told members that started tubers will not put out much growth until soil temperatures at night reach 52 degrees.* He starts his tubers on heat mats in the greenhouse before setting them outdoors when he is sure the soil temperatures are warm enough. The **May-June 1989 Begonian** has the full story.,

For more information on Round Robins or to join, write to:

**Virginia Hamann, 1169 Lincoln Ave.,
Chester, Iowa 52131-8508**

Conservation News

*Tamsin Boardman,
Conservation Chair*

Requests, Requests:

Everyone wants money. Even living 'way out in the country we're inundated with telephone calls from total strangers being paid to call us by our first names and request money for good causes, and almost every mail delivery brings "free" gifts (*one set of 5 note cards, with 5 envelopes, was accompanied by a letter suggesting a donation of \$150 to \$500 in return, surely the high point for gall*). It's really annoying.

So reporting that there are good causes among begonia lovers, too, and requesting your support, is undertaken with temerity. But hey, at least we aren't telephoning you at dinner, or when you're up a ladder painting the ceiling.

Something you can support #1:

Species Banks are intended to help keep plants, particularly rare or endangered ones, in cultivation. There are in this whole world only two Begonia Species Banks.

One is in Fort Worth, Texas. **Kelton Parker**, Curator of Begonias at the **Fort Worth Botanic Garden** (*3220 Botanic Garden Dr., Fort Worth, TX 76107*) and the Bank have been through fire, hail, white-fly invasion, as well as the problems normally encountered with keeping the rare and finicky alive. Kelton has about 200 of the 400 species there three years ago. Here's how you

can help rebuild the collection: send him a list of the species you grow and would be willing to share. If there's one he needs, he'll contact you.

The newer Bank is in Florida. **Dale Sena**, Curator of Begonias at the **University of South Florida**, has built a collection that now boasts over 70 species. But, as every begonia grower knows, there are never enough! Dale's address is **816 W. Braddock St., Tampa, FL 33603**, and she'd appreciate hearing from you, too. **USF** also lists cultivars.

Something you can support #2:

Scott Hoover plans another collecting trip to Sumatra in winter of 1998. He will bring back seed and possibly cuttings of begonia species encountered there. Donations may be made to defray costs of his expedition. Please make your check payable to American Begonia Society, mark for "**Hoover trip**", and **send to Treasurer Carol Notaras, 2567 Green St., San Francisco CA 94123**. Donations are tax deductible.

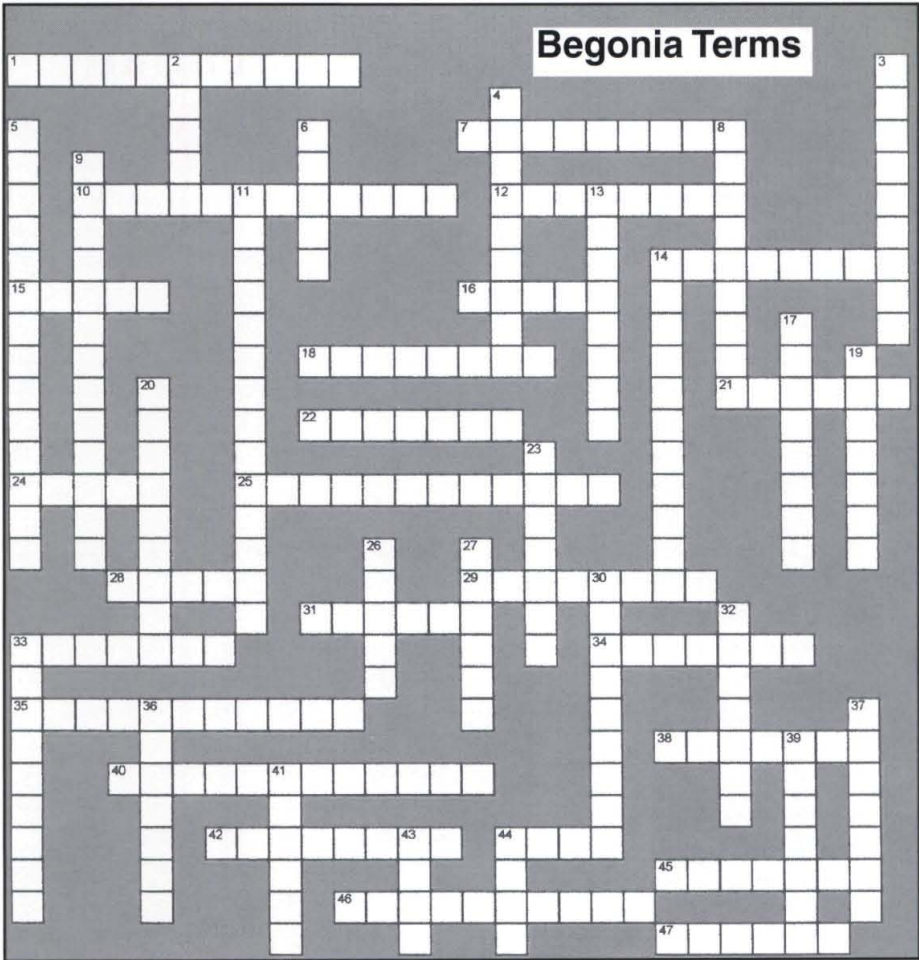
Something you can support #3:

ABS supports the **Adopt-A-Species** project through our Conservation Department. Sponsors "adopt" a favorite species, promising to grow it, study it, propagate it, distribute it. To date 97 begonias have found sponsors. Members get a quarterly newsletter.

You can find out more by writing

**Tamsin Boardman,
P.O. Box 69,
Bluff Dale, TX 76433.**

Begonia Terms



Across

1. Green matter in leaves.
7. Covered with hair.
10. Dealing with names
12. Cultivated varieties by man.
14. Without hair.
15. Result of a sudden deviation.
16. Slender rib or vein.
18. Growing on, but not parasitic
21. Main vein of a leaf.
22. Capable of producing viable seeds.
24. Space between two lobes of a leaf.
25. Kind of growth found in unusual place.
28. Greek prefix for large.
29. Climbing.

31. Undivided leaf
33. Subdivision of species.
34. Heart shape.
35. Largest group of begonias.
38. Attaches leaf blade to stem.
40. Abundant flowering
42. A leaf having two or more leaflets.
44. Main stem
45. Leaves.
46. Native to an area.
47. Pollen bearing organ of a flower.

Down

2. Egg shaped.
3. Yellowing.

4. Fleshy.
5. Process that makes carbohydrates for plants.
6. Modified leaf at base of flower
8. Wardian case
9. Flowering portion
11. Grouping in categories..
13. Producing tubers.
14. Development of a plant from seed.
17. Main stalk supporting flower.
19. Loosely branched or spreading.
20. Lying flat on the ground.
23. Restive.
26. Decomposing matter in soil.
27. Greek prefix for fake.
30. Loosing leaves after a period.
32. Environment.
33. Green leaves spotted with another color.
36. Unequally sided leaf.
37. Having a tuft of hair.
39. Reverse of ovate.
41. Name ending in - aceae.
43. Joint on stem.
44. Terminal.

At least attempt to complete the puzzle on your own before you cheat and look at the answers on page 136. I'm not bragging but I had to figure out the all the answers on my own and I only had one questionable wrong answer. The answers weren't in the issue of the newsletter that the puzzle appeared in, and since I wanted to include it this month, I had to find the answers on my own. Luckily, I received the answers just before sending this issue to the printer, so I was able to verify they were right. This puzzle comes courtesy of the Begonia Chatter, newsletter of The Astro Branch. I don't know who to give the credit to, so if you know, let me know, then we'll all know, so I can give the author proper credit. I think this was a great idea and I hope some other budding puzzle authors will create some more. How about it? Feel free to send me some feedback, either yeh or neh, about how you felt about its inclusion in this issue.... the editor.

Australian Convention '98

The **New South Wales Begonia Society** is hosting **Convention 98 "beautiful, beguiling, bewitching begonias"** in Sydney, Australia. The dates are **April 10th - 13th, 1998**. If any of you have ever thought about a visit to Australia, then this could be a great opportunity for you to see how begonias are grown "**down under**". **Sydney** is worth a visit even if there wasn't a begonia Convention being held so this would be icing on the cake.

The **NSW Begonia Society** has a great show planned with excellent tours, seminars, luncheons, plant sales, and begonias in abundance. The plant sale will include many new begonias from the best Australian hybridizers.

If you would like more information on **Convention '98** contact the **Editor** or you can contact:

Peter Sharp,
Convention Secretary
2/238 Jersey Road
Woollahra, NSW 2025,
Australia

phone: 02 9327 3240

GROWING FOR SHOWING

by Brad Thompson

In the May/June issue of the *Begonian* we went over the basic culture for growing nice plants and for growing show plants. This issue we'll be going over the fine details of what the requirements are of a show plant.

You should look at your plants with a critical eye but not be overly critical or you will never have a show plant. None will measure up to your standards. Sometimes our standards can be higher than the judges will be because they have seen many plants and shows and know the degree of difficulty involved in producing a near perfect plant (*there is no such thing as a perfect plant*). Strive to grow your plants the best you can and you will undoubtedly have some that can go to a show.

Most of you have been to Begonia Shows before so I guess it will come as no surprise to you that the majority of the plants are entered by a minority of the members. It really shouldn't be this way, as a member you really have an obligation to participate in the club activities and to help promote begonias. Even if you don't always win the trophies that shouldn't dissuade you from entering plants, winning isn't the most important thing, the participation is. Believe me you will grow better plants as you go along and eventually you will win awards too. I haven't always gotten trophies. The **first year** I entered plants, I got a trophy for **Best Novice**, and one trophy for **Best Terrarium** at another show. Of course it was very encouraging but the next year I entered

even more plants and didn't win a #%\$# thing (**sorry**) I mean darn thing, and even though that was pretty discouraging it didn't stop me from participating the next year after that. I always enter as many plants as I can because we want to put on a nice show and to do that you need a lot of entries. I know they aren't all going to win something but I enter all the nice plants I have just to have the plants there for people to see. Do try to support the clubs this year and especially the **Conventions** with as many nice entries as you possibly can, if you need help along the way just ask, that's why we have clubs in the first place, to help each other grow Begonias.

The following are a few tips on how to produce a nice finished plant for entering-

1. CHOOSING THE PLANT: A show plant should be **characteristic of that variety**; it should have leaves of the proper color and size, it should have the proper color and size flowers, it should be mature and be the normal height for that plant (*within reason of course*). It should be healthy and full, and as symmetrical as possible for the variety.

It should be potted in a pot of the appropriate size and type for the plant and be of an excepted color. Black nursery pots, cans or decorator pots (*outside of the unusual container class*) will not be allowed in the shows. Pots should be wood, moss, clay or plastic pots (*green or terra cotta plastic pots are acceptable, white may be allowed but is generally discouraged and may be marked down for.*)

2. MAKE SURE YOUR PLANTS ARE CLEANED UP: This is probably the most important item in showing plants. I can't tell you how many times I've seen nice plants that probably would have won something, get nothing, just

because the owner didn't groom and clean the plant before they brought it in. Even plants that did win awards might have won higher awards or cultural certificates if they would have done a little more grooming.

Remove leaves that are damaged (*unless they are large leaves and removing the leaf will ruin the looks and symmetry of the plant*). Remove dead flowers, and remove dried stipules (*those little papery bracts around the base of the leaves and flowers*) on most plants except plants like *B. venosa* where the bracts should be left on because that is one of its defining characteristics. Remove spider webs and dead stuff from inside the plant and remove any debris from the surface of the soil. Look carefully for insects and bugs because the judges have to only see one on your plant to have it removed from the show.

3. DETAILING THE PLANT: After all the bad stuff is removed you need to actually clean the leaves. Some people use a soft brush, like a makeup brush but most probably rinse the leaves. If you do a preliminary cleaning a week or so before the show, they will be much easier to touch up at show time.

I use a spray bottle filled only with water and spray the plant until all dirt is rinsed off. Using a hose may damage the plant, and it sometimes takes a couple of bottles of water to totally clean larger plants. Start at the top and work your way down and if your plant has hairy leaves or is especially dirty, spray the plant and then let it sit for awhile to loosen the dirt before you try rinsing it off. I usually don't do this cleaning until the day of the show because I usually don't choose who's going until that day. It's too nerve racking for me to pick the plants earlier and then worry whether they'll still be perfect at show time. After cleaning, I put them in front of a gentle fan to dry them faster. Make sure you keep them out of the sun when the

leaves are wet so they won't burn and also because the leaves sometimes streak like a window you try to wash in the sun. As a general rule, my leaves are already pretty clean because I always rinse the leaves off when I water. Now most people (*who shall remain nameless*) recommend not wetting the leaves because they say it will cause mildew but I don't find that to be the case in my yard, in fact I feel it rinses off the mildew spores. Besides, it seems unnatural for a plant not to be able to get its leaves wet. Use your own judgment and experiment.

4. FERTILIZER AND BLOOM:

Fertilizing is something you need to start weeks in advance if you have plants that are hard to get to bloom or want a lot of extra bloom. What I'm referring to is using a high bloom fertilizer (*a high bloom fertilizer is one that has a higher middle number like 15-30-15*) and most say high bloom on the bottle or box if they are. I use it ¼ strength once a week like I would other fertilizer. You need to start using it six weeks or so in advance or even sooner because if you wait too long you won't see the affects before the show. Any plant that should normally be blooming at the time your show, will be marked down in points for not having enough bloom. The amount of bloom can be the difference between getting a blue ribbon and getting a trophy in many cases. If the judges have two plants of equal quality, the amount of bloom will usually be the deciding factor. Do not leave old spent blooms on the plant, however, because you can be marked down for that also. You will lose points for poor grooming in that case

5. CLEAN THE POT: The final step is to make sure your pot is clean. An easy way to do this, if the plant is not too large and if it can be easily removed,

from its pot is to just slip it out of its old pot and into a new one of the same type. Unless I totally change pots, I usually just wash mine with mild soapy water and a rag and dry with a dry rag. Of course, this is for plastic pots, these are the easiest to clean and I highly recommend them. To clean clay pots you can restore them with baby oil (*Mary Sakamoto uses hand lotion*) on a cloth and they will look like new. You'll have to figure out the wood ones on your own. Make sure the soil level in the pot is refilled up to about ½ inch to 1 inch from the rim of the pot if the soil level has gotten low. I usually put a shallow layer of small orchid bark on top of the soil to finish it off and give it a clean look (*remove the bark when you take the plant home so your plant won't stay too wet.*)

Hopefully, I given you a few tips and hints to help you have award winning plants. I'm including the points scoring at the end of this article so you will know just how plants are scored and how much each item is worth.

40 points Cultural Perfection: deals with the overall appearance of the plant, such as symetry, fullness, size, staking, etc.

30 points Condition: deals with your grooming of the plant, cleanliness of the container, removal of bad leaves, and whether the plant looks healthy, and the amount of foliage.

10 points Quantity of flowers: deals with whether the plant has the proper amount of flowers for the variety for the time of year. (*If it's summer and rhizomatous are not blooming you will not lose points for your rhizomatous plant not having flowers. If your are*

entering a cane and it should be in full bloom, your plant will be marked down if it isn't)

10 points Quality of flowers: Deals with how nice the flowers are and the grooming of the flowers such as removal of dried seed pods and spent flowers etc.

10 points Difficulty of Cultivation: These points are mainly brought into play if there are two plants of equal quality vying for the same award. The one that is more difficult to grow will usually win.

I haven't included the point scoring for tuberhybrida which uses different point scoring, with most points directed toward the size and quality of the flowers.

I expect to see your plants at the Shows... yes I do mean you.

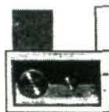
Quick Tip



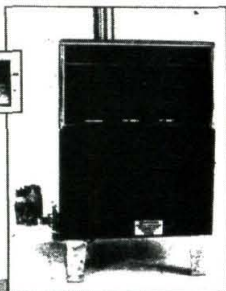
This is a frequently asked question; "*what do I do with that tall growth that sometimes comes up in my hanging basket plants*". The answer to that question is to trim it back. Many begonias have to be trained to grow as a basket because their natural growth is more upright. When you notice strong stems shooting up in the middle of your basket, prune the strong stems back to the lowest outward facing bud. This will force the plant to put out weaker side growth from the base of the plant that will conform better.... brad

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Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund Notes



Eleanor L. Calkins, Seed Fund Administrator

With this issue the Clayton M Kelly Seed Fund changes hands. For the first time the Seed Fund is to be handled as a **branch project** instead of by an individual. **The San Miguel Branch** in San Diego, California will have the primary responsibility and **Eleanor Calkins** will be the administrator. This is a small branch devoted to the study of Begonia. All of the members have committed to helping to prepare and package the seeds. Seed donations this month were from Thelma O'Rielly, Ed Baker, Eleanor Calkins and anonymous donations.

B. bakeri: Thick-stemmed rhizomatous, pink blossoms in early spring. Identification of this plant is confused.

B. boisseri (*open pollinated*): A white flowered tuberous species. Tubers are finger-like and develop deep in the soil.

***B. carriae:** rhizomatous, large lobed leaves of bright lime green with a rugose surface. White flowers in late winter to early spring.

B. gehrtii: large medium green puckered leaves, needs high humidity and low light, white flowers.

B. grandis var. evansiana white
B. grandis var. evansiana pink
flowered tuberous, quite hardy.

B. heracleifolia: Rhizomatous, collected in Chiapas, Mexico. R. Ziesenhenné advises this is the true species. Handsome, huge light green leaves are deeply parted.

B. novogranatae syn. *B. rosacea*: seeds collected by Scott Hoover; soft hairy leaves, large flowers, many with multiple double tepals. See *the Begonian* July/August 1985

B. sutherlandii: tuberous from S. Africa. Orange flowered, slightly hairy leaves.

B. taiwaniana: lovely plant with medium, dark mottled unusual leaves, white flowers

B.U043: Thick stemmed, thick set, an unusual Brazilian species also known as B. J-11; first seed listing in eleven years, see *the Begonian*, 1982, page 54.

B. U083: Thick stemmed tall Brazilian species, angularly shaped leaves, mass of white flowers. First time in seed fund. See *the Begonian* 1982, pg 83.

B.U252: Shrub-like, 2-3 ft. tall, branched, medium green leaves, white or pink flowers. See *the Begonian* 1997, page 9

B.U331: Thick stemmed rhizomatous, first Ecuadorian collection of species tentatively identified as a form or variety of *B. sericoneura*, large green leaves, white or pink flowers.

B.U332: Tuberous, identified as *B. biserrata*, see *the Begonian* 1996, page 8.

B.U333: Tuberous, identified as *B. pedata*, see *The Begonian*, 1996, page 8.

*denotes limited amount

Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund

The Seed Fund is a service to members only. It is a privilege of your membership. The Seed Fund would appreciate receiving donations of any fresh seed, as our supply is very limited at this time. Thank you!

Rare species seed \$2.00 per packet
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All orders must be accompanied by check or money order payable **ONLY in US funds to The Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund**

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Mexico only: 1 -12 packets, \$1.15; 13-24, \$1.51; 25-36, \$1.87; 37-48 (2 cans), \$2.50 49-60, \$2.81.

All other international mail: 1-12 packets, \$1.85; 13-24, \$2.68; 25-36, \$3.68; 37-48, \$4.68; 49-60, \$5.68.

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Escondido, CA, 90027-1708**

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B. boisseri
**B. carriae*
B. gehrtii
B. grandis var. evansiana white
B. grandis var. B. grandis var. evansiana white
B. grandis var. evansiana pink
B. heracleifolia
B. novogranatae
B. sutherlandii
B. taiwaniana
B.U043
B. U083
B.U252
B.U331
B.U332
B.U333

All semp seed from previous Seed Fund listings is no longer available, also species seed, U237, *B. pearcei*, *B. thelmae*, *B. solanthera*.



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A VISIT WITH MARY BUCHOLTZ

home of 25 years. It had a yard of wonderful oak trees, giving that dappled sunlight the begonias so love during our hot summers and a small greenhouse which was heaven during our winters, Nov.- Mar. The house had seemingly unlimited windows with great exposures for holding over begonias in the winter, begonias which I couldn't fit into the greenhouse. Also, there were windows where terrariums resided all year.

As with all things, nothing is constant. My children grew up and established homes of their own. I returned to work full time. My husband, who never enjoyed gardening, but loved the results it brought, grew tired of spending his one day a week away from work in the yard. The solution for us seemed to be a much smaller place and no

yard - enter our condo, and it is lovely and we do enjoy this new way of life. We have a bit less than half the square feet of our former home. Fortunately, I have a glassed (floor to ceiling) terrace, 20' x 8' for a growing area, part of this space is dedicated to my office. Unfortunately the exposure is south, southwest and the glass does not open. The capacity of the air conditioning system in our apt. doesn't sufficiently cool the terrace area. herein lies my frustration - hot and dry alien territory.



leaves. On the front south, southwest glass wall, I have a 3 shelled, 36" high, T long stand. This is home to canes, a shrub or two, and a few terrariums, and yes there are several terrarium varieties that will tolerate higher temps. Also, on the southwest exposure there is a pyramid cast iron stand with 12 arms which holds small canes, shrubs and a trailer or two. The remaining floor space in front of all that glass is home to several pots of non-begonia type plants (there really are some) and a few large canes which I did not want to be without, *B. maculata*, 'Esther Albertine',

Let me describe my set-up. I have two light stands, 3 shelves each. one stand contains 4, 40 watt tubes each shelf, the other 2, 40 watt tubes each shelf. The larger stand is against an end west glass wall, a sheer curtain to filter the sun; excellent light. The second light stand is parallel with 3 feet between, just enough space for one person to work among the begonias and try to avoid the shoe boxes on the floor full of rooting

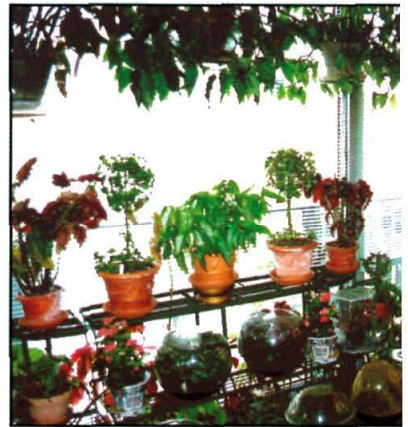
'Cardinal', which is now a constant bloomer, and 'Rip Saw'. If you look up, you will see I attached a bar to the ceiling from which I hang 12 baskets containing canes, a couple shrubs and trailing begonias. Receiving only front light, none overhead, I must be very diligent making sure all are turned weekly along with the others which only receive light from the front exposure.



Now I have only a few small-leaved rhizomatous varieties; B. 'Bethlehem Star', 'Toy Tiger', 'Red Bellybutton', 'Robert Shatzer', 'Little Darling', 'Red Planet' and 'Zip Code' are among my favorites. B. 'Curly Q' is grown in a fish bubble with the top completely open and seems to be quite happy. The medium-leaved seem to have adjusted to the heat much easier than the smaller-leaved, so I now have a few more of these. B. 'Chantilly Lace' has beautiful color under the lights as does *bowerae* Major, 'Olive Milliman' and 'Passing Storm'. An old favorite B. *sanguinea* seems to love the heat, and the tomentose (densely woolly) covering the leaves of B. *floccifera* is thicker and brighter than ever.

The begonias I grow on the light stands, which are not as tolerant of the heat, are placed on the lower 2 shelves. The canes seem to be "ok" on the top shelf of the 4 tube stand and the bloom color is wonderful. I have a few small-leaved canes which would rather not be up on

that top shelf, B. 'Lois Turks', 'Dracula', 'Minute Maid Orange', 'Kismet' and 'Amber Meyer'. They have a lower shelf spot and are a delight. I had two ceiling fans installed giving constant air movement. There is also a floor fan and small fans attached to the shelves of the light stands. All of the trays in my light garden have egg crate on the bottom. This gives me the opportunity to try to create a bit of humidity. I like to mist every day and someone needs water everyday. Keeping these guys wet enough, cool enough, and creating humidity seem to be my most difficult challenges. I have added polymer water grabbers to my soil mix, I use a heavier mix, fertilize less and water more; all seem to help. A few things are double potted, with sphagnum between the pots.



I find I do a lot of root pruning as well as foliage grooming, tip pinching and pruning so that my begonias remain small and I may continue to have variety.

Most dread the coming of winter and cooler temps, but I look forward to those months. This is the time when my begonias put their best foliage forward. Oh, where are all my terrariums?? They made the move with flying colors, as the saying goes, but that is an adventure for another day...*Mary Bucholtz*

Minutes of National Board Meeting

**MINUTES OF THE AMERICAN BEGONIA
SOCIETY BOARD MEETING,
HOUSTON, TEXAS
MAY 17, 1997**

1. The meeting was called to order by President Ann Salisbury at 3:15 p.m. with a request for a reading of the Aims and Purposes of the Society. They were read by Past President Gene Salisbury who requested all present to stand and repeat each one after he read it.

2. The minutes of the last ABS Board Meeting held by mail in January 1997, were read by the Secretary. Acceptance was moved, seconded and approved by the Board.

3. The treasurer's report for Aug. 1, 1996, to Apr. 30, 1997, was presented by the Treasurer, Carol Notaras, who pointed out details leading to a balance of \$24,349.28 in checking accounts and \$32,343.66 in savings accounts (\$56,692.94 total.) Acceptance was moved, seconded and approved by the Board. The treasurer commented that the cost of printing the Begonian is being reduced substantially.

4. A show of hands was requested by President Salisbury of all voting board members including National Directors. There were 32 present.

5. Committee reports were requested by the president, but not all were available. Highlights follow:

AUDIT - Paul Tsamtsis sent a letter stating that the books were in order as of 5/17/97.

AWARDS - Chair Mary Sakamoto has resigned.

BOOKSTORE - Betty Benningfield reported a balance of \$149.39 and a new addition to

the Buxton list.

BRANCH RELATIONS - Mary Bucholtz reported Organization of a new branch, Cascade, of Lebanon, Oregon. There was no branch established in Tallahassee, FL, as reported in the Jan./Feb. 1997 Begonian. Instead, requested information was sent. There were four new branches in 1996-The Preservation Branch, Boston, MA ; now dissolved; The San Jacinto Branch, Houston, TX; The Wheatheart Branch, Tonkawa, OK; and the Rocky Mountain Branch, Denver, CO. The Branch Relations Newsletter for Spring 1997 has been mailed. There are possibilities of new branches in Wisconsin, and western MA/southern VT.

CONSERVATION - Tamsin Boardman reported 114 Begonia species adopted and 100 participants in the Save Our Species Program.

CONVENTION - President Salisbury quoted Tom Keepin, who stated that there were 160 registered attendees.

ENTRIES/CLASSIFICATION - Leora Fuentes reported 256 show entries and requested that show schedules be distributed more widely in the future and that exhibitors be given more guidance on filling out entry forms to save time setting up the show.

HORTICULTURAL CORRESPONDENT - Shelley Andros reported interesting activity in the area, a result of which appears in the May/June, 1997 Begonian, p. 86.

JUDGING - Maxine Zinman reported that the list of judges has been updated and purged of those who are no longer eligible.

MEMBERSHIP - John Ingles reported by mail an increase of 30 members since January 1997.

PARLIAMENTARIAN - Margaret Lee reported that she was available to answer any questions relating to parliamentary procedure.

PUBLIC RELATIONS - Russ Richardson cited a published article on Begonia and proposed it be sent to all new members and made available through the bookstore to all

present members. It will be reviewed for that purpose. He exhibited a watch with an ABS logo on the face, and suggested ABS consider using it as a promotion. He also urged renewal of magazine advertising. No immediate action was taken on the latter two items

RESEARCH - Kelton Parker reported 320 species in the species bank and a list of these is available on request. The reference library now has 1527 journals and many requests for references are being received. Receipt of much of the Thompson Library was gratefully acknowledged.

ROUND ROBINS - President Salisbury received a written report from Virginia Hamann showing a lot of good activity. Examples appear on page 98 of the May/June Begonian.

SEED FUND - Ann Salisbury reported being relieved of that activity and that the San Miguel Branch will be taking it over pending approval by the Board.

SLIDE LIBRARY - Charles Jaros reported that many people are using the library and urged people to send for the list of programs because there are many good ones available.

6. NEW BUSINESS

AWARDS - Thanks went to Mary Sakamoto for her three years of effort as chair. Michael Ludwig was appointed the new chair, with Melba Schultz and Mary McLelland as new members. The Board voted to accept the appointments.

NEW BRANCHES - Acceptance of the Cascade Branch, recommended by the Branch Relations Director, was moved, seconded and approved by the Board. The Rocky Mountain Branch was represented by Andrew Conely, and officially welcomed to the convention.

ADVERTISING - Ann Salisbury has accepted this responsibility and the Board voted approval.

SEED FUND - The San Miguel Branch has agreed to oversee this fund. The Board approved, with Eleanor Calkins as Administrator, and Ingeborg Foo as

Secretary of the Fund, with permission to open a joint bank account in the American Savings Bank

JUDGING - Maxine Zinman presented changes in the rules and qualifications for judges. Acceptance of the changes was approved by the Board. The revised rules will be printed in a future issue of the Begonian.

CONVENTION '98' - Mary Elizabeth Moultrie, '98 Convention Chair, invited everyone to Atlanta for the Convention next year, June 18-She stated one of the projects for the Convention is a quilt, and asked for help in making it. Russ Richardson inquired about an appropriate advance of funds to help with expenses. The Board voted to advance the '98 Convention the usual \$1500.

MEETING CALENDAR - Kay Tucker raised the question of scheduling National Conventions and SWR Get-Togethers too close together. For example, if they are both in the Spring, it is difficult for some to attend both. Since both the ABS and Swg depend heavily on the proceeds, President Salisbury appointed a committee to study the economic impact of reducing the number of Conventions and Get-togethers on both organizations and to study other pertinent factors. The committee consists of Don Miller, (Chair,) Charles Jaros, Mary Sakamoto and Gene Salisbury. They were asked to make recommendations to the Board at the September, 1997, meeting.

7. The annual business meeting and installation of officers will be held on September 6, 1997, in Sacramento, CA, in conjunction with a judged show. Annual reports from committee chairs and National Directors will be due at that time and copies must be sent to the President and Secretary by September 1.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Richard N. Macnair, Secretary

DIRECTORY OF BEGONIA SOCIETIES

The following directories are according to the latest information I have received. If the National Representative or President was unknown, then another member contact was included.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETIES

Australia

Association of Australian Begonia Societies Ross Bolwell, Chair 226 Annangrove Rd., Annangrove, NSW2156

Associated Societies: Begonia Society of Western Australia, Inc. Stewart Sylvester, Pres. 34, Waterton Way Cooloongup WA 6168

New South Wales Begonia Society, Inc. John Cameron, 31 Barry St., Cambridge Park 2747 New South Wales

Queensland Begonia Society Mrs. Carmel Browne 'Paradise', Browns Road BelliPark 4562, Queensland

South Australian Begonia Society Mrs. Myrnie Jennings, 4 Kinnaird Crescent, Highbury, SA 5089

Victorian Begonia Society, Inc. c/o Mrs. Margaret Wright, 74 Railway Place, Macedon 3440

Belgium

Societe Beige du Begonia Piron Gilles, Pres. Chemin de Lancre, 4

Canada

British Columbia Fuchsia & Begonia Society

Lorna Herchenson, Pres. 2402 Swinburne Ave., North Vancouver B.C. V7H 1 L2

Canadian Begonia Society

Miree Lex, Pres. 70 Enfield Ave. Toronto, Ontario M8W1T9

England and Wales

The National Begonia Society C.

Nicklin, 33 Findern Lane, Willington, Derbyshire, DE65 6DW, England

France

Assoc. Francoise de Amateurs de Begonias Mme. Annie Danancher

editor, le petit bego-fil 11 Rue Myrha Paris 75018

Japan

Japan Begonia Society

Mr. Naoyuki Vemura, 27-10 Higashi-Ohizumi, J-Chome, Neriam-Ku, Tokyo 178, Japan

Scotland

Scottish Begonia Society

c/o- 260 Bellfield Rd. Coalburn, Lanarkshire Scotland M1110ONQ, UK



Large clay pots with a simple crack or two can be repaired with epoxy putty. Some putties can be found that are pot colored or pigments for coloring concrete can be used. Use a putty knife to apply the putty and smooth over crack or to join a broken piece. *Carol Wright, Ventura, CA*

AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY

Members and guests are welcome at all meetings - plan to visit a group while traveling! Contact National Director or other member (listed) for more information.

REGIONAL GROUP

Southwest Region Lucille Dyess 3971
Flagle San Antonio, TX 78237

BRANCHES CALIFORNIA

Alfred D. Robinson: 2nd Tuesday,
10:30 am Home of member Margaret
Lee, 1852 31st St. San Diego, CA
92102

Doug Frost Branch 1st Wed., 7:30 p.m.
12860 Euclid St. Garden Grove Herb
Wilkinson 16281 Mercer Lane
Huntington Beach, CA 92647

Long Beach Parent Chapter: 3rd
Saturday, 1-3pm, Paramount United
Methodist Church, 16635
Paramount Bl. , Paramount, same
contact as Doug Frost Branch

Monterey Bay Area: 4th Wednesday,
7:30 p.m. Monterey Senior Cntr,
Lighthouse & Dickman Sts., Monterey
(no meeting June, Aug.) Leslie Hatfield
3025 Kennedy Court Marina, CA 93933

Orange County: 2nd Thursday, 7:30
p.m. Fullerton S & L 2310 E. Lincoln
Ave. Anaheim Margaret Fisher, 7552
Danube Dr. Huntington Beach, CA
92647

Palomar: 2nd Sunday, 2 p.m. Quail
Botanical Gardens 230 Quail Gardens
Dr. Encinitas Eleanor Calkins 910 Fern
St. Escondido, CA 92027

Palos Verdes: 1st Mon., 7:30 p.m. S.
Coast Botanic Garden, Jeanne Jones,
1415 Via Margarita, Palos Verdes, CA
90274

Rubidoux: 4th Thursday, 7:30 p.m. W.
Riverside Mem. Auditorium 4393
Riverview Dr. Bob Bailey 5190 Mission
Blvd. Sp. 90 Riverside CA 92509

Sacramento: 3rd Tuesday, 7:15 p.m.
Garden Center 3330 McKinley Blvd.
Sacramento Adena Kalal 6833 West
2nd St. Rio Linda, CA 95673-2020

San Francisco: 1st Wednesday, 8 p.m.
Garden Center Golden Gate Park, 9th
Ave. & Lincoln Way Susan Muller 124
St. Charles Ave. San Francisco, CA
94132

San Gabriel Valley: 2nd Tuesday, 7:45
p.m. Los Angeles State & County
Arboretum 301 N. Baldwin Ave. Arcadia
Elaine Baxter,

San Miguel: 4th Saturday Members'
Homes Toni Baker 6475 50th St. San
Diego, CA 92120

Santa Barbara: 4th Sunday, 2:30 p.m.
The Cottage 1130 N. Milpas St. Santa
Barbara Rudolph Ziesenhenné (*address
same as above*)

Santa Clara Valley: 3rd Thursday, 7:45
p.m. Rm 2, Kirk Corm Cntr. 1601
Foxworthy Ave. San Jose Jackie Davis
170 Wingfoot Way, Aptos, CA 95003

South Bay: 2nd Friday, 7:30 p.m. Dana
School Cafetorium 135th & Aviation
Hawthorne Ramona Parker 14965 Van
Ness Ave. Gardena, CA 90249

Theodosia Burr Shepherd: 1st
Monday, 7:30 p.m. American Commer-
cial Bank 6401 Telephone Rd. Ventura
Beverly Paulson 397 Baker Ave.
Ventura, CA 93004

Westchester: 2nd Wed., 7:30 p.m.
Congr. Church of the Messiah, 7300 W.
Manchester Ave., Irene Nuss 8329
Regis Way Los Angeles, CA 90045

Whittier: 4th Friday, 7 p.m. Room 1,
Civic Center 7630 Washington Ave.
Whittier Joy Blair, 10006 Pomeroy Rd,
Downey, CA 90240

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AREA

Potomac: 4th Sunday, 2 p.m. Green
Spring Farm Park 4601 Green Spring
Rd. Alexandria, VA Carrie Karegeannes
3916 Lake Blvd. Annandale, VA 22003

FLORIDA

Florida West Coast: 3rd Tuesday, 7:30
p.m., Church of Christ 6045 Park Blvd.
Pinellas Park, H. Alton Lee 5813 19th
Ave. S. Gulfport, FL 33707

Fort Lauderdale Area: 1st Tuesday,
7:30 p.m. 3245 College Ave. Davie, FL
Sylvia Ben 2808 N. 46th Ave. E-551
Hollywood, FL 33021

Jacksonville: 3rd Monday, 7:30 p.m.
Garden Club 1005 Riverside Ave.
Jacksonville Mary Bucholtz 1560
Lancaster Terr. #1008 _ Jacksonville, FL
32204

Miami: 4th Tuesday, 8 p.m. Simpson
Garden Center 55 SW 17th Rd. Miami
Bob Cochran. 951 SW 99th Ave
Pembroke Pines, FL 33025

Palm Beaches: 2nd Monday Hort.
Center 531 N. Military Trail Elizabeth
Mateus 2353 Carambola Rd. West Palm
Beach, FL 33406

GEORGIA

Greater Atlanta: 2nd Sunday, 3 p.m.
odd-numbered months Atlanta Botanical
Garden Betty Lockett 2064 S. Akin Dr.
NE Atlanta, GA 30345

ILLINOIS

Greater Chicago 4th Sunday, 1:30 p.m.
Oak Park Cons. Earth Shelter 621
Garfield St. Chicago Daniel Haseltine
6950 W. Nelson St. Chicago, IL 60634

MASSACHUSETTS

Bessie Buxton: write for meeting info.
Wanda Macnair, 177 Hancock St.,
Cambridge, MA 02139

NEW YORK

Knickerbocker: 2nd Tuesday, 7:00 p.m.
(except July & Aug.) Hort. Society of NY
128 W. 58th St. New York Vanessa
Young 2975 Bainbridge Ave. Bronx, NY
10458-2101

Brooklyn-Queens-Nassau: 3rd
Sunday. 1:30 p.m. Planting Fields
Arboretum, Oyster Bay NY Sol Schwartz
143 Hewlett Neck Rd. Woodmere NY
11598

OHIO

Western Reserve Branch: Member's
homes., Alice Nierenberg 5829
Birchwood Dr Mentor, OH 44060

OKLAHOMA

Fred A. Barkley: 3rd Sunday, 2:30 p.m.
Will Rogers Garden Cntr. 3400 NW 36th
St. Oklahoma City Diane Horne 3601
Oakhurst Dr. Midwest City, OK 73110

Wheatheart Branch: 2nd Sunday, 2
p.m. 1 st Nat'l . Bank Annex Tonkawa
Gene Salisbury P.O. Box 452 Tonkawa,
OK 74653

OREGON

Cascade Branch: 3rd Sunday,
Member's homes, Kathy Goetz, 935 W.
Isabella, Lebanon, OR 97355

TEXAS

Alamo 3rd Saturday Homes of
members John Howell 129 Trillium San
Antonio, TX 78213

Astro 1st Sunday, 2 p.m. Tom Keepin
4513 Randwick Dr. Houston, TX 77092

Dallas Area 3rd Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
Northaven Gardens 7700 Northaven Rd.
Dallas Don Miller 1010 Mt. Auburn
Dallas, TX 75223-1533

Mae Blanton 4th Wed., 10:30 a.m.
Homes of members June Davis 3421 N.
Beach Fort Worth, TX 76111

Satellite, 4th Tuesday League City Bank
& Trust League City Verna Lawrence
5008 Cedar Creek ,Dickinson, TX 77539

San Jacinto George Macias 622 East
Lake Houston, TX 77034

THANK YOU! to all Branch Officers
who sent updated information for this
Directory. Please check your Branch
listing and let us know of updates and
corrections. Many of your branch
newsletters don't list officers or if they
do, they rarely mention the National Rep
for your club. The National Represent-
ative (or Branch Relations Director) for
your Branch is the person who needs to
be listed in the Directory, not the current
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Begonia *hydrocotyfolia*

by Iris Bird

I have been growing begonias for a little over two years, and I am repeatedly amazed at the hundreds of unique and wonderful plants to choose from. I definitely have found many I can call favorites. Most are rhizomatous with distinctive foliage, such as **B. 'Mirage'** and **B. 'Sara-bande'**. Then there are the tiny leaves of **B. 'Kit Kat'**, **B. *bowerae* var. *nigramarga***, **B. 'Robert Shatzer'**, and my recently acquired favorite, **B. 'Wanda'**. I'm also very interested in the rexes and the species. Still very much a novice and learning every day, it's a wonderful world discovering new and unusual treasures in the family **Begoniaceae**.



About a year ago, fellow grower **Eric Seel** gave us a small 3" x 5" container full of minute little plants. He grew these from seed. I was instantly impressed with the fact that someone could get tiny baby plants from seed that resembled dust. I didn't have any idea what to do with them so I referred



to that wonderful big green book ("*Begonias, The Complete Reference Guide*"). I read about the care and requirements of what appeared to be a million and a half baby plants that appeared to be a green carpet of tiny round shiny leaves.

I didn't want to disturb them in their nice little yellow container, all crowded together like so many peas in a pod. There were many more than I knew what to do with but I had to start some place. I assembled some 2" pots in a tray, poured boiling water over all to sterilize. Then I filled them with a mix of **Sunshine #3** (a peatmoss based commercial mix), and small perlite. I dampened them all with distilled water with 1/8 strength 32-10-10 fertilizer added. With a spoon, I picked out four or five plants in a "clump." I observed they had hair-like roots entwined with their siblings' and I also noticed I was destroying them as I transplanted. Well, I thought I wouldn't tell **Eric** I killed most of them! What was I to do?

I read on the little marker that these particular plants were *B. hydrocotylifolia*. What a long name for such a tiny plant. I knew nothing of this species. So, back to the big green book; there must be something about growing these new little plants that will help me to keep them alive and growing to maturity. There was!

I needed to create some type of miniature greenhouse for them, so I put the two inch pots inside a clear plastic

Solo cups with another on top. It made a little greenhouse of sorts. Another twelve pots were placed into a clear shoe box with a clear lid. I placed them under my lights, and they grew! After a month or so, I took the Solo cups off and put them in our greenhouse. They filled the small pots and I pulled some out to make room for two or three.

I wanted to see which location they preferred, so I have some in my home under lights, some in the greenhouse sitting on the bench, and some hanging in a ceramic moss basket. One is growing well with *B. kellermanii*, and *B. sanguinea* in a large pot for a novel-grown appearance.

B. hydrocotylifolia is rhizomatous, small leaved and entire/subentire, meaning without incisions, an even margin, or smooth margined. It blooms mid-winter to early spring. It is blooming now as I write, with many rose-pink flowers held high above the leaves on eight inch stems. Those almost round shiny leaves on thin little stems, when moved, seem to shimmer and dance. This plant requires almost no care. It's happy with a medium amount of light, a little fertilizer (2 tsp. to the gallon every time you water) and good drainage. They are a joy to have in our collection and bloom profusely.

Quoting "*BEGONIAS, The Complete Reference Guide*", *B. hydrocotylifolia* was discovered in Mexico in 1842. **Kew Gardens** in England received this species from **Otto Froebel** at the **Royal Botanic Gardens of Berlin**.

Many of the earlier discovered rhizomatous species are still in cultivation. *B. rotundifolia* is probably the earliest rhizomatous begonia still being grown. There are several very outstanding species widely grown today that were discovered before 1850. But, that is a story for another day. We have enjoyed growing *B. hydrocotylifolia*,... thanks **Eric**...and agree that all of you

begonia lovers, if you haven't already, might try this lovely little specie.

(*Editor's Note: Iris Bird grows begonias under lights at her home near Diamond Bar, CA and also in the greenhouse and shadehouse of her friend Bob Golden in Torrance. If you would like to contact her, her address is 20739 Lycoming St. #2, Walnut, CA 91789. Iris is a devoted begonia grower and a perfectionist (well, picky anyway) and I'm sure we'll be hearing more from her in the future*)

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Editor's Notes

by Brad
Thompson



Editor's Notes

It has always been my policy to be open and honest with the membership. Especially concerning issues that affect the production of *The Begonian* and especially those issues that concern me personally which ultimately affect *The Begonian*. I know what it's like to wait for the magazine to show up and it bothers me when you have to wait. Unfortunately, there are times when it can't be helped so I hope you will be patient.

Over the past year, I have been battling two serious illnesses plus the side effects of the medicine to try to keep them under control. I have wanted to quit editing this magazine nearly every issue but luckily I've had many friends in the ABS that wouldn't allow me to. I have to admit that putting together the magazine has been the only thing that kept me going and motivated during many times. I'm grateful that these fellow members gave me the push I needed to continue. Like I've said in previous Editor's Notes, I'm not looking for sympathy cards or to make any excuses, I just want you to understand how difficult it has sometimes been to get an issue out. Neither of my illnesses are curable but hopefully will continue to be controlled due to the marvels of modern medicine. One reason I'm telling you this is because it has been almost impossible

to keep up with correspondence and I feel bad about not being able to send replies to everyone's letters. Please don't stop sending me items. I do appreciate all the feedback and help I receive, but you will have to understand if you sometimes don't get a reply. I do hope to rectify that situation soon by enlisting friends to help. Feel free to call me anytime you would like to find something out right away, you wouldn't be intruding.

I know, to people that don't grow plants, this next statement will sound hard to believe. I know that you fellow growers will understand, however, when I say that growing my begonias, and writing and learning about them, has been the one constant joy during an extremely bad year. They have been the greatest inspiration to continue struggling, besides, who would take care of my children (begonia children) if I wasn't around. My begonias mean a lot to me and I would have to be dead to neglect them. Even the times I was forced to go to the hospital, I stopped to water them all before I left. Thanks for begonias and thanks for fellow growers, like yourself, for your years of support...

On another note, the **Begonia Webpages** are temporarily off line. I hope to have them up again soon but I just couldn't afford to keep up with two Internet accounts, so the pages will be back with a new address. I already have a new e-mail address, it is **MrBegonia@aol.com** which should make it easy for you to remember. Now I know **Rudy Z.** is the **REAL Mr. Begonia** but since he isn't online, I can be Mr. Begonia in Cyberspace without creating confusion.

Thanks again for all of your help and support during my first year as Editor, I look forward to many more. Again, I'm sorry about the tardiness of this issue.

ABS Elected Officers



President.....Ann Salisbury
P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa OK 74653
(405) 628-5230
fax (405) 628-2236 M-F 8-5
Past President.....Gene Salisbury
P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa OK 74653
1st Vice-President...Bruce C. Boardman
P.O. Box 69, Bluff Dale TX 76433
2nd Vice-President.....Shelley Andros
740 Lamat Rd., La Habra Heights CA
90631
3rd Vice-President.....Michael Kartuz
1408 Sunset Dr., Vista CA 92083
Secretary.....Richard Macnair, 177
Hancock St., Cambridge, MA 02139
Treasurer.....Carol Notaras
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Appointed Chairmen and Directors

Audit.....Paul Tsamtsis
1630 F St., Sacramento CA 95814
Awards.....Mary Sakamoto
6847 E. Sycamore Glen Dr., Orange CA
92669
Back Issues.....Keith Fletcher
P.O. Box 1, Tonkawa OK 74653
Ballot Counting.....Ingeborg Foo
1050 Melrose Way, Vista CA 92083
Book Store.....Betty Benningfield
P O Box 969, Anahuac, TX 77514
Branch Relations.....Mary Bucholtz
1560 Lancaster Terrace #1008,
Jacksonville FL 32204
Business Manager.....John Ingles, Jr.
157 Monument, Rio Dell CA 95562-1617
Conservation.....Tamsin Boardman
P.O. Box 69, Bluff Dale TX 76433
Convention Advisor.....Bob Cochran
951 SW 99th Ave. Pembroke Pines, FL
33025
Convention Chairman... ..Tom Keepin,
4513 Randwick Dr., Houston, TX 77092
Entries/Classification.....Leora Fuentes
13747 Wilderness Point, San Antonio TX
78231

Historian.....Norma Pfrunder
1958 Sycamore Ct., McKinleyville, CA
95519-3900
Horticultural Correspondent.Shelley
Andros, 740 Lamat Rd.,La Habra Heights,
CA 90631
Judging.....Maxine Zinman
Rt.1, Box 73, Boyce VA 22620
Members-at-Large.....Elaine Ayers
3939 Lee Heights Bld., Cleveland, OH
44128
Membership.....John Ingles Jr.
157 Monument, Rio Dell CA 95562-1617
Nomenclature.....Carrie Karegeannis
3916 Lake Blvd., Annandale VA 22003
Parliamentarian.....Margaret Lee
1852 31 st St., San Diego CA 92102
Public Relations.....Russ Richardson
1854 Chancery Lane, Chamblee GA
30341
Research.....Kelton Parker
3220 Botanic Garden Dr., Ft. Worth TX
76107
Round Robin.....Virginia Hamann
1169 Lincoln Ave., Chester IA 52134-8508
Seed Fund.....Eleanor L. Calkins,
Coordinator, 910 Fern, Escondido, CA,
90027-1708 (San Miguel Branch Project)
Slide Library.....Charles Jaros
200 Maureen Dr., Sanford FL 32771

BEGONIA STAFF

Editor: Brad Thompson, 2436 W. Lomita
Bl. #1, Lomita, CA 90717 (310) 530-7428
E-mail address MrBegonia@aol.com
Nomenclature Editor: Jack Golding
Editorial Assistants: Maria Holmes, Teri
Dykzeul, Janet Brown, Ramona Parker

Advertising Staff

Display Ads: Ann Salisbury
P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa OK 74653
Plant Society Ads: Wanda Macnair, 177
Hancock St., Cambridge, MA 02139
**for subscription, dues, circulation
inquiries contact:**

John Ingles Jr.
157 Monument
Rio Dell, CA 95562-1617



American Begonia Society

157 Monument

Rio Dell, CA 95562-1617

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