



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: Here is the growing wonderland at Hi-Mark Nursery (which advertizes in these pages) in a photo taken February 2, 2002 by **Iris Bird.**

Back: And another one from California - here is *B. gracilis* var. *martiana* to remind us to start tubers now. It is a photo from **Jackie Davis;** read her letter on page 54

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*B. 'Victoria Woods' grown by Joyce Pridgen, on her lanai, April '03.
Photo by Doug Pridgen/*



Quick

Check your mailing label.

If it reads

200405 or 200406 , your membership is about to expire. Please renew! We don't want to lose you.

President's Message

I think one of the most important benefits of American Begonia Society membership is attending National and Regional conventions and shows. Barbara and I attended our first ABS convention in the mid-sixties that was held in a middle school gymnasium in Long Beach, California. We had grown mostly tuberous begonias prior to that time and we were amazed at the number of species and hybrids on display in the show and in the plant sale. We have attended many conventions since then.

We joined the ABS at that convention and we were given packets of seeds when we signed up. Among the seed packets was *B. herbacea*. I was transferred to Washington, D.C. shortly after the convention and we started the seeds under lights after we relocated. *B. herbacea* grew and thrived even though we moved it to New Jersey since I was transferred to New York when the plant was just a few months old. We joined the Knickerbocker Branch and met a large group of good begonia growers who regularly shared cuttings and plants and had a well stocked plant sale table at each meeting. We also met **Jack Golding** who was starting his study of begonia nomenclature.

After five years in New Jersey where we were still growing under lights, we moved the *B. herbacea* and about 100 other begonias to Chicago where we attached a greenhouse to our home and became charter members of the Greater Chicago Begonia Branch. The branch had some of the best growers I have ever known and one of our members, **Phil Seitner**, wrote a paper on the variation in seeds of species that is still often referenced in begonia literature. About five years later we moved *B. herbacea* and 150 other begonias to New York where we re-

joined Knickerbocker branch just in time to help the branch prepare to host the first ABS convention held outside California. I still remember the *B. luxurians* that was so perfectly grown and the *B. bogneri* that was the center of much attention. Both, if I remember correctly, were entered by **Corliss Engle** from Boston.

We built a greenhouse attached to our home and we now grow a couple hundred begonias, a good mixture of hybrids and species, in the greenhouse and under lights. Most of those begonias come from convention and branch plant sales, the seed fund and exchanging plants with other ABS members.

I lost *B. herbacea* after about 25 years, but **Dale Senna** who I had met at a winter board meeting in Florida sent me a replacement plant. I got another cutting of *B. herbacea* at last year's ABS convention when the Fort Worth Botanical Garden opened their greenhouses to convention attendees. In addition, I got a cutting of *B. roxburghii*, a plant I have always wanted since I saw it in **Ed and Millie Thompson's** Begonia Museum.

Barbara and I are looking forward to this year's convention in San Diego. (Barbara also learned her high school reunion is being held at the same hotel at the same time, so she gets a twofer). Maybe she can recruit some classmates to the ABS.

Freda Holley tells me that a little more than half of our members don't belong to a branch. I would urge all our non-branch members to join us in San Diego on August 24 – 29 for interesting tours of the gardens of exceptional growers in Southern California and a buying trip to **Mike Kartuz'** greenhouse and, of course, a fabulous show of California grown Begonias, plant sales, seminars and a lot of contact with friendly ABS members. Bring an empty suitcase or two to take

home your newly acquired plants. Make your plane and hotel reservations now, you'll be glad you did. Barbara and I are always happy we attended that first con-

vention for us nearly forty years ago. See you there.

Howard Berg

In Memory: Edward J. Thompson

Edward J. Thompson, coauthor with Mildred L. Thompson of *Begonias: The Complete Reference Guide* -- a major, enriching resource for begonia lovers and growers -- left us December 11, 2003, after a long illness.

Ed was a recipient with Millie of the ABS Eva Gray Kenworthy Gray Award for literary contribution to knowledge of begonias and of a special president's citation.

He took most of the beautiful photos in the Guide and contributed to the work in many important ways, Millie says. The naturalistic plantings on driftwood and rocks were Ed's. He was publisher of the *1984 Update*. He was also co-owner of the Thompson's living museum in the 30' by 72' greenhouse on Long Island's Southampton College campus. Envisioning the collection as a "reference library of living begonias," the Thompsons sought examples of every begonia being grown in cultivation, especially trying to collect and maintain endangered species.

When, after years during which many ABS visitors enjoyed their magnificent plants and informative lectures, the Thompsons had to give up the greenhouse, they distributed plants, cuttings, and seed to botanical gardens in a number of states.

Called an avid gardener by friends, Ed built benches, shared grooming and fertilizing, took charge of spraying, transplanted the heavy plants, and planned placement in the greenhouse -- in addition to the Thompson's plumbing business. When they married he was the plant

grower, Millie says, and she the city girl. It was he who interested her in growing. He participated in giving programs and in showing, and supported her writing.

"Original vision...pursuit of knowledge...dedication to perfection," the citation reads.

Carrie Karegeannes

When I visit the internet today and see the number of beautiful photographs available, I think no one now can understand the impact that the Thompson's books made on those of us interested in begonias in the 1980's. It seemed a miracle to have available the wonderful color photos there; my first copy of the book is so worn from constant reference over the years that it bears witness to its importance. My great regret is that I never had the opportunity to visit that greenhouse, but Ed and Millie Thompson gave us the lasting gift of memory in that book. Ed lives on in its pages... FH

**Plan Today: Come to
San Diego for the
ABS Convention 2004:
Back to the Future
which this year
will be dedicated to the
memory of Marge Lee.**

Unidentified Species Listing

Thelma O'Reilly, Project Director

B. U293

Western Malaysia. Cuttings collected by Scott Hoover 40.0 km from Rt. 1 on road to Fraser Hill off Rt. 55, February 21, 1990. Habitat: A modest population on a moss covered shady cliff face above stream. Elevation 3100 ft. This rhizomatous species is same as *B. U303*.

B. U294

Western Malaysia. Cuttings collected by Scott Hoover at Maxwells Hill, Perak Province, March 1, 1990. Habitat: About 150 m before office building above a small stream on a heavily vegetated embankment above a drain ditch. Elevation 3200 ft. Collector noted that this species has an affinity to *Begonia maxwelliana*.

B. U295

Ecuador. Tubers collected by Scott Hoover in Los Rios Province on road from Guaranda to Pueblo Viejo, 34.8 km from a crest, January 21, 1988. Abundant local population along cliff face. Tuberous: Scarlet red flowers. Elevation 2900 ft. Note: In cultivation Thelma O'Reilly noted flower color was deep orange, leaves green, female tepals 5, male tepals 4. Identified as *Begonia froebelii* by Thelma O'Reilly.

B. U296

Norther Thailand. Cuttings collected by Scott Hoover at Doi Inthanon National Park, January 25, 1990. Habitat: Steep wet slopes at Si Ri Phum waterfall. Population growing in mist of waterfall. Elevation 5700 ft.

B. U297

Northern Thailand. Cuttings collected by Scott Hoover at Thum Lueasi Cave in Doi Suthep/Doi Pui National Park, January 27, 1990. Habitat: Small population growing in cracks between limestone boulders at small waterfall.

B. U. 298

Ecuador: Cuttings collected by Scott Hoover near Hwy. 63.2 km from Machala between Camarone and Saracay, February 25, 1988. Habitat: Forested embankment on nearly vertical rock face. Elevation 1200 ft. Rhizomatous. Modest colony of scattered individuals with *Begonia nelumbiifolia*-like roundish, peltate leaves.

B. U299

Laguna, the Philippines. Species seed obtained by Martin Johnson from University of Philippines Land Grant. Distributed by Edgar Bates, July, 1991.

B. U300

Hinabongan, N. Samer, Indonesia. Species seed obtained by Martin Johnson. Distributed by Edgar Bates, July, 1991. Rhizomatous: Leaves greenish bronze, sparsely hairy with few stiff hairs on upper veins, 1 3/4" x 2 1/4". Male flowers white, small glabrous, 2 tepals, female flowers white, small glabrous, 4 tepals. Terrarium culture recommended

B. U301

Telupit, Malaysia. Species seed obtained by Martin Johnson. Distributed by Edgar Bates, July 1991. Habit: Meliau River



Above, Begonia U295 grown by **Mabel Corwin**, photo by **Edgar Bates**, with an inset of its flowers in a photo taken by **Thelma O'Reilly**. Below is B. U298 at Thelma O'Reilly's home in a photo she took during the disastrous fires of 2003. At right, the inset is of another older plant of B. U298 showing its stem grown by Mabel Corwin in a photo by Thelma O'Reilly.



Watering, Not a Simple Chore

by Morris Mueller

Watering is not a glamorous topic to write or read about. Yet this topic is most essential to growing and upon consideration is not as simple as dumping water on a plant. Without thinking consciously about it, I realized how complex watering really is for me. There are a lot of considerations that go into watering each and every plant.

Is it spring, summer, fall or winter? The season has much to do with how often to water. And the season is influenced by day-length, temperature, humidity and wind. The longer the day the more the plant transpires water. This is true also for higher temperatures and windy conditions. The more sunlight the plant receives outside the more frequently it needs water. The lower the humidity and again more water. This is true also for higher temperatures and windy conditions. The lower the humidity and again more water.

The potting media and pot type also determine watering. Well draining soils, which begonias like need more frequent watering than do heavier general use potting mixes. Clay, wood, and other types of porous pots need more frequent watering than do plants in plastic pots. Pot size also helps to determine when to water; the larger the pot most often the less water it will need, but there are other considerations addressed later in this article.

Where the plant is placed also must be considered. Inside, outside-location has a lot to do with watering. Inside on a light cart plants on the lowest level need less water than those on the upper shelves. Inside plants need less water usually than those outside in all seasons except winter. Enclosed terrarium plants, of course, need less water than plants grown in pots or in

the ground. Also plants grouped close together need less frequent watering than those isolated, because groups of plants increase the humidity around them. Some more unusual considerations also go into how, when, and how much to water a given plant. Plants with less foliage require less water than those with many leaves. A plant that is not too healthy requires less water than one that is growing vigorously. And certainly one that is either semidormant (tuberous, semi-tuberous) or completely so needs only minimal water. A plant with thin leaves will require more water than one with thicker leaves although this may not always be true. The type of plant and where it originated (or its parents if a hybrid) determines how it is watered. For example, *B. peltata* has low water needs while Southeast Asian species have high water needs. Plants that are pot-bound will dry out more quickly than those that still have room to grow actively, thus pot-bound plants need more frequent watering. One way to help determine the pot-bound (and any needing water) is if a small bit of water sits on top of the soil and doesn't soak in immediately. That pot needs more water than one where the water soaks in immediately.

Color of soil can also help determine water needs: dark means soil is moist, light means it is dry or drier. A heavy pot needs less water than a lighter pot of the same size. The best test of all is a finger pushed down into the soil which will indicate if a pot needs water or not. Obviously a plant that appears wilted needs water; however there are two other ways to tell if water is needed. Some plants have foliage that turns glossy showing they need water. Also with some plants when you touch the

leaves they are soft and not rigid, again indicating the need for water.

One last point, if a particular plant dries out between waterings, put it in a saucer only slightly larger than the pot. The water the saucer retains will most likely not rot the roots and will give you an extra day or two between waterings.

Maybe there is nothing in this article you didn't already know, but have you ever consciously tried to put it all together?

Morris Mueller is Past President of ABS. Now that he doesn't have to write that president's message every month, I'm urging him to be a regular contributor! You may contact him at the address shown on page 79 of this issue.

New Benefits of Indoor Plants

From the Begonia Journal, newsletter of the San Gabriel Valley Branch edited by Joy Blair, comes this interesting summary of plant benefits. It is quoted from the newsletter of the San Gabriel Nursery there.

In the past we reported on tests that showed when indoor plants were placed in a Norwegian school, complaints of minor ailments such as dry throats and headaches were reduced by 20-40%. Recent tests by the same researchers in a hospital are showing other interesting results. In the ex-ray department of an Oslo hospital, not only were complaints of ailments reduced, but "afternoon droop" stopped altogether when plants were placed in the area; absence from work fell from 16% down to 6%. As an added benefit, the smells and chemicals used in the x-ray process were reduced once the plants were put in place.

In a German study, absenteeism was

reduced by up to six days annually per employee after plants were placed in a large office complex. In fact, it was reported that due to more pleasant surroundings, employees now volunteer to work late!

A study in a German bank showed that the addition of interior plants raised the office humidity and (shockingly) solved their serious electrostatic problems.

Another extensive German study involving 94 offices showed that workers in offices with indoor plants perceive the offices as being more conducive to health, less stressful, and better places for concentration on tasks.

Based on various case studies in hotels, including a scientific study in the famous Opryland Hotel in Tennessee it was found that plants can improve tenant occupancy and retention by 17%.

Are there enough plants in your office or home?

Corrections

The January/February 2004 cover was indeed of the plant grown by **Charles Jaros**, but the photo was by **Mary Bucholtz**. And lovely photo that it was, it had won a first place at the Southwest Region Get-Together at DFW in August 2003 where I had admired it and requested a copy! Apologies to Mary.

In the July/August 2003 issue on page 128, second paragraph, line 2-3, the correct name is **Mary Sizemore**. And apologies to you as well! We will be learning more about Mary and her many collections in a future *Begonian*.



Above, *Miichael Kartuz* in his greenhouse. Right, display theme at the Westchester Show honoring Michael. And below is that wonderous, magic greenhouse displaying a *B. gehrtii* in the background with all the lovely *Rexes* at the forefront. All photos by *Janet Brown*.



Michael Kartuz

by Janet Brown

Driving down to Vista for a plant table or when the urge for a new begonia hits has been a custom of Southern Californians for many years. There is no better place in all the world to find rare species, tropicals, sub-tropicals, passifloras, gesneriads, hoyas, ferns than Kartuz Greenhouses. Those who are lucky enough to attend the ABS Convention in August of 2004 will find those greenhouses on one of the tours.

The Westchester Branch of the American Begonia Society honored Michael Kartuz at their annual Show and Sale in July, 2003. This project was a labor of begonia love for we were able to catalog and collect many of the beautiful hybrids that Michael has created over many years. And as we collected we found how many truly beautiful and unique begonias he has created.

MICHAEL'S STORY: He was born in New York City on the west side of Manhattan. His father was from Grodny in Russia and his mother from Budapest and it was from her that he developed a love of plants. The family which included three sisters moved to Greenwich, Connecticut for a time but moved back to New York City in time for Michael to attend Flushing Heights High School. He already had a small greenhouse and exhibited at the New York Flower Show in 1950.

Besides plants Michael was a musician, a pianist, and when he attended NYU he studied musical composition. In other words he was and is an artist who hybridizes as a composer would with that unknown essence and spirit that comes from deep within.

In the '50's Michael Kartuz moved to Wilmington, Massachusetts and even-

tually opened four greenhouses where he began his business. At first he was mostly interested in Gesneriads/African Violets and in fact was a cofounder of the AGGS with **Elvin McDonald**. At this time he also met the great **Bernice Brilmayer** and it was she who introduced him to begonias and gave him his first one. She was writing her book "All About Begonias" at the time and introduced Michael to **Alfred Byrd Graf** the author of "Exotica" which was first published in 1957. Bernice Brilmayer wrote the begonia section and many of her photographs were used as well. He also met **Millie Thompson** probably also in Massachusetts.

And surrounded by these begonia greats he began to hybridize. He doesn't remember the first one but between 1960 and 1980 there were many and continuing on through the present. When Westchester decided to honor him we asked for a list of those hybrids and there was none. There is now.

In the late 70's after several gas shortages and a tremendous rise in fuel prices Michael decided to make the move to California—no easy undertaking or one lightly taken on. He had met many California begonia growers since joining the Bessie Buxton and Knickerbocker branch in 1955 and with that help and the lure of the wonderful California weather the decision was made to "Go West".

Ralph and Mabel Corwin helped with the site and, when they found the hill-top in Vista, Mabel looked it over. There was one greenhouse heated with natural gas, a house and lots of land to expand: An almost perfect site blessed with the cooling breezes from the Pacific only a few miles to the west. And so Kartuz Green-



Above left, **Michael** prepares to present the Best of Show award to **Bob Golden** for the Kartuz hybrid

B. 'Tangier'. Right is another shot of his greenhouse demonstrating his love for gesneriads and ferns as well as begonias. At left is his B. 'Star Frost'. And below is another of those magnificent new Rex hybrids. Let's see them all in August!



houses began. The first ad appeared on page 200 of the July, 1980 *Begonian* and only the zip and area code have changed since then. Michael celebrated 25 years of growing begonias from the east coast to the west in 1985.

MICHAEL'S HYBRIDS: Some of the hybrids are so classic and iconic that we forget who created them. *B.* 'Buttercup' is surely one of these, a rhizomatous, enclosed atmosphere begonia, child of *B. prismatocarpa* & *microsperma* (syn. *ficicola*), ABS registration # 451, winner of the Alfred D. Robinson medal for outstanding begonia hybrid. The flowers are a lovely golden bright yellow and the female flowers quite beautiful with a long slender pale green ovary. 'Buttercup' is one of the only begonias in the Logee's catalog where the hybridizer is named.

B. 'Little Night Music' provided the theme for the Westchester Show. The display centered on a music stand with Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusic* open and the same music playing throughout the day. *B.* 'Little Night Music' had center stage and was surrounded by many beautiful Kartuz hybrids. The begonia as described in the Kartuz catalog: "Small midnight black leaves, eyelash edges, light pink flowers. Small, compact." This plant tied together Michael's love of music and his art in hybridizing.

B. 'Concord': This lovely shrub begonia is made for a hanging basket. It blooms most of the year, can be cut back and it will pop right back, with dark green leaves and delicate pink/white flowers. Because of the profuse bloom it is a bit hard to start but patience will be rewarded.

And then there is the most magnificent and elegant *B.* 'Caravan'. **Thelma O'Reilly** wrote the best description of this plant: (At the time it was written in September, 1978 in the *Begonian* the name was *B.* 'Serlis'). "When garden guests gaze

upon *Begonia* 'Serlis', which hangs at the far end of my lath house, they immediately head in its direction for a close up view. And no wonder, for it is breathtakingly bold and beautiful....The off-center heart shaped mature leaves measure 9 inches long by 5/12 wide....The upper side is forest green but appears lighter because all of the veins, including the tiniest, are lime green.....*B.* 'Serlis' was further endowed with an iridescent radiance that shimmers over the entire upper leaf surface." Parents of *B.* 'Caravan' are *B. sementacea* x *listada*.

Space does not permit describing all of Michael Kartuz hybrids but each one is unique and special. He is a most discriminating hybridizer and does not release a new hybrid until he is sure it is special, unique and beautiful. Rhizomatous predominate in the list with canes and shrubs following. And there are many rexes, the type that he has been doing much work with in recent years.

There is only one thick stemmed and one trailing scandent but both are exquisite—*B.* 'Star Frost' and trailing *B.* 'Cascade'.

A list of some of the most famous and most loved follows:

Canes: *B.* 'Coral Chimes', 'Corliss Engle', 'Mandarin Orange', 'Mathild', 'Orpha C. Fox'

Rexes: *B.* 'Fireworks', 'Peridot' & 'Exotic Peridot', 'Persian Swirl', 'Shawn Henthorne', and many new ones coming up that may be ready for August, 2004.

Rhizomatous: *B.* 'Brown Derby', 'Butterscotch', 'Green Velvet' & 'Green Queen', 'Jagged Edge' the 'Palomar's—'Prince', 'Perfection', & 'Whirlwind', *B.* 'Morocco' 'Twinkle Toes' & *B.* 'Valmont'.

Shrubs: *B.* 'Heavy Metal', 'Olivia' and the *B.* 'Palomars—'Pirate' & 'Fanfare' and one of the greatest baskets

B. 'Tangier' that took Best In Show in Westchester last summer and put the icing on the cake for the celebration of Kartuz' work. **Bob Golden** was the grower.

Entering the Kartuz Greenhouses for the first time is an unforgettable begonia experience. And, in a way, every time is like the first time for there are always new plants of all kinds. The large room is stuffed with the variety of things he offers in his beautiful catalog. Some of Michael's biggest fans are the hummingbirds who make their nests in the old hoyas that drip down through the greenhouse.

Eleanor Calkins has been a devoted helper for Michael for many years and is usually there to answer questions and point out what's new or interesting or both or to help find the treasure that you are looking for.

There are four greenhouses now. Two are devoted to the tropicals, aroids, acalyphas, gesneriads, streptocarpus,

passifloras, and so forth and the fourth devoted to begonia hybrids and culture. Michael Kartuz has earned a place in the American Begonia Society Hall of Fame for his hybrids of distinction, for his work with species preservation and enhancement and for his support of begonia culture by passing on his great knowledge and experience writing for the *Begonian* and branch newsletters as well as lecturing for local branches and at seminars for ABS conventions. May his work continue to enrich our begonia lives for many years to come.

Janet Brown is ABS Vice President and editor of the Westchester Branch newsletter. She is a tireless worker for ABS and frequent contributor to the *Begonian*. You may contact her at the address shown on page 79 of this issue. The ad for Michael Kartuz' greenhouses appears on page 77.

Letters to the Editor

Back Cover Photo

I have been growing *B. gracilis* var. *martiana* for many years. For me, I find it hard to grow - that sounds odd because the little bulbils fall off and maybe a new one starts. If I collect them and plant them they may start or may not. I don't know if I pick them off too soon or too late. I have tried starting seed ever since I learned about seed and they never ripen for me thus I can't send them to the seed fund, but I do send the bulbils. I don't know if the takers have luck starting them or not.

This year was a crazy one for me at the coast: has been cold, then hot, then cold, not too cold, but odd. No mildew

this year on *B. gracilis* and they have grown bigger than before.

Not much information is in the Thompson's book either. I love them and I have three plants that come up each year; they could be different plants each year as I put all the bulbils down and wait. Hope you print my picture.

I wrote you about *B. fischeri* several years ago, complaining because they came up in everything. Well now every one that comes up in my seed trays with tuberous begonias outside goes out on my side yard in the sun and they grow beautiful. Enclosed is my dumb *B. fischeri* pictures, but I found out the dumb one was me for not knowing what they can do. I have even crossed them with *Semperflorens* and they grow lush and beautiful. Thank you for saying to me

“don’t complain - work with them and enjoy them” - which I am now doing.

Jackie Davis

170 Wingfoot Way
Aptos, CA 95003

What lovely blooms to brighten our winter days! B. fischeri in Florida (see page 207 of the November/December 2003 issue) or in California [Sorry, I could not squeeze that photo in.] is lovely, but the amazing thing continues to be that they are so hardy coming up here from two years of 5 and 7 degree lows; however, we just had 5 degrees with no snow so I'll wait anxiously to see if they make it back this spring -- I'll let you know! And the B. gracilis on the back cover will remind us that it's time to start those tuberous begonias from seed, bulbils, or tubers!.

A Search from Japan

Hello! I'm a Begoniac in Japan. I have two questions about Begonia. First, I have heard that *B. versicolor* has various types, called *B. versicolor* variety. Second someone told me about the species from Laos. There are two types the green type below and the black one. The green type is silver-variegated. [Photo could not be reproduced.]

If you know anything about them, please let me know. I'm looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Thanks. All the best.

Your Friend.

Mr. Tatsuo Morike

4-16 Tana-cho, AOBA-KU
Yokohama-SHI, Kanagawa,
227-0064 Japan

P.S. Can I get the above from anyone in your branch, or any nursery? It is very hard to find them in Japan. I have tried, but in vain. (I have already asked the Japan Begonia Society.) My email address is apmoriki@hotmail.com.

Tatsuo, I do not know of or find in my references any mention of differing varieties of B. versicolor. Perhaps our readers might. I believe you can find B. versicolor at a number of sources with email addresses advertising in the Begonian, and perhaps a reader might know about the Laos begonia with which I am also unfamiliar. If you discover more, let us know.

Begonia Poem

Would you like a bit of levity (conveying admiration for begonias at the same time) for a small spot on a page somewhere? A member of my Poetry Workshop (part of the National League of American Pen Women) made us all laugh with this at our last meeting. And she said I could send it to you for the *Begonian* if you would like to use it -- with her permission to publish.

Carrie Karegeannes,

3916 Lake Boulevard
Annandale, VA 22003-2319

At the Flower Show

Oh, Begonia, Begonia,
First Place Winner, lovely Begonia,
How I wish I could own-ya'!

Barbara D. Johnson

Alexandria, Virginia

Off to Indonesia

Scott will set off for Indonesia at the end of February 2004 to complete his exploration of Java. ...

His explorations in Java 2000-2002 have drawn our attention to the lovely *B. areolata* and to the many variations within the species of *robusta* and *multangula*. He has also found a number of local endemics and a few species believed to be new. The agenda for 2004 will take the team to Mt.

Slamet, which is the wettest in Java and the one most likely to produce interesting new or endemic species. The last stop is the island of Sumbawa. Lying to the east of Bali, it has not been explored botanically.

The work to date could not have been achieved without the generous support from ABS branches, the ABS., and from individuals. Your contributions add up to a significant amount NETC [New England Tropical Conservatory] expects to fund at least one-half of the total cost. We look forward to your help this year.

If you have question, please call one or the other of us. Your contribution should be directed to **Carol Notaras**, Treasurer, American Begonia Society, 2567 Green Street, San Francisco, CA 94123.

Sincerely,
Mary M. Fuqua, President
NETC 802-447-4719
netrop@sover.net
W. Scott Hoover
Founding Director, NETC

News from Atlanta

by **Rekha Morris**

As Atlanta prepares for the 2004 Southeastern Flower Show, February 18th to the 21st, the Atlanta chapter of the ABS gears itself not only to make its presence felt by mounting an exhibit of begonias grown by its members but also to take this opportunity to recruit new members.

At their last bimonthly meeting in January, the current president, **Ms. Johnnie J. Hadley**, encouraged members to begin preparing their plants for the show and confirmed that they would also need volunteers to help at a booth set up to in-

form visitors to the Southeastern Flower Show, now among the top three of its kind on the east coast, about the activities and interests of the Begonia Society. Information sheets, membership forms, copies of the *Begonian* and *The Save Our Species Newsletter* will be available to illustrate the multifaceted dimensions and involvement of the society and its members. Large posters of begonias made from photographs taken by Rekha Morris will hopefully attract visitors to stop and browse through the material, and acquaint themselves with what the society has to offer.

At the invitation of **Ann Bradley**, 2004 Show Chairman of the Southeastern Flower Show, Rekha Morris will be giving a talk on species begonias she has collected in Mexico at 2.30 P.M. on the first day of the show, February 18th. Hopefully this will also aid in generating greater interest in the Begonia Society and increase its membership.

The current vice president, **Carolyn Hawkins**, has planned a begonia workshop for the Atlanta Branch by inviting **Charles Jaros** to share his expertise and his begonias with the chapter, June 26th. Both **Carolyn Hawkins** and **Johnnie Hadley** are keenly aware of the need for raising additional funds for the chapter, and one way to do so is by the sale of begonias grown by its members. Additionally they have recruited the help of a former member and nurseryman, **Doug Jensen**, to grow begonias from cuttings from the Ft. Worth Botanical Garden donated by **Carolyn Hawkins** and from seeds of species begonias collected by Rekha Morris on her trips to Mexico.

Each September all members of the Atlanta chapter are invited to the home of long time members, **Jack** and **Janet Harris**, who generously offer all their begonias growing in outdoor beds for the summer to those who wish to dig them up to

supplement their own collections. Since the Harris' have a large collection of begonias to accommodate, they donate their large plants to the chapter while continuing their collection by taking cuttings at the end of the summer to be grown under lights in numerous propagation units designed and constructed by Jack Harris specifically for this purpose. For the first time in 2003 the chapter decided to charge a nominal sum for each plant to replenish their operating funds. The results were so encouraging that the chapter voted unanimously to repeat this each September and avail themselves of a ready source of funds thanks to the generosity and growing skills of **Jack and Janet Harris**. Also for the first time, cuttings donated by **Bill Claybaugh** at the end of summer and rooted by Janet Harris were made available to members of the Atlanta Branch for a nominal charge. Similarly the sale of a small collection of books donated by past president, **Russ Richardson**, added to the funds of the chapter much to the satisfaction of its treasurer, **Mary Elizabeth Shannon**. For those living in the southeast in the environs of Atlanta and wishing to become members of the Atlanta chapter are encouraged to contact Johnnie Hadley at chocolatejrh@yahoo.com.

Southwest Region Get-Together by Valerie Morris

Our 2004 SWR Get-Together is at the San Antonio Hilton airport at I-410 West, next to the airport on May 27-30. There is a shuttle bus service. Also the hotel will have shuttle service to local malls.

We will have tours to 4 to 5 nurseries. Our theme is **Begonias Caliente!**

We are working hard to provide an economical and interesting program of events. It is our mission to keep costs to the members as low as possible and encourage participation and interaction of the membership. Our hospitality room will be stocked with lotsa home cooked food and refreshments. Our hospitality hosts are **Johanna Zinn, Maxine Zinman, and Mary Bucholtz**.

Our aim is to have great fellowship while sharing in the bounty of this region.

The registration packets will be coming out mid February.

You may contact me at valeriemorrisrn@hotmail.com or at 802 Great Britain Rd., Austin, TX 78748-6503.

Remember you do not have to be a SWR member to attend the Get-Together. If you are not a member but want the packet, just email or write Valerie.

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Conservation Comments

**B. E. Claybaugh,
Conservation Chairman, ABS**

Begonia 'Argentea-guttata

About a year ago, I wrote the following article, but somehow it got lost in the computer. I just found it, so thought you might like to see an early adventure of mine on getting names correct.

"Arose by any other name....." That has an interesting ring, but "any other name" just doesn't make it in the scientific world, and certainly not in the world of begonia nomenclature.

I was recently working on the database of begonia information that I maintain on the Astro web site. There, I again encountered the problem of a name that is consistently misspelled in the literature. The plant is a lovely shrub-like begonia named 'Argentea-guttata' or 'Argenteo-guttata'. Sometimes with the hyphen, sometimes without. Sometimes with the "g" of guttata capitalized and sometimes not. This problem finally became worrisome enough to cause me to act.

I remembered that the chemical formula for the element silver was "Ag", so it seemed logical to assume that the first part of the word was all about silver or silvery. After several false starts, looking in French, then Spanish, then Italian dictionaries, I finally turned to a recently acquired dictionary on Botanical Latin. There, in a few minutes of reading, I solved the mystery. I was reminded that in Latin, as in all of the "romance" languages that are derived from it, an adjective must cor-

respond in tense and gender with the word it modifies. Knowing that the word "Begonia" is considered both singular or plural and feminine, I realized that the descriptive name, if Latin derived, must also be feminine. Next I learned that the Latin word for silver, a noun, is argentum. To use the word as an adjective i.e. silvery, it must be either masculine, argenteus; feminine, argentea; or neuter, argenteum. Now we're making progress.

I next turned to solve the guttata mystery, again using the Botanical Latin text. There I found the word gutta to be a feminine noun meaning a drop, or a spot. When the word is used as an adjective, to say something is spotted, the adjective (agreeing in tense and gender with the modified noun) becomes: masculine, guttatus; feminine, guttata; and neuter, guttatum. Now we're two-thirds home.

The final answer came when I remember reading recently in G. H. M. Lawrence's "An introduction to Plant Taxonomy", page 43, the following, concerning leaf-form classifications; "...botanists continue to use these terms, and hyphenated combinations of them, to express situations." Thus, the use of a hyphen is commonly used when the botanists want to conveniently and succinctly convey a description. The issue of capitalizing the "g" or not became mute when I recognized the hyphen was correctly used in the name.

Thus, after an hour or so of work, I concluded that the correct name of this plant is Begonia 'Argentea-guttata'. The plant was named by Lemoine in 1888, and he undoubtedly wanted the world to know that the plant is "silvery-spotted". I did find

Continued on page 72.

A Beauty to Behold

The Saga of Creating a Beautiful Plant From A very Ordinary Cutting

by Joan Blundell, Australia

This article is taken from The Queensland Begonia Society Inc. Journal, Vol. 61, Summer 2003, edited by June McBride.

The creation of a beautiful new plant is to me a labour of love, a joy. Each time I take a cutting I have an expectation, a vision of an adult plant which is a beauty to behold. Propagation is to me, an art, a craft. It is a miracle, a marvellous event, a remarkable occurrence to be able to create a whole new plant from a piece of leaf, rhizome or stem. Why waste this gift by creating a single spindly stem devoid of lower leaves which bends this way and that, due to lack of a little forethought in selecting the initial cutting and then giving the subsequent plant no ongoing care?

By now it would be hoped that each and every one of us dedicated begonia growers would have leapt at the chance we have been given during spring to create some real beauties from the off-cuts created when we pruned. We have, I feel certain, chosen the best pieces, small stout pieces of new strong-stemmed growth, pest and disease free, fully turgid and bursting with life. Or perhaps we have chosen some mature, but not old and haggard leaves, or maybe pieces of rhizome which we retrieved when we cut our rhizomatous or rexes back to where the rhizome is rooted in the growing mix.

These valuable pieces are not to be wasted, but put to good use in producing new vigorous juvenile plants with which we can replace our old tired, geriatric ones. Why be unhappy with a plant you have had for ten years, tall and emaciated, a

starveling, with no hope of retrieval? Collect up those cast-offs and march with gusto. You have a quest to pursue; relinquish the thought, enjoy the fulfillment of creating a beauty to behold. Do it with style and artistic execution. Join me, be enthusiastic, let yourself feel the true joy of creation.

Canes -- when you cut back your mature plants, choose the strongest piece (experience will dictate), cut your small stems, short but compact, cut away the lower leaves and cut back by half the remaining leaves. Insert those pieces immediately into the propagating mix (pressing the mix very firmly around them ensure good contact between the mix and the cut stem). I use a striking bench with propagating mix about 8 cm to 10 cm depth. Stake each stem -- I use skewers so that the stems have support should they wilt. Immediately give a thorough watering as you do each individual pot or group of cuttings. If using pots for striking, place them in a cool, shady, moist environment. I place my potted cuttings under a bench in a protected position. All cuttings I keep very well watered, with plenty of moisture in the surrounding air, if possible. Once the stems have formed roots you can repot as you wish singly or as multiple plantings. This is the time to place them into increased light until finally the plants are subject to good bright light. It is essential to keep at your plants, pinching often to encourage branching (I let each stem form two or three pairs of leaves and then pinch out the following shoot. I continue this process until about 6 weeks later

re flower time, thus allowing flowers to
orm). There are many of the medium
zed cane-like which will branch from
ch node if you are diligent with your
nching. Be persistent, remember your
al -- a beauty to behold!

Rhizomes -- Hold your breath and
it, it won't hurt. Cut your rhizomatous
ck to where the roots are anchored in
e mix. At first you may be hesitant to
it off every leaf, however, as you experi-
ce the appearance of new growth from
e rhizome, you will feel a little more
onfident. This is when you cut off all
aining leaves from the past year, thus
aving only the new fresh growth. Repot.
et the mix dry a little so that it falls eas-
y from the roots. Take away most of last
ason's mix, and depending on the
ount of healthy root growth you find,
ot the plant into an appropriately sized
ot. Hold the plant so that the roots dangle
eely in the pot and fill in around them
ith new mix. Firm the mix in the pot,
ot by pressing, but by tamping the pot on
firm surface. Water. Place the revital-
ed plant in good light, water and liquid
ertilise regularly and voila!!!! I'm ex-
cting to see some really superb plants
i the competition benches in the coming
ason and at the show.

Cut those nice firm, juicy, turgid
otless pieces of rhizomes you have left
to short pieces (5 cm). If you are coura-
ous you will cut off most of the leaves
aving just a few at the tip. Or maybe
ou might prefer to cut the very tip of the
itting off (this will encourage the rhi-
me to form new growth points along its
ngth). Whichever, it's best to leave only
few short-stemmed leaves. Brave, fear-
ss growers will fare best. Place these
eces in the propagating mix so that they
e half in depth buried in the mix. I mean
depth of rhizome vertically -- smooth
de down where the roots come out from,

not the leaves. Now make sure you sup-
port the remaining leaves using the good
old omnipresent skewer, because other-
wise they will droop taking the piece of
rhizome leaf out of the mix and the leaves
will probably go all limp and eventually
abort. The rhizome will dry up like a prune
because it has been lifted clean out of the
mix and **you haven't noticed**.

Now that your pieces of rhizome
have rooted and are sprouting new leaves
(you will know that roots have formed
because you are brave enough to give the
remaining leaves a little tug, which will
meet resistance), pot into pots appropriate
to the size of the root ball just allowing
room to surround with a little mix - not a
big pot, please. Sometimes a nice rounded
plant can be achieved by placing pieces of
rooted rhizome with growing tip going in
different directions. Plant two or several
to a pot, but do not go overboard and use
too big a pot.

The above rhizome cuttings are use-
ful for these plants with long extended rhi-
zomes. However, there are some rhizoma-
tous begonias which rarely need cutting
back except for removing the old tatty,
spent leaves. These clumping types (my
words) such *B. 'Dot's Choice'* need only
to be potted on with some of the old pot-
ting mix being replaced. Don't go over-
board with removing too much mix or your
plant will wilt badly as it has many leaves
to support and if you remove too much mix
you will disturb the roots significantly.

All rhizomatous types can be propa-
gated from leaves and leaf wedges. When
the weather is hot, cut the outer part of the
leaf back so that you have a smaller sur-
face area from which moisture can be lost.
Leaf wedges also should be smaller dur-
ing the hotter months. Firm both types of
these cuttings in well and water immedi-
ately. Keep your leaf and wedge cuttings
well watered, and if possible, mist on a

regular basis -- particularly on windy and/or hot days.

Pretty soon you will have many new plants, some you may wish to share with friends, others to sell at meetings or at the annual show. Whatever their destiny, remember, a plant which is a beauty to behold will always be in demand. Wouldn't it be great if every plant each of us produced was truly hard to part with, one we would truly be proud to add to our own collections, if it were offered to us - one you are proud to have propagated when someone tells you they always look for your plants to buy because they are beauties to behold.

I never cover any type of begonia cuttings and at home in Brisbane manage to propagate all year round in my open propagation bench using 8 cm to 10 cm depth of Aussie Peat and 10% washed ash or perlite etc. This bench has no bottom heat. Temperatures range from 3 degrees C to at least 40 degrees C.

Begonia Quick Tips

by Dianna Wilkerson

Dear fellow begonia lovers and growers: This is a request for you to make your growing, propagation, and seed starting tips and techniques available for publication in the Begonian. I know we all have a few "techniques" we use to prepare our plants for a show, and I would not ask you to give up any old family recipes.

However, many growers could benefit from an understanding of how you, on a day to day basis, manage your collection and grow your plants. In the last two years, Diane Horne is the only ABS member who has sent me any information.

The long term health of the ABS is dependant on how well we recruit, encourage, and retain new members. These folks certainly are not mind readers. For many of them, this may be their first attempt at growing any type of plant. When all the pretty plants they bought at their first sale die, lots of them become discouraged and quietly stop coming to meetings.

Many beginning growers do not understand some begonias go dormant in the winter, or fail to thrive in the summer heat, but perk back up in the coolness of fall.

I don't know how many canes my Mother threw away because she thought they were dead when they dropped all their leaves after she brought them inside for the winter. No one ever told her begonias commonly drop their leaves after a sudden change in growing conditions.

There may be something you do in your daily routine which would solve another grower's problem.

Here is a list of some tips I would like to see published:

- How do you work with seeds?
How do you ship and store seeds?
How do you tell if seed is viable?
How long, using your system, does it take seed to sprout? How do you control the common, dark green mold we all seem to run into while starting seeds?
- How do you pollinate plants, especially if you vision is as bad as mine? Is there a time during the day when pollination is more successful?
- How do you manage the temperature, humidity, water, and light in your greenhouse? What about insect and mildew control?

Please send your tips today, so begonia growers everywhere can benefit

from your knowledge.

Dianna Wilkerson,
Quick Tips Editor
15356 Pheasant Run
Chocktaw, OK 73020
TheBegoniaFiend @cox.net

Quick Tip

Print cartridges for the HP printers come packaged in a clear plastic overwrap which is *very* large. That is the bad part, but the good part is that these can be cut up very easily. If you have a terrarium bowl that needs a cover, you can find a plate with the near same size as the opening, trace it on the clear plastic, and trim the plastic. Now you have a perfect, almost invisible and nice fitting cover for the bowl.

As the holders are shaped to fit the cartridges, there are also a couple of cups in the plastic that can be cut up and used as seed planters or seedling transplanters since it is easy to pierce holes in these with an ice pick.

Haven't you found some more unusual recycling items that you use in begonia growing? If so send the info in to Dianna, address above and on page 78.

Millie Thompson Publication Fund

This fund again has something over \$4,000. Remember all you writers and researchers, this fund is available to assist you in the publication of your efforts. If you lack upfront funds for publication, this fund can assist you, asking only that the funds be returned from future sales. It is

available only for the printing of new or substantially new work on begonias.

The fund has brought readers several new publications on begonias now which is its purpose.

Ann Salisbury still has a few copies of the Smithsonian *Begoniaceae II* by **Jack Golding** and **Dieter Wasshauser** available for purchase at \$50. plus shipping with this cost being returned to the Millie Thompson fund. You may contact her at geneann@cableone.net, at 580-628-5230 or at the address shown on page 78 for more information.

If you have a publication proposal please submit that to the editor, **Freda Holley** at the address shown on page 78.

Continued from page 67.

of species level diversity in the genus. As such I expect a shift in emphasis towards more taxonomic/checklist/descriptive work in the short-medium term in our Begonia programme here. Reflecting this shift in emphasis, the coordination role will be passed over to a colleague (**Toby Pennington**) here who has expertise in the taxonomy and evolution of large genera."

Both Goodall-Copestake and Pennington were copied, but I have not heard from them or had a chance to follow up as yet.

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2004 ABS Awards Call

by Ann Salisbury, Awards Chair

This year in San Diego we will be presenting the four prestigious awards of the American Begonia Society. These recognize the outstanding service and achievements that have been done for the **national organization** by its members. **YOU**, the membership, are responsible to make the nominations. Do take a moment now and write up your nominations and send them in. Your nomination will place the name on the ballot from which the awards committee makes the final selection. The nomination **must** contain the name of the award, the recipient **and reasons that make them or the plant eligible for the award.**

The committee may present only one of each of the awards each year.

I must receive your nominations by **May 15, 2004.** If you have questions, give me a call at 580-628-5230. Please mail all nominations to:

Ann Salisbury
P. O. Box 452
Tonkawa, OK 74653

Criteria for the awards are as listed below. A recipient may receive an award only once and recent recipients are listed with each award.

The **Herbert P. Dyckman Award for Service** is presented to member who has rendered long-term or very outstanding service for ABS above and Beyond the normal duties of a member or officer.

1995	Ann Salisbury
1996	Carol Notaras
1997	Joan Coulat
1998	Eleanor Calkins
1999	Gene Salisbury
2000	Mary Sakamoto
2001	Wanda and Richard Macnair

2002	Leora and Ray Fuentes
2003	Janet Brown

The **Eva Kenworthy Gray Award**

is given for one of two reasons: 1. Contributing something of a spiritual value toward cementing goodwill and harmony among members; and/or 2. Contributing original material toward helping the rank and file members further their study of begonias.

1995	Mae Blanton
1996	Kit Jeans Mounger
1998	Gene and Ann Salisbury
1999	Mary Bucholtz
2000	Freda Holley
2001	Brad Thompson
2002	Helene Jaros
2003	Cheryl Lenert

The **Rudolf Ziesenhenné Award** is presented to the current or retired editor of the *Begonian* for the following reasons: 1. For the outstanding use of contributions of members and others in the *Begonian* to execute the Aims and Purposes of the American Begonia Society. **AND** 2. For leading and strengthening the membership in their study of begonias through the excellence of editorship.

2001	Ed and Phyllis Bates
2002	Tamsin Boardman
2003	Freda Holley

The **Alfred D. Robinson Medal of Honor** is for a begonia cultivar that has been released for at least five years and no more than fifteen. The hybrids must be registered with the Nomenclature Department and widely distributed, and the originator of the begonia must be a member of ABS.

2000	B. 'Mary Sakamoto'
2001	B. 'Little Miss Mummy'
2002	B. 'Flamingo Queen'
2003	B. 'Cowardly Lion'

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The Seed Fund needs donations of seeds. Seeds may be traded for listed seeds. Seeds may be ordered from the master list by name. If you have a special need ask the Seed Fund Administrator. 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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Very limited, first offering, few seeds in packets

B. U #451 \$3.00 This seed is from Vietnam where the plant was found growing in soil and rocks. It was found growing at Boa Loc at an altitude of 3000 feet. Its habit is rhizomatous with leaves almost black above and red underside, forms quite a nice plant with quite a few leaves.

B. U #452 \$3.00 This seed is from Vietnam where the plant was found growing on rocks in dense forest at an altitude of 5000 feet on the slopes of Elephant Mountain. Its growth habit is rhizomatous with small lobed green leaves, plants remain about 8 inches in height with the spread of the plant not much more.

Begonia Resarch by Freda Holley

Ever once in a while I go to the internet just to look up "begonia research" in a Google search to see if anything new pops up. In my most recent expedition there, I found two items of interest. First, were very exhaustive photos of *Begonia hirtella* from a website on the plants of Hawaii. I think this begonia may be considered an invasive species there. Anyway, I have always had difficulty in knowing which was *B. hirtella* and which *B. humilis*. Either I didn't know what the plant was that came up or I had planted both species so that I could see the difference and then before they were large enough I had lost the labels or was fearful that I had mixed them up! Photos haven't always been helpful since the leaves and flowers are somewhat alike. These photos made the appearance of *B. hirtella* very clear. I don't have the address of the

website, but you could just enter *Begonia hirtella* on Google.

My second interesting find were the new names **Will Goodall-Copestake** and **Sophie Neale** listed as researchers at the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh where researchers we have heard from in the *Begonian* in the past including **Mark Hughes, Vanessa Plana, and Laura Forrest** have worked. Goodall-Copestake's supervision was listed as **Peter Hollingsworth**. I contacted him to ask about his student's research and about his own interest in begonia research. I thought you might find his reply of interest:

"Many thanks for the e-mail. Will Goodall-Copestake's project is now focusing on trying to further our understanding of the broad scale evolutionary relationships in the genus. He is taking a number of morphologically, and geographical disparate species to try to represent the main divergent lineages within the genus, and obtaining sequence data from a lot of genes to try to firm up our understanding of the phylogeny of *Begonia*. He is in the main data gathering phase of the project so as yet relatively little to report - but I will ask him to write a summary of his work for the *Begonian* when he gets a clearly view of what is going on.

My interest in *Begonia* was initially coincidental - I 'inherited' Laura Forrest as a PhD student when her initial supervisor left science for teaching. Since then I have developed an interest in *Begonia* (particularly in relation to my area of research - population genetics and speciation) and have been coordinating the *Begonia* programme here at RBGE. However - it has become very clear to us that the key need in *Begonia* is not so much for population genetics research, but rather some urgent cataloguing and description

Continued on page 62.

In the Mailbox

by Greg Sytch, Horticultural Correspondent

Q: I purchased some scraggly begonias for my summer patio and they grew like gangbusters during summer. What can I do to keep them going inside. (New York City).

A: Without knowing the variety, use general begonia care which is: bright to good light, well drained soil that is never wet, and perhaps a tray of pebbles and water for extra humidity. Always keep the pots above the water level - you may mist frequently and include a little fertilizer in the water. To prevent mildew, add a tbs of baking soda once per month, and fertilize once per month. If you check out the website www.begonias.org there is even more information on propagating and growing begonias so you can keep your collection thriving!

Several begonias have recently sent in questions to use, and I will look for-

ward to applying them in future articles. If you are inquiring like this apartment dweller in NYC was, always try to include a description of the begonias. I can answer your questions much better with more information.

MILDEW TIP: Mildew thrives in moist, cool conditions. Here in Florida, winter and spring are mildew seasons because of the fluctuations in temperatures and the heavy dew of the early morning. I believe in preventative spraying, so I use an all-purpose fungicide once per month all year and during the winter-spring I add a little baking soda. Keep all dead leaves removed and air flow good.

If you have any questions, feel free to ask me at: Greg Sytch at gsytch@cs.com or by mail at 6329 Alaska Avenue, New Port Richey, FL 34653. Or feel free to call me at 727-841-9618, leave your number and let me call you back as I have an unlimited long distance plan.

Begonia 'Normand'

by Freda Holley

Trailing scandents are among the most underrepresented of begonias and yet they are among the most beautiful. Not one is more so than *Begonia* 'Normand', a hybrid created by **Joy Porter**. One notable thing about this plant is that it is named after one of our favorite ABS members, **Normand Dufresne** who contributes a monthly begonia article to the *Buxtonian*, newsletter of the Buxton Branch of which he is a member. Many of those have been reprinted in recent *Begonians*. And Normand always bright-

ens our conventions with his presence.

Another unusual aspect of this plant is a cross of *Begonia glabra* and *U221*. The mother plant is *B. glabra* and was grown from seed provided by **Roberto Brin** of Panama. The pollen plant was *U221* which is a thick stem and Joy's plant came as she remembers from **Millie Thompson**. Not everyone realizes that many of the trailing scandents will cross easily with a number of the thick stems while others will cross with canes.

My own *B. 'Normand'* came



Watercolor by Joy Porter

directly from Joy Porter who brought me a small cutting at a Southwest Region Get-Together while I still lived in Ozone, Arkansas. That plant went to Denver, but I gave a start to Gene Salisbury and when we moved to Oklahoma he gave me back a cutting. This cutting grew into the plant shown in the photograph. This won a division award at the 2002 Barkley Branch Show. I took many cuttings, one of which I passed to **Chuck Ades** of California and with his great skill with plants, he was able to pass it on to others in California. It is always interesting to me to trace how quickly great plants spread across the U.S.! I am hoping to see some *B. 'Normand'* growing in that perfect California climate at the upcoming San Diego show and if you see one there at the plant sale, be sure to try it.

I find that the plant does well in our spring, but doesn't really care for the ex-

treme heat and low humidity of our high summer. The plant shown declined during the heat of the following 2002 summer and eventually died, but fortunately I had those cuttings and was able to start another. Mine never bloomed in either Arkansas or here, so I think that it probably needs much higher light than I am able to give it. (Our sun here is so fierce that it is necessary to provide deep shade and that inhibits bloom.) As you can see from Joy's watercolor, however, the blooms are white and quite beautiful.

In addition to *B. 'Normand'*, Joy Porter also created *B. 'Bayberry Lane'* which is named after the street on which she lives. This too is an unusual cross of *B. U067* (now identified as *B. cardiocarpa*) and *B. crassicaulis* and Joy registered it, #946. Joy Porter is a creator of both beautiful watercolors and beautiful begonias!

Begonia U029

by Freda Holley

Joy Porter has not only introduced me to her own hybrid, but to so many species I love. It seems she always knows about the most unusual and lovely ones! Since I have a bit of space here, let me tell you about another one because just as I was completing the above article I received great photos from *Mary Bucholtz* of its most unusual aspect, the flowers.

The female flowers have very ruffled petals! But it is not only the flowers that are beautiful on *B. U029*, the leaves are such a glistening, lovely dark color with magnificent red reverse. In the right light and temperature they tend to cup up which gives the plant overall a shapely appearance.

Now this plant is not from Brazil where as many of you know most of my

favorites originate, but from Honduras where my husband **RL** was born and raised.

Dr. Fred A. Barkley gave seed of this plant to Logees many moons ago and seed were listed in our seed fund in 1984. Logee's sold it under the name *B. 'Mystique'*. My own seed came from Joy and I managed to raise just one plant in Arkansas. Like *B. 'Normand'* one of those plants wound up with Gene Salisbury and he gave me back a cutting when we moved to Oklahoma. It grew well in the cool climate of Arkansas, but it clearly doesn't like the lower humidity here. In neither place have I been able to set seed; nor has Gene. Yet, it must come from seed; has anyone else managed to get seed? I suspect it might be one of those that refuses to accept it's own pollen and ours are all clones.



Above, you see my *B. 'Normand'* in the 2002 Barkley Branch Show. The small inset , from the only photo (by *Ann Salisbury*) I could find in my files, is of *Normand Dufresne* himself. Below are *Mary Bucholtz's* great photos of *B. U029*.



New Year's Resolutions

by Tony Collins

Tony Collins, President of the San Jacinto Branch (TX), made a set of resolutions for 2004 in the January issue of the San Jac Begoniac, their newsletter, quoted here, that could serve any of us well!

I didn't make any resolutions in the other areas of my life, but I still have foolish hopes that I may improve in the gardening department - so here are my gardening resolutions for the coming year.

1. Exercise some restraint and realize I do not have to have a sample of every plant that will grow in the Houston area.
2. Get serious about labeling -I have been very remiss about labeling this, counting on **George [Macias]** or **Helen [Spiers]** to identify my mystery begonias. The non-begonias I have to guess at.
3. Throw some plants away - get rid of the dogs that aren't ever going to do well, either because they don't like this climate, or because I don't have the correct growing environment. Two tips I recall from gardening columns I have read:
 - a. Discover what grows well for you and grow lots of it.
 - b. Discard any plant that doesn't at least double in size or number every three years.Of course our begonias can more than double in number because we grow them from cuttings, but some of your mature specimens may not realize the potential of the type. Are they worth spending time on?
4. Take some irons out of the fire - I never can "show" my yard because its always in the middle of some major overhaul. I need to set a date and say that I will have everything "done" by then, and not take on any new projects until I complete what's at hand.
5. Contribute to the programs - Am I constantly on the lookout for new program materials and keeping Pepi apprised of same? Am I willing to do a program during the year?
6. Spread the word - Make a point of asking people I know are interested in plants to come to one of our meeting as my guest. Do this at least twice during the year.

Continued from page 58

that John Ingles spelled the name correctly, in the *Buxton Check List Revised Edition*, May 1990. The reference source used was *Gardeners Chronicle* published in England, 1841 through 1939. I do not have access to this original reference source, but I feel the above conclusion is correct.

It is unfortunate that the Thompson's great book *Begonias The Complete Guide* misspells the name, using *Argenteo* rather than *Argentea*. This error has been propagated throughout the begonia literature ever since, because this book is a primary reference source for all of us. The latest version of the *Buxton Checklist*, i.e. the *John Ingles Memorial Checklist Supplement* November 2000, once again misspells the name, using an "o".

This is a small issue with many people, not one to get too excited about. However, I like my plants neatly placed on shelves, in uniformly sized pots, and with correctly spelled names on the tags.

I just hope the next worrisome naming problem will be as easy to solve.

Editor's Notes

I hope that as you read through this issue you will note all those who have contributed to this issue and make it a point if you meet one of them in the coming days to mention how much you appreciated their contribution. Let me tell you, however, that no one appreciates those contributions more than this editor! It is an awesome feeling to face all those blank pages that remain unfilled when all the contributions have been entered. I would also like you to note all those articles with my name in the author's position and know that it is not there by choice. Only empty pages get articles by me! This issue there seemed to be more of them than ever and I fear even I, who never runs out of enthusiasm for begonias, find myself running out of words and thoughts!

So I plead with all of you out there. Write something, anything! I know other readers would rather hear from one of you who have never written about your begonia growing efforts than me. There are so



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many regions of the country that we never hear from even though we have members there.

Since I am on the Yahoo Begonia List, I know a lot of you have questions and thoughts about begonia growing, but I never hear from you with items for these pages. How about a contribution, however small. **Dianna Wilkerson** in these pages appeals to you for your tips and has a number of suggestions; read that and send them in.

Continued on page 76.

Back to the Future: Species, Seeds, and Beyond

By Michael Ludwig

Our theme for the 2004 convention reflects the San Diego Branches interests and what we are all about. The Margaret Lee Branch maintains the American Begonia Society's Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund. We are a dedicated group of begonia fanatics, doing in-depth study of begonia species and hybrids, their sections, nomenclature, variability and culture. We then spill into the Mabel Corwin and Alfred D. Robinson Branches and deal

with these subjects in a manner to stimulate and promote other members to further their love of begonias, encouraging them to dive deeper into the complexities of this wonderful family.

As true devotees, we are always looking forward to the new horizons, seeking the new species being described and brought into cultivation by growers around the world. The exciting new hybrids and hybridizers that are constantly pushing the



Above, B. U405 with ash at *Thelma O'Reilly's*. At right above, notecard photo by *Maria Holmes* of begonia at *Mike Flaherty's Gazebo* and right below her photo at *Hi-Mark Nursery*. Begonia stamp below.



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envelope of what is possible as they use the new species to produce the seeds and, therefore, plants and flowers of tomorrow. They also reproduce the crosses of yesteryear and reintroduce these with a newfound hybrid vigor and to a new generation of begonia growers. As we all know styles come and go and then return again, which is true of begonias too.

We invite ALL begonia lovers to San Diego and enjoy begonias on whatever level they may be on.

We are preparing to have a GREAT plant sale. We are asking for donations of cuttings and leaves in order to insure a FANTASTIC selection. We would like to receive them in March or April, so that we might grow them into quality plants. If you have either of these and would like to send them to us, please contact **Dean Turney** at 760-942-1919.

This 2004 Convention will be dedicated to the memory of **Marge Lee**.

*This convention is going to be a great one as I can tell from hearing from and talking with those participating in the planning. In this issue you will find an article on **Michael Kartuz** who is in Vista nearby to San Diego and next issue we can look forward to an article on **Chuck Ades** and his nursery which will also be on our tours. At the top left you see a begonia growing outside at **Thelma O'Reilly's** home. It is covered with soot from the notorious fires that plagued the area this past year. Let's see how they look when we arrive in August. Also to the left, right, are two gorgeous photos that appear on stationary that will be offered by **Maria Holmes** in the boutique. Knowing those creative California folks, I'm sure there will be untold other items for sale that will be going home with us! Contact Mike Ludwig at 760-942-1919*

Special Note

Several persons notified the editor just as this edition was going to the printer that **Marge Lee**, friend to us all, died on January 18. Her memorial will appear in the next issue.

Begonia Stamps

by Freda Holley

Many collectors of items related to our favorite plants regularly visit EBay and enter a search for begonias. I do that as well just to see what appears.

Last year when I was looking for ideas for the Oklahoma City ABS Convention Boutique, I stumbled on a listing for Argentina stamps featuring begonias. I entered a bid for them, but was outbid while I was too preoccupied to revisit EBay. I was regretful and emailed the seller to ask if he knew of a source for these. With more luck than I usually enjoy, I wound up with 2 sheets of these lovely stamps.

Long ago I was given a gift of framed U.S. owl stamps (I collect bird art and the owl is the mascot for my alma

mater). With this in mind, I matted and framed several and they were very attractive. (If you bought one of these at the Boutique that's their story!)

I had really forgotten this until I received the current edition of *Aroidiana*, the journal of the Aroid Society and found an elaborate article of research on international stamps featuring aroids. Moreover, it was the latest of several such articles and was intended to bring the research up to the current date. The article was extensive and accompanied by truly beautiful illustrations of many of these stamps.

I do not have the knowledge or resources to do the same for begonias, but if any reader out there does, I urge that this be done as a service to our begonia com-

munity. Stamp art is not only lovely and collectible - and not only by stamp collectors, its extensiveness is fascinating.

As another aside, the Aroid Society features plants that I have found excellent companion plants for begonias and they are almost as diverse. You may contact them at: International Aroid Society, nc., P.O. Box 43-1853, South iami, FL 33143-1843. and the issue with

In Memory: Robert Ammerman

It is with great sadness that I inform you of the death of Robert Ammerman. He passed away November 18, 2003.

Bob was president of the Mabel Corwin and Margaret Lee Branches, here in San Diego. He was also active in other Southern California begonia branches and fern societies. He was president of the American Begonia Society from 1983 through 1985. Bob also served as convention chairman for the last San Diego convention in 1986.

Bob was an excellent grower and won awards in both local and national shows.

He will be missed and will be remembered for all he contributed to our societies.

Michael Ludwig
San Diego, CA

Continued from page 73.

Most of you know that we are more limited in the number of color pages with the current printer than in the past. In each issue now I try to optimize every inch of that space for begonias. Sometimes that means I have to start articles in odd places and continue them in odd ways, just to get

in the optimum number. This issue seems to have more of those than usual which I regret. The photographs this issue are just outstanding and as much as our writers, we should appreciate the fine work of our photographers.

Sometimes, also, I have to hold articles just so I can get the photos or more photos in with them. In this case, I do have a couple of articles now on hand that I am holding for the next issue just because of that, but still I need a lot more articles. What I mean is that I particularly need articles that do not depend on photos (or that have such spectacular photos that I just have to use them!). So if you have been holding back because you did have a photos, please don't -- write away. You will note that I often use articles from the Queensland Australia journal; I am always impressed with how great that journal is even though they cannot include color pages. The articles there are, I think, excellent and a special thanks to them for letting me use their work in our pages. One of the things they do particularly well is write about the various groupings of begonias. That type of article can be very helpful to those new to begonia growing who are not familiar with the ways we group and grow certain types of plants such as the Rex, the rhizomatous with unusual leaves, or the species semps. Try your hand at one of these for us!

Anyway, I want you to know that one measure of the success I feel as an editor is the number of pages I don't have to write! In this issue there were far too many and I hope you are thinking this moment of how you can help me out!

We were at seventeen degrees last night and I hear it is going lower before it warms up. All of you who made the Board Meeting in Florida in February write and tell us about how wonderful it was!

~ FH

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COMING EVENTS

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August 24-29, 2004, ABS Convention: *Back to the Future*, San Diego, CA. Town and Country Hotel and Convention Center, go to www.towncountry.com for a virtual tour. See page 73-75 this issue for more information.

2005 Association of Australian Begonia Societies National Conference in Beautiful Ballarat. This will coincide with the annual Ballarat Begonia Festival. Activities will include a conducted tour of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens. Accommodations for 90 will be available at the Midcity Motel. Convention Chair is Diana Lawrey who may be contacted at (03) 9898 8863.

May/June Issue: Please get feature articles for next issue to me by March 1; announcements closing date is March 15.

The Begonian

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