

The

BEGONIAN

November/December 2000

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: **Iris Bird** and **Bob Golden** remind us of one of the joys to come in the new year: blooms on our rhizomatous. Here, *B. barkeri* in their garden, April 1999.

Back: Have you ever suffered as the editor has in trying to grow *B. masoniana*? Then share her envy in seeing this mass grouping of them photographed by **Eleanor Calkins** at Palm Hammock Orchid Estate during the ABS Convention 2000.

Come to Denver in July!

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*Our thanks to all the
Branches and Individuals
Who Have Helped Us
Celebrate the Holidays in
this issue
and to bring you a better
Begonian
all Year!*

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Quick

Check your mailing label. If it reads

200101 or 200102, your membership is about to expire. Please renew! We don't want to lose you.

President's Message..

"TIS THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY!" I hope everyone is ready for this busy holiday season. But let's not forget to bring some of that holiday cheer to our begonias. Most growers have their plants inside their homes or packed into greenhouses for the winter. During this busy time don't forget to check for mildew and pests. It is so easy during this period to overlook our favorite plant group.

Many of our begonias have names that represent some of the Holiday Season, such as *B.* 'Christmas Candy', *B.* 'Merry Christmas' and *B.* 'Happy New Year'. Why not decorate your homes with your begonias? They will be a nice addition to your holiday decorations, and with all that company coming in and out you may just make a begonia convert and a new ABS member. What better gift to a gardening friend than a membership to the American Begonia Society?

I hope everyone enjoys the beautiful holiday greetings in this issue and so many in color. A big thank you to **Joan Coulat** for chairing this effort and organizing the greetings.

A great big KUDOS to Editor **Freda Holley** for another great year of the *Begonian*. Freda works tirelessly to make each issue something special. The help she receives from ABS members with photos, articles, suggestions and comments are what makes the *Begonian* your magazine. So let's not let Freda down; continue to support the *Begonian*.

The ABS Winter board Meeting will be held in February and will be hosted by the Atlanta Branch. Some great activities are being planned including a visit to the Southeast Flower Show, which is one of the premier flower shows in the South. Also, a visit to the Atlanta Botanic Gardens and a get-together on Saturday

evening. Remember ABS Board Meetings are open to all ABS members to attend. So plan to attend the board meeting, enjoy the activities and see what is happening with the Society. Details on the Board Meeting are in this issue.

I want to thank the members of the American Begonia Society for allowing me to serve as your President for another year. It has been a most interesting, informative and eventful year and I look forward to the challenges of 2001. As I stated in my first President's Message after being installed in Los Angeles, never hesitate to contact me or any ABS officers with questions, concerns, suggestions and comments. We are here to serve you and the American Begonia Society.

I want to wish all a Happy Thanksgiving, Happy Chanukah, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year.

Good Begonia Growing,
Charles Jaros

Letters to the Editor

On *B.* 'Calico Kew'

On Logee's internet catalog (www.logees.com) there is a nice picture of *B.* 'Calico Kew'...

P.T. Duffy
San Francisco

There is a nice photo in their 1999 print catalog too.

On Becky Steve's Begonia

I am finding that many begonias look so similar that I almost don't want to guess what the begonia is from Becky Steve; however, several years ago I had one very similar to hers and have recently gotten another start of it from Kay Tucker.

The one I have is called *B. 'Immense'*. The stem and leaves were just like the one pictured. It was a fast grower and rooted with no effort at all and soon was a large plant, so I could see where damage to the stem might send up a leaflet. The one that I have now has not bloomed yet, but my previous one bloomed like the one pictured. Hopefully I am guessing correctly. I am still rather new at trying to actually identify the many unnamed begonias that I have.

I am a new subscriber and really like your magazine. Especially the photos. I am soon going to be starting my first begonias from seed, so I have enjoyed the articles on how to do that.

Karen Herrmann

341 SE Dupont Rd.
Tecumseh, KS 665421
Email:
Karenh@ksdot.org

Karen, you are correct that it is very difficult to guess a plant's identity from a photo and sometimes, with the many similar hybrids out there, it is often impossible to identify the plant when it is at hand. And I'm glad you enjoy the work of our photographers (and my thanks again to all of them) - the photos I receive just seem to get better and better and I only wish we had more pages so I could use every one I receive.

And Another Response...

Just a note about the begonia Becky Steve was asking about. My story is very similar. I found my begonia in a small restaurant in New Jersey, the owner did not know what it was, but was very generous with a leaf for a start.

My plant has led a rather hard life. When I went south for the winter, I clipped all the leaves off to take with me so I couldn't lose it completely, then watered it generously, wrapped it in clear plastic,

and left it in the cool house. When I returned four months later, it had started a number of small leaves and has been growing, as you can see from my pictures.

This begonia has a rhizome which grows from both ends. The leaves continue to grow bigger, the stems have red hairs. We call it "hairy legs." It is very much a sun lover. The stems I took south with me grew lots of roots plus some small plantlets formed on one of the stems which grew into my second plant. I don't know what to make of it, but I love it dearly. I wish I had someone to leave it with this winter, so I could see how much bigger the leaves and the whole plant would become without such severe pruning.

I'll be looking forward to some more knowledgeable person enlightening both of us.

Ruth Hazen

205 Water Street
Perth Amboy, NJ 08861

And well you should love it, Ruth! What a lovely stem (see page 210)! And what a great tip for saving a plant when one has to be away for a time.

And More on *B. fisheri*: Masters of Disguise

I joined the American Begonia Society in 1974. I have used the Seed Fund for a long time, but I have never received seed for *B. fisheri*. I think my first encounter with them was after a convention down south and I brought several plants back home. In among my rhizomes were these little odd looking plants.

I asked everyone I knew in begonias and found these were *B. fisheri*. Now I am very aware of them: They are coming up in everything. Between *B. fisheri* and ferns, my hanging baskets take on an odd appearance. My husband grows fuschias and epiphyllums and he



Above and right is Ruth Hazen's "hairy legs" plant.

Below are the surprises found by Jackie Davis in one of her seed pots.



gets the ladder out every once in a while to remove them.

What I can't understand is how the *B. fischeri* seed gets into my seed room. I am fortunate in having a wine storage area under the stairs in the house and have three shop lights to keep it warm. I have never brought *B. fischeri* into the house. I use Park's "grow mix" for my seeds so it is sterile, but I always seem to get *B. fischeri* in my seed trays. I must carry it on my clothes or it flies through the air!. Like many growers I don't know exactly what the babies will look like and I love to try "U" numbers so I wait and see what I get. When they are big enough they go into 1 inch pots. After that I get my surprises. It's just like they want to hide and shock me, because maybe 10 will be the same and 11 will be *B. fischeri*.

The funniest thing happened a few weeks ago. I had put down two types of tuber seed, one was from Park's called B. 'Pin Up', the other was one I had crossed myself. They went from 1" to 4" pots and

were growing good. I check them often as I was interested in B. 'Pin Up'. Some were ready to be transplanted to 6 inch pots and lo and behold there was a *B. fischeri* staring at me. I called my husband and pointed to my tuber and we had a good laugh. The *B. fischeri* are truly: "Master's of Disguise."

Jackie Davis

170 Wingfoot Way
Aptos, CA 95003

Jackie, save those B. fischeri seed and share them with the seed fund. Many don't save them because they consider this a "weed begonia", but I consider it a wonder and we need to give others an opportunity to form their own opinion. Many of you know that we are into our second month of double digit, no rain temperatures here in Oklahoma and B. fischeri just goes on looking great (which can't be said for so many that have passed away). What a great begonia! And if you want to know more about this marvel, read the Begonian article by Carrie Karegeannes and Jack Golding. "B. fischeri: widespread and widely variable" in the January 1981 issue, page 6-7. This is a begonia with a history! (AND see the current issue's Seed Fund!)

A Begonia That Made an Impression

Ever since seeing the cover of the Begonian for March/April 2000, I've been trying to find out the name of the lovely plant on the cover, but to no avail. Can anyone identify it for me please? I'd be happy to pay for seeds or cuttings.

Thank you.

Jack Simenc

601 21st St. Apt. 104
Glenwood Springs,
CO 81601-4208

Johanna Zinn photographed this unidentified rhizome and we have been unable to identify it. My closest guess would be B. manicata or a hybrid of it.

Merry Christmas from The San Gabriel Valley Branch

Happy Holidays

and

Best Wishes for
the Millennium

from

The Alamo Branch

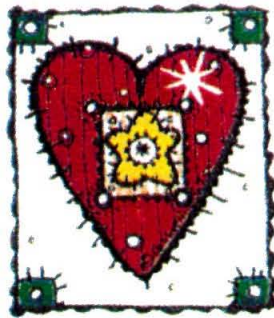
AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY



Merry Christmas

And

Happy Holidays



Westchester Branch



**Pronunciation of Begoniaceae
Names for the Begonian, 67,
November-December 2000
by Jack Golding**

barkeri	BARK-er-eye
corallina	kor-ral-LEYE-nuh
carolineifolia	kar-oh-lin-e-eye- FOH-li-uh
dipetala	deye-PET-a-luh
dregei var. dregei	DREG-e-eye
var. macbethii	mak-BETH-i-eye
syn. <i>natalensis</i>	nay-tal-EN-sis
syn. <i>partita</i>	par-TEE-tuh
fischeri	FISH-er-eye
glabra	GLAYB-ruh
var.	
cordifolia	kor-di-FOH-li-uh
heracleifolia	her-ak-le-eye-FOH- li-uh
kellermanii	kel-ler-MAN-i-eye
leathermaniae	leth-er-MAN-i-ee
syn.	
<i>platanifolia</i>	plat-an-i-FOH-li-uh,
var.	
<i>acuminatis- sima</i>	uh-kyew-min-a-tis- SEYE-muh
lindleyana	lind-ley-AY-nuh
masoniana	MAY-son-i-ay-nuh
multinervia	mul-ti-NER-vi-uh
naumoniensis	now-mon-i-EN-sis
nelumbiifolia	nel-um-bi-eye-FOH-li- uh
peltata var.	pel-TAY-tuh
peltata	
rubropilosa	ryew-broh-pi-LOH-suh
sericonoura	ser-i-kon-OO-ruh,
syn.	
<i>hypolipara</i>	heye-pol-i-PAY-ruh
thiemei	THEEM-eye
syn.	
<i>macdougallii</i>	mak-dyew-GALL-i-eye

Send a Card!

Ruth Pease has recently had surgery. She is recovering well, but wouldn't it be great if all her friends sent good wishes to this good supporter of ABS and the *Begonian*. You may write her at:

Ruth Pease
8406 Croydon
Los Angeles, CA 90045

*Good wishes for a speedy recovery,
Ruth.*

Quick Tips Collector

Maria Holmes reports that she can no longer collect and edit the **Quick Tips**. Do we have another volunteer for this task? And a big thank you to Maria for her years of good work!

Quick Tip

My *B. versicolor* seeds germinated in 31 days. The Seed Fund said the germination for *B. versicolor* takes from 70 to 390 days. I use a tin can that the size of a quart mayonnaise jar cover will fit into it upside down. The can is wrapped with layers of newspaper and foil to hold in the heat and filled to three fourths full of hot water (not boiling). The seed tray is set in a plastic saucer and then placed on top of the tin can. The water is reheated twice a day. It works!

Louise Muzyk
6905 NE 182 St., #14
Kenmore, WA 98028-
2748

Return to Tropical World, Fortin de las Flores, Mexico

by Dale Sena

It's been 5 years since I last visited Tropical World's eco-tourist facilities in Mexico. And almost that long since the first article about it appeared in the *Begonian*. (See Virginia Jens' article in the January/February 1996 issue.) Located about two hours by car inland from the city of Vera Cruz, "la finca" (the farm, as they affectionately refer to the former coffee farm) is a begonia lover's paradise.

Located in the town of Fortin de las Flores, it is certainly off the regular tourist route. On this trip, we flew into Mexico City, then took two bus rides, each two hours long. (An alternate route is through Vera Cruz, but it's also much more expensive.) Buses are the main form of transportation for most Mexicans, and the system is very efficient and reliable. It's also a great opportunity to experience more of the local flavor of Mexico.

After traveling all day, I was anxious to see Tropical World again. What changes in 5 years! First of all, the construction is done, and the mud is now a beautifully landscaped lawn/soccer field. The guest facilities are beautiful and comfortable. Like small townhouses, each room has its own unique decor - Africa, the Orient, the Pig Room, and others. Three large greenhouses behind the kitchen are filled with lots and lots of everything, but especially orchids, bromeliads and begonias. Highlights of the landscaping include very attractive flat round stepping stones of various sizes, and many wonderful begonias. Lots and lots of other beautiful things too...aroids, gingers, bananas, orchids, toucans, and other birds, and butterflies, ...but I was so dis-

tracted by the begonias. Some begonias, such as *B. heracleifolia*, *B. nelumbiifolia*, and *B. carolineifolia* self-pollinate and drop seed and come up everywhere. I mean *everywhere*...every crack and every crevice in sidewalks, buildings and roofs. Under the greenhouse benches, and along the sides of the roads like weeds. (Tropical World's co-owner, Bruce Pearson, considers *B. heracleifolia* particularly invasive.) If you're a plant, the climate in Fortin is perfect: Daytime highs of 70°F to 80°F at night, year round. Summer-time is the rainy season, with many frequent brief rain showers. (Michael Marino, Tropical World's other co-owner, claims that the climate is similar to that of Hilo, Hawaii.)

On this trip, we left Tropical World for two days to check out a "new" (to us, anyway!) collecting area - Lake Catamoto, a large freshwater lake near the east coast of Mexico. It's two hours by car south of Vera Cruz, and very tropical. Also fairly "mountainous," at least it seemed that way to this Floridian. The weather was warm and humid by day (75 - 85°F) and cooler and humid at night (60 - 70°F). Rain was frequent and brief, anytime of the day or night, typical of rainforest conditions.

As I mentioned earlier, the most frequently seen begonias were *B. heracleifolia*, *nelumbiifolia*, and *carolineifolia*. There were lots of others, of course, but what particularly struck me this time was the apparent variety I observed in these three species. Bruce (who loves begonias too) pointed to begonia after begonia, looking for a name, and I



Right, Dale Sena on location says, "Oh, my. Look at that begonia!" Above, she photographs the different looks of B. heracleifolia.



kept saying, “*B. heracleifolia* ...*heracleifolia*...*heracleifolia*,” and “*B. carolineifolia*...*carolineifolia*...*carolineifolia*.” Growing side by side, each and every one was noticeably different, yet at the same time they were also the same. For someone like myself who is so used to growing clones, seeing the variations in their native habitat was very interesting.

Of the three, I noticed the most variability in *B. heracleifolia*. Many of us are familiar with the one we refer to as *B. heracleifolia* var. *nigricans*, the one with dark markings. But some had narrower leaves, or wider leaves, or were more serrated, or had different markings. Some were spotted, some plain, others had a silver blush. In the case of *B. carolineifolia*, there were variations in the leaf shapes and margins. Fewer, or more drip points for example, as well as variations in its size. And of the three, the least amount of variation I noticed was in *B. nelumbiifolia*. It remained unchanged everywhere I saw it except one place. Out of reach and high above a waterfall I spotted the variation we call “*rubra*”. Unfortunately, my camera did not pick up the distinctive red veins.

It’s been suggested to me that maybe I was seeing natural hybrids. That’s pos-

sible, I’m sure. But my limited exposure to hybridizing leads me to think that hybrids would have even more variation. Wouldn’t the first generations show the distinctive characteristics of their respective parents? Wouldn’t later generations be more blended? My feeling is that I was seeing generations of species inbreeding, allowing some recessive traits to pop out. Perhaps DNA technology will answer some of these questions for us. Perhaps it’ll only take us to a new level of questions.

If you’ve ever thought about an ecotrip, Tropical World is a wonderful facility, and very affordable. Those who are interested in a trip to the Mexican facility should contact Bruce or Michael at Tropical World in Boynton Beach, FL, by phone at 561-732-8813 or by E-mail at TROPICALW@aol.com for the details.

Dale Sena will no doubt grow out some of these variations at 816 W. Braddock St., Tampa, FL 33603-5410. She can be reached by E-mail at dalesena@cs.com. Those interested in the subject of species variation can read more about it in Jack Golding’s article “Begonia Species are Variable” in the January/February 1992 Begonian, p. 10-12 or in F. Holley’s “Variety is the Spice...” in the March/April 1995 issue, p. 44-45.

IN MEMORY

On the 14th of June 2000, it was with much sadness we farewelled **Jack Krempin**, a fourth generation nurseryman from Newcastle, new South Wales, who spent his retiring years on the Gold Coast of Queensland, at first with his own business at Sundale Shopping Centre, and then at Dellow’s, one of Australia’s largest nurseries, as one of their managers. He was known throughout Australia and indeed the world for being the author of many books with a botanical theme. He

researched all plants that he purchased, grew, hybridised, and propagated on, so his information was factual to the best of his knowledge. His involvement with indoor plant books, plus palms and cycads, and many others were a credit to his widespread horticultural knowledge.

Knowing your Begonias is the book we at the Queensland Begonia Society are most familiar with, and it is much sought after for its many beautiful coloured photos.

Carmel and Ken Browne
Australia

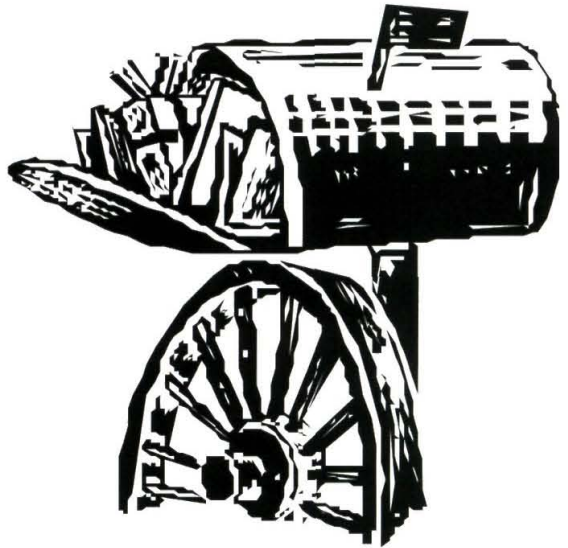
***The Southwest Region/American
Begonia Society***

Wishes Begonia Growers Everywhere

Happy Holidays

**and the *Best
Growing
Conditions Ever*
for All Your
Begonias in**

2001



When Our Members Invite you to

Dallas

for Our Next Get-Together



**Holiday
Greetings
From
The
Miami
Branch**

B. Silver Shadows

B. Dale Sena

B. Little Red Wagon

B. Spiderman

B. Tom Tom

B. Strawberry

B. Julieta

B. Rolling Thunder

B. Mem. Bernice Ryan

B. Caribbean Corsair

B. Simple Simon

**B. 'Caribbean King'
in the Jungle**

B. Double Yam

Startin' Out

by Jim Hannah

Transplanting begonia seedlings from their original germination containers to new 'quarters' is a simple process. It can begin as soon as the wee little guys show their first set of true leaves. These are the second pair to appear. When they are at least as large as the original pair, the plants are far enough along to withstand the move. The key is to keep transplanting shock to a minimum. A bit of preparation helps here.

The first step is to make sure you have the things you'll need on hand. These are some planting medium (soil), pots or containers, identification markers and some sort of a transplanting tool to help you handle the little rascals. A trip to the supermarket, the home furnishings section of a discount store, a stationery store, and a stamp dealer can be useful here.

Let's start with the soil. Any good potting soil will do just fine. A look through the *Begonian* will provide you with the names of some suppliers, or you can go to your local garden center. If you're adventuresome, you can mix your own. We do. We use a mix called 1:1:1. That's one part sphagnum peat moss (Canadian, not Michigan), one part vermiculite, and one part perlite. It's best to add some ground limestone to control the acidity. A good starting mix is a one pound coffee can each of peat moss, vermiculite and perlite. Then add 2 to 3 tablespoons of ground limestone. Mix thoroughly, and water to moisten and you're ready to go. It's best to do this outside -- peat moss can produce a lot of dust in the air. If you're tempted to use your own garden soil, I beg you to resist. Garden soils don't

always work out well as potting mixes, even though they may grow some absolutely super tomatoes.

Pots and containers are next on the list. It's important for any pot or container to have a drainage hole at the bottom. It's also important for the container to be tall enough. The mix in a very shallow container can become waterlogged if you don't control the watering very, very carefully. This condition can occur in shallow containers even if there's a drainage hole and it will quickly wipe out seedlings. Containers that are too shallow can also dry out very quickly with results that are just as bad. If you want a lot of inexpensive containers in a hurry, the plastic cups sold in packs of 50 in the supermarket will serve. Just make drainage holes on the bottom edge. Don't make the hole in the bottom itself -- when the cup is standing on a flat surface, there's no way for the water to run out.

Markers are helpful if you are going to grow several different begonias. A stationery store will carry permanent marking pens, sometimes called laundry markers. The ink is really permanent. We use them to mark the tags for our water lilies. The tags are a foot underwater and remain legible for years. If you're using plastic containers, you can mark directly on them.

The markers themselves can be the ones sold in garden centers or you can become a bit more inventive. Don't use wooden popsicle sticks or tongue depressors, though. The wood will rot out in a short while. If you want a lot of tags for a true bargain price, look around the home furnishings section of a discount store for a really cheap plastic Venetian blind. You may be able to get one for as little as \$3. The slats can be cut into tags with scissors. They take and retain markings just fine. We use them in our ponds. The cords

can be used to tie up old newspapers for disposal -- we try not to waste anything!

That brings us to tools. Some writers suggest using a spoon handle or a popsicle stick to lift the seedlings out. We've found that these are pretty clumsy for small seedlings, especially if they're growing close together. If you can, go to a stamp dealer's store or get hold of a stamp collector supplies catalog. We've found that stamp tongs are just the thing for lifting small seedlings with minimal damage. The 'spade tip' style is by far the best. You can push them down on both sides of a seedling and lift out a neat little 'plug'.

A few more comments will wrap things up. Your seedlings have been growing in a closed container at 100% humidity. If you transplant them, don't put the open container in a low humidity location. The seedlings may not be able to

adapt quickly enough and will wilt and die. Rather, put the containers in a high humidity location or in a clear plastic bag open at the top. As time goes on, you can simply adapt the plants to lower humidity.

Finally, the seedlings will be very small at the 4 leaf stage. There's nothing which says they must be transplanted one to a container. You can transplant several to a single container and then move them on to their own individual containers once they've grown larger.

Next time the topic will be simple vegetative propagation, or how to turn one plant into several. See you then.

Jim and Joan Hannah, growing all kinds of stuff at 158 Fisher Avenue, Staten Island, N.Y., NY and jrh158@aol.com.

Identify this Species...

September/October issues's mystery species was *B. leathermaniae* O'Reilly & Karegeannes 1983. This begonia was once known as *B. platanifolia* var. *acuminatissima* Kuntz until ABS begonia detectives Thelma O'Reilly and Carrie Karegeanes researched it and proved that it was a new species. It's primary distinguisher is the hairy collar at the petiole/leaf blade junction.

B. leathermaniae has the most beautiful of juvenile leaves, but these give way to rather plain adult leaves. It has been known to grow to 9 ft. in cultivation with a caudex at the base and a somewhat knobby base. Flowers are a light to deep pink depending on light and are pendulous and beautiful. *B. 'Phantom'* by Paul Lee is one of its hybrids and it takes the name from that changeable leaf. See

and read all about it in the *Begonian* of November/December 1983, pp. 144-149.

Eleanor Calkins was one of those correctly identifying the plant and wins this month's drawing for a small plant of this beauty.

Have you enjoyed this feature..or hated it? If so, send in your responses to the questionnaire in the Editor's Notes in the September/October issue. Only 3 responses have been received to date. Responses will guide the editor as she puts together future issues. Editors do not receive a lot of specific feedback and it is difficult to know if the magazine is meeting the needs of our members. Already from just three responses, I have ideas for future issue. Your responses will be an important help so send them today!

Carol and Peter Notaras



*Wish that You may have A Partridge, Dozens of Pears ,
Lovely Trees for this Holiday Season, and of course,
Beautiful Begonias
for all of 2001!*



**MAY THIS SEASON BE FILLED WITH
JOY AND BEGONIAS
FROM THE DALLAS AREA BRANCH**

Seasons Greetings

From The
*Barkley
Branch*



Wishing a Joyous Holiday Season and
Best Wishes for the New Year - to all
From your Begonia Friends of the
Doug Frost Branch of
ABS

Growing Begonias Indoors

by Brad Thompson

Except for the members that are blessed with a climate where they can grow begonias outdoors year round, most growers have to learn how to grow begonias indoors. Sometimes it's only for the winter months, but for some plants and people it's a year around proposition.

Most houses, especially those with forced air heat, are not perfectly suited for growing begonias indoors. Most begonias can be grown in your home, however, if you are careful to provide each with its particular requirements. There are also a few tricks that will help make growing them in the house more successful.

1. Location and Light

The first consideration is where exactly are the begonias going to live. The best light for growing indoors is to use fluorescent lighting. This will give you the most control over the amount of light your plants get. It doesn't have to be an expensive or lavish setup. Even a simple shop light with ordinary cool white tubes will suffice if you want to save money. A more expensive, but possibly more useful idea if you plan to start a larger collection of plants is to purchase a light stand. These can be bought from most mail order catalogs. The lights should run about 14 hours a day, but I have left lights on 24 hours a day and the plants did fine. The tubes should be just a couple inches above the tallest plant on the shelf.

Most of us also have natural light that we would like to take advantage of. There are begonias that will grow in nearly every window location except probably not well in a north window. Some plants in terrariums may grow fine in a

north window, however. Different areas of the country vary as far as light intensity during the months of the year. You might have to experiment to find which plants grow in which windows. If you find that the plants are stretching, they need more light and if they are stunted and burning then they need to be farther from the window or moved to a window with less light. A good share of begonias will grow in a south window and most will grow in either an eastern or western exposure.

2. Pots and Potting Mixes

How your plants are potted and what soil mix you use will have a lot to do with how successful you are. Begonias hate to be over-potted or over-watered. It is hard to kill an under-potted begonia, but they can die pretty fast if over-potted. Don't move begonias to a larger pot until roots have filled the current pot. If you find that a certain plant never seems to dry out, it is probably in too large of a pot. Move it down to a size that fits the rootball after you've removed all the soggy wet mix.

For growing indoors you should always use a soilless mix. Nearly all soilless mixes are mostly composed of peatmoss with additions of perlite and/or vermiculite. You can also make your own by mixing two thirds peatmoss or a peat based mix with a third part perlite. A couple of commonly available peat based mixes are Sunshine and Fafard. If you use plain peatmoss you should premoisten it before using because it can sometimes be hard to wet in the first place. When I use peat, I wet it with boiling water to get

it slightly damp and then use it after it cools. I wouldn't recommend using any amendments you would commonly use outdoors such as leaf mold or manure, or even garden soil. These will cause your mix to stay too wet indoors and also invite diseases. A peat mix is the perfect mix for indoors since it drains well, but holds the perfect amount of moisture for the plant without staying too wet. I would use the same mix for begonias in terrariums.

As far as watering goes, a good pot for using indoors is the type called a self-watering pot. There are many brands and they work well for most begonias. You should also only use a peat based mix for these types of pots; anything else will stay too wet. Allow the mix to dry out slightly before refilling the reservoir again.

3. Watering

Regardless of what you have read in indoor gardening books, there are few plants that want to stay constantly moist. Besides, constantly moist is near impossible to achieve. Allow the surface of the mix to dry out slightly and then water thoroughly till water runs out the bottom when using conventional pots. Don't use saucers unless you fill them with pebbles so that the plant doesn't sit in water. You can use bottom watering, but empty the water out of the saucer after a couple of hours. Most begonias will also grow well using wick watering such as is used for African violets and gesneriads.

4. Humidity

Humidity is the biggest problem with growing begonias indoors. Although begonias don't like to be in wet soil, they do like humidity in the air. You can achieve enough humidity for many types of begonias by simply misting them daily.

You can also use a humidifier. If you are growing plants under fluorescent lights a simple way to keep good humidity is to cover the plant stand with a plastic tent (make sure to use nonflammable plastic). They will still usually benefit from misting inside the tent because if the light fixtures are inside the tent they tend to keep it warmer and the air will dry out faster.

5. Terrariums

There are many begonias that are easier to maintain and that you will have greater success with if they are grown in terrariums. It's possible that your past attempts with terrariums have soured you on them, but if you follow a few simple rules you should do well with them. Most people keep their terrariums too wet and this is the most common reason for failure. You should only use a sterile medium for growing and this should only be damp.

The two most common mediums are the peat mix listed above or plain green sphagnum moss (don't use the brown florist type sphagnum). If you use peatmoss, first put in a layer of perlite or pebbles in the bottom covered by a thin layer of mix. This will allow any extra water a place to drain. If you use sphagnum, wet it first with hot water and squeeze out the extra water before using. Peat and sphagnum are already basically sterile and if you take the added precaution to wet with boiling water before use, it will be even more so. There will always be some glass fogging after planting, but if it's excessive, crack the lid open until it has dried out enough that you can close tightly. Terrariums require less light than plants in pots and should never get direct sun. They should also not be fertilized often. Since the soil in a terrarium never gets flushed, the salts will build up and damage the plant.

Happy Holidays

and a

Joyous New Year

to All

**Alfred D.
Robinson
Branch**

*Houston
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ABS*



Happy Holidays

*All the members
of the
Palos Verdes
Branch
wish that you may
have the best of
holidays and that all
your begonias
have beautiful
blooms in
2001.*



6. Fertilizing

All plants that are actively growing do best with regular fertilizing. There are many brands of fertilizer formulated so you can fertilize every time you water by adding a few drops to the watering can. You can also just mix your own weak fertilizer such as quarter strength and use once a week.

7. Additional Notes

Begonias grown indoors can be pinched or pruned any time of the year. Any plants you bring indoors from outside will probably adjust easier if you trim them back. This will also give you cuttings to start a back up plant in case your plant doesn't do well with the change of conditions.

Indoor plants in nice warm conditions are very prone to mealy bugs. The easiest and least toxic mealy bug killer is plain rubbing alcohol. You can brush the mealy bugs with a cue tip or artist brush dipped in the alcohol and they die on contact. For a badly infested plant you can also put the alcohol in a spray bottle and spray the entire plant. It won't harm the plant. Avoid spraying the soil directly as a precaution.

Hope this article gives you a few ideas and helps you to grow begonias indoors successfully.

Brad Thompson is a former Begonian editor and is well-known as an expert grower and hybridizer. You may E-mail him at BTbegonia@aol.com or write him at 2436 W. Lomita Bl. #1, Lomita, CA 90717.

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Note for Your Directory of Begonia Societies

The former National Representative for the Knickerbocker Society has moved away.

The new National Representative is:

Nikki Taussig

233 Harrison Avenue

Highland Park, NJ 08904

Ph: 732-246-0175

To
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and
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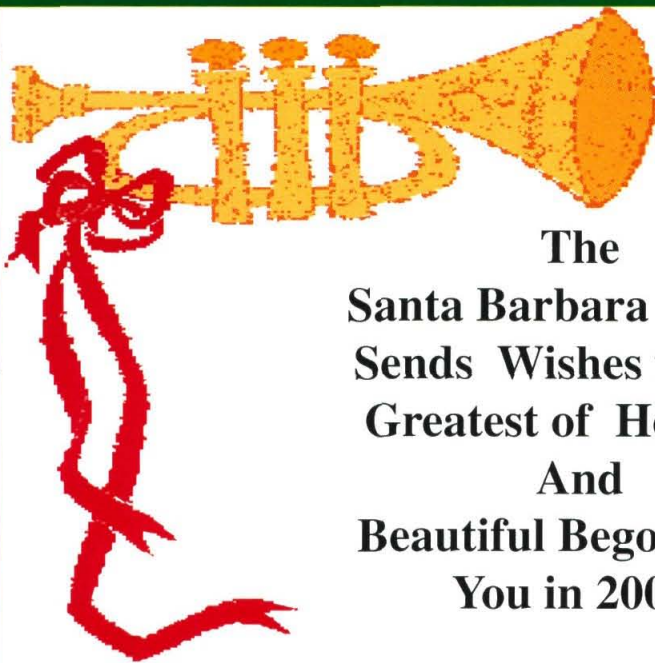
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The Seed Fund needs donations of seeds. Seeds may be traded for seeds offered in the Seed Fund Listings. Unlisted seeds from earlier offers may be available in small quantities. If you have a special need ask the Seed Fund Administrator. The need for new seeds 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. The Seed Fund needs enough seeds for 25 packets.

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The CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND is a project of the Mabel Corwin Branch of the ABS in San Diego County, California.

Seed donor this issue was Evelyn Bouquet. September/October seed were donated by: Barbara Berg, Chiara Seccovini, Jackie Davis, and Michael Ludwig.

Seed List

November-December 2000

- ND00-01: *B. corallina*
- ND00-02: *B. dipetala*
- ND00-03: *B. dregii* var. *natalensis*
- ND00-04: *B. dregii* var. *macbethii*
- ND00-05: *B. glabra* var. *cordifolia*
- ND00-06: *B. hypolipara*
- ND00-07: *B. kellermanii*
- ND00-08: *B. kuhlmannii*
- ND00-09: *B. lindleyana*
- ND00-10: *B. macdougalii*

Continued on page 232.



B. 'Looking Glass'

*The Sacramento Branch
Wishes holiday cheer and joy
to everyone
who love and grow
Begonias*

- ND00-11: *B. multinervia*
 ND00-12: *B. naumoniensis*
 ND00-13: *B. peltata*
 ND00-14: *B. partita*
 ND00-15: *B. parvifolia*
 ND00-16: *B. rubropilosa*

DESCRIPTIONS

NOTE: The names reported here as correct are based on the latest information from the Smithsonian *Begoniaceae* by Smith, Wasshausen, Golding, and Karegeannes.

ND00-01: *B. corallina* Carriere [Brazil] (Sect. *Gaerdtia*). Stems 8-10 feet; leaves 3-8 inches long, lanceolate, glossy green with white spots above, red underneath, greener toward the margin; numerous large, pink flowers in spring.

ND00-02: *B. dipetala* Graham [India] (Sect. *Haagea*). Stems to two feet, erect, rarely branches; leaves finely toothed, green above, red underneath; flowers light pink, may flower all year.

ND00-03: *B. dregei* var. ***natalensis*** W.J. Hooker. Now considered to be a synonym of *B. dregei* var. *dregei*. Caudate glabrous succulent reddish stem 1-3 feet tall; small leaves similar to maple leaves, light green with purple veins, reddish underneath; white flowers in summer.

ND00-04: *B. dregei* Otto & Dietrich var. ***macbethii*** L.H. Bailey [South Africa] (Sect. *Augustia*). Similar to ND00-03, stems shorter and more slender; leaves smaller, deeply notched to lobed, green veined.

ND00-05: *B. glabra* Aublet var. ***cordifolia*** (C. de Candolle) Irmscher, [S. America] (Sect. *Wageneria*). Stems trailing, branched, leaves medium, ovate-lanceolate, short acuminate, cordate at base, crenate, bright glossy green, depressed veins; small white flowers in summer.

ND00-06: *B. hypolipara* Sandwith, [Honduras]. Now considered a synonym of *B. sericoneura* Liebmann. Rhizomatous, leaves dull green, thick, soft, oval, entire to 20 inches; large white flowers in winter.

ND00-07: *B. kellermanii* C. de Candolle [Guatemala] (Sect. *Gireoudia*). Stems 1-3 feet,

succulent, hairy; leaves peltate, ovate, acuminate, green with white felting above; flowers white on erect peduncles in winter.

ND00-08: *B. kuhlmannii* Brade [Brazil] (Sect. *Knesebeckia*). Thick stems, long narrow heart shaped leaves with sunken veins; petiole with seven lengthwise ridges; white to pink flowers.

ND00-09: *B. lindleyana* Walpers [Guatemala] (Sect. *Gireoudia*). Rhizomatous, usually erect to 12 inches, covered with red felt when young; leaves 3-8 inches long, obliquely broad ovate, cordate base, toothed; flowers white in broad cymes on hairy peduncles above foliage in spring to summer.

ND00-10: *B. macdougallii* R. Ziesenhenné [Mexico]. Now considered to be a synonym of *B. thiemei* C. de Candolle. Succulent rhizome ascending to erect; leaves 2 feet or more, palmately compounded with 7-10 lanceolate leaflets on fleshy green, brown-hairy petioles; small greenish white flowers in spring.

ND00-11: *B. multinervia* Liebmann [Central America: Costa Rica, Panama] (Sect. *Gireoudia*). Thick, erect, sparsely branched rhizome; large wavy-margined leaves; glossy green leaves with reddish-brown veins; white to pink flowers in winter.

ND00-12: *B. naumoniensis* Irmscher [New Guinea] (Sect. *Petermannia*). See picture in the *Begonian* V. 39, Aug., 1972, p. 176.

ND00-13: *B. peltata* Otto & Dietrich var. ***peltata***, [Mexico, Guatemala] (Sect. *Gireoudia*). Stems 1-3 feet, succulent, hairy; leaves peltate, ovate, acuminate, green with white felting above; flowers white on long erect peduncles in winter.

ND00-14: *B. partita* Irmscher [South Africa]. Now considered a synonym of *B. dregei* Otto & Dietrich. Leaf lobes longer and narrower than typical *B. dregei*.

ND00-15: *B. parvifolia* Schott [Brazil] (Sect. *Pritzelia*). Large lobed leaves and large clusters of fragrant white flowers.

ND00-16: *B. rubropilosa* A. de Candolle [Brazil] (Sect. *Pritzelia*). No description available.

New Cultivars

Official International Registrations 975-977

Gene Salisbury, Nomenclature Director

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 'Lyndybelle'

No. 975 *Begonia* ('Zulu' [Blackmore & Langdon] x #3560 [Howard Siebold Cultivar]) 'Lyndybelle'

This tuber hybrida is 18" at maturity. Leaves are dark green to burgundy with lighter green veins, wing shape with acute tips and are 6" long by 4" wide. Margin is scalloped, but varies with the age of the plant. The surface is sparsely hairy with 9 main veins. Petioles are 3 to 4", light green with many hairs. Flowers are red. Male flowers are large and fragrant, 7" with 27 petals. Male flower clusters are single, females have 1 to 2 flowers. Clusters are few. Female flowers are 1.5". Length of flower peduncle is 7 to 10". Season of bloom is midseason to frost. This begonia differs from others in being a large, rose form, fragrant, crimson pendula.

This plant originated from several seedlings that germinated from the seed lot supplied by Howard Siebold that was the result of his cross #631. It has been propagated by tissue culture only thus far.

Developed in 1996 by R.M. Hatcher, 4 Sheahan Cres., Nepean, Ontario, K2H8M2 Canada. It first bloomed in 1997 and has been tested by Lindy Ranger and Line Bellemare of Rideau Hall Greenhouse, 1 Sussex Dr.,

Ottawa, Ontario KIA 0A1. Registered June 2, 2000.

Begonia 'Amelia Hamilton'

No. 976 *Begonia* (Unknown [Blackmore & Langdon] x Unknown [Blackmore & Langdon]) 'Amelia Hamilton'

This tuber hybrida grows to approximately 19". Its leaves are mottled forest green with lighter green veins. They are 8.5" long x 4.5" wide with an acute tip. The margin is toothed. Surface is smooth, sparsely hairy with 7 main veins. Petioles are 9", blush pink, with sparse hairs. Stipules are 1/4" x 1/4" and are a semi-transparent green.

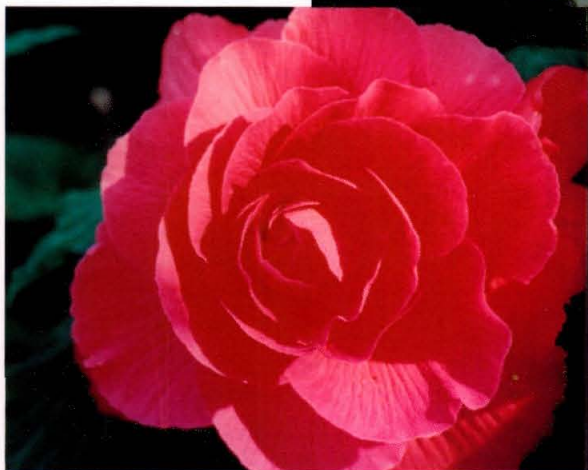
Male flowers are 7" with 20 petals. Females are 3 1/4" with 4 petals and ovaries are pale green. Peduncles are 5". Large, snow white double rose form flowers are on an upright, large, vigorous plant from midsummer until frost.

The plant was selected from several seedlings germinated from a seed lot supplied by Blackmore and Langdon in 1996. The seed packet was labeled "Double Begonia - Mixed Colours." It has been propagated by tissue culture exclusively.

Developed by R.M. Hatcher, 4 Sheahan Cres., Nepean, Ontario, K2H8M2 Canada in 1996. It first bloomed in 1997. It was tested by Lindy



*Above, No. 976 Begonia
'Amelia Hamilton'*



*Left, No. 977 Begonia
'Rosina Hatcher'*

*Below, No. 977 Begonia
'Lyndybelle'*



Ranger and Line Bellemare of Rideau Hall Greenhouse, 1 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, Ontario KIA 0A1. Registered July 30, 2000.

Begonia ‘Rosina Hatcher’

No. 977 Begonia (Unknown [Blackmore & Langdon] x Unknown [Blackmore & Langdon]) ‘Rosina Hatcher’

This tuber hybrida of double rose form reaches 20” at maturity. Its leaves are lush, medium green and 8” long x 5” wide. They are toothed, velvet smooth with 9 main veins. Stipules are 5/8” by 1/4”, semitransparent, light green.

Flowers are large, spectacular deep pink double rose form. Male flowers are about 8” with 24 petals and females are

3” with 4 petals. The flower peduncle is 6” and strong. This robust, upright plant blooms midsummer to frost.

This plant is a prolific bloomer. It is capable of producing 9 to 9 1/2” blooms of exhibition quality. It was selected from numerous seedlings that originated in seeds purchased from Blackmore & Langdon in 1995. The seed packet indicated “Double Begonia - Mixed Colours.” All propagation has been by tissue culture.

Developed by R.M. Hatcher, 4 Sheahan Cres., Nepean, Ontario, K2H8M2 Canada in 1994. It first bloomed in 1996. It has been tested by Lindy Ranger and Line Bellemare (address above). It was registered July 30, 2000.



In the Mailbox

by Greg Sytch,
Horticultural
Correspondent

The short days of winter are upon us, and that can mean only one thing to begonians - the rhizomatous will be blooming soon. Lately, I've been answering quite a few E-mails regarding this diverse group of begonias, with issues ranging from the searing heat in Texas this past summer to preparation for bringing the plants inside for fall. The answer is fairly consistent no matter what the problem - be cautious about your watering!

I feel for my poor Texas friends for this past summer was one of the hottest and driest on record. One lady E-mailed me when it was 112°F in Austin, and she did not know what to do to keep her plants going other than bringing them indoors into the A/C. I've never experienced growing conditions like that and could only offer the same advice as everyone else on the begonia e-group list which is spray down the growing area frequently with cool water and do not over water. Living in Central Florida, and growing within a mile of the Gulf beaches, it is a rare afternoon that soars past the lower 90's as our sea breezes modify the afternoon heat. Our nights stay hot, but our afternoons remain tolerable in comparison. Any Texan, or Oklahoman, who had success getting their begonias through the summer, please feel free to E-mail me on what you did that was so successful so I can use it in the future.

I did receive several downloads of pictures to identify, and when it comes to the ID of a begonia via picture, it is important to know the following: 1) Conditions it is growing in, such as a greenhouse, indoors, summering outdoors, etc.;

2) where you got the original plant or cutting; 3) type of soil in which the plant is growing; 4) and time of year the picture is being taken. Whether you are sending me a download or mailing snail mail, please include this information and I can begin my study. Oh yea, one more thing! Please do not send me tuberous begonias to identify because here in Florida we do not grow them in our heat. I have not grown a tuberous in over 12 years and am unfamiliar with their characteristics. Perhaps another begonia in a cooler climate might be my counterpart for this group? E-mail me, please! (*A/k/a help me someone!*)

Back to 'tis the season. Remember that when your rhizomatous are beginning their bloom they will not be actively putting out new growth until the blooming is nearly finished. Therefore, it is wise to only feed lightly, and perhaps use a bloom fertilizer to enhance the quality and quantity of the blossoms. Remember, the middle number is for blossoms, so try a formula such as 15-30-15 or 5-60-7 and you'll get flowers to remember. If your plants are in full bloom, and you have species, also remember to pollinate and harvest that seed for the seed fund. We need all we can get. If you would like directions on pollinating and harvesting, E-mail me and I will give you the simple directions! Hope everyone has a healthy, happy holiday season! Best from Greg.

E-mail: gsytch@cs.com. Write to Greg Sytch, 6329 Alaska Avenue, New Port Richey, FL 34653 (727) 841-9618.



Seasons Greetings



The Palm Beaches Branch of the American Begonia Society would like to wish all of our members and friends, a very special Holiday Season and a prosperous growing year.



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ABS WINTER BOARD MEETING

The Atlanta Branch of the American Begonia Society is happy to welcome ABS back to Atlanta—this time for the Winter Board Meeting. The following registration form and information will assist you in making your plans to attend.

Hotel: Ramada Plaza Hotel (located 5 minutes from the Atlanta Airport)

1419 Virginia Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30337 (404) 768-7800. Reservations must be made directly with the hotel for your stay. Rates: \$80 single or double, free parking. Free 24-hour airport shuttle (white bus with 4 logos on it: Ramada, Drury Inn, Howard Johnsons and Red Roof). Free Starbucks coffee in lobby from 6:00-11:00 a.m. In-room coffee makers and hair dryers. Any other questions can be directed to the hotel. **CUT-OFF DAY FOR REGISTRATION: February 1, 2001. After that rooms may not be available and the room rates will increase.**

Schedule of events:

Thursday, February 22 (a small block of rooms for early arrivers)

Friday, February 23 (most will arrive this day—dinner on your own at several restaurants within a brief walking distance of the hotel)

Saturday, February 24 - 9:15 a.m. leave for the Southeastern Flower Show (20 minute drive). Return to hotel by noon-lunch on your own. 1:30-5:00 ABS Winter Board Meeting 6:30 – Banquet at the hotel. Buffet dinner \$23.00 each person

Sunday, February 25 – visit to the Atlanta Botanical Garden at 9:00 a.m. with return to the hotel by noon for lunch on your own and departure to the airport. Fee to the garden is \$7 adults, \$5 Seniors, paid individually at the entrance.

Note: If we have enough people attending who are driving we will car pool to the events and will not have to rent a bus for the trip to the Flower Show or the Botanical Garden.

Cut the form here and make out checks to **Carolyn R. Hawkins**. Send registration form and checks to: **Carolyn Hawkins, 7329 Kendel Court, Jonesboro, GA 30236-2512**

Name _____

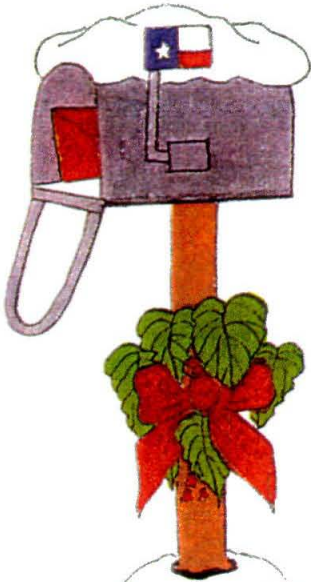
Address _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

<u>Amount Enclosed</u>	<u>No. Attending</u>	
I will attend the Southeastern Flower Show \$11	_____	_____
I will attend the Saturday Night Buffet Dinner \$23	_____	_____
I will have a car and can help with car pooling	Yes _____	No _____
I will attend the tour to the Atlanta Botanical Garden	Yes _____	No _____
I plan to arrive via air at:	_____	
I will have a roommate Yes _____ No _____	Name: _____	

Deadline for registration is February 10th.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS



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Greetings
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Parent
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*Happy Holidays
To All*

*from
The South Bay Branch*

NEWS: ABS, Branch, International

From the Brooklyn Botanic Garden comes this report entitled "Begonias in Paradise":

"As part of their ongoing study of the diverse and horticulturally important begonia family, BBG scientists and colleagues travelled to the islands of Hawaii in May to collect leaf samples to be studied using DNA analysis.

The begonia family (*Begoniaceae*) consists of three genera: the genus *Begonia*, which includes some 1400 species spread throughout the tropics and subtropics; the genus *Symbegonia*, with 16 species in New Guinea; and the genus *Hillebrandia*, which is represented by a single species, *Hillebrandia sandwicensis*, found only in the Hawaiian islands. BBG's scientists, together with scientists from Ithaca College, have hypothesized that *Hillebrandia* or its predecessor arrived on the Hawaiian archipelago via "island hopping" from now-submerged islands northwest of the current Hawaiian islands.

To test their theory, the scientists -- BBG's horticultural taxonomist **Dr. Mark Tebbitt** and research technician **Dr. James Yeadon**, together with **Dr. Susan Swenson**, ...at Ithaca College, and two Ithaca College students -- visited the islands of Oahu, Kauai, Maui, and Molokai. There they worked with scientists from the National Tropical Botanical Garden and the Nature Conservancy to collect dried leaf samples from about 150 individual *Hillebrandia sandwicensis* plants found at geographically scattered sites.

They are now extracting and analyzing DNA from these plants, to detect the genetic variations among the specimens from the different areas of the islands. If *Hillebrandia* has indeed been slowly island hopping, the scientists ex-

pect to find greater genetic diversity among the specimens from the older islands, and less diversity in the younger islands. Their studies, which should be completed in about 18 months, will provide valuable information about plant dispersal including information critical to future conservation and management of *Hillebrandia*."

(Thanks to Karen Lawrence and Charles Jaros for bringing this to our attention.)

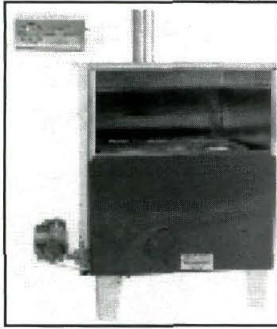
Iris Bird shared her knowledge and propagation mix for rhizomatous begonias in a program for the Doug Frost Branch in August. Her recipe for the potting mix is: "1 part vermiculite, 1 part perlite, 1 handful (aquarium) charcoal, 5 drops of Superthrive in 2 gals. water. Just dampen the mix and let stand overnight. If it is a little too dry, add a little more water until it is just damp, not saturated and not dripping wet. Too wet and your wedges will rot very quickly."

Corrections for the September/October issue: Charles Jaros tells us that the cover photo (Page 166, 167) is *B.* 'Caribbean Prince', a Tim Anderson hybrid. Tim says that it is the result of *B.* 'Boomer' selfed. Also, Tim grew *B.* 'Harbor Lights'. And on page 194, there was a label crossup and the correct *U* number for this plant is *U400*; we hope to carry a photo of the real *U388* soon. Should you have a photo or plant of this one, be sure to correct the label. And finally on page 185, the correct spelling is *B.* 'Connee Boswell', named after a jazz singer and registered as #881 in 1985. It is a cross of *B. palmata* var. *palmata* x *diadema* (Thanks to the Westchester Branch Newsletter for this last note.)

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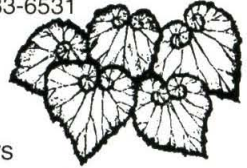
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COMING EVENTS

February 23-25, 2001: Winter ABS Board Meeting in Atlanta. See page 238.

July 4-8, 2001: ABS Convention 2001 in Denver, CO. Packets are scheduled to go out in January. There will be a preconvention tour on the day before the convention starts and a postconvention tour following the last day of the convention. For more information call Andy Conely at 303-455-7845.

2001: Southwest Region/ABS Get-Together in Dallas, TX. Date to be set.

September 2002: AABS Convention, Perth, Australia. You're invited!

Closing Date for Next Issue is November 15.

**Please! Respond to Editor's Questionnaire, Sept/Oct Issue, Page 200!
Remember to note new address for editor below.**

The Begonian

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