

The
Begonian

September/October 1997



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) 754-5407.

Cover

Front: B. 'Guy Savard', Best Cane-Like in the 1997 ABS Convention Show, exhibitor: Don Miller. Photo by Janet Brown.

Back: Verna Lawrence took Best Novice Grown with this beautiful B. 'Shiloh'. Photo by Midori Nobusawa.

IN THIS ISSUE

ABS Convention 1997 "Texans' Love Affair"

This year's convention held in conjunction with the Southwest Region Get-Together was chaired by Houston's Tom Keepin and co-chaired by Helen Spiers and Gail McGregor. From decorations by Joan Kessinger to hospitality by Verna Lawrence, Mildred Kirkpatrick, and Ray Fuentes it was a joy to all begonia lovers. Read Janet Brown's description of the event (borrowed from the *Westchester Branch Newsletter*, June issue) on the following page and see the convention in photographs generously provided by those noted.

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Quick

Check your mailing label. If it reads **11/97 or 12/97**, your membership is about to expire. Please renew! We don't want to lose you.

Convention -1997

by Janet Brown

There is nothing but good to say about the Houston Convention: Texans' Love Affair with Begonias. The hotel was excellent with superb service and all the amenities. Just minutes from Hobby Airport it couldn't have been more convenient. Best of all if you wanted to go out for dinner the hotel van with cheery, helpful drivers would take you almost anywhere you wanted to go and pick you up after dinner.

An unscheduled event occurred on Thursday and was thrilling while it lasted. A Texas style thunder and lightening storm swept through in the late afternoon giving the Californians a good scare. We had a bird's eye view of the approaching storm as it came right at us. There were multiple cracks of lightening everywhere and some seemed to be hitting the runways of Hobby Airport. Sparks were flying as the strikes occurred closer and closer and the rain was pelting down making the hotel parking lot a lake. The closest strike was just one block from the hotel and it hit and cracked a light pole (I have a picture of the shattered pole). Texans are used to these storms, but every Californian was saying, "I'll take an earthquake or two, thanks." Flights were held up two hours or more because of the deluge.

The tours were wonderful and included Astroworld, Mercer Arboretum, Moody Gardens in Galveston, the amazing Cockrell Butterfly Center at the Museum of Science in Houston and NASA. At the Cockrell Butterfly Center we had expert entomologists and horticulturists to show us around and we were taken up to the rooftop greenhouses and nurseries to see how the lovely creatures are propagated.

High praise should go to **Cheryl Lenert**, the tour director. Cheryl was a master at getting us all into and out of the buses with never a hitch and always with a big Texas smile. It was a flawless performance.

Also marvelous were the "Backyard Tours" beginning with the charming **Lulu Leonard's** home. Lulu has been in begonias only since 1991, but what an astounding collection she has all arrayed under huge pecan trees. The lunch was also quite delicious, Texas barbecue and the desserts set diets back for some time to come. The tours also included the yards of **Nancy Smith, Sue Shelley, and Penny Skov**. The final "Backyard" was Show Director **Tom Keepin's** with a great collection of not only begonias but many other plants--orchids, crotons, etc. Another delicious lunch, but it was the ice cream cart that was the star. Never have we had more delicious sundaes with all the trimmings.

Then there were the seminars in the afternoon. **Maurice Amey** lectured on getting your plant ready for show. **Mike Lowery** led us through a hands-on demo on Mounting Begonias and all came away with B. 'Fragrant Beauty' on a cedar board to take home. Two gentlemen from England gave us a delightful afternoon on Friday. **Bill Ash** told of his invitation (you must be invited) to Chelsea Flower Show, about mounting the incredibly beautiful begonia exhibit and about walking away with the Gold Medal. Wow! Then **Dr. Martin Sands**, plant Taxonomist and begonia specialist at Kew Gardens told us about collecting Southeast Asian species on which he is an expert. In addition to other begonias, he found B. *rajah* growing on rocks, fought off leeches, and dined on tasty grubs. These wonderful seminars were brought to us by **Tamsin Boardman**.

Texan's Love Affair, Houston, May 15-18, 1997

Awards

Major Trophy Winners

Best in Show

Don Miller, B. 'Black Fancy'

Sweepstakes

Lou Dyess

Showing is Sharing

Charles McGough

Kay Tucker Award (Best Cane)

Don Miller, B. 'Guy Savard'

Best Species in Show

Virginia Kettler, B. *venosa*

People's Choice Award (Selected by Show Viewers)

Lou Dyess (B. 'Crestabruichii')

Division Winners

Division A Cane-Like	Don Miller (B. 'Guy Savard')
Division BB Shrub-like, Distinctive Foliage	Lulu Leonard (B. 'Sinbad')
Division D Semperflorens	Gail McGregor (B. 'Charm')
Division EE Rhizomatous, Spiral, Small-leaved	Don Miller (B. 'Black Fancy')
Division EE Rhizomatous, Spiral, Giant-leaved	Lou Dyess (B. 'Crestabruichii')
Division EEE Rhizomatous, Distinctive Foliage	Estelle Sullivan (B. 'Emerald Jewel')
Division F Rex Cultorum	John Howell (B. 'Fever')
Division I Contained Atmos., Single Begonia	Pauline Mahoney (B. <i>prismatocarpa</i>)
Division II Contained Atmos., Multiple Varieties	Charles McGough (Fern/Christmas Time)
Division J Species	Virginia Kettler (B. <i>venosa</i>)

Division K Hanging Containers	George Macias (B. 'John's Fragrant')
Division L Heritage Begonias	George Macias (B. 'Constance')
Division M Novel Grown, Stnd.	Estelle Sullivan (B. <i>partita</i>)
Division M Novel Grown, Min.	Charles McGough (B. <i>obscura</i>)
Division O Seedlings & Plants	Charles McGough (B. 'Jim Wyrsten' x B. 'Vodka')
Division P Novice	Verna Lawrence (B. 'Shiloh')
Division S SWR Hybrids	Don Miller (B. 'Wee Paws')
Division U Traveling Begonias	Joan Coulat (B. <i>dregei</i>)
Division X Begonia Photos/ Horticultural	Mary Henderson (B. 'Erythrophylla Helix')
Division XX Artistic Photos	Thomas Keepin (B. 'Connie Boswell')
Division Y Begonia Crafts/Color	Charles McGough (Window & Curtain Fantasy)
Division YY Glasswork	Lisa Holmes (Glass Carving)

Culture Awards

		<u>Points</u>
Joan Coulat	B. <i>dregei</i>	95
Lou Dyess	B. Unknown	96.3
	B. <i>rotundifolia</i>	96
	B. 'Crestabruichii'	96
Leora Fuentes	B. <i>leprosa</i>	95
Elaine Gordon	B. <i>rajah</i>	95
John Howell	B. 'Weltonensis'	96
	B. 'Lillian Transue'	95
	B. 'Fever'	97
Virginia Kettler	B. <i>venosa</i>	97
	B. 'Covey's Favorite'	95.6



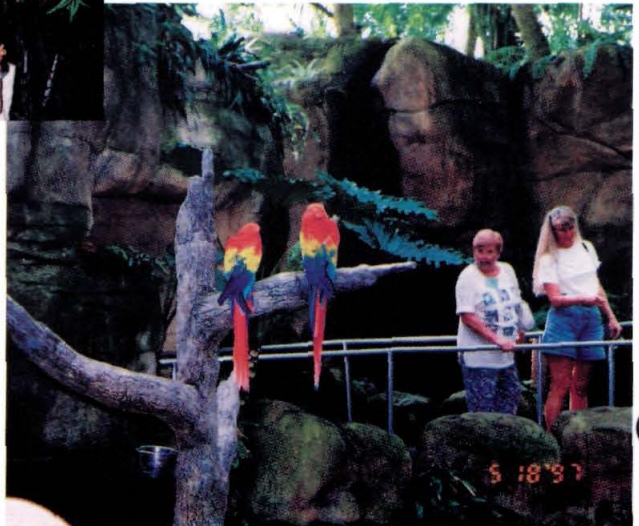
The Tours

Begonias in their natural settings were the joy of Moody Gardens in Galveston and the Cockrell Butterfly Center in Houston.

A California contingency, left, checks out the wonders at the Cockrell Butterfly Center in Galveston: (left to right) Mary Sakamoto, Shelley Andros, Margaret Fisher (almost hidden), and Joyce Hesse. Photo by Bruce Boardman.

Joy Porter of Massachusetts, bottom left, enjoys the tropical foliage. Photo by Carol Notoras.

Shelley and Joyce, below, amidst the color of Moody Gardens. Photo by Midori Nobusawa.





The signs in Nancy Smith's garden, above, made it difficult to believe Helen Spier's explanation that we were not really in a tropical paradise. Helen was a show co-chair. Photo by Gail Harmon, AR.

Sue Shelley's garden was replete with Rexes. Photo by Carol Notoras.

In Penny Skov's garden canes were tucked in with Semps and impatiens in the landscape. Photo by Midori Nobusawa.



1997 SPECIAL AWARDS

Service to ABS makes the society what it is; without the participation and contributions of every member, it could not exist. Recognizing one member with a special award is symbolic of recognition to all. It is significant that the 1997 Convention was dedicated "to all the members of the American Begonia Society" with thanks "for your contribution of time, money, knowledge, plants and money." The following special awards were presented at the Convention.

Herbert P. Dyckman Award

ABS' Herbert P. Dyckman Award for 1997 was presented to Joan Coulat of Sacramento, California. Joan, who has been a member of ABS for thirty years, has inspired with her generosity and expertise.

She has served as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd vice-president. She was show chairman of the 1978 Convention and plant chairman of the 1989 Convention. Joan has also served as a national

director and awards chairman. Joan has been a senior judge and taught the senior judging course at shows in Sacramento. Joan served her branch as president four times.

She is currently ABS nominating chairman and has done the Christmas ads for the past two years.

You can read about Joan's expertise in begonia growing in a feature article in *The Begonian* of May/June 1997.

SWR May Blanton Service Award

Outgoing Southwest Region Director Leora Fuentes prepared to make this award, opened the envelope and, in disbelief, read her own name.

No one else doubted, however, that this award went to the most worthy recipient. Of course, she gave outstanding

service as director, but Leora is a tireless worker for the Alamo Branch, for every SWR Get-Together and for national conventions. She was Entries/Classification chair for the Houston Convention. She always has plants that win ribbons and culture awards at every show.

Astro Branch Begonia Ambassador Award

Estelle Sullivan was awarded the Begonia Ambassador Award given by the Astro Branch. Estelle helped to organize the Satellite branch in Houston contributing many of the names on the invitation list. She

"sells" begonias literally and figuratively for the Houston branches. She typifies the spirit of this award which is to reach out to others to increase interest and expertise in begonia growing.

In order to appreciate fully the meaning of an award, it helps to know the history of the person for whom the award is named. Read Tamsin Boardman's article for this understanding.

The Henry P. Dyckman Award

by Tamsin Boardman

On the inside front cover of every issue of *The Begonian* you'll find these words:

American Begonia Society
Founded January 1932 by Herbert P. Dyckman

It is fitting that our society, dedicated to an unusual and varied plant family, exists thanks to the efforts of one unusual man with varied talents.

Herbert P. Dyckman was born in Aurora, Illinois April 11, 1884. His early years were spent on the family farm, and his love of beauty and of growing things became an ineradicably ingrained part of his being. Rudy Ziesenhenné wrote that the young Herbert planted and tended his own flower beds by the time he was five or six. He also helped raise his younger sisters and brothers--another trait that followed him throughout life was helping and instructing others, and this, too, can be linked to the strong nurturing tendency evident in his caring for plants. There can be no doubt that this man was raised by caring, loving parents.

Throughout his life, Herbert was to find happiness in family and friends. Rudy described him as "an honest, modest man who loved his fellow man." Photos show a long face with high cheek bones and a square strong jaw; his could have been stern, even forbidding, were it not for the immense smile and adventurous eyes.

Education was a luxury. Henry finished grade school. Later, as younger siblings no longer needed him, he took a job as a meat cutter. It cannot have been a happy choice and didn't last long. Wanderlust struck, and he set out across the country, working odd jobs for several years. The jobs he enjoyed all had to do with farming and agriculture.

About the time he returned to his family, they moved to a ranch near Livingston, Montana. By now he was ready to settle down; he was twenty-eight when he met and married Gladys d'Lavergne on February 2, 1902. It was a long and happy marriage, and the vegetable and flower gardens around their home in Livingstone drew admirers--but didn't pay the bills. He worked for several years for the Northern Pacific Railroad. When that job ended, he moved in 1922 to Long Beach, California and worked for Century Lumber Company.

The Lumber Company job ended, too. For Herbert, that was probably a blessing. Through necessity, his plant hobby became a business. He was, at last, in the proper field full time.

At some point someone gave him a rex leaf. The plant he grew from that cutting changed his life. By 1928 he was hybridizing rexes, and began putting on rex displays at flower shows. He loved talking begonias! Soon he was attracting others who admired his plants, and in December, 1931, he held a meeting in his home. The group met again the following month, at the home of Clayton M. Kelly, and formed the California Begonia Society.

Herbert P. Dyckman was the first president, a job to which he was reelected in the following year. This is a tradition that has, for the most part, continued: ABS presidents are elected for one year, but most serve for two terms. Herbert, however, was elected for a third term in 1941 (by which time the society had been renamed as the American Begonia Society). There were by then fifteen branches: ten in California, one of them named Herbert Dyckman Branch; three in Pennsylvania, one in Syracuse, NY, and one in Massachusetts. A

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The Show

Photos by Midori Nobusawa.

B. 'Black Fancy', left top, won Don Miller, Best in Show.

Can you believe Lou Dyess' *B. rotundifolia*, left center, with a culture award of 96 points lost out as Best Species to Virginia Kettler's *B. venosa* which had 97 points.



John Howell's B. 'Fever', bottom, won Best Rex.

Many of us were surprised to learn that Chuck McGough's planter was a recycled cooler top.



The Plant Sale and Seminars

Bruce Boardman, new ABS President, and Russ Richardson, Atlanta (top left) wait in line with everyone else for admission to the plant sale. Photo by Gail Harmon.



Isn't everyone's favorite activity at Convention the plant sale?

Once inside (right), it was everyone for himself, with plenty of plants for everyone. Photo by Gail Harmon.



Charles Jaros (next photo right) is not going to let Tom Keepin have his plants!. Tom Keepin, Show Chairman, was everywhere helping out. Photo by Gail Harmon.



Virginia Brinkley, California (lower right) works hard along with everyone else at the "Mounting Begonias" seminar led by Mike Lowery. Photo by Midori Nobusawa.

Carol Notoras (below) and Ann Salisbury want to learn more from Dr. Martin Sands after his seminar highlighting Kew Gardens and his Malaysian travels. Photo by Bruce Boardman.



IN MEMORY

Ruth Marie "Winkey" Woodruff died in her home in McKinleyville at age 53 on July 13, 1997, surrounded by the flowers she loved and her puppy "Bubbles." Winkey was stricken with brain cancer in May, which was found to be inoperable.

Winkey, as her family and friends lovingly called her, was born in Crescent City on October 25, 1943, to Ruth and George Leslie Woodruff, Sr. She lived in the Brookings, Ore., area until moving to McKinleyville in 1971 to work with her parents in the family business, Fairyland Begonia and Lily Gardens, which she continued to operate until her death.

Winkey is survived by her two sisters, Betty Dupee of Fairbanks, Alaska and Patsy (Suzanne Kootz) of Redding; her two brothers, George Jr. of Sequim, Wash. and Alan of Bend, Ore.; and their families, Sheri Savalos of Sequim, Wash., Shawne Woodruff of Anchorage, Alaska, Andrew Woodruff of Port Orchard, Wash., and Suzette Woodruff of Port Angeles, Wash., Ron J. Dupee and Christine Dupee of Fairbanks, Alaska, Joseph Woodruff of Bend, Ore., and Nathan Woodruff of Modesto.

Winkey was the past president of the Humboldt Singles Club. She had been a speaker at local garden clubs and was very knowledgeable about lilies and begonias, which were her life's work. She also had been the primary caregiver for many years for her mother and father during their struggle with cancer.

She was happiest working with her flowers, not only the lilies that her father was world famous for, but calla lilies and iris and whatever caught her

fancy. She loved to dabble, crossing one with another, probably an inherited trait. She also loved people and went to many singles dances, painted with TriChem, attended Grange functions and took classes at College of the Redwoods. There weren't enough hours in a day to do all the things she wanted to do. She was a busy lady with lots of friends and she will be sorely missed by all.

Donations in lieu of flowers can be made to the "Woodruff Scholarship Fund" at College of the Redwoods, 7351 Tompkins Hill Rd., Eureka or to the Linkages Program, 1910 California, Eureka.

A celebration of life memorial service was held at the McKinleyville Baptist Church in McKinleyville on Saturday, July 19, 1997.

ABS Membership

This is the time of year when we begin to think of gift giving. Please remember that a gift of membership in the ABS is a precious one.

Also, remember that for only \$2 per year more your spouse or other family member can join you in ABS membership.

Finally, when you get ready to renew this year, think about renewing for more than one year. When you have renewed for a given time, say three or five years, you don't have to worry about letting your membership expire through oversight.

Introducing Your New Editor by Ann Salisbury

Your new editor, Freda Holley, planted her first vegetable garden when she was about seven years old in Mobile, Alabama and her mother's chickens promptly scratched it up. This early lesson in the adversities of gardening did not discourage her; she has been an avid gardener ever since.

She bought her first begonia many years later in Austin, Texas and then began to notice their diverse forms in the local garden shows. In the early 70's she found ABS and began growing from seed. But the 80's brought increasing responsibilities in her job as research director for the Austin Public Schools and she had to drop out.

Then, in 1989 she and her husband jumped at the opportunity to take early retirement and move to a farm they had bought in the Arkansas Ozarks. There she raises fruit trees (her second plant love), a vegetable garden, and begonias. Her husband has a small herd of cattle. He doesn't have much interest in growing plants, but he gives her support and help in the mechanics of growing.

In Arkansas, she promptly rejoined ABS. She attend her first Southwest Region Get-Together in 1993 and hasn't missed one since. Some of you met her at the ABS meetings in Oklahoma City and Houston. You might even have a plant from her since she always brings several hundred baby seedlings, mostly species from seed, to the plant sales. You may also have read some of her articles in *The Begonian* or corresponded with her in a Robin. In

1996 she became editor of the *SWR Begonia Leaflet*.

Writing has always been second nature to her, a way to express her interests. In fact, her first job out of Houston's Rice University was as an editorial trainee with the old *LOOK Magazine* in New York. But marriage took her back to Texas where she had two sons and eventually wound up in graduate school with a fellowship in a multidisciplinary research training program which led to her career with the Austin schools. Her publications fill pages, but she also edited the work of her staff and for national research publications.

Freda says she is really not so much a grower as a planter, belonging to the Polaroid school of gardening--she likes to plant and "See What Develops." She doesn't really like to pinch and prune, but loves to observe what plants do on their own. If you came to her garden, she says, you will not find show plants, but you will find a great variety. Still, she admires those who do have the talent and patience of good growing and wishes she had it too.

Although she believes Mother Nature is the greatest artist of all, she thinks many ABS hybridizers and growers are not far behind. She never leaves a plant sale without both species and hybrids. She always loses a few of these, but she finds an ever growing number that seem to like the Ozarks as well as she and her husband.

SEE YOU IN ATLANTA!

June 17-20, 1998

Visit Callaway Gardens, Pre-Convention; Atlanta is Lovely in June.

West of the Wallace Line

A Trip Across Java and Bali, Indonesia

by Cytandra G. Hoover

On March 29, 1995, I left my home in Williamstown, Massachusetts for the islands of Java, Bali and Lombok in Indonesia. Jim Hunter, his daughter Sarah and I were on our way to meet my father, W. Scott Hoover, in Jakarta, the capital of the country. We were going to spend two and a half weeks on these islands with the purpose of observing the natural history and culture of the Indonesian people.

At the time, I was a seventh grade student at Mount Greylock Regional High School in Williamstown. I traveled to Indonesia because of an opportunity to visit a tropical country where my father was working. My teachers and I spoke about different objectives for the trip. They suggested I write a paper about my observations on these islands. We decided the best way to record observations was in a daily journal, and use that to supplement my [Search](#) paper, this was a paper of my choice, based on library research on Indonesia. I learned about the "Wallace Line" between Bali and Lambock. (The "Wallace Line" is an imaginary boundary based on differences in species of mammals, first proposed by Alfred Wallace in the early 1850's. Marsupials are found on the drier Lesser Sunda Islands to the east of the line and relatives of mainland Asiatic species which are found in Sumatera, Java and Bali, located to the west of the line.) My objective was to observe natural history and cultural adaptations on both

sides of the Wallace Line. These observations were what I used in my daily journal.

I became a student Member of the Explorers Club in September 1995. Other members of the Explorers Club have also traveled to Indonesia.

After arriving in Jakarta, we rented a Mitsubishi Starwagon van, and drove about an hour south to Bogor, West Java Province. Here we met Dr. Harry Wiriadinata, a senior botanist at the Bogor Herbarium, who became our guide, translator, and friend. It would have been difficult to travel across the islands without him.

We stayed two nights in a hotel that had lizards running up the walls. We visited the Bogor Botanical Gardens which are the oldest in South-East Asia. The trees, shrubs, herbs, flowering and non-flowering plants had been collected from tropical areas all over the world. In several huge, deciduous trees, we observed many fruit bats. Some had their wings open, as if about to fly, and some had their wings closed. We estimated approximately three to four hundred bats. While walking through the gardens several Indonesian people asked to have their pictures taken with us; Harry explained it was because of the unusualness of seeing young, white American teenagers.

The following day, we visited the Cibodas Botanical Garden, Mt. Gedes National Park, one of the wettest areas in Java. While hiking to a waterfall, we

collected *B. robusta*. (Begonias are recognized to grow in wet areas of the tropics, all over the world.) We were again asked to have our pictures taken with Indonesian people. Further along the trail, we learned that Mt. Gedes National Park has one of the highest measured plant species diversities in all of South-East Asia. This scientific work was done by Dr. Wilhelm Meyer. Learning of this high species diversity is an important observation for areas west of the Wallace Line which receive higher rainfall than areas to the east. I later learned that for tropical rainforests, as rainfall increases, so does plant species diversity.

The next day, we drove through the city of Bandung, to the city of Garute, also in West Java Province. After we arrived in our hotel, we took a walk and observed a series of terraced fish ponds, separated from each other by man-made earth dams. Fish ponds are a cultural adaptation to a wet climate. The following morning, we arose before dawn to see the sun rise on Mt. Papadayan, a 2,622 m. volcano. The volcano was smoking with sulphur fumes which stung our eyes. We never saw the sun rise, but we did see Indonesians harvesting cabbage, another cultural adaptation to a wet climate.

After leaving Mt. Papadayan, we drove approximately 270 kms (169 miles) in ten hours, in order to reach the city of Yogyakarta before nightfall. Yogyakarta is its own small province bordering the Indian Ocean. Though 169 miles is a short distance we expected that driving on the most densely populated island in the world would be time consuming and difficult. And that it was; Jim was the lucky one who did all the driving. Everyday brought dangerous conditions on the roads. The driving was nothing like I have ever experienced before.

After a pleasant night's rest, we visited the ruins of Borobudur, in Central Java Province, a short distance from the city of Yogyakarta. Borobudur is the largest Buddhist temple in the world. The heat is unbearable, but the beauty and details of the temple were overwhelming and I took many photographs. After leaving Borobudur, we drove partway up the south slope of Mt. Merapi, a 2,914 m. volcano, and parked near Kaliurang, Yogyakarta Province. From there we hiked up the mountain and collected our second begonia, a tuberous species, at about 1,050 m. My father has tentatively identified the species as *B. phoeniogramma* which has never previously been collected on Java, but is common on peninsular Malaysia. It would be of significant botanical interest if this collection is *B. phoeniogramma* because the finding of this species in Java indicates a larger geographical range than previously observed. Two days later we collected the same species at a large waterfall at 920 m. along on the west slope of Mt. Lawu near Tawangmangu, Central Java Province. To get to the waterfall we rented some horses and rode there. A modest population of this tuberous species was scattered along the steep slopes bordering the waterfall and observed the plants growing in the mist of the falls. Near the end of the day we crossed the crest of the divide on Mt. Lawu heading into East Java Province. There we made our second begonia collection for the day at 1800 m. This species was a shrub to 1.5 m. with leaves up to 30 cm. across. The identity of this species is unknown at this time. At this elevation, the habitat was a cloud forest, characterized by many air plants growing on the trunks and branches of forest trees. Air plants are found in cloud forests because there is a

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great deal of moisture in the clouds. The following day we drove to the small town of Pujon, along the slopes of Mt. Kawi, East Java Province and collected the same shrub species at 1100 m. Again, this species was collected in the heavy mist of a waterfall. That finished our begonia collecting.

The next day we drove from Malang, East Java Province, our final section of the island, to Ketapang; part of this drive was along the coast of Java Sea. We arrived in Ketapang and crossed the Bali Straight on a ferry then drove to Denpasar, the capital of Bali. The last several days of the trip were spent searching unsuccessfully for Begonias, but having a wonderful time touring Bali. We visited wood carving centers, saw more rice terraces, went to temples and observed Balinese dances. Harry flew out of Denpasar, returning to Bogor, with the begonia specimens.

This trip was the most educational experience I have ever had. I learned there are people who don't have as much as Americans, but often exhibit greater generosity and friendliness than many Americans. Visiting tropical rainforests and seeing the variety of plants was educational, particularly because of the great species diversity observed. The fish ponds and rice terraces of Java and Bali are cultural adaptations to the wet rainforest climate found west of the Wallace Line. Since we never made it to Lombok, perhaps another opportunity will arise, allowing me to continue my unfinished voyage to the east of the Wallace Line.

(Cytandra is the daughter of Scott Hoover, well known to Begonian readers for his plant collecting trips. You may write to Cytandra c/o Scott Hoover at Metamorphosis Unlimited, P.O. Box 93, Williamstown, MA 01267.)

A Message from Mildred Thompson

Mildred Thompson has experienced a delay in getting materials to Kelton Parker and would like begonia enthusiasts to know why. Ed Thompson has serious lung problems which now involve irregular heart beats and rhythm. After more than eight weeks in the hospital, he is home and on powerful antibiotics. Surgery which went wrong left him with a hole in his lung and until this heals, the heart problem remains. She hopes to get back to work soon on sending the references.

(You can drop Ed or Mildred a note or letter at 310 Hill Street, Southampton, NY 11968. Ed.)

Continued from Page 169.

requirement of presidents in those early days was visiting each and every branch during his term of office. These were war years, and past president Clarence Hall has written of driving along the California coast to night meetings--with no headlights permitted because of the blackouts! Today's presidents can be grateful they don't have to do that.

It was about the time that he discovered begonias and started the society that other factors in Herbert's life began to look up. An irony: during the roaring 1920's, his jobs were unstable; during the depression, he blossomed. In 1932 Long Beach hosted the aquatic programs of the Olympics, and the Olympic Beautification Committee chose Herbert Dyckman to head up the plantings. Plants, beauty--what more could he have asked for? More came. The city hired him to supervise "thrift gardens" for the legion of unemployed, teaching them to grow their own vegetables for their

families; he set up 500 gardens, at last using his teaching and nurturing talents in combination with his love of plants. We can suspect there were some flowers in those gardens, too, to feed the spirit.

By 1933, this man who had only a grade school education was hired to teach Adult Ed classes for the Long Beach School District. He was also writing articles for the *California Begonia Society Bulletin*, which later became *The Begonian* (copies of these early newsletters are available through the ABS Book Store).

There were setbacks, possibly the worst being when his fledgling nursery was wiped out by frost in 1934. But he doesn't seem to have been a man easily discouraged. The Dyckmans persevered, and by 1939 were able to realize a dream. They toured the country visiting botanic gardens, meeting with horticulturists and botanists. A high point was meeting the fabled Thomas Everett in New York.

Herbert P. Dyckman died in May, 1958. Gladys survived him by nineteen years. During that time, she faithfully attended every ABS Convention. At the 1976 Convention, she told Rudy Ziesenhenne, "I promised Herbie on his deathbed that I would attend every convention I was physically able to. I want you to know I have done this." She died in January of 1977.

Thank you! to Rudy Ziesenhenne, whose article (*The Begonian*, Vol. 55, July-August, 1988) on Herbert P. Dyckman provided dates and framework.

Don't Want To Miss an Issue?

The post office will not forward third class mail even with a forwarding address. They throw away the magazine and charge ABS to send an address correction. Save ABS Funds and don't miss an issue, let us know if you are moving. Please notify:

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Growing Organic or Hurray! A Convert!

by Tamsin Boardman

Everyone who strings together words wonders if anyone reads their work - what a thrill when someone does, says so, and thinks you make sense! Read on-

Using New Organic Resources
by Greg Stych

This past winter I experienced an unusual problem with low pH and excessive salts from a bad batch of peat moss. After my plant inspector tested for and detected the problem, I needed drastic measures to save some specimens from decay.

Turning to old Begonians, I got the idea of incorporating organic ingredients in my standard mix of peat moss, perlite, and vermiculite. Ground limestone was an obvious choice, both to raise the pH of the soil and counteract any excessive acidity.

But I also decided to experiment, utilizing the many organic ingredients usually used in vegetable gardens. I've incorporated the following additives into my dry soilless mix while repotting:

- Bone meal (6-12-0) - for blooms and vigor
- Blood Meal (12-0-0) - for lush leaves
- Magnesium Sulphate - in a powdered form of Epsom salts
- Super Phosphate (0-46-0) - for canes and shrubs
- Ground limestone - to neutralize acidity

The result has been dramatic! Leaves are lush, dark, full of lustre. Blooms are abundant - almost annoying as I try for decent cuttings. Seed pods hang all over my oasis of thousands of begonias. Cuttings taken from these specimens root rapidly.

These experiments have worked well under my conditions, which are very hot and humid from May through October. Fertilizing is difficult in summer here, as heavy rains and hot nights break down the effectiveness fast.

I've even resorted to using liquid soap as my primary insect deterrent. Who knows, maybe I'll even try cayenne pepper next! I think Tampa Bay has a new organic gardener on the horizon.

Way to go, Greg! I'm so glad it's working for your begonias! Just wait until you discover liquid seaweed, and Superthrive, and molasses, and apple cider vinegar, and that old stand-by fish emulsion (yes, it smells bad). Take it easy on the super phosphate: adding a lot of one element overbalances your mix, and phosphate tends to build up in the soil. - Tamsin.

Use Begonias In Your Holiday Decorations or Displays?

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**Editor
The Begonian
P.O. Box 99
Ozone, AR 72854**

The Branch Newsletter

by Tamsin Boardman

One of the most interesting events at the 1997 ABS Convention was the editor's meeting. This was a brainchild of Freda Holley, editor of Southwest Region's Begonia Leaflet (and now editor of The Begonian), who suggested a meeting of all members responsible for editing a newsletter to get together and compare notes, swap ideas, and work toward lending each other support in the future.

Those present included editors from branches all over the US, Mr. Akira Tanaka from Japan, and the editors of *Branching Out* and *Save our Species*. Many topics were covered: printing and mailing procedures, increasing input from members, topics to be covered, and graphics.

The most exciting result was the offer of Andy Conely, president of Rocky Mountain Branch and also their newsletter editor, to collect line drawings of begonias, scan them onto disks, and share the disks with other editors. (If you missed the meeting but would like to participate, drop Andy a line at 4575 Elm Ct., Denver CO 80211 - and be sure to send him any begonia drawings you have!)

The editors agreed that effective newsletters had several things in common: first and foremost, they let members know the "who, what, where and when" that is stressed so strongly in journalism courses.

WHO: In the case of a begonia branch, it is vitally important for members (and prospective members who receive a copy of the newsletter) to know who to contact for further information. Who are the officers? How do you get in touch with them? Every newsletter should include at least one phone number - and preferably several, so that a member can contact the program chair to volunteer to present a seminar, or suggest an interesting speaker; contact the treasurer to see if dues are paid or why a check hasn't cleared; contact the secretary or whoever lines up refreshments to offer to bring cookies. The bigger the

branch, the more necessary it becomes to make the officers known and accessible. Could you find a phone number for "that tall blonde named Judy" when you want to bring refreshments? Another "who?" is the speaker. "Joe will do our program on canes" doesn't tell a new member much. Is Joe renowned for canes? Is he a newspaper columnist? A nurseryman? A botanist? Is he speaking on growing, grooming, classification, feeding, diseases, hybridizing, species? And who won the prize at the show? "Our Tom took first!" doesn't tell the uninitiated who Tom is, or what plant he showed, or even what show you're talking about. Note: This kind of remark is particularly upsetting if you're editing *The Begonian* and would like to mention the show and its winners!

WHAT: What will happen at the meeting? Will someone (please see above, and name the person!) bring a raffle plant? Or present a mini-class on nomenclature or propagation or whatever? Will there be a show-and-tell? Will there be an auction, special refreshments, a birthday party, a potluck dinner?

WHERE: Believe it or not, branch newsletters that are handed out at sales and shows don't always include the meeting place. How is a potential member to find you? There's another possible trap here: when the branch changes its meeting place, members who have not attended for several months may not even know about the move. There may be other "wheres" involved in a particular situation. For example: if parking is a problem, mention how to find the parking lot. If there's a show and sale at a mall or large auditorium, mention which entrance to use. Do sale plants go in one door and show plants another? Tell your members *before* they arrive and cart plants to two or three different doors to gain admittance.

WHEN: Some branches change their meeting times with the arrival--or departure --of daylight savings time; or the officers decide to do the program first, meeting later, or change the time for snack break. People who have a late supper and don't plan to make the refreshment table arrive to find

Continued on page 184.

Conservation News

*Tamsin Boardman,
Conservation Chair*

A special **Thank You!** to our friends Down Under:

Dorothy and Barry Mann, of Queensland, Australia, for a most generous donation to the Conservation Fund;

and to the Association of Australian Begonia Societies, for their support of Scott Hoover's expedition to Sumatra.

Perhaps "Sumatera" requires an explanation. We've always said Sumatra, and spelled the country's name that way; but Scott used the spelling Sumatera, and we've found that is the way its citizens both spell and pronounce it. So Sumatera it is, and we apologize for taking so long to become aware of our error. (We probably wouldn't like it if they called us the United Steaks, an error I've heard a few times.)

Scot expects great things from his upcoming voyage; he's been before and says he knows just where to look this time. We'll all hope for lots of viable seed to make its way to this side of the world.

Why are we interested in begonias from Sumatera? For that matter, why is growing begonia species important in a day when there are thousands of hybrids around--some of them more beautiful and easier to grow than their wild ancestors? The answer depends on your own interests: those in medicine stress

the possibility of plants that will contain the cure for mankind's ills (and begonias have been shown to have tumor-reducing properties), agronomists look for new food sources (and begonias are grown as food in some areas), environmentalists stress biodiversity, horticulturists see new products, hybridizers see new genetic material. Some of us are just so fascinated by the family *Begoniaceae* that we get excited about each new--often unusual--species. Sumatra is exciting because many of their begonias are dramatic in color and texture, and critical because their begonia habitats are being rapidly deleted. Seed ABS members grow might provide the avenue to save a species...

...And speaking of saving begonia species: new members may not know that ABS sponsors an Adopt-A-Species project through the Conservation Department. Members select a species, study it, report on it, propagate it, share it with others. There's a quarterly newsletter. The purpose is to ensure that begonia species survive in cultivation even though begonia habitat in their native lands is vanishing. As the benefit of conservation become clearer worldwide, there is even the possibility that some day our species can be reintroduced to their old homes.

If you would like to participate, write:

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

for more information.

Reader Survey

The Begonian is very important to those of us who love begonias, and it is important that it reflect our needs and interests. By completing the following survey, you will help assure that happens.

Rate each of the following with a 1 (Want to read/see often), 2 (Want to read/see occasionally), 3 (Not important to me to read/see).

1	2	3	Articles about new hybrids.
1	2	3	Articles about older hybrids.
1	2	3	Articles about species.
1	2	3	Articles about U numbered species.
1	2	3	Articles about general culture.
1	2	3	Articles about insect/disease control.
1	2	3	Articles about organic growing.
1	2	3	Articles about begonias in the landscape.
1	2	3	Articles about greenhouse growing.
1	2	3	Articles about raising from seed.
1	2	3	Articles about hybridizing.
1	2	3	Articles about other ABS growers.
1	2	3	Articles about branch/regional shows.
1	2	3	Monthly summaries of regional/branch activities.
1	2	3	Scientific articles about begonias (genetics, botany, etc.)
1	2	3	Photos of older hybrids.
1	2	3	Photos of new hybrids.
1	2	3	Photos of species.
1	2	3	Photos of seed fund offerings.
1	2	3	Photos of begonias in the landscape.
1	2	3	Photos of member greenhouses.
1	2	3	Photos of ABS people.
1	2	3	Photos of Begonia Arts/crafts.
1	2	3	A glossary of botanical terms used in each issue.
1	2	3	A pronunciation guide to species names used in each issue.
1	2	3	Descriptions of seed fund offerings.
1	2	3	Articles about member experiences with seed fund offerings.
1	2	3	Round Robin summaries.

Continued on reverse.

Should *The Begonian* include:

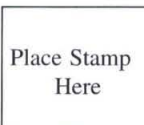
- | | | | |
|-----|-----------|----|---|
| Yes | Sometimes | No | Good articles taken from older issues of <i>The Begonian</i> . |
| Yes | Sometimes | No | Articles from branch/regional newsletters. |
| Yes | Sometimes | No | Articles from other plant society publications when appropriate to begonia interests. |
| Yes | No | | Only original material. |

What *one* thing about *The Begonian* is most important to you?

Can you suggest anything else that would make *The Begonian* better?

Is there anything the editor can do that would make contributing to *The Begonian* easier for you or would you be willing to contribute articles, photos, drawings?

FOLD, STAMP, AND MAIL



To:
Freda Holley
Editor, *The Begonian*
P.O. Box 99
Ozone, AR 72854

Round Robin Notes

Virginia Hamann
Round Robin Director

#32 Kusler & Canes

Greg Sytch (FL) has completed a new greenhouse which will give him perfect conditions for starting cuttings in the quantities needed for his commercial ventures.

#25 Midwest Growers II

Members are busy putting begonias outdoors for summer. Marvin Kahr (IA) plans to plant cane begonias directly into prepared flower beds on a protected side of a building. Jack Bohy (IL) grows miniature begonias in clay pots set atop plastic egg crating (plastic grid) that is fitted over a plastic tray such as orchids are grown over; they get humidity and air circulation.

#22 Propagation

Rhodora Buss (IA) and Mary Simon (OH) agree on using light tubes until they are completely burned out, putting plants liking intense light in the center and low light plants at the sides.

#8 Tuberos Begonias

Mildew is a problem for Jeanette Dupey (WA). Her plants keep blooming, but foliage is bedraggled. Howard Siebold (WA) uses a spray of 2 teaspoons baking soda per gallon of water every 5 to 6 days as a mildew preventative.

#14 Semperflorens

Members are growing the new hybrids B. 'Stara' and 'Dragon Wings' from Burpee's. These plants are very husky 2 foot plants with large flowers. B. 'Lord', 'Lady Frances,' and 'Cherry Blossom' are also being grown by members.

#4 Window Gardening

Mildred Swyka (DE) is using B. 'Selph's Mahogany' and B. *bowerae* var. *nigramarga* as pollen parent. Since getting begonias to bloom is important to hybridizers, Elaine Ayers (OH) says B. U089 is a constant bloomer.

#1 General Culture

Mabel Corwin (CA) likes oak leaf mold as an addition to her potting soil. This is oak leaves that are partially composted and crumbled.



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Continued from Page 179.

everyone eating after all, and the program they'd wanted to hear finished. Please let your members know the schedule! Be sure and mention times for shows and sales, too. What time do the doors open? What's the earliest time you can bring plants? The latest? When do show plants and unsold sale plants have to be removed? One more "when": be sure you mail the newsletter out in plenty of time to notify members of meetings or special events. This is especially important if you change date, time, or place. Allow several days for delivery, even if all members live in the same town, a week if members are spread over several zip codes, and as much as a month if your newsletter goes by bulk mail.

Once the "who, what, where, when" is covered, newsletters diverge according to branch needs and editor personality. Large branches with a high percentage of new members tend to include articles on general culture, and lots of branch news. Brad Thompson edited some excellent examples of the long, chatty, informative newsletter for Orange County Branch in California. In Florida Greg Sytch's newsletters for Pinellas County Branch (now named Florida West Coast) were noteworthy not only for his news of members and complete coverage of branch activities, but also for his combination features of a "Begonia of the Month" and a "Companion Plant of the Month", with descriptions and growing advice. These are the kinds of newsletter that are eagerly anticipated, read all the way through, and saved for future reference.

Other branches have special needs. For example, one small branch with several members who couldn't get out in bad weather put out a newsletter stressing personal notes about members as well as telling about everything that was happening at meetings--when spring arrived the members returned all up to date. One large branch highlights a member or two each month, so that members get to know each other better.

An outstanding example of a branch newsletter is that of Westchester Branch. Edited for a long time by Marion Lindgren, it is now in the capable hands of Janet

Brown. Regular features cover what's coming up at the next meeting (times and place - street address included--are at the top, with officers and phone numbers), information on who will provide the refreshments and the plant table, a review of last month's meeting, updates on ABS conventions and shows, notes from the president, gardening by the moon, a calendar of what's going on horticulturally in the area, notes on members and Food for Thought (a quote with a philosophical bent). In June: "One of the best reasons for remaining silent is that it can't be repeated to anyone."--which was properly credited to Ann Landers, Gem of the Day). Every other month there is a color photo of a begonia.

The color photo, unfortunately, is expensive. So are printing and mailing. Should your branch bother at all?

Several years ago my husband Bruce and I edited a monthly newsletter for Dallas County Audubon Society, a large organization with over 2,000 members. At an Audubon conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico we attend a workshop on newsletters. The leader stressed the immense importance of a newsletter in contacting, interesting, and motivating members. One statement stands out strongly in memory: "The smaller the chapter, the larger the percentage of its budget should go into its newsletter. A small chapter should spend up to 95% of its budget on its newsletter."

Why the emphasis on the importance of the newsletter for a small group? Because the newsletter is a group's best impetus for growth.

A good newsletter has a function in the life of your branch. It helps members grow better begonias; it helps them get to know each other better through communicating concerns of the group and of individual members; it keeps members up to date; it presents your group to potential members as a cohesive, interesting, knowledgeable, fun bunch of people; and promotes begonias and all facets of begonia lore. Best of all, its exciting!

Your branch newsletter may be produced by a master at computer graphics, or by typewriter, or even handwritten.

Continued on Page 192.

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Clayton M. Kelly

Seed Fund Notes

Eleanor L. Calkins, Seed Fund Administrator

The Seed Fund is handled as a branch project by **The San Miguel Branch** in San Diego, California with **Eleanor Calkins** as the administrator. This is a small branch devoted to the study of Begonias. All of the members have committed to helping prepare and package the seeds. **Seed donations for this month are from Thelma O'Reilly, James Ault for NACPEC (North American China Plant Exchange Consortium), Michael Ludwig, Scott Hoover, Ingeborg Foo, and Tracy McLellan.**

B. bakeri: (Central America) thick-stemmed rhizomatous, pink blossoms in early spring. Identification of this plant is confused with *B. cardiocarpa*. This plant is different from the *B. cardiocarpa* growing next to it. Both plants were obtained from R. Ziesenhenné.

B. coccinea: (Brazil) cane-like, intermediate to tall, coral red flowers.

B. cucullata var. cucullata: (Brazil) shrub like, tall growing species with light green, glaucous leaves and white flowers. Identified as true species by Rudolph Ziesenhenné.

B. glabra: (Central America) trailing-scandent, medium green waxy leaves, light green stems and petioles, white flowers.

B. lanceolata: (Brazil) a rare small Brazilian species with green incised lanceolate leaves; white flowers on short peduncles.

B. opuliflora: (Panama) the first seed fund listing of a rare Panamanian species collected by Scott Hoover. Try this now, then read the complete story of the clues that led Rudolf Ziesenhenné and Thelma O'Reilly to the identification of "The Elusive Begonia *opuliflora*" which will be published by Thelma O'Reilly in the November/December issue.

B. pinetorum: (Mexico, Central America) rhizomatous, medium green leaves with fine hairs, 7-8 light green veins, white flowers.

B. rudatisii: similar to *B. homonyma*, but with thinner, larger leaves that are darker and browner; small caudex. Female flowers unlike other plants of the *B. homonyma* group. (Editor's Note: *B. rudatisii* is considered a synonym for *B. homonyma* which is in turn one of the complex *B. dregei* group that is still under study.)

B. sinensis: a small--6" to 10" tall--single-stemmed deciduous plant with light pink flowers. Collected in China at the base of a cliff in a very moist shady site, some snow and winter temperatures to the high 20s (°F). (Editor's Note: *B. sinensis* is considered a synonym for *B. grandis* ssp. *evansiana*, but again this is a complex of plants which exhibit varied characteristics.)

B. subvillosa var. subvillosa: (Brazil) shrub-like, small round leaves, white flowers; all plant parts covered with soft, white hairs; over watering is fatal.

B. wollnyi: (Bolivia) incised leaves splashed with silver, greenish white flowers.

Other Plants:

Bilbergia brasiliensis: handsome green, tubular rosette, masses of bright pink bracts, pendulous inflorescence, satiny violet purple petals that are easy to grow.

Habranthus robustus: bulbous plant resembling miniature amaryllis, four inch

bright pink flowers, blooms anytime from spring to fall, said to bloom in first year from seeds.

single whorl of 4 leaves at top of a short stem.

Sinningia leucotricha: large oblong leaves with dense silver hairs, usually in a

CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND LISTING

The seed fund is a service to members only. It is a privilege of your membership.

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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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- B. rudatisii* (\$2.00)
- B. sinensis* (\$2.00)
- B. subvillosa* var. *subvillosa*
- B. wollnyi*

Hybrid Seeds

Begonia mixed canes--open pollinated

Other Seeds

- Bilbergia brasiliensis*
- Habranthus robustus*
- Sinningia leucotricha*

*The Seed Fund needs new seed. The Seed Fund Committee has requested the reprint of this article from **The Begonian** May 1978 along with a request that you send seed.*

New Seeds by Linda Miller

It is again time for the Seed Fund to request seed from our ABS members. We are in need of fresh and different varieties. Can you help?

Contributions of seeds do not go unrewarded. When sending seeds, send a list of a few varieties that you would like to have from recent issues, or others that you may be looking for. I will do my best to meet your requirements. Seeds of species are especially in demand, although every contribution, no matter how small, is appreciated. Even one seed capsule of a rare or unusual plant may enable your grower friends around the world to share in the growing of a new plant.

Questions are always coming in the mail regarding setting, cleaning, and sending seed; so I will try to answer some of your questions.

In order to obtain seeds, it is best to hand pollinate your flowers. Many plants will set seed on their own, but the grower then does not know whether the pollen has come from the same plant or another close by. When planted the seeds may not produce the same named plant: the seedling will revert to the hybrid's parents or new cultivars arise. The *semperflorens* varieties produce seeds freely and these are great for the seed fund as is, for they are used in mixtures anyway.

Begonias have 2 kinds of flowers -- male and female. The female is easily

identified by the winged ovary in the back of the petals. The male is the pollen-bearing flower. When the pollen is ripe on the male flower, the golden pollen will cover your fingernail like dust. Choose a female flower that has been open 2-3 days. It will be more ready to accept the pollen at this stage.

There are several ways of transferring the pollen from the stamen of the male plant to the pistil of the female flower. One method is the use of a small brush picking up the pollen then lightly dusting it onto the pistil of the female flower. Another easy way is to remove the male flower and hold over the female flower and very carefully "rub their little noses together", or just dust the pollen onto the flower. Be careful not to injure the pistils on the female flowers.

If pollenization has taken place, the petals usually drop from the female flower and the ovary will swell with seed production. (Success!) The seed pod should ripen in 2-4 weeks. Remove it from the plant when the flower stem is dry. Do not leave it on too long or the seed capsule will open while still on the plant, with seed sown in every surrounding pot!

After removing seed pods, store separate varieties in small paper bags to completely dry. Seed should open on its own into the bag. If some pods still contain seed, open

up each seed compartment with a needle.

Dump seed onto a piece of paper, leaving seed capsules in bag. Roll seed off edge of this paper onto another piece of paper. Lightly tap as you do so. Most chaff should remain on the first paper. Another fast way of removing most of the chaff is to sift through a fine tea strainer. This is especially good for large quantities of seed. Any remaining particles of foreign matter can be removed with a tweezers. It is important to get seeds as clean as possible, for foreign particles can produce fungus problems in your growing medium.

For mailing seed, you can recycle Seed Fund envelopes for packaging or make your own. Regular paper, onion skin, or roll-your-own cigarette papers are a few of the things you can use. Do not use plastic for storing or sending seed. The seeds stick to this like crazy.

Make sure all ends are closed well, so that seeds can't stray.

To avoid crushing in the mail, (the postmark can do irreparable damage!) use cotton, bubble packaging, or even kleenex as cushioning material. Try to position seed packet in corner of envelope away from the postal mark.

I hope these few suggestions will help you. Try setting seed on your plants, even if only for yourself and your friends. If you have extra, please share with the Seed Fund. Send along with a short description of the plant, and the plant name, if known. Unlabeled varieties will be combined and offered as mixtures.

Do you have an unusual or "sure fire" method of sowing seed? Write to me, so that different methods can be shared with our growers.

Have You Ever?

Have you planted a large patio pot, window box, or hanging basket with a display of plants that included begonias as a feature? It's all the rage in garden magazines these days and your editor would like to have an article featuring some examples and maybe giving the principles of planting these.

Please, could you write such an article? Or if you have an example of one of these you've planted, send along a photo and a description.

Send to:

Freda Holley, Editor
The Begonian
P.O. Box
Ozone, AR 72854

You Are Invited!

To Oklahoma City for the Southwest Region's Annual Get-Together on April 23-26, 1998.

The Fred A. Barkley Branch, host for this event, reminds you of how great OKC was in 1994 and hopes you will come back. The Get-Together will once again be in the Embassy Suites Hotel with those great complimentary breakfasts and happy hours.

Make your plans to attend now.

For information, contact:

Linda or Mike Clemons
3512 N.W. 65th Terrace
Oklahoma City, OK 73116
Phone: 405-843-9016

Member Favorites

At the 1997 Convention I asked a random sample (i.e. those I ran into when I had a pencil and paper at hand) which begonia was the favorite. Results yielded names as unique and varied as the begonia family. In general, favorites were hybrids, but species were also frequently mentioned. I was usually asked what I was going to do with the information and I had no idea at the time, but serendipitously the results suggested this column as a **Begonian** feature. I would like to see this become a readers' page. If you have a favorite, won't you write me about it. If you have a photo, include it, but if not I'll try to locate one (Did you know, the inexpensive disposable cameras often take quite acceptable photos?). Give history if you know it, but sometimes I can add that from references here (see below). Tell about your experience with it. We can learn a lot from each other. I was having trouble with *B. 'Lucerna'* until I read in an old **Begonian** that Tamsin Boardman placed hers outside in full Dallas sun where it thrived. So out '*Lucerna*' went to full sun, and in the process I learned I had been starving some of my canes for light. Write soon! In the meantime, I'll be using my survey results. Ed.

Joy Porter's Favorite *B. manicata* 'aureomaculata'

Forced to make a choice, Joy Porter of Framingham, MA selected *B. manicata* 'Aureomaculata' as her favorite. The accompanying photo taken at the Ft. Worth Botanic Gardens makes it easy to understand why. Joy says it always looks nice no matter what the circumstances. Her plant has even frozen and still come back.

'Aureomaculata' is but one of the vigorous *manicata* group. It is rhizomatous, rhizome erect, entire/subentire (large-leaved). Its flowers are soft pink and in the greenhouse it is one of the first rhizomes to begin blooming and keeps at it until late spring. This is one of the rhizome group that needs a period of long nights to initiate bloom. Mildred Thompson's *Begonias 1984 Update* lists this plant as moderate in bloom which I found true of plants in low light, but in a greenhouse mine bloomed lavishly and set seed easily. As are all *manicatas*, it is very easy to propagate from leaf wedges, whole leaves, or stem cuttings. The amount of variegation seems also to be light dependent, and I have never been able to develop or maintain the color amount or intensity of the plant shown here or of my own plants when I first bought them.

Like Joy, I love this plant, but then I've found I love every *B. manicata* variety or hybrid I try and only wish I might find the other varieties described by Rudy Ziesenhenné in this exhaustive article on this group in *The Begonian* of May/June 1988, page 84-89. There is disagreement on whether this plant is simply a cultivar of the species or a variety. Thompson lists it as a cultivar and the Smithsonian's *Begoniaceae* fails to list it as a species, but Rudy writes otherwise as you will see in the excerpt of his article on the next page. Because I have been unable to reproduce the variegation from seed of this plant or of 'Aureomaculata Crispa' (although I keep trying and waiting to see if older plants develop the variegation), I have been inclined to view it as a mutant cultivar.

Joy Porter's
Favorite
B. manicata
'Aureomaculata'
at the Ft.
Worth Species
Bank.



From *The Begonian*, May/June 1988, p. 87-88:

***Begonia manicata* Brongniart and Its Varieties** by Rudolph Ziesenhenn

...
Begonia manicata variety 'aureo-maculata' is a very striking begonia. The earliest article I can find on this plant is in Bulletin de la Societe d'Horticulture de Geneve, 1840, January, on Page 100. The article states that the plant was obtained from M. M. Roggero & Sons, Turin, Italy. This plant is like the *Begonia manicata* type except that the lettuce green leaves may be spotted, blotched or variegated with white to primrose yellow. The margin is pale rose. The flower stems and petioles are agathia green. The flowers are spinel pink. The inflorescence is spreading.

Begonia manicata variety 'aureo-maculata' has always been assumed to be a cultivar produced in the trade by Victor Lemoine (1823-1911), a French horticulturist who introduced many new cultivars of *Begonia* and *Fuchsia* as well as others. It has been variously called *Begonia manicata* variety 'alba', *Begonia manicata* variety 'aurea

variegata' and *Begonia manicata* variety 'maculata.' However, on August 12, 1979, Loran Whitelock of Los Angeles presented me with a plant he collected in the wilds near Palma Sola, Vera Cruz, Mexico, which as proven to be *Begonia manicata* variety 'Aureo-maculata.'

I asked Mr. Whitelock if it was possible that the plant could have escaped from cultivation. He assured me that there was not the slightest chance of that having happened. To corroborate the fact that *Begonia manicata* variety 'aureo-maculata' is really a plant found growing in the wild state, I found on page 154 of the Book Les Begonia by Adolphe van den Heede (1903) the following: "*Begonia manicata* 'aureo' variety is a natural variation introduced from Mexico by Victor Lemoine." No date is given. Since this is truly a wild plant, I name it botanically *Begonia manicata* variety *aureomaculata* Ziesenhenn, new variety.

Continued from Page 184.

While computers make the job easier, the production method doesn't matter. The content is what's important.

If your branch already has a good newsletter, take a moment and thank your editor. Better still, offer to do an article or a drawing, or help fold, address envelopes, or lick stamps.

If you lack a newsletter, let me encourage you to try a stint as editor. Try it at least for a year. There's no greater gift you can give your branch. Pack your newsletter full of branch and begonia information, and everyone will await it eagerly each month--nag enough, and you'll get other members to contribute articles. No, it's not an easy job, but it is rewarding: you'll know absolutely everything that's going on, for one thing, and you'll learn a lot about both begonias and writing. You may even have members of other branches sign up just for the newsletter--that's a real ego booster!

Tamsin Boardman edits Save Our Species, newsletter of the Adopt-A-Species for the Conservation Dept. She is a former editor of The Begonian, and has also edited newsletters for Southwest Region, Dallas Area Branch, and Mae Blanton Branch.

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	B. 'Darlene Morris'	95
	B. 'Down Home'	95
Don Miller	B. U176	96
	B. 'Wee Paws'	96
	B. 'Guy Savard'	97
	B. 'Don Miller'	95
	B. 'Black Fancy'	97

Lawrence Pope	B. 'Withla- coochee'	96
Estelle Sullivan	B. 'Peridot'	96
	B. <i>partita</i>	95

In The News

ABS Members

Bill Ash, England: On April 30, 1997 *The Times* of England ran an article on gold medal winners at the Royal Horticultural Society's flower show at Westminster. There featured was a lovely photo of *Begonia chlorosticta* and a lot of space was given to its exhibitor, ABS member Bill Ash. They described his exhibit of begonias and other tropical plants. Bill later shared photos of this exhibit with ABS members at Convention 1997.

Don Miller, Dallas: The *Dallas Morning News* on June 13, 1997 featured plant collectors on Page 1 of their *House & Garden* section. Don Miller was featured in color with his begonias in his greenhouse. His travels to Ecuador and Malaysia to collect begonias were recounted.

Begonias

Horticulture Magazine in its June/July issue featured begonias in a window box story. Instructions were given to prepare a window box containing three begonias: the species *B. luxurians*, the rhizome *B. 'Mintie Bryant'* (Frost), and Kit Jeans Mounger's hybrid *B. 'Velvet Jeans.'*

ABS & BRANCH NEWS

ABS NEWS

Morris Mueller is the new National Director for the **Sacramento Branch**. You may contact him at 163 Hartnell Place, Sacramento, CA, 95825-6609, (916) 927-4921.

Shelley Andros has resigned as Horticultural Correspondent and **Don Miller** has agreed to take on the job. Send him your questions to: 1010 Mt. Auburn, Dallas TX 75223 or call him at 214-823-1070.

Correct these errors in your Branch Directory: **Rubidoux Branch** no longer exists; remove from the list. The **Rocky Mountain Branch**, Colorado was omitted please add. **Andrew Conely** is President and can be reached at 4575 Elm Ct., Denver, CO 80211.

BRANCH NEWS

San Jacinto Branch, Houston, TX

Their August 12, 1997 program given by Charlsie Hancock called "The Journey of a New Begonia Enthusiast" detailed how this great veteran grower adjusted to the specialty growing of begonias in a very short time.

Westchester Branch, Los Angeles, CA

This Branch had a successful 1997 Show on July 19. Winning begonia trophies were Arlene Haskins for Cane with B. 'Lenore Oliver', Rhizomatous with B. 'Cathedral', and Rex; Janet Brown for Shrub with B. *echinosepala*, Thick-Stemmed with B. *cabrida*, and Begonia Collection; Eloise Colby for Novice with B. 'Carnation'; LaVerne Hanell for Arts/Crafts, Watercolor

with B. *pearcei*; Patricia McElderry for Hanging Container with B. 'Tom Ment'; Irene Nuss for Tuberous with B. 'Bumblebee'; Brad Thompson for Best in Show with B. *albo picta* and Novel Grown Begonia with B. 'Irene Nuss'; and Ossie Williams for Best Semperflorens.

Thirteen plants won Culture Awards for Janet Brown, LaVerne Hanell, Arlene Hoskins, Patricia McElderry, Irene Nuss, and Brad Thompson

The show also featured a spectacular tribute to Irene Nuss with an exhibit of her hybrid collection mounted by Jeanne Jones. This was a complete surprise to Irene. Tributes also came in from ABS President Ann Salisbury, Thelma & Tim O'Reilly, Rudy Ziesenhenne, Mike Kartuz and others.

Joy Blair gave a timely program at their August meeting on how to get plants bought at a show adjusted to a new home and off to a good start.

Please send your newsletters or news items to your new editor at:

Editor, The Begonian
P.O. Box 99
Ozone, AR 72854

Remember the November issue has to be at the printer around October 5 so September 20 has to be the closing date for receipt of items.

Items which tell about events earlier than November 1 are history (also important); November and December dates may serve to invite visitors. Please help me make The Begonian a timely publication.

The Pleasure of 'Surfing'

by Mildred Swyka

This rhizomatous begonia is keeping my interest in the rhizome species going strong. It is a hybrid of Misono registered in 1978, a cross of *B. manicata*

'Aureomaculata Crispa' x 'Bokit.' It does great in the terrarium. When it first bloomed, the blossoms were very small. The second year the blossoms were full size and it was so lovely. I decided not to put it outside in the greenhouse, but to keep it inside the house in my "everything" room. There are two

plants of it in the terrarium which they have not filled.

The leaf is fan shaped with heavy raised veins that go well up into the leaf. The veins are white and the edges of the leaf have a chocolate marking. The underside of the leaf has red markings.

I planted both plants in two and a half inch pots and put them in the "terri". In no time the roots grew into the terrarium soil so I didn't disturb them, but merely put soil over the pots.

It is certainly a conversation begonia and a pleasure to grow. It is now twice as



B. 'Surfing'

large as it is shown in this photo.

Mildred Swyka, Lulu Leonard, and Freda Holley (your new editor), left to right, in Lulu's garden during Convention 1997. Photo by Joyce Corrin, Mildred's daughter.





Lulu Leonard's Garden

Lulu Leonard's Garden was the favorite of four participants at Convention 1997. All photos are by Midori Nobusawa.

Pecan trees (above) provided the shade in Lulu's garden and what pecans trees they were.

Hanging baskets were everywhere and B. 'Sinbad' (top right) was a beauty; one like this garnered Lulu the award for best Shrub-Like, Distinctive Foliage at the show (It is Stewart's cross of B.U062 and B. *dipetalia*).



Lulu is as well known for her daylilies as for begonias. It is easy to see why (below right).

Lunch was served from the patio which gave us an opportunity to get up close and personal with more of those lovely hanging baskets.



You Can't Miss Atlanta!!

In this issue you read all about Convention '97 in Houston and would you believe that plans are well underway for the 1998 Convention to be held June 17-20 in Atlanta, GA. The Greater Atlanta Branch of ABS extends a warm invitation to all for a most enjoyable Begonia Convention. You will experience Southern Hospitality at its finest.

Kit Jeans Mounger is requesting members to send quilt blocks, either applique or patchwork that have begonias as their subject for a quilt that will be prepared to raffle off at the Convention. They prefer the background be a pale color; off-white, beige, pale yellow, green or whatever. The blocks should be twelve-and-a-half inches in size. Kit promises that everyone who submits a block will receive a free raffle ticket. Write to her or send your block to Kit Mounger, 485 Cottontail Lane, Afton, Tennessee 37616. The absolute deadline for the blocks is January 31, 1998 so the quilt can be completed in time.

A pre-convention trip to **Callaway Gardens** is being planned. One of the spectacular attractions is the **John A. Sibley Horticultural Center** featuring ever changing floral displays in a unique indoor/outdoor environment. The **Cecil B. Day Butterfly Center** there is the largest free-flight butterfly conservatory in North America. **Mr. Cason's Vegetable Garden**, the Southern location for the PBS series "**The Victory Garden**", flourishes seasonally. Since begonia fans love to eat, you will want to know Callaway Gardens has seven restaurants featuring all kinds of specialties. Shoppers can visit The Country Store and many other distinctive gift shops.

The headquarters and conference hotel of the Convention will be:

Atlanta-Decatur Holiday Inn

130 Clairmont Avenue

Decatur, Georgia 30030

(404) 371-0204

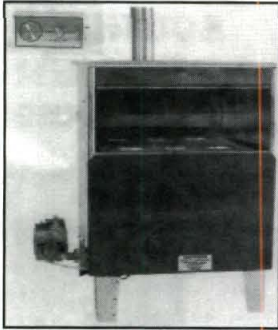
A special rate of \$73 single or double is being offered for ABS registrants.

On Friday there will be a tour of the **Atlanta Botanic Gardens** where you can see roses, herbs, summer bulbs, ornamental cultivars and more.

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P.O. Box 1598
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COMING EVENTS

- September 10, 1997 Westchester Branch (LA, CA) Birthday Pot Luck. Speaker Herb Wilkinson will present a slide show on his recent trip to Indonesia. For information contact Janet Brown at 310-670-4471.
- September 13, 1997 Orange County (CA) Fiesta at Mary & Eddie Sakamoto's Estate. Plant Sale & Boutique 2-4 pm. A Mexican Dinner, 4:30-6:30; tickets \$8. For information contact Mary Sakamoto at 714-633-6997.
- April 10-13, 1998 The Association of Australian Begonia Societies' Convention will be hosted by the New South Wales Begonia Society with seminars, tours, and a plant sale which will include many new begonias from Australian hybridizers. Contact Peter Sharp, Convention Secretary, at 2/238 Jersey Road, Woollahra, NSW 2025, Australia or phone 02-9327-3240.
- April 23-26, 1998 SWR Get-Together in Oklahoma City at the Embassy Suites Hotel, hosted by the Fred A. Barkley Branch. For information contact Linda Clemons at 3512 N.W. 65th Terrace, Oklahoma City, OK 73116 or phone 405-843-9016.
- June 17-20, 1988 ABS Convention in Atlanta, GA hosted by the Greater Atlanta Branch at the Atlanta-Decatur Holiday Inn. Contact Show Chairperson Mary Elizabeth Moultrie at 3710 Cochise Drive, Atlanta, GA 30339 or call 770-436-5932.

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.

Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund

Seeks donations of seed and photos of plants grown from Seed Fund Seed.

Slide Library

Requests individual slides of begonias as well as complete slide programs.

ABS Elected Officers

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P.O. Box 69, Bluff Dale, TX 76433
(254) 728-3485

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P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653

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Awards.....Michael Ludwig
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Ballot Counting.....Ingeborg Foo
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Book Store.....Betty Benningfield
P.O. Box 969, Anahuac, TX 77513

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, Bluf Dale, TX 76433

Convention Advisor.....Tom Keepin,
4513 Randwick Dr., Houston, TX 77092

Convention Chair.....Mary Elizabeth
Ioultrie, 3710 Cochise Dr., Atlanta, GA
30339

Horticultural Correspondent....Don Miller
1010 Mt. Auburn, Dallas, Texas, 75223

Judging.....Maxine Zinman
R.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 Karegeannes
3916 Lake Blvd. Annandale, VA 22003

Parliamentarian....Margaret Lee
1852 31st 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 Calkins, 910
Fern St., Escondido, CA 92027-1708

Slide Library.....Charles Jaros
200 Maureen Dr., Sanford, FL 32771

BEGONIAN STAFF

Editor: Freda Holley, P.O. Box 99,
Ozone, AR 72854, (501) 292-3755

Nomenclature Editor: Jack Golding,
33 Ingram Drive, Cranbury, NJ 08512-
4641

Advertising Staff

Display Ads: Ann Salisbury, P.O. Box
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(405) 628-5230

Plant Society Ads: Wanda Macnair,
177 Hancock St., Cambridge, MA
02139

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