

*The*  
**Begonian**

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# *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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## Cover

**Front:** In Australia, they hybridize all kinds, including tuberous. This is B. 'Maplewood' which is on **Philip Wright's** list of his favorite hybrids. See the article beginning on page 164.

**Back:** Just a sample of what will be seen on the garden tours in Los Angeles in September. This is B. 'Tangier' grown and photographed by **Bob Golden** and **Iris Bird**. **Mike Kartuz**, the hybridizer, says he threw lots of pollen including that from B. 'Coral Chimes' at B. 'Tiny Gem' and planted lots of seed, but B. 'Tangier' was the only one of its seeds ever to germinate.

# In This Issue

## Begonias: They're International!

Around the world, there are those who love and grow begonias. We are not many, but what we lack in numbers we make up for in our passion and dedication. When we in the U.S. think of begonias in other countries, we often think of them in their native lands - in Brazil or Mexico or Malaysia. In this issue, however, we glimpse a bit of that zeal in just a few of the other countries of the world where begonias are not native. From those who hybridize in Australia to those who preserve species in France or to the individual grower in Romania or in other countries not mentioned here, we are all bound by our common love affair with begonias.

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## Quick

Check your mailing label. If it reads

**199911 or 199912**, your membership is about to expire. Please renew! We don't want to lose you.

## *President's Notes...*

We were so pleased to show the begonia world the Fort Worth Botanic Garden during the SWR Get-Together in May. The newsletters we've received since then have indicated many pleasures in getting to the Get-Together and to the Botanic Garden itself. Yes, 'tis a lovely creature in all its aspects.

I've been pleased to do a series about the sculptures in the FWBG and a recent assignment by my roommate, the FWB Society *Redbud* newsletter editor, was to do the Japanese Garden. There is oh, so much research that can be done. I've delved into the Garden library, interviewed the head gardener, taken walks through the place along and amidst crowds, in sunshine and in rain, and joy of joys, listened to a tape of the late K. Mose Fadeem about Japanese gardens in his radio series, *The Fanatic Gardener*. Using some of Mose' expressed feelings: much of what is written about 'how to do a proper Japanese garden' is drivel. Rather, one must do what pleases the senses with the plants, stones, and space that one has available.

One of my daily home chores is to keep the water wall in the big greenhouse flowing, and the smaller 'swamp' cooler in the little greenhouse steadily dripping on all three sides. I have, at last, gotten to the point that I pause when passing through each of them to give Tam's plants a look see: a pleasuring of my senses, if you will. Too often, my male tunnel vision of 'getting the job done' robs me of some very fine and beautiful moments. Tam has never forgiven me for not coming to the edge of a cliff in South Australia to watch 150 black swans alighting in a lagoon below the cliff - I had the tent to put up before it got too dark! I'm learning, ever so slowly.

I've mentioned the newsletters that I've been getting (and thoroughly enjoying). Please, editors, start to send your next letters to the new president. Freda is holding a small space in this Begonian to tell us how the elections were settled. All of you, please, jump in and support the new officers' efforts to make our Society the very best it can be!

~Bruce C. Boardman

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## **ABS 1999 Election Results**

Ingeborg Foo, Ballot Counting Chairman, reports that there were 177 ballots cast in the ABS 1999 Election and the following are the newly elected officers:

**President: Charles Jaros**

**1st Vice President:  
Morris Mueller**

**2nd Vice President:  
Howard Berg**

**3rd Vice President:  
Helen Spiers**

**Secretary: Richard Macnair**

**Treasurer: Carol Notaras**

Congratulations to our new officers and best wishes from all ABS members.



## Hybridising Down Under

by Ross Bolwell

It has been relatively difficult to obtain the latest overseas hybrids in Australia. This is because of our tough and costly quarantine procedures. We cannot import plants with soil or peat on the roots and all of our imports are subjected to methyl bromide treatment. This also includes cutting material such as leaves and stems. If the plants survive this, they are then kept in quarantine glasshouses for 3 months with inspections on entry and exit for disease or pest problems. This "service" is charged for at "user pays" rates. Plants eventually introduced this way can cost the importer hundreds of dollars. The only other option is to bring them in as tissue cultures which is allowed after an initial inspection. Because such new hybrids are rarely in tissue culture few have entered Australia in this way.

This has been a major factor in the growth of hybridising here. We see and hear about wonderful new cultivars particularly in the USA and Japan and seek to emulate that in Australia. There have been many beautiful new Australian hybrids over the years with many wonderful hybridists producing them. This article will concentrate on four Aussie hybridists of more recent times. Each was asked a series of questions and their answers form the basis of this article. Lyla Kilpatrick has been hybridising for about 15 years and is based in Western Australia. Lyla originally began hybridising because there were so very few varieties in the west. John Clare has a keen interest in bego-

*Lyla Kilpatrick's B. 'Alice Faye', below, is one Aussie hybrid that has been glimpsed at ABS sales in the U.S. Photo is by Tony Watts.*



nias and began hybridising about 10 years ago after ceasing full time work. John lives in Queensland. Philip Wright practices his hybridising techniques in Victoria. Philip was persuaded to try raising new varieties from seed and has been growing begonias since the early 1970's. Ross Bolwell has a wholesale nursery in New South Wales (NSW) and has been growing begonias for 30 years. Slowly the wholesale side of this business has made way to concentration on retailing begonias via mail order.

### **Lila Kilpatrick**

Lyla now produces new varieties for the joy it gives her and the chance that it might just produce a worthwhile new plant. She does not look for any particular characteristics, just different and very beautiful plants. This is clear from the magnificent plants we now have because of her efforts. She has concentrated mainly on rhizomatous and cane-like varieties. Lyla's favorite begonia parent plants are B. 'Lenore Olivier' and B. 'Baby Dress'. She cites the reasons for using these plants because they "bloom over a longer period than many begonias and are so available. They are also very 'willing' and usually produce attractive, strong hybrids." Lyla had some difficulty when asked what her favourite begonia hybrid was, finally deciding that B. 'John Tonkin' must be near the top. "It has large dark glossy leaves with huge umbels of pearly pink blossom. It is a strong grower producing many basal shoots, grows to medium height so doesn't require as much staking as some and is fairly resistant to mildew." Lyla's most recent interest is in the Hiemalis group of begonias.

Lyla's top ten hybrids: **B. 'John Tonkin'** (B. 'Lenore Olivier' x B. *radicans*); **B. 'Kimbrook'** (B.

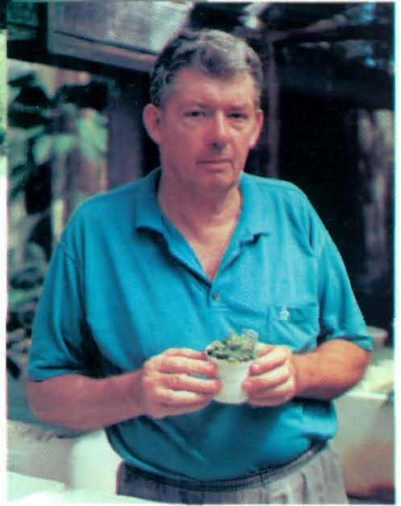
*heracleifolia* x B. 'Locheil'); **B. 'Alice Faye'** (B. 'Lenore Olivier' x B. *hydrocotylifolia*); **B. 'Gecko'** (B. 'Baby Dress' x B. 'Kimbrook'); **B. 'Sunrise'** (B. 'Gecko' x B. 'Baby Dress'); **B. 'Choclit'** (B. 'Whirlwind' x B. 'Baby Dress'); **B. 'Bright Eyes'** (B. 'Red Doll' x B. 'Libby Lee'); **B. 'Jester'** (B. 'Orange Pinafore' x B. *dregei*); **B. 'Whispers'** (B. 'Baby Dress' x B. 'Silver Jewell'); **B. 'Donna'** (B. 'Lenore Olivier' x B. *maculata* var. *wightii*.)

### **John Clare**

John has over 100 named hybrids in circulation and has mainly worked with rhizomatous begonias. He has produced a few thick stem types and more recently has turned his attention to cane varieties. John looks for good leaf colour, shape and a compact habit. He also wants plants that are free flowering which provides more opportunities for hybridising. Vigorous growth is another requirement John seeks in his breeding parents. He finds it "interesting to watch plants you have picked out change colour and leaf shape with every new leaf." John cited several parents he uses most, but did explain that he changes parents every year or so to avoid too many look alikes. Some of these parents are B. 'Morning Mist', B. 'Bedford Delight', B. 'Sisquoc', B. 'Star Gazer', B. 'Tiapan', B. 'Dragon Wing', B. 'Griselda', B. *lindleyana* and B. *wollnyi*.

John didn't nominate his favourite hybrid, but his top ten are: **B. 'Crystal Brook'** (B. 'Woodgate Delight' X B. 'Bedford Delight'); **B. 'Caralan's Pride'** (B. 'Morning Mist' x B. *lindleyana*); **B. 'Burgundy Dream'** (B. 'San Bernardino' x B. Unnamed Yorke Hybrid); **B. 'White Wash'** (B. 'Morning Mist' x B. *wollnyi*); **B. 'New Party Girl'** (B. 'Star Gazer' x B. *manicata* var. *aureo-maculata*);





*John Clare, right, has chiefly specialized in rhizomatous begonias bringing to his hybrids colour, vigorous growth, and compact habit. Above, B. 'White Wash'; below, B. 'Tu-Tu', 'Crystal Brook', and 'Purple Magic'. Plant photos by John Clare.*



**B. 'Daintree Delight'** (B. 'Woodgate Delight' x B. 'Bedford Delight'); **B. 'Paringa'** (B. *glandulosa* x B. 'Bedford Delight'); **B. 'Annie Eggert'** (B. *popenoei* x B. 'Tiapan'); **B. 'Little Iodine'** (B. *glandulosa* x B. 'Baloo'); **B. 'Lota Rose'** (B. 'Dragon Wing' x B. 'Griselda').

### *Philip Wright*

Philip is a foundation member of the Victorian Begonia Society and has a keen interest in hybridising tuberous begonias. This stemmed from his first attempt at growing these beauties from seed. Philip has stuck to a long term plan which was "to increase the range of yellow hybrids, salmon reds, and introduce more general vigour, health, stronger stems and flowers to hybrids that would cope with the higher temperatures we experience in the summer." This of course required a good deal of research into the breeding background of the parent varieties. More recently Philip has been working to introduce more perfumed types by crossing seedlings obtained from Howard Seibold in the USA with other named clones in his collection. Philip's work with yellows continues. Philip says hybridising "can cause some heartache, but more often than not you obtain rewards if you select your parents carefully, and also your seedlings...patience is a necessity." Some of Philip's hybrids are: **B. 'Carolyn Dawn'** (Flushed yellow apricot, an unusual colour.); **B. 'Penelope'** (Soft primose yellow with many petals, pendula.); **B. 'Beulah Powell'** (A rich yellow.); **B. 'John Henderson'** (Yellow hybrid with multi wavy petals.); **B. '219'** (Rose formed soft pink); **B. 'Jim Curtis'** (Strong upright salmon red.); **B. 'Bronwen Huxtable'** (Very strong, crimson red); **B. '401'** (Wavy salmon red.);

**B. '415'** (Large salmon red.); **B. 'Maplewood'** (Cyclamen pink with white reverse picotee.)

### *Ross Bolwell*

Ross has been hybridising begonias since 1981. He specialises in rexes and canes, but has produced some rhizomatous, shrub and trailing hybrids. Driven by his commercial need for new varieties he has introduced hundreds of rex cultivars. Cane begonias are his primary interest. Ross wants to produce disease resistant, compact growing, free branching, free flowering canes that have large flowers and fragrance. A good strong growing yellow flowering cane is one particular aim. He also likes to produce primary hybrids from different species and one of these vigorous plants was named after him by members of the NSW Begonia Society. B. 'Ross Bolwell' is a hybrid from B. *carolineifolia* x B. *thiemei*. Ross has many favourite hybrids, but his choice for overall favourite is B. 'Annan Belle' an unusual cross with flowers in a beautiful shade of burnt orange-apricot. Unfortunately this plant appears to be sterile.

Ross's top ten hybrids are: **B. 'Annan Belle'** (B. *micranthera* var. *venturii* x B. *carrieae*); **B. 'Flamingo Queen'** (B. U078 x B. 'Lenore Olivier'); **B. 'White Cascade'** (B. U078 x B. 'Lenore Olivier'); **B. 'Vamigo'** (B. 'Red Amigo' seedling.); **B. 'Pink Kiss'** (B. 'Orpha C. Fox' x B. 'Lenore Olivier'); **B. 'Red Dragon'** (B. *kenworthyae* x B. *carrieae*); **B. 'Starry Night'** (B. U078 x B. 'Lenore Olivier'); **B. 'Tribute'** (B. 'Orpha C. Fox' x B. Lenore Olivier); **B. 'Rosie'** (B. 'Christine B' x B. 'Lenore Olivier'); **B. 'Think Pink'** (B. 'Pink Surprise' x B. *carrieae*).





*The color in Philip Wright's B. 'Carolyn Dawn', above left, B. 'John Henderson', above right, and B. '219' evidence his work with pastel colors and greater heat resistance in tuberosus begonias. Many in the U.S. know Ross Bolwell for his canes, particularly B. 'Flamingo Queen', but the unique B. "Think Pink" below is also his.*



# 1998: A Year to Remember in Scotland

by H.D. McLauchlan

1998 has come and gone and I'm sure many people are glad of that, but I have to say that for the Scottish Begonia Society (SBS) 1998 will long be remembered as a specially good year. SBS staged exhibits at all three major horticultural events held here in Scotland, the first of these being "The Chelsea of the North" in Strathclyde Park in the last week of May, staged by the Royal Horticultural Society. This was a three day show and was a tremendous success, many of the exhibitors at the Chelsea Show coming up to take part.

The Scottish Begonia Society exhibit was a 30 ft. stand and consisted of over 200 begonias including a collection of very fine specimens of named tuberous begonias and a collection of cane stem, shrublike, rhizomatous, and symbegonias. There were also terrariums showing propagation by leaf and stem cuttings and a number of rare begonias from the rain forests of the world including *B. versicolor*, *B. amphioxus*, *B. malachosticta*, *B. chlorosticta*, *B. brevirimosa*, and *Symbegonia sanguinea*, U012, and B24, and to our great delight we were awarded a gold medal.

Our second major show was The Royal Highland Show, Edinburgh, 25-27 June and, here again, our display was awarded a Gold Medal, and finally at the Ayr Flower Show, 27-29 August, the venue for our annual show, we were awarded our third Gold Medal.

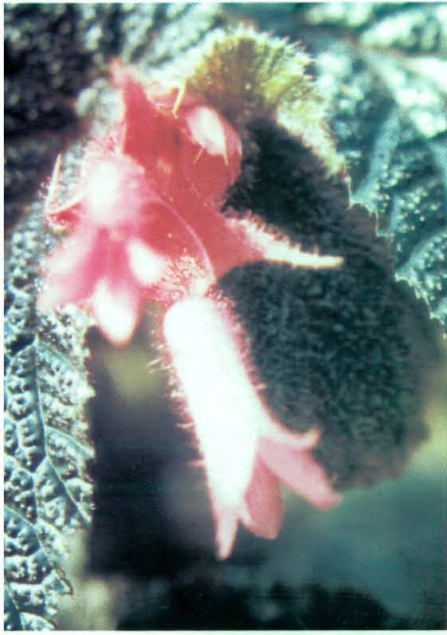
The Glasgow Botanic Garden also staged a very nice collection of begonia species in a natural rain forest setting at the Chelsea of the North show which also included symbegonias and *Symbegonia*

U012 which we have had since 1991. As far as I am aware it has never been known to flower anywhere before; it finally decided to reveal itself, a beautiful white bell shaped flower between dark green leaves with a very attractive pink picotee edge.

What an exciting moment that was; its timing could not have been better. This was first seen by John Stevenson, Glasgow Botanic Garden propagator, while unpacking their plants prior to staging them. This is a begonia I gave to Glasgow Botanic Gardens after propagation in 1992 and until now we had almost given up hope of every seeing it in flower.

*What a year for Scotland and the SBS! Look for H. D. McLauchlan in Los Angeles in September and after asking him about those Gold Medals, inquire about an article entitled "Beguiled by Begonias" in the June 1998 Scottish Field magazine. From this, the editor learned that Hugh is a vice president of the SBS, honorary president of the Bishopbriggs Horticultural Society, and as we know, a member of ABS. Hugh has traveled all over in the pursuit of his begonia passion including the rain forests of San Juan in the Caribbean, Australia, and in the six months previous to the article, Tenerife, Cyprus, China, Japan, and Korea. And from the photos with the article, it was evident that not only does Hugh grow the magnificent begonias such as those mentioned here, he also grows the most gorgeous Rexes you are likely to see anywhere. You may write him at 29 Tofthill Ave., Bishopbriggs, Glasgow, G043PB Scotland, U.K. ~ Editor*





Left, is *Symbegonia sanguinea* in bloom and just below is, the rare bloom on *Symbegonia* U012. Below that, *B. chlorosticta* really stands out in the Scottish Begonia Society exhibit at the "Chelsea of the North." Photos by H.D. McLaughlin.



## The French Begonia Society

by Wallace Wagner

Since my son and daughter-in-law speak and write French fluently, I decided to write to members of the French Begonia Society (AFABEGO) and solicit information about what begonias they grow and how they grow them. This article contains excerpts from those letters.

Dominique Permingeat has been a member of AFABEGO from its creation and has been the editor of their newsletter, *The Begofil*, for the past two years. He has been an ABS member since 1992.

Begonia fans in France would love to be able to get plants from the U.S., but in France it is difficult to receive plants from other countries since customs keep the plants for two or three weeks in their office. By the time the recipient gets the plants they are all mush.

Fortunately, they have in France an important collection of begonias in the Conservatoire du Begonia of Rochefort. Patrick Rose, its conservator, receives seeds from all over the world. Sometimes travelers bring him new begonias that they have found on their trips. Dominique also gets some begonias from Henri Laporte, who travels to Madagascar to collect new species of begonias.

Two years ago, in France there was only one nursery that sold begonias. Now, Dominique and a friend have created a new nursery that specializes in rare plants and have decided to add begonias to their offerings. They have a catalog and sell by mail.

Members in the AFABEGO range in age from young to old, men and women. Several members have more than 300 different plants in their collections.

Some have terrariums that they build themselves. Henri Laporte has a hexagonal greenhouse that he built himself. He heats it with an electric cable in the soil in the winter.

Except in a small part of France, near Italy, they have to heat their begonias in the winter. Heating systems vary widely, depending if the greenhouse is attached to the house. In the north and central parts of France temperatures can be under -20 degrees Celsius in the winter and it is necessary to heat plants all the time during the five cold months. For those who live in the South of France they heat their begonias only during the night from about November 15th to March 15th. During a few days it is necessary to heat all day and night. From May to the end of October, Dominique puts his begonias outside under the shadow of his bamboo.

*Below is information on begonias in France by Patrick Rose, curator of the Conservatory of Begonia Rochefort, France, and translated from the French by Samuelle Wagner, daughter-in-law of Wally Wagner.*

Begonias in France date back to the 17th century. At that time France had almost no marine fleet. King Louis XIV wanted to make Rochefort the most beautiful arsenal of the times. Micheal Begon was put in charge of the creation of the city and the harbor. He wrote to collectors and scientists of the entire world, especially the French colonies of the West Indies and the French islands of the Americas where he served in 1682.

Begon sent 2 scientists, Father Plumier and Dr. Surian, to study the West India Flora. In 1689, Father Plumier described a little plant



with succulent leaves and round flowers that he named "Begonia rosea flore, folio orbiculare" in honor of his renowned protector, Michel Begon.

For the next 3 centuries, Rochefort was in the lead of great marine expeditions, satisfying the desire for exotic plants from the corners of the world. Rochefort became a genuine platform for ethnobotany.

Today, the City of Rochefort and the Conservatory of Begonia carry on the work of Michel Begon, seeking to increase its large collection of begonias.

For many years France lost interest in the species begonia, except for Vincent Millerioux, who continued to collect begonias during the 'dry period' of interest in begonias. The Conservatory of Begonia was created in 1988 after the city of Rochefort bought the collection of Millerioux when he retired.

The Conservatory that houses the collection is over 1000 square meters in size. It is not a general collection of begonias but rather safeguards and studies the less known and forgotten begonias: African miniatures, South American giants, small yellow-flowered begonias from Gabon, thick-leafed begonias from Mexico, and genuine jewels from the Indo-Malaysian peninsula. The Conservatory houses the largest begonia collection in Europe. They are constantly searching for new species, particularly, to add to their collection.

Famous horticulturists and botanists from around the world come to Rochefort to the Conservatory to study and discover begonias. Rochefort begonias are sold in "Ton-tines", wicker baskets patterned after 18th century prints.

*Following are excerpts from a booklet from the Conservatoire du Begonia, 1, Rue Charles Plumier, 17 300 Rochefort, written by Patrick Rose, Curator. It is condensed and edited by Wally Wagner.*

## **Conservatoire Du Begonia**

### **Chapter One - The Collection**

Rochefort, France's Begonia collection of more than 1300 begonias includes

400 species and 900 hybrids. It was designated as a National Collection by the C.C.V.S. (Specialized Vegetable Collections Conservatory). The begonias are kept, cultivated, propagated, and tested in a 1000 sq. meter<sup>1</sup> greenhouse-conservatory established in November 1988 in the Municipal Horticulture area.

The begonia collection was purchased in April 1986 from a long-time collector, Vincent Millerioux, horticulturist in Presles, a suburb of Paris, Mr. Millerioux became interested in begonias at the beginning of the 1960's. Initially, he grew Rex Cultorum begonias. He then discovered the variety of begonias from around the world and began to import species from collectors. By 1986, when he decided to retire and sell his begonia collection, he had collected more than 200 species and hybrid begonias.

Since 1986, donations, purchases, and exchanges have added more than 1000 new plants to the collection. Many begonias were imported from the rainforests in Sumatra, China, and Guinea, especially from the expeditions of Professor Francis Halle in 1988 and 1990, and the 'Le Radeau des Cimes' expedition in 1990 in South American and in 1991 in Cameroon.

### **Chapter Two - The Charter**

The genus Begonia includes around 1550 botanical begonias (species, subspecies, and forms and varieties of species). The number of hybrids is around 15,000! That's why begonia is one of the most important genres of the vegetable kingdom. Only orchids and some composites flatter themselves with such diversity. Begonias are also fascinating because they come in so many forms, mimicking other plants

<sup>1</sup>Approximately 10,764 sq. ft., ed.

such as palms, lilies, orchids, and other genus. They are uniquely begonias because of their flowers and seedpods.

We make a distinction between botanical begonias and cultivars or hybrids. Botanical begonias grow under their own shape in their original environments (tropics, rainforests, mountains, open environments). They come relatively true from seed.

Hybrids are the results of cross-pollinating two begonias or are genetically mutations. The earliest known hybrid, *B. Erythrophylla*, was created in 1849 by crossing two species (*B. hydrocotylifolia* Hooker with *B. manicata* Brongniart).

Rochefort's Conservatory includes few traditional begonias. Instead, it presents the unknown, the forgotten, the newly discovered begonias. The collection includes African miniatures (about 5 centimeters)<sup>2</sup>, South American giants (about 5 meters high and wide)<sup>3</sup>, small yellow blooms from Gabon, huge hanging clusters of pink blossoms of 19th century cane-like hybrids, thick foliage from Mexico, and colored jewels from the Indo-Malayan peninsula. It's a real showcase of the tropical ecology, even for the most experienced horticulturist and for the most famous botanists who come to discover and study the diversity of the genus. The plants grow in total liberty, as they like.

One of the main purposes of the Conservatory is to grow successfully unknown or forgotten begonias, which have been replaced by plants that present ease and rapidity of growth.

Since 1987 efforts at the Conservatory have been concentrated on (1) observation of the collection, (2) testing and (3) selection of species and hybrids which are most suitable for high productivity.

*Approximately 2 inches, ed.  
Approximately 16.4 ft., ed.*

Also studied are (1) nutrition and how to recognize deficiency symptoms, and (2) the influence of pruning on behavior.

The first necessity is to try to acclimatize the new plant. Most of the time the botanical species arrive without precise indications concerning their biotype (environment in which they live in the wild). For the hybrids, you have to determine their difficulty of growing conditions.

### Chapter Three - The Explorers

The Conservatoire Du Begonia collection honors two men, Michael Begon and Charles Plumier.

Michel Begon was administrator under France's King Louis XIV. Begon was born in Blois, France in 1638. He was successively Administrator in Brest, Toulon, Le Havre in the West Indies, Administrator of the Marseill's Galleys, and finally Administrator of Rochefort from September 1688 until his death, March 4, 1710.

In 1682 Rochefort consisted of timber framed houses where workers of the Arsenal lived. During the next 22 years, Begon built the town in "stones" with perfectly straight streets as it exists today. Begon's epitaph on his gravestone reads "Hanc nascentem urbem ligueam invenit, lapideam reliquit" (He found the town in wood and left it in stones).

Beyond his architectural skills, Begon had a curious mind and thus corresponded with several scientists. In 1688, as requested by Louis XIVth, he organized an expedition to the West Indies. Participants included a doctor, Francois Joseph Donat Surian and Charles Plumier, a Franciscan and Minik monk, a botanist, and an artist. Plumier discovered six small herbaceous plants of similar struc-



ture. He studied them, discovered they were the same species, and named them "Begonia" in honor of his benefactor Begon. Plumier drew and described the plants, but most likely did not bring back any plants, roots, or seeds.

In 1693, after a second expedition, he published a book on the "American Plants" where he presented 106 new genera. He earned the title of Royal Botanist. In 1697, he made a third expedition to the Americas, and died in 1704, on the eve of a fourth expedition.

The first printed descriptions of the six begonias discovered by Plumier appeared in Tournefort's "Institutiones Rei Herbariae" published in Paris in 1700.

#### Chapter Four -Origin of the Begonias

The genus Begonia belongs to a family that covers all the tropical areas of the globe except Australia.

America is the most represented continent; first because it is where we can find more than half of the discovered botanical begonias in the world and secondly because it was explored earlier and more often than the other continents.

The Conservatoire Du Begonia collections contains a lot of begonias from Central America and especially Mexico. Generally those begonias are (a) Low, creeping and weakly erect such as *B. carolineifolia*, (b) Thick stems such as *B. lindleyana*, (c) Swollen stems such as *B. crassicaulis*, (d) large green leaves such as *B. conchifolia*, (e) small colored leaves such as *B. conchifolia* var. *rubrimacula*, or (f) more or less deeply denticulate leaves such as those on *B. heracleifolia*.

Brazil is also well represented with several plants from the Atlantic Forest on the east coast called "Mata Atlantica", Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, the Serra dos Orgaos, The Serra do Mar. None, so far,

are from the Amazon region as one might expect.

A few are from the temperate areas of Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile where we find the ancestors of our present day tuberous begonias.

Asia is also represented with the temperate China species *B. grandis*, which grows at an altitude of 3400 meters<sup>4</sup> and can suffer winters of -30 degrees Celsius. *B. rex* comes from Assam in the Himalayas. *B. malabarica* and *B. dipetala* come from Bombay, India.

The Indo-Malayan peninsula, Borneo, Sumatra, Malaya, and New Guinea have blessed us with many exotic begonias with very colorful foliage such as *B. deliciosa*, *B. rajah*, *B. goegoensis*, *B. decora*, *B. breviromosa*, and *B. serratifolia*.

<sup>4</sup>Approx. 11,154 ft., ed.

Wally Wagner carries on his correspondence with France from 4560 39th Ave. NE, Salem, OR 97305 or Email him at [wwwno1@earthlink.net](mailto:wwwno1@earthlink.net)

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## Adrian Popa

Aleea Episcop Popeea, 27, B, 2  
2212 Sacele Brasov, Romania

Dear Sir,

My name is Adrian Popa and I have the same hobby as you and that is the study, the collecting and the cultivation of foliage and flowering Begonias.

Because I have very little information about begonias from your country (most of literature is from Western Europe), I'm addressing you with the request to send me some literature on this subject if you can. I'm also interested in other information about begonias like photos of different species, and varieties, addresses of associations or institutions involved in begonia study, etc. I will be very happy if you can send me a number of your journal 'The Begonian'.

Thank you for your attention.

Best regards,  
Adrian Popa

*Last year, Tom Keepin of the San Jacinto Branch in Houston received this letter. He is not sure how Adrian Popa received his address. You will note this month that Adrian has donated seed to the Seed Fund. Why not write Adrian and learn more about begonias in a part of the world we rarely hear from. Below is Adrian Popa's photo of some of the begonias in his collection. Wouldn't we like to know what that apparent thick-stemmed begonia with a peltate leaf is on the back row?*





# About Begonias in the Netherlands

by Beatrice Huckriede

At this moment the universities in the Netherlands have no special begonia collection. Apart from them, there is, as far as I know, only one firm in the Netherlands that is engaged with improvement and research of begonias: AGRION bv, Aalsmeerderweg 300-A, 1432 CX AALSMEER, The Netherlands. Occasionally you come across begonias in garden centers.

Because of the climate, in summer the temperatures vary from 15-30 degrees Celsius, a small number of begonias can be grown outside such as cane-like and some rhizomatous begonias, only in the period from June until September. The results are beautifully coloured leaves and sturdy plants.

The Begonia Werkgroep Nederland, that counts only a few members is taking care of about 40 hybrids and 80 species in the course of about 20 years. We've got a lot of support from the University of Agriculture in Wageningen, especially from

Prof. J. Doorenbos who is now retired, but still active. The ABS is of great help too.

I am not acquainted with individual nurserymen of begonias. I am growing plants in greenhouses. The winter temperature there is 15 degrees Celsius. I try to enlarge and maintain the collection by seeding. The seeds are ordered from the ABS seed fund, the Canterbury Begonia Circle and a lot of begonia-freaks all over the world. My results of pollinating are sent to them in return.

*Beatrice Huckriede reports to us from Gaelstraat 9, 2291 SG Wateringen, the Netherlands. You can Email her at BeWE.Huckriede@Inter.NL.net. Although Dr. J. Doorenbos, who has done so much for ABS over the years, is retired, he has just managed to co-author the book The Sections of Begonia (Wageningen Agricultural University Papers 98.2) 266 pp., 52 line figures. ISBN 90-5782-007-2) which can be purchased in softcover in the U.S. from Balogh Scientific Books, 1911 N. Duncan Rd., Champaign, Illinois 61822 USA (balogh@balogh.com or <http://www.balogh.com>) for \$79. plus \$5. surface shipping) .*

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## A Tuberous Begonia

*From Harry Colclough, 82 Penwill Way, Devon TQ45JQ, comes this:*

I was giving one of my talks to a group in a small Devon village...just a group of villagers. After the talk amongst the questions came: "Can I cut my large begonia tubers?" asked one gentleman..A box was produced and from it was taken the largest begonia tuber that I have ever seen in my life. I fortunately had my camera with me to record the occasion. The tuber was 14" long and 10" wide - 7" deep and it sprouted over 10 shoots.

The tuber weighed in at just over 11 lbs and it was in perfect condition just waiting to be planted. I was assured by its owner that it was entering in its fourth year and that it was purchased at a local garden centre for 40p. I was also informed that there was another at home a little smaller weighing in at 10 lbs. 3 oz. They are grown outside in large tubs of soilless compost and they are a sight to behold when they are in flower.

*Harry says he will photograph them during the season. Will you share your photographs of this horticultural wonder with our U.S. readers, Harry?*

From the Bulletin  
National Begonia  
England

## Begonias in New Zealand

by Mike Stevens

New Zealand is a small mountainous country of approximately 3.5 million people and consists of two main islands whose combined size is very close to that of Colorado. It is situated in the southern Pacific Ocean, has a temperate climate ranging from cool in the south to semi-tropical in the north.

Although begonias of all types have been grown here for many years, it was only fifteen years ago that the first organised group was formed in the province of Canterbury in the South Island, specialising mainly in the large flowered tuberous types most suited to the climate there. More recently interest in all types of begonias has developed throughout the country and particularly with regard to species in the warmer regions of the North Island where about two thirds of the population reside.

Six years ago the Canterbury group launched a magazine in which the main focus is tuberous begonia which is now

read by growers not only in New Zealand, but also in Australia, England, Scotland, the USA, Canada, Holland, and Japan. As a direct result of the launch of *Begonia News* a number of groups of growers have sprung up all over New Zealand, all linked together by this magazine; however, as yet, there is no formal New Zealand society.

Also associated with the magazine is our own website ([Http://Gateway.to/begonias](http://Gateway.to/begonias)) which has been in existence for the past twelve months. This like the magazine, has helped spread knowledge about begonias and stimulated friendships internationally from the shared love of the plants.

*Mike is editor of the Canterbury News to which U.S. readers may subscribe for one year (4 issues) by sending a U.S. check for \$10. to Mike Stevens at 47 burnside Crescent, Christchurch 8005, New Zealand. The tuberous begonia is covered in depth there. You also may E-mail Mike for more information: (m.i.stevens@extra.co.nz).*

Report from Sweden

## Growing Begonias in Sweden

by Ann-Sophie Asplind

The greatest difficulty in growing begonias in Sweden is the difficulty in getting them. There is no society and there are no commercial growers of begonias. Ordering them from commercial growers in other countries is very dissatisfying. One friend waited for her order for over a year. I know of only one USA grower who always does as he promises in sending orders. In the ABS Members at Large group there is a swap and trade list, but we cannot be on it even though we could pay the cost of shipping. I think

it is bad that we can be a member of ABS, but not participate in some services even though we can pay for them.

There is a big general flower show here in the middle of August in Uppsala. It is a very long drive from where we live in the north. I promised to show begonias with the hopes that we might start a begonia society in Sweden. But I have so few begonias to show that we will not gain a lot of interest. I am aware of only one other person, my friend, who grows begonias in Sweden.



All begonias can be grown in Sweden if one can provide the stuff to take care of them. All begonias are grown in my greenhouse with double plastic. It is heated in the winter. In the summer I have blinds half open and I have to open the door most every day. I have many fine things to take care of including seeds and cuttings. I have grown mostly canes, but now I am trying to grow rhizomatous begonias, but the problem again is in getting starts. I order such things as seakelp,

fish emulsion, and other things from the U.K.

I love these wonderful begonias and all the fine friends I have made after I started with growing them.

*Sophie would love to hear from others and if you send her cuttings, she is very good about repaying shipping costs promptly. You can write her at : Via Tunhem Fristorp 4718 Trollhattan, 461 93, Sweden.*

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## Growing Organic

### or, Winning the War

by Tamsin Boardman

It's war! You are the general, in charge of strategy and choice of weapons.

There are plenty of weapons. Some, easily available, heavily advertised, and pushed by lobbyists, promise TOTAL KILL! But there's a catch: only 10% of the dead will be the enemy; 90% will be your own troops and innocent civilians. You yourself could be a victim. Do you go for the kill? Given the facts, most of us would not.

The analogy of course is to begonias: apply the odds to horticulture. Most pesticides are non-selective, killing any insect in range - although only 10% of insects are harmful. The kill travels up the food chain, poisoning birds, lizards, frogs and toads, fish that eat the insects, then poisoning the larger animals that eat the birds, lizards, amphibians, fish. We generals suffer too from touching, breathing, eating those substances.

More odds: in every attack, some of the enemy survive. Insect enemies are capable of reproducing with incredible rapidity and in enormous numbers, and they and their millions of offspring are immune to the effects of pesticide. The

enemy is back, in full force, in a few days. You'll have to use another, stronger weapon next time, and the next time, and the next time. The victims from higher on the food chain, however, don't reproduce as quickly: some take as long as nine months to come up with a single offspring. Who's ahead in this war now? Are a few days of totally bugless begonias really worth all the risks?

Wise generals don't use the neutron bomb at every encounter. Wise generals plan, prepare, and attack in proportion to the threat. Wise generals keep their troops in top form at all times - opportunistic enemies are attracted first to the weak - so that skirmishes don't turn into disasters. In growing begonias, this translates into observing and studying your plants: watering, and feeding as needed by each plant (*not* on a schedule: some begonias need more water, some are hungry feeders), providing good light and good air circulation, repotting when needed (tangled, bunched roots are a stress, too).

Wise generals know that weather is important. They prepare both summer and winter camps in advance, with contingency plans for bad weather attacks. Summer camp can be fairly casual: provide shade, good air circulation/protection from wind, water, food. The move to summer camp can be made gradually.

Winter camp is more complicated, since for most of us the begonias must be enclosed and heated. Wise generals start early: deciding where begonias will go, realizing they'll have grown over the summer. They may need to thin the ranks (share with friends, hold a plant sale, cut back, and root prune). They may need to extend the facilities (put up a shelter, add on to the greenhouse, enclose a porch, cover a lath house, rent greenhouse space). They do this way in advance, and prepare the facilities (clean, clean, clean - with water and soap, not a heavy chemical barrage) before commencing the move. The roops are inspected before and during the

move - no contraband will go into the camp - and after all are in for the winter too, as some may be unhappy or unhealthy, and need a shift in position.

Wise generals also have emergency materials on hand. These vary by territory, but always include stored water. Other possibilities are fans, emergency heat sources, solar blankets. (See the article by H. Alton Lee, *the Begonian*, November/December 1990, p. 223 for more ideas - wise generals research too and back issues have tons of information).

Here's to a happy, healthy winter for begonias and their generals.

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## Round Robin Notes

*Virginia Hamann,*  
*Round Robin Director*

**#16 Eastern General, Mildred Swyka (DE), Chairman:** Mildred plants begonia gardens in 16" bowls, putting together canes and rhizomatous. Her plants are small plants that would otherwise take up room in her plant room. **Mike Gratton (VA)** is experimenting with hot chili pepper wax as a mealy bug treatment. **Matt Barlow (IL)** is enjoying growing begonias from seed obtained from the ABS seed fund. Another grower, **Eileen Morrison (PA)** used a high nitrogen fertilizer to help green up her begonias. She also thought her lights were too hot for them. B. 'Quinebaugh', 'Madame Queen', and 'Jelly Roll Morton' all do better for Eileen in natural light.

**#25 Midwest Growers II:** Canes, and what size pot to use was a topic in May. We were first told tall pots were to be used only to find roots like to spread out, so shallow pots were discussed. **Mary**

**McClelland (NE)** mentioned canes need heavier soil as they have more roots; they also need more water and fertilizer.

**#15 Cold Climate, Greenhouse Growing: Elaine Ayers (OH)** is growing more begonia species and wants to put light stands in her basement recreation room. In her greenhouse, she will put plants waist high and drape them with plastic pool liners which she claimed "will be a learning experience."

**#1 General Culture: Elaine Ayers (OH)** is planting seeds in Pepsi bottles by using a funnel to place the soil into the bottle. A butter knife is used to place the seed on top of the soil...her bottle greenhouse is then placed at the northeast end of her greenhouse. After germination she cuts the top off the bottle and removes the seedlings. Elaine also likes to pour boiling water on her potting mix as the hot water penetrates the soil and keeps it moist longer.

**#6 Odd, Rare and Unusual: Daniel Haseltine (IL)** has had orchids in bloom,



from February to April. He has also been planting seeds of begonias and gesneriads.

*Round Robins are a great source of information on growing begonias and other plants that members grow...one member said the robins are like going to a Branch meeting, only no refreshments are served! You are invited to join a robin or two. Just let me know your interests and I will put you in a robin, or if they*

*are full, I can get a new robin in flight when enough names are on my list. I currently have a request for a robin with growers from Florida. ~ Virginia*

**Join a robin today! Write:**

**Virginia Hamann  
1169 Lincoln Avenue  
Chester, IA 52134-8508**

## **Pronunciation of Begonia- ceae Names for The Begonian, 66: September/ October, 1999.**

**by Jack Golding**

**Begonia** be-GOH-ni-uh

**amphioxus** am-FEE-ok-us  
**brevirimos** bre-vir-i-MOH-suh  
**carolineifolia** kar-oh-lin-e-eye-FOH-  
li-uh  
**carriecae** kar-REE-ee  
**chlorosticta** klo-ro-STIK-uh  
**conchifolia** var. kon-chi-FOH-li-uh  
**rubrimaculata** ryew-bri-mak-YEW-  
luh  
**convolvulacea** kon-vol-vyew-LAY-se-  
uh  
**crassicaulis** kras-si-KAW-lis,  
kras-si-KOW-LIS  
**decora** de-KOH-ruh  
**deliciosa** de-lis-i-OH-suh  
**dipetala** deye-PET-a-luh  
**dregei** DREG-e-eye  
‘Erythrophylla’ e-ri-THROH-fill-uh  
**glandulosa** gland-yew-LOH-suh  
**goeensis** goh-goh-EN-sis  
**grandis** GRAND-is  
**heracleifolia** her-ak-le-eye-FOHL-  
li-uh  
**hydrocotylifolia** hey-dro-koh-til-i-  
FOHL-i-uh

**juliana** jyewl-i-AY-nuh  
**kellermanii** kel-ler-MAN-i-eye  
**kenworthyae** ken-WORTH-i-ee  
**leucostricta** loo-KOH-strik-tuh  
**lindleyana** lind-ley-AY-nuh  
**listada** lis-TAH-duh  
**maculata** mak-yew-LAY-tuh  
var. **wightii** WHITE-i-eye  
**malabarica** mal-i-BAR-i-kuh  
**manicata** man-i-KAY-tuh  
var.  
**aureo-maculata** AW-re-oh [OW-re-oh],  
mak-yew-LAY-tuh  
**micranthera** meye-kran-THER-uh  
var. **venturii** ven-TYEW-r-i-eye  
**nelumbiifolia** nel-um-bi-eye-FOH-li-  
uh  
**paranaensis** pa-ra-na-EN-sis  
**popenoei** poh-pen-OH-eye  
**radicans** RAD-i-kanz  
**rajah** RAH-juh  
**rex** REX  
**serratipetala** ser-ra-ti-PET-a-luh  
**subvillosa** var. sub-vil-LOH-suh  
**leptotricha** lep-to-TREYE-kuh  
**thiemei** THEEM-eye  
syn. *mac-*  
*dougallii* eye  
‘Purpurea’, hort. pur-pu-REE-uh  
**versicolor** ver-si-KOH-lor  
**wollnyi** WOHLL-ni-eye

**Symbegonia** sim-be-GOH-ni-uh

**sanguinea** san-GWIN-e-uh-eye

# Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund Listing

The San Miguel Branch, San Diego County, CA

Eleanor L. Calkins, Seed Fund Administrator

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

**DISCLAIMER:** The seeds distributed by the Seed Fund are identified as received from the donors. The Seed Fund cannot guarantee that the identification is correct. When you find that seeds received from the Seed Fund do not develop into the plant expected, please notify the Seed Fund so that a warning can be published for others who may have received seeds from the same batch. Each offering will be identified by a code and that code should be used whenever writing to the Seed Fund about seeds. The descriptions published are from the literature and apply to the name used for the seed offerings. Thank you!

**The Seed Fund needs donations of the following seeds requested by members:** *B. acetosa*, *ampla*, *baccata*, *bartonea hort* (syn. 'Winter Jewel'), *brevicaulis*, *cathayana*, *circumlobata*, *compta*, *strigillosa* (syn. *daedalea*), *decora*, *diadema*, *floccifera*, *hemsleyana*, *hydrocotylifolia*, *kenworthyae*, *leprosa*, *lindleyana*, *listada*, *manii*, *nepalensis*, *olsoniae*, *paranaensis*, *philodendroides*, *platanifolia*, *leathermaniae* (syn. *platanifolia* var. *acuminatissima*), *polygonoides*, *princeps*, *prismatocarpa*, *pseudolubbersii*, *roezlii*, *sharffii*, *sharpeana*, *soli-mutata*, *stigmosa*, *subnummularifolia*, *tacanana*, *tayabensis*, *teuscheri*, *thomsonii*, *wolnyi*, U357, and from the hybrids: *B.* 'Bunchii', 'Erythrophylla', 'Madame Queen', 'Oliver Twist', 'Scrooge'. **The need for**

**new seed to distribute is becoming acute. Please pollinate your species begonias with pollen from other plants of the same species and contribute (or exchange) to the 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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ABS in San Diego county California. Donors of seeds in this issue are: **Jacky Duruisseau, Peggy Fratus, Beatrice Huckriede, Janice Keck, Barry & Dot Mann, Adrian Popa, Thelma O'Reilly, Patrick Rose, and Joan Taylor.** (Note: *Thelma O'Reilly should have been on the July/August list of donors as well, but was inadvertently omitted by the editor.*)

### Species Seeds

- SO99-1: *B. juliana*  
 SO99-2: *B. kellermanii*  
 SO99-3: *B. kenworthyae*  
 SO99-4: *B. listada*  
 SO99-5: *B. nelumbifolia*  
 SO99-6: *B. paranaensis*  
 SO99-7: *B. subvillosa* var. *leptotricha*

### Hybrid Seeds

- SO99-8: *B. 'Erythrophylla'* x 518-1 (APO 193)  
 SO99-9: *B. "Peru-like"*

## DESCRIPTIONS

SO99-1: *B. juliana* (Loefgren ex Hoehne) Brazil. Grown as *B. U049*. See *Begonian* March-April 1986 for photos. Cane-like; velvety green leaves with red undersides.

SO99-2: *B. kellermanii* (C. De Candolle) Guatemala. Shrub-like: felted green leaves with green petioles and stems; fragrant pink tinted white flowers early spring

SO99-3: *B. kenworthyae* (Ziesenhenné) Mexico. Upright rhizomes; blue-green cleft leaves; white flowers.

SO99-4: *B. listada* (Smith & Wasshausen) Brazil. shrub-like; small, hairy, dark green, velvety leaves, long and narrow with a yellow-green midrib, hairy brown stems; white flowers (Open pollinated).

SO99-5: *B. nelumbifolia* (Schlechtendal & Chamisso) Central America. Upright rhizomatous, large round-ovate peltate leaves, white or pink tinged flowers in tall erect forking cymes in late winter.

SO99-6: *B. paranaensis* (Brade) Brazil. thick-stemmed; sparse green leaves with sparse small bristles over the upper surface, white flowers.

SO99-7: *B. subvillosa* (Klotzsch) var. *leptotricha* Paraguay. Sempervlorens type, rusty hairy stems to 1 ft; fleshy, glossy green leaves, cobwebby-hairy above, rusty hairy underneath; profuse white flowers all year.

### Hybrid Seeds

These two submissions are from Europe. There are no other descriptions available to the seed fund.

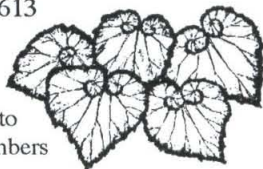
SO99-8: *B. 'Erythrophylla'* x 518-1 (APO 193)

SO99-9: *B. "Peru-Like"* Gray leaves and profuse white flowers.

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*Hey! People do read the Editor's Notes! Thanks to those who sent some great photos and articles for the months ahead. Here's an example, above. From Florida came Joyce Pridgen's beautiful photo of her plant of B. U049, tentatively identified as B. juliana and offered in this month's seed fund.*

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# In the Mailbox

**Greg Sytch,**  
**Horticultural Correspondent**

Our editor asked for articles, more specifically basic articles for beginners. Since Freda can use all of the help possible, I feel I must oblige her request and use this column to solicit information from members. This way, there will be more articles for beginners in the future.

**Q:** A grower from the upper midwest recently wrote me with a serious problem she was having with her tuberous begonias. She stated that while the plants were growing fine, her flower buds were dropping off before opening. (Since little information was given as to culture, where it is growing, etc., I'll assume she is growing them in her shady landscape.)

**A:** As a Floridian, I mentioned to her that my experience with tuberous is limited as they are only winter gift plants here. It is too hot. However, when I lived in New Jersey, I did grow them in summer. It was back to the basics here since I have little recent experience with tuberous.

I suggested that she first check for pests, such as aphids or thrips. Both pests are known for inhibiting bloom on plants by infesting the flowering buds. Ants often cultivate these pests as they derive a sweet delight from this symbiotic relationship. If aphids or thrips are present, disease usually follows and this can infect tuberous and cause serious problems. I suggested using a pest control and, following label directions, spraying for disease. Another cause of bud drop can be wet soil.

I asked her to check this and to allow the soil to dry out; if not, repot/replant.

If any grower has a similar experience to this, please drop me a line for future reference.

Note: A new grower to begonias should be interested in learning that pests infrequently infest begonias. My experience has been that if begonias have pests, there is a more serious problem in the growing environment that needs to be addressed.

And here are some small tricks I have utilized for years in growing my plants. Some of the tips came from other growers, while some I developed myself. Hopefully, by sharing a few of them, it might make growing begonias a little easier for just a few begoniacs:

- 1) Recycle the styrofoam peanuts that come with shipped items. We are all familiar with how the bottom few inches of a pot stays wet, and even sours as newly potted plants have yet to use up the soil there. Before repotting, place broken peanuts at the bottom of the pot, layering to an inch or two. Then pot as normal. This will aid with drainage and prevent "sour bottom soil."
- 2) A member of our branch is a huge fan of using Epsom salt as a spray or soil additive. Several years ago, I purchased magnesium sulfate in a fine powdered form, and when I repot a plant, I add a "good pinch" to the top of the soil and work it in. Over the next few months, the magnesium gradually breaks down and adds to the lushness of the leaves.
- 3) If it appears disease is present, and you do not have fungicide or might not be able to secure some for a time, use baking soda. While an exact recipe is up to you, I find 1/3 baking soda with 2/3 water works well. Baking soda covers up



spores to prevent them from proliferating, starving the spore. However, it must be repeated every 5 to 7 days. Use a little soap (3 drops) as a spreader-sticker. (Tamsin will sure love this idea!)

*This is the place for help with growing! Send me your problems or if you have a solution, drop me a line with that as well. Write:*

**Gregg Sytch**  
6329 Alaska Avenue  
New Port Richey, FL  
34653-4301  
Phone: 813-841-9618  
Email: GSytch@cs.com

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## Minutes of Board Meeting, American Begonia Society,

Ft. Worth, Texas, May 8, 1999.

1. **President Boardman** opened the meeting and read the Aims and Purposes of the Society. 2. Reading of the minutes was dispensed with by motion since they had been published. 3. **Carol Notaras** presented the financial statement for Janu-

ary 1 to May 3, 1999. The general fund began with \$26,831.09 and ended with \$24,183.22. Two issues of the *Begonian* were printed during this period. Total income was \$13,548.32 while total disbursements were \$16,196.19. The bookstore fund began with \$143.34 and ended with \$56.03. The seed fund account started with \$1,381.13 and ended with \$381.13 after transferring \$1,000 to the general fund. Savings accounts began with \$34,059.10 and ended with \$36,723.88. Combined checking and savings accounts began at \$62,414.66 and ended with \$61,344.26. 4. Publication fund activities were highlighted briefly. The two books, **Howard Siebold's** book on tuberous begonias and **Freda Holley's** *Raising Cane*, have been well received. Publications from books are being handled separately from the bookstore due to more complicated record keeping and the need for foreign transactions including payment in foreign currency. 5. Branch Relations Director **Mary Bucholtz** provided a written report indicating the Branch Relations Newsletter was mailed in March and information was sent to Trenton, FL on new branch formation. Mary was recognized by the Board for her efforts as director. 6. **President Boardman** commented on improvements in Branch



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newsletters and gave deserved recognition to their members. **7.** Convention plans are going well. Registration packets will be mailed by the third week of May by bulk rate mail. Convention hotel rates will be good from August 31 to Sept. 6. **8.** A question about officer membership was raised. The Board reconfirmed that officers of ABS and Branches must be ABS members. **Gene Salisbury** stated that this requirement was cited in the ABS Constitution. **9.** Internet security was discussed for those listed on the web page. **President Boardman** asked that comments on the web page be sent to him or the Internet Editor, **Kathy Goetz**. **10.** The *MAL Newsletter* was discussed and **President Boardman** asked for comments and wants to know if members think it is worth the subscription fee. **11.** The policy on availability of ABS membership rosters was discussed. There were many comments on the usefulness of membership information. The item was tabled for a decision by the Executive Board. **12.** **Ann Salisbury** was recognized for her activities on back issues and advertising. **13.** Everyone is urged to send in award nominations soon to Awards Chair **Michael Ludwig**. The deadline for their receipt is July 1, 1999. **14.** If you have received begonia seed from the Seed Fund and find that it does not produce the stated plants or has a very low germination rate or any other problem, please be sure to notify the Seed Fund Manager. However, keep in mind that there is a disclaimer with each offering. **15.** The suggestion of having a credit card system for ABS dues payments has been tabled because it is currently too expensive for the low volume. **16.** Prior experience with a computer program for use with show classification and entries was shown to be very efficient for setting up a show. A suggestion to purchase a laptop computer

and a printer was tabled until a test could be conducted at the 1999 Convention. **Bob Golden** offered ABS the use of a laptop and printer for this. A report on this test will be made to the Board.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Richard N. Macnair, Secretary**

*These minutes have been slightly abbreviated by the editor for reasons of space. A complete copy is available from Richard Macnair at 177 Hancock St., Cambridge, MA 02139.*

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## Packing Plants

by **Andy Conley,**  
**Public Relations Director**

Bought too many plants? How do you get them home when you're taking a plane? Very easy! First of all, be prepared! Take plenty of gallon size ziplock bags when you travel. A canvas tote bag will travel to your destination and take up little space. When filled with your new plants, carry it during your return trip.

A few hours prior to packaging your plants, lightly water any that seem dry. The night before, or day you travel home (if time allows) "process" your plants. It may sound cruel, but it works. Spread enough newspaper to keep the mess to a minimum, then take one plant at a time out of its pot. Remove most if not all dirt from the roots. Put the plant in a Ziplock bag with its tag. Put just enough air into the bag so the plant will not be squashed by those stacked on top. Place the bags into the canvas tote. Twenty or so plants will fit into a standard tote bag and travel home safely. When you get home, place the bags in a cool, but bright area (no direct sun).

If it takes a few days to replot the plants in your favorite mix, that's okay



Each Ziplock bag acts like a small greenhouse protecting your plants. One word of caution: Too little moisture in the bags is better than too much.

Have fun in September and buy all the plants you want. We'll be there and glad to help you "process" your plants for travel home.

*Andy did this column on special request after those attending the SWR Get-Together saw how he could pack them in! The editor also has special reason to know that Andy can pack more plants in a small space than any other Begonian; ask him how she knows! And finally, Andy shared with the editor that HGTV spent many hours at his greenhouse recently filming; his begonias are going to be on TV! He also ended this piece with the sign "The Rocky Mountain Branch of ABS, site of the 2001 ABS National Convention". Wouldn't that be great? You may write him at 4575 Elm Court, Denver, CO 80211-1442, or E-mail him at [sierra\\_vista\\_gardens@juno.com](mailto:sierra_vista_gardens@juno.com).*

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## ABS Bookstore Sales List

*Addendum to 1990 Revised Buxton Checklist*, 1997 \$5.  
*A Barkley Retrospective*. Collected writings of Dr. Fred Barkley. \$2.50.  
*Begonia*. Hakari. Gardening Handbook Series; 32 color prints, Japanese text, \$13.25. Translation of above, \$2.  
*Begonia Song Book*, \$2.  
*Begonia in Colore*. Yuri Murotani. Hikoichi Arakawa, trans. of text only. \$5.  
*Begonias in General*. Pamphlet from the *Begonian*, \$.50  
*Begonias*. Isamu Misono. Marguerite DeCola and Hikoichi Arakawa, trans., \$5.  
*Begonias from Seed - Sowing and Growing*. Chuck Tagg. *Begonian* reprint. \$.50  
*Bibliography of the Begoniaceae* (At Fort Worth Botanical Garden), Kelton Parker, 1996, \$2.  
*Catalog of Registered Cultivars*. First 100 registered cultivars, background, parents, originator, *Begonian* references, test date, description, 47 pp., from ABS, \$5.25.  
*Constitution and Bylaws of American Begonia*

*Society*, 1997, \$1.50.  
*Curtis Botanical Magazine Reprints*. Seven 1800's color prints, 6 x 9, \$6.  
*Guidelines for National Conventions and Annual Shows*, 1995, \$2.50.  
*How to Win with Begonias*, 1993, \$1.  
*Index to Registered Begonias*. ABS reprint of Ziesenhennel list. Revised through 1994, John Ingles, Jr., \$2.  
*Index to Begonian*. Pat Williams, 1990. 72 page guide to finding specific Begonian references.  
*Les Begonias*. Chevalier, 1938. Alva Graham, trans. Pictures, some in color; botanical study, culture, 165 pp. \$2. (*Editor's note: this is one super bargain!*).  
*Remembering Fred*. Begonian articles by and about Dr. Fred Barkley, \$2.  
*A Report on Study tour to the Macae Decima Reserve*, including a catalog of begonia species, plus drawings. Darrin Duling, Kew. 2 spiral bound booklets, July 1994, \$5.  
*Revised Buxton Checklist*. Original 1957 checklist and 1958, '62, '67 supplements, species, "U" numbers not included. 481 pp. \$37.50.  
*Terrariums for Begonias*. Mae Blanton. Types and appropriate plants. \$2.  
*The Begonia Book*. Eva Kenworthy Gray, 1931 classic, reprinted 1986; first US begonia book: growing, propagation, fertilization, descriptions. \$5.25.  
*The Begonian: The Earliest Issues*. Newsletters from January 1934 thru 1938; unbound, \$25.  
*Tips for Begonia Beginners*. Reprint of Dorothy Patrick's *Begonian* articles, 1987-89, \$4.50.  
*Unidentified Species Listing*. ABS. Most recent and complete "U" numbers, location of species, brief description, references in *Begonian*, \$3.

\*\*\*\*\*

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ABS pin, \$3.

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*Above, left:* B. 'Black Gold', Registration #970



*Right:* B. 'Mary Sakamoto', Registration #971

*Below:* B. 'Cowardly Lion', Registration # 969.





# New Cultivars

## Official International Registrations 969-971 Gene Salisbury, Nomenclature Department

Applications to register Begonia cultivars may be obtained from Gene Salisbury, P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653. Forms must be typed or printed in ink and accompanied by a \$2 check payable to the American Begonia Society. Clear photos for publication in the *Begonian*, drawings, and dried specimens are requested. ABS is the International Registration Authority for Begonia cultivar names. In the listing of cultivar parents below, the female (seed) parent is given first.

### *Begonia* 'Cowardly Lion'

**No. 969.** *Begonia* (*carrierae* x 'Bokit')  
'Cowardly Lion'

Rhizomatous hybrid with creeping growth habit, distinctive foliage. Large leaves are green to golden bronze, shape spiraled into lobed, 8" or larger. Double spiraled at base. Sharply obtuse. Caducous, texture coriaceous, rugose. Margin crenate. Surface sparsely hairy. 8 veins. Petioles 8", green, stipules 5/8" long, 3/8" wide, green, smooth. Male flower 1/2", female 3/4". Flower clusters few, but contain many flowers. Peduncles 10". Flowers and ovaries white with red dots on underside. Unusual red hairs on underside. B. 'Cowardly Lion' has distinctive leaf shapes and colors on the same plant that are not necessarily related to leaf age. Developed in 1989 by Kit Jeans Mounger, 485 Cottontail, Afton, TN 37616. First bloomed in 1991. Tested by Bob Koehler. Distributed 1991. Available from B & K Tropicals, 5300 48th Terrace N., St. Petersburg, FL 33709 and Sunshine State Tropicals, 6329 Alaska Ave., New Port Richey, FL 34653-13230. Registered November 28, 1998.

### *Begonia* 'Black Gold'

**No. 970** *Begonia* ('Jumbo Jet' x *dregei* 'Glasgow') 'Black Gold'

Bronze/green, red backed leaves with a red spot at the sinus on this superba cane-like hybrid with stems growing 12"

to 18" at maturity. Leaves are lightly lobed, smooth, chatoyant\* with 6 main veins. Petioles are 1 1/2" and red. Stipules are 1" x 1/2" and green. Flowers in summer and fall. Female flowers have five dark pink, oval tepals and a dark pink ovary. Males have 4 tepals. Lower peduncles are 1 1/2". There are many flower clusters averaging 13 male and 16 female flowers. Flowers are strongly rose scented. B. 'Black Gold' bears a slight resemblance to B. 'Jumbo Jet', but the *B. dregei* male parent yields a more compact full-growing plant. The sheen on the leaves makes them appear "oil" colored, hence the name.

Developed and described by Brad Thompson (2436 W. Lomita Blvd. #1, Lomita, CA 90717) in 1990, first bloomed in 1991, and first distributed in 1992. Recommended for registration by Elda Regimbal (Fullerton, CA) and Mary Sakamoto (Orange, CA). Available from Kartuz Greenhouse, 1408 Sunset Dr., Vista, CA 92083. Registered on December 30, 1998.

### *Begonia* 'Mary Sakamoto'

**No. 971** *Begonia* ('Jumbo Jet' x 'Orange Rubra') 'Mary Sakamoto'

This cane-like hybrid grows to 12-18" at maturity, placing it in the cane-like category of "all others; low growing". Leaves are bronze/green with small silver

\*changeable in color or texture

Continued on page 193.



Oh, the begonias we'll see, in California! Here's *B. 'Little Brother Montgomery'* (a shrub with pink flowers by Johnson of CA) and a glimpse of the garden of Bob Golden in which it grows.. Photos by Iris Bird.





# Begonia Kaleidoscopes:

ABS Convention '99,  
September 1-5, 1999

## Practicalities

You are almost on your way to Los Angeles and we will be on hand to welcome you when you arrive at the Embassy Suites Los Angeles Airport - South. Here's what you are to do when your plane has arrived and you have claimed your luggage.

Proceed to the hotel courtesy phones located right in the baggage claim area. Call Embassy Suites-LAX south at 55447 using one of the black courtesy phones. Please indicate in which airline terminal you are located. The hotel phone number is 310-640-3600. Proceed to the hotel/car rental shuttle pick-up area under the GREEN TRIANGLE. The Embassy Suites-LAX South van is burgundy.

If you are renting a car ask the rental company for directions to Sepulveda Boulevard. Head south under the runways, through the tunnel to Imperial Highway, turn right and proceed to the first stoplight at California Street. Turn left and back around to Imperial Avenue. Turn left to the hotel at 1440 East Imperial Avenue at the corner. Parking is underground and free during the day and overnight for American Begonia Society members. You will get a parking permit when you check in.

Please call or email if you have any questions or concerns. Janet Brown at 310-670-4471, phone and FAX. Email JBBBROWN3@aol.com. The Convention Committee and all the ABS members in Southern California are looking forward to your arrival. We hope you will have a wonderful Convention with us, meet old friends and new ones and come

away with happy memories of five days in Los Angeles.

FOR THE RECORD: In the May/June *Begonian* on the convention page, seminar speaker Bill Ash was referred to as "of Kew Gardens." Bill is not officially associated with Kew Gardens although he does do begonia work there on occasion as well as at Glasgow Botanic Garden.

The Species to Hybrids Panel will be chaired by Michael Ludwig with Tamsin Boardman and Don Miller participating.

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*Continued from page 191.*

spots and light red backs. Leaves are ovate, oblique with acute tips being 4" wide x 9" long. Margins are undulate, lightly dentate, smooth and chatoyant. Petioles are 1 1/4" long, reddish. Stipules are 3/4" long x 12" wide, reddish.

Flower clusters are many with 13 male and 18 female flowers. Male flowers are 2" wide with 4 tepals. Females are 1 1/2" wide with 5 tepals. Flower peduncles are 2". Ovaries have white stripes dividing segments. Tepals are wavy; female tepals especially so.

This hybrid can be recognized by its large chatoyant leaves that are an odd shade of bronze/green with wavy edges. Flowers are a dark orange. It cannot be confused with other orange flowered canes because of its size.

Developed by Brad Thompson (address above) in 1990, first bloomed in 1991, and first distributed in 1992. A photo appeared in the September/October 1996 *Begonian*. Tested and recommended by Elda Regimbal (Fullerton, CA) and Thelma O'Reilly (La Mesa, CA). It is available from Kartuz Greenhouses (address above). Registered on December 30, 1998.

# Conservation News

Tamsin Boardman, Conservation Chair



A few years back, a lovely and charming young woman came to a Dallas Area Branch meeting in search of a particular begonia she had owned, loved, and lost. She described this plant, though none of us were sure which one she wanted, and kept attending meetings in hopes of finding it.

Several months later, the program was a "Show and Tell": bring a begonia, tell how you grow it, and share cuttings. I took *B. convolvulacea*. It was huge plant, typical of this begonia's vigorous growth. Lo and behold, it was the young woman's heart's desire! She took home tons of cuttings. There was not exactly a happy ending, however, for, having gotten what she wanted, she never appeared at a meeting again.

You never can tell what brings people to begonias. For many of us, though, it's not one individual plant, it's the diversity of the family: The wide variety in size and shape and growth habits, leaf habits, leaf shapes and sizes and colors, bloom types, and all the oddities in reproduction design: bulbils, tubers, runners, epiphytic growths.

*Although not as luxuriant as the plant described here by Tamsin, even in the cool climate of the Ozarks, the editor's plant of *B. convolvulacea* almost needed a wide angle lens for a photo so fast did it reach out on this ledge.*

While *B. convolvulacea* isn't one of the weirdest in appearance, it does have an oddity that few begonias share: it develops little crystals on the undersides of leaves. These aren't malignant in any way and don't need to be removed or sprayed or worried about; they're a natural phenomena shared with some other plants, and possibly a way to deal with excess heat.

*B. convolvulacea* comes from Brazil and was described by Adolphe de Candolle in 1861. Classified as trailing-scandent, it has glossy apple-green cleft leaves. The green deepens if it's grown in shade; grown in sun, the leaves are lighter in color, thicker in texture, and growth is more dense. White flowers come in clusters at the end of peduncles that form interesting little shapes like the hives in honeycombs (there's a gorgeous photo of



this geometric arrangement on the cover of the January/February 1982 *Begonian*, taken by Sue Hessel).

The first *B. convolvulacea* I ran across was in a 4" pot, at an April garage sale. The grower had no idea what it was, but suggested I grow it in shade and keep it moist. Following these instructions, I had to repot frequently; I had a 16" wire sphagnum-lined basket by August - after giving away cuttings by the dozens as well as starting several new pots. Only a year or so later did I find out, finally, that it was a begonia.

This Brazilian is tolerant of a wide range of conditions. Shade and moisture worked for me, but the Thompsons rec-

ommend semi-shade and a friend grew hers on a porch facing west. In Texas summers that's usually the kiss of death, but she had a very vigorous plant with smaller, tougher leaves, and lots more flowers. I have stayed with the admonition to keep it moist, because the leaves will go limp and lose color if it dries out so much. Salty water is a quick killer.

*B. convolvulacea* roots easily from cuttings. Sometimes while trailing down from a pot a stem will take root in a pot beneath. Its tolerance for heat and dryness makes it a good houseplant - if you've the space for its vigorous growth. It's an easy grower for beginners, and a good plant to give to anyone who thinks he can't grow begonias.

### You Can Still Order These!

**The Catalogue of Registered Cultivars** by Ivy McFarlane and Debbie Weber, \$28 including postage.

**The Begonian Index** by Pat Williams. \$12 including postage.

**Tuberous Begonias and How to Grow Them** by Howard Siebold. \$5. plus \$1.75 postage.

**Raising Cane** by Freda Holley. \$5. plus \$1.75 postage.

*Cost of the last two goes to the Millie Thompson Publication Fund.*

And Back Issues of the **Begonian**: \$5/year or \$1/issue.

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## News: ABS, Branch, and International

We have just received the sad news that **John Ingles, Jr.** died on July 18, 1999. An In Memory column will appear in the next issue. Continue to send all correspondence regarding membership and business affairs to Arlene Ingles at his address.

The Astro Branch (TX) and the San Francisco Branch (CA) are exchanging begonia cuttings. What a neat way to expand the kinds of begonias grown in each area!

The Sacramento Aids foundation will hold its Fall Plant Sale, September 18-19, 1999, 9 AM to 5 PM at Parking Lot 8, 21st Street between W and X Streets in Sacramento, CA. Begonias, succulents, perennials and other plants will be available.

The San Jacinto Branch is seeking a hybrid to bear its name. Will there be a contest? Can anyone enter a candidate? Will there be a prize? Tell us, San Jac!

**Ingeborg Foo** spoke to the Palomar Branch (CA) on African Begonias in July and members brought examples they were growing.

*Wow! Arlene Hoskins won a Best in Division Award at the Doug Frost Branch (CA) show/sale in July 1998 with the awesome B. 'Medora' below, with 97.6 points awarded. Nancy Mirgon, editor of their newsletter The Shade House where this photo first appeared reports: "This is a shrub-like begonia with profuse pink flowers in the summer/fall time frame. It is included in the listing of Begonias for Beginners in the Thompson Guide and does well in semi-shade."*

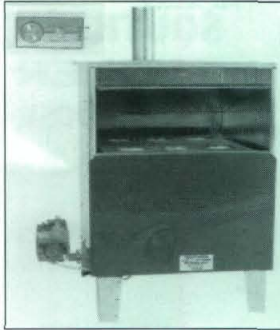




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# COMING EVENTS

**September 1-5, 1999:** Begonia Kaleidoscopes, ABS Convention, hosted by the Westchester Branch, Los Angeles, CA. Come on August 31 to be there for the first tour on Wednesday morning, September 1. The show will close at 4 PM on September 5. Hotel is Embassy Suites, Los Angeles Airport - South, 1440 East Imperial Avenue, El Segundo, CA 90145, Ph: 310-640-3600. Free Shuttle. See page 193 of this issue for more information.

**October 3, 1999:** San Francisco Branch (CA) picnic at Junipero Serra Park. Contact Carl Laipple at 650-873-4890 for more information.

**October 2-3, 1999:** Palomar Branch (CA) Show of Begonias at Casa del Prado in Balboa Park. Contact Eleanor Calkins at 760-746-4743 for more information.

**March 25-26, 2000:** Begonia Convention 2000 will be held at the Haven Motel, Glenelg, Adelaide, Australia. The South Australian Begonia Society invites all to attend. For more information write to the Convention Secretary, Mrs. Myrnie Jennings, 4 Kinnard Crescent, Highbury, South Australia, 5089. Australia

**May 3-7, 2000:** ABS Convention, Palm Beach Shores Resort, Palm Beach Shores, Florida. More information soon!

**September 20-24, 2000:** SWR Get-Together, San Antonio Texas, sponsored by the Alamo Branch, Sevens Oaks Resort. More information soon!

**Closing date for next issue is September 20!**

---

## *The Begonian*

**Editor: Freda M. Holley**, 1716 Gardenbrook, Nacogdoches, TX 75961-2107. E-mail: fholley@netdot.com

**Consulting Editors: Tamsin Boardman and Jan Brown.**

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

**Quick Tips: Maria Holmes**, #144, 760 W. Lomita Bl., Harbor City, CA 90710-2517. E-mail: mariaholmes@worldnet.att.net

**Advertising Staff:**

**Display Ads: Ann Salisbury**, P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653, Ph: 580-628-5230

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

Send inquiries about address changes, missing copies, dues, subscription and circulation to **John Ingles, Jr.**, 157 Monument, Rio Dell, CA 95562-1617, Ph: (707) 764-5407; E-mail [ingles@humboldt1.com](mailto:ingles@humboldt1.com)



# ABS Elected Officers

**President**.....Bruce C. Boardman,  
P.O. Box 69, Bluff Dale, TX 76433; Ph:  
254-728-3485

**Past President**.....Ann Salisbury,  
P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653; Ph:  
580-628-5230

**1st Vice-President**.....Gene Salisbury,  
P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653; Ph:  
580-628-5230

**2nd Vice-President**.....Don Miller,  
1010 Mt. Auburn, Dallas, TX 75223;  
Ph: 214-823-1070

**3rd Vice-President**....Mary Bucholtz,  
1560 Lancaster Terrace #1008, Jacksonville,  
FL 32204; Ph: 904-353-9111

**Secretary**.....Richard Macnair,  
177 Hancock Street, Cambridge, MA  
02139; Ph: 617-876-1356

**Treasurer**.....Carol Notaras, 2567 Green  
St., San Francisco, CA 94123; Ph: 415-  
931-4912; E-mail: cnotaras@juno.com

## Appointed Chairmen and Directors

**Audit**.....Paul Tsamtsis,  
1630 F St., Sacramento, CA 95814

**Awards**.....Michael Ludwig,  
6040 Upland St., San Diego, CA 92114-1933

**Back Issues**.....Ann Salisbury,  
P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653; Ph:  
580-628-5230

**Ballot Counting**.....Ingeborg Foo,  
1050 Melrose Way, Vista, CA 92083; Ph:  
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