

July/August 2012

# THE BEGONIAN





*B. scutifolia* Hooker  
Photo by Charles Henthorne

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

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Back issues (current volume) \$2.50.

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# The *Begonian*

Publication of the American Begonia Society  
**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.

### Editor, Art Direction and Design:

**Linda Tamblin**, 5635 Woodward St., Merriam, KS 66202, 913-231-1020. [begoniaskc@yahoo.com](mailto:begoniaskc@yahoo.com)

### Consulting Editor:

**Jan Brown**, [begoniabrown@yahoo.com](mailto:begoniabrown@yahoo.com)

### Nomenclature Editor:

**Kingsley Langenberg**, 3293 Country Lane, Waukegan, IL 847-336-9104 [kingsley.langenberg@gmail.com](mailto:kingsley.langenberg@gmail.com)

**Quick Tips: Dianna Wilkerson**, 15356 Pheasant Run, Choctaw, OK 73020 [b2writer@cox.net](mailto:b2writer@cox.net)

### Editorial and Identification Assistance:

**Charles Jaros, Tom Keepin, Jem Wiseman**

### Advertising Staff:

#### Display Ads:

**Linda Tamblin**, 5635 Woodward, Merriam, KS 66202, 913-231-1020, [begoniaskc@yahoo.com](mailto:begoniaskc@yahoo.com)

#### Plant Society Ads; Holiday Greetings:

**Wanda Macnair**, 59 Walker St., Cambridge, MA, 02138, 617-876-1356, [wmacnair@msn.com](mailto:wmacnair@msn.com)



ABS Convention - San Diego pg. 128



Begonia cremnophila pg. 129



Chromolithograph of *B. 'Arthur Mallet'* published in 1886 in the French journal, *Revue Horticoles* and now in the MSU special collections library. pg. 152

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### Front cover:

Mark Tebbitt introduces us to another begonia of the Vallegrande. This photo shows a rock slab with a population of *Begonia cremnophila*. pg. 129

**Back cover:** Endangered species *Begonia lymansmithii* pg. 144

## President's Message

To coin a phrase - borrowing from the musical *Porgy & Bess* - 'Summertime and the begonias are growin.' The begonias in my collection have been doing extremely well during this spring. One hybrid in particular has been really spectacular this season and that is *B. 'Gryphon.'* This thick-stemmed hybrid is readily available at many local nurseries and is a must-have in any begonia collection. It's an easy grower and quite striking in appearance, with its large star-shaped, parted leaves that are splashed with silver. It has been touted as a landscape begonia but also makes a great container grown plant. Another begonia that should be added to a collection is the species *B. crassicaulis*; this species from Guatemala does go dormant and is unique in that it blooms first and then puts out its foliage. Its long stem can make some unusual shapes, as the plant gets larger, so for those who want the unusual, obtain *B. crassicaulis* for your collection.

I want to commend the San Antonio Branch and the Southwest Region for their great get-together this past May. The plant sale was phenomenal with many species and terrarium plants available. The show was lovely as well, especially the terrarium division. Of course it was great to see old friends and make new ones as well. Think about attending a future Southwest Region Get-Together. They are a lot of fun.

Our next big begonia event is the American Begonia Society Annual Convention & Show which will be held in San Diego, California August 8 – August 12. Convention packets are out with many outstanding tours

and events being planned. This is the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of the American Begonia Society and I am honored to be your President during this momentous occasion. One of the tours is to the KOLZ Research Center; this is a repository for the botanical works of Carrie Karegeannes, Thelma O'Reilly, Margaret Lee and Rudolf Ziesennhenne. Tour participants will get to see this fabulous research center and learn about how the research center works. The information is available to all ABS members, just send your request to the KOLZ Research Center; its curator is longtime ABS member Michael Ludwig. Also donations can be made to the preservation of its research material through the American Begonia Society. Just send donations to our Treasurer Carol Notaras made out to the American Begonia Society with a notation that the donation is for the KOLZ Research Center. I hope many, many of our members will be attending the Convention and Show.

This is also our Annual Meeting and Committee Chairs and National Directors are to submit their annual reports to both the President and the Secretary, Richard Macnair. To the national directors - tell us about your branch's activities that have occurred throughout the year. This is a duty of the branch National Director, so don't delay. Reports can be read at the annual meeting but should be 5 minutes or less in duration. Remember all members are eligible to attend and vote at the Annual Meeting. If a member has a topic or concern they want brought up at the meeting send it to: (1) the President, (2) the Secretary and (3) the Parliamentarian, Linda Lawson.

See you in San Diego.

Good Begonia Growing



## Request for Donations for Holiday Greetings, 2012

It is time again for branches and individual members of the ABS to consider their donations for the Holiday

Greetings for 2012. You have come through with flying colors in the past, donating \$4,075 this past year. This helps to pay for at least one issue of *The Begonian*, and helps to keep the dues down.

Categories are: Bronze, \$1-\$50, Silver, \$51-\$100, Gold, \$101-\$150, Platinum, \$151-plus. In order to save room for more articles and photos, these are listed on a single page in the November-December

issue of *The Begonian* with only the category and donors listed.

We will be happy to accept checks anytime through the first week in September, including the time of the annual convention in San Diego in August. It is difficult to contact presidents or national directors unless they have been reported to the secretary, membership chair, or the branch relations chair, so please spread the word. Checks should be made out to ABS, for Holiday Greetings, and sent to: Wanda Macnair, 59 Walker St., Cambridge, MA 02138. If you have any questions, please contact Wanda by email at [wmacnair@msn.com](mailto:wmacnair@msn.com). Thank you. This is a deductible donation and we will be happy to provide a statement for the IRS if you wish.

## Letter to the Editor: Round Robins

I've been going back over the back issues that friends have sent along, trying to catch up and I noticed that the Round Robins have dwindled away to nothing. Well, given the gold the Post Office thinks we're willing to pay for postage, I'm not surprised... however; the Internet is only a click away.

Who would be interested in an online Round Robin list? It could be broken down into groups like the old Round Robins and I could edit a listing for *The Begonian* every issue. In years past, there was a *lot* of interesting stuff in those round robins.

ABS members were asked if they'd like to sign up for such and if they'd like to offer any suggestions for topics: general culture, terrarium growing, species, et cetera.

If members would like to give it a try,

just email me so that I can have an idea of how many might participate, at which point I will set up a group within Yahoo groups. And also give me suggestions for a title: "Begonia Round Robins", "ABS Begonia Notes"...whatever.

This yahoogroups list would be under the heading of, say, ABS Round Robins on Begonias or words to that affect. Interested members could sign up for it and when they write up their Round Robin tips, they would just put the subject on the subject line as in "terrarium culture," general growing" and so forth.

Anyone interested in a round robin can reach me at:

[mountainmaines@centurylink.net](mailto:mountainmaines@centurylink.net)

Kit Mounger

# Proceedings of the Board Meeting

## American Begonia Society San Antonio, Texas, May 19, 2012

President Charles Jaros opened the meeting and asked Virginia Jens to read the Aims and Purposes of the Society.

The proceedings of the Annual Business Meeting in Tampa, FL, on August 13, 2011, were accepted as published in *The Begonian* and thus upgraded to minutes.

Treasurer Carol Notaras presented the financial report for August 1, 2011, to April 30, 2012. The general fund had a beginning balance of \$15,462.54 and an ending balance of \$20,955.34. This was based on income of \$241,240.95 and disbursement of \$235,748.15. The main reason for these high numbers was a bequest from Morris Mueller's estate in the amount of \$204,735.79. This money was transferred to a money market fund pending further action. The seed fund had a beginning balance of \$535.21, income of \$1625.51, and debits of \$1120.00 and an ending balance of \$1040.72. Savings accounts began at \$69,960.43 and ended at \$274,631.56. Total checking and savings accounts were \$85,958.18 beginning and \$296,627.62 ending. The report was accepted and filed for audit. The treasurer also stated that Morris Mueller's bequest was directed to be used strictly for conservation, research and education.

The Executive Board recommended that \$150,000 of Morris Mueller's bequest be placed in a most secure financial investment with the remaining funds to be used to supplement expeditions, student grants and other educational, research and conservation endeavors. The recommendation was accepted and approved unanimously.

The Executive Board recommended that ABS make a donation of \$1500 to the Begonia Collection at the Fort Worth Botanic

Garden. The recommendation was accepted and approved unanimously.

The Executive Board recommended that \$1000 be provided to support the International Begonia Database that is maintained by Ross Bolwell. The recommendation was accepted and approved unanimously.

The Executive board recommended that \$500 be provided to the KOLZ Research Center to further assist with presentation of research material. The KOLZ Center houses the files of Karegeannes, O'Reilly, Lee and Zieshenne. The recommendation was accepted and approved unanimously.

The Executive Board recommended that \$1500 be allocated for the purchase of a computerized show entries program. This program has already been developed and has been used for three years. Once entry and award data are entered the program will print entry cards and calculate and print awards including cultural certificates. The program uses Microsoft Access under Microsoft Office. For those using Apple computers a program called "Windows for MAC" would need to be purchased. The recommendation was accepted and approved unanimously.

The Executive Board recommended that the conservation and research committees be combined under one chair. Johanna Zinn is the current conservation chair and she would assume the additional duties of the research committee chair in the combined committee. The recommendation was accepted and approved unanimously.

Membership Chair Paul Rothstein submitted a report showing 801 domestic members, 99 foreign members and 46 business or school members for a total of 946. There are also 62 free memberships primarily for gardens, libraries and societies.

The Executive Board reminded all branch

officers that it is necessary for every branch to report their slate of officers annually to the ABS president, secretary, membership chair and branch relations director. Contact information for these officers is in *The Begonian*. It is particularly important for the branch treasurer to make annual reports to the IRS and to pass this duty on to succeeding treasurers. Instructions for reporting can be obtained from the ABS treasurer. If reporting to the IRS is not done properly and timely, the branch tax-free status could be lost. If this happens it costs time and money to get it back.

President Jaros announced that a National Director's website is being planned.

Holiday Greetings Chair Wanda Macnair thanked everyone for their generous donations last year that yielded \$4075. She announced that this year's program is getting started and urged individuals and branches to respond to requests.

U-Numbers Co-Chair Charles Jaros announced that an addendum to the U-numbers list is planned for availability at the San Diego Convention. It should also be available online through the ABS Bookstore on the ABS website.

Nomenclature Director Gene Salisbury reported three new registrations. He also urged others to participate in the program and offered help in filling out the application forms. Hybridized introductions cannot be nominated for the Alfred D. Robinson Award unless they have been officially registered with the ABS Nomenclature Committee program for registering hybrids.

Nominations are open for the ABS service awards that will be presented at the San Diego Convention. The nominations deadline has been extended to June.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Richard Macnair, Secretary

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# ABS Convention 2012

## August 8 - 12 2012

You are invited to sunny San Diego to explore and enjoy all our local Begonia branches and city have to offer! This year's convention returns to the Town & Country Resort and includes visits to botanic gardens, renowned nurseries, and historic homes. Seminar speakers are coming in from near and far in addition to our local legends. The show always inspires the grower within, and thanks to the proximity of our great nurseries, the sale will offer the highest quality and widest assortment of plants anywhere.

This year's tours will be kept local to minimize time on the bus and maximize feet on the ground. They include: "Rosecroft," the Alfred D. Robinson house and grounds, the Balboa Park lath house (pictured below) and the adjacent historic Marston House, and the KOLZ Begonia research center. Nurseries and private home tours take us to San Diego's rural North County, where you'll have plenty of time to wander through A&G (formerly Ades and Gish) and Kartuz Nurseries and two homes with equally striking sub-tropical yards and plant collections.

For more information contact Dean Turney, 467 Fulvia Street, Encinitas, CA 92024, 760-942-1919, dean@deansmail.us



### *Begonia cremnophila*: a new Bolivian begonia

*Dr. Mark C. Tebbitt, California University of Pennsylvania, PA*

A major goal of my recent expedition to Bolivia was to visit and collect a begonia that I had first seen as a dried herbarium specimen at the New York Botanical Garden. This plant had been collected in one of Bolivia's National Parks – the Parque Nacional Amboró. With over 1,700 square miles of wilderness this park is home to one of the richest concentrations of wildlife on our planet, including jaguars, pumas, monkeys, giant anteaters, and almost as many bird species as occur in the United States and Canada combined. Yet only 10 species of begonias have so far been recorded from its tropical forests (Nee, 2008). Others undoubtedly await discovery. The plant that I was interested in was new to science. The dried specimen I had studied previously showed that it has a unique mix of characters including an unusual rhizome and female tepals that oddly do not fall off once the flower is pollinated but remain at-

tached to the developing fruits. I was eager to see a living plant.

So the day after I arrived in Bolivia I crossed the huge River Pirai in my hired jeep and made my way via a rutted and very bumpy road to the cliff where this new begonia had first been collected. After driving for about one hour into the park I was still very much on its margin, in a buffer zone where humans and wildlife share the same space. The cliff where the new begonia grows is located alongside a small river that has carved its way through soft rock and has in the process created a series of waterfalls and sculptured pools. The locals come to this area to relax and enjoy the natural water slides and spectacular scenery.

As I walked along a narrow footpath next to this river I saw to my right this new

**Figure 1.** *Begonia cremnophila* with beautiful red leaf undersurfaces growing at Parque Nacional Amboró, Bolivia.



species of begonia growing on the cliffs (Fig. 1) and to my left groups of boisterous teenagers zooming down the waterslides just a few feet away. Quite an incongruous situation, but one that is not too unusual; there are probably a few hundred begonia species that are yet to be described and with humankind's ever increasing encroachment upon nature many of these species are now located in popular recreational areas.

The cliffs upon which the begonia grows are fascinating and quite unlike the rest of the sandstone landscape that characterizes this part of the world. These cliffs consist of tufa, a strange type of highly porous limestone rock that forms when carbonate minerals precipitate out of water, often at the source of a natural spring. The result in this case was a steep cliff composed of a crumbly, lime-rich rock with perfect drainage, a tough place for plants to grow (Fig. 2). Indeed only three plant species have managed to colonize the cliff – the new begonia, a species of *Selaginella*, and a gesneriad - *Koellikeria erinoides*. The begonia seems to survive here by virtue of shedding its leaves during the dry season, and then for a while it exists in a semi-dormant state as a curious knobby rhizome that has grown into the soft cliff face. This rhizome is quite unlike that of any other begonia I have seen before. As it matures it becomes constricted at each of its nodes so that the whole length ends up resembling a string of 2-8 small tuber-like sections (Fig. 3). Occasionally, individual tuber-like portions will break off from the main rhizome and likely provide a means by which this

Figure 2. Tufa cliff with *Begonia cremnophila* and *Selaginella*.

plant clonally propagates itself. But colonization by seeds also occurs and these seeds appear to have become unusually small and spherical for a begonia, perhaps so that they can roll along the cliff faces after the wind shakes them out of their winged capsules. By this means of dispersal a seed would eventually become lodged in a crevice of the soft rock and result in a new plant. (These seeds are illustrated in a separate shorter article on page 134.)

The new species appears to be thriving in its unusual cliff habitat with perhaps as many as five hundred plants growing along this short stretch of cliff. But up to this point of the expedition this was the only known location of this curious species and since no similar tufa cliffs are known from this area of Bolivia it appeared to be extremely rare. Two weeks later we discovered a second population in a different location. About one hundred miles to the south of Amboró National Park Bolivian botanist, Alexander Parada, and I were exploring a river gorge cloaked in lush rainforest (Fig. 4). Soon after arriving in this forest Alexander had noticed that a similar unusual mix of tree species occurs in this forest as is found in the part of Amboró National Park where the new species grows. So noticing this similarity he began to search for this begonia (while I went off to climb a cliff to collect plants of *B. cinnabarina*) and eventually he located a small population growing on a single small rock-face next to a small stream (Figs. 5 and 6). The total population size in this case numbered about 100 individuals. And curiously, there were subtle differences between these plants and those that we had seen previously. For example, the undersurfaces of their leaves were not the same

bright red as those in Amboró but instead were green with just a faint reddish tinge (compare Figs. 1 and 5 [on cover]). But perhaps more significantly the rhizomes of the plants in this second population consisted of just one or two segments and these were flattened and tightly pressed against the rock face, reminiscent of tiny suction cups. This difference in rhizome structure had probably originated because the rock upon which these plants were growing was hard sandstone, quite unlike the friable tufa of the previous site.

Additional herbarium studies have now turned up a third population that was collected in this same general area of Bolivia close to where the Andean foothills arise up from the Amazon Basin. But at this time the species appears to be rare and restricted to just a few scattered steep cliffs. I have named it *Begonia cremnophila* (Tebbit, in press), which in Greek means “cliff-loving”.

**Acknowledgement:**

This expedition would not have been possible without the generous financial support of numerous ABS members and branches. I also wish to thank Mr. Alexander Parada for assistance in the field and Drs. Michael Nee (NY) and Luzmilla Arroyo (USZ) for their advice and support.

**References:**

Nee, M.H. 2008. Flora de la región del Parque Nacional Amboró, Bolivia. vol. 3: Dilleniidae. FAN, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia.

Tebbit, M.C. in press. A new species and a new synonym of *Begonia* L. from Bolivia. Brittonia.



**Figure 3.** The curious knobby rhizome of *Begonia cremnophila* **Figure 4.** River gorge near Vallegrande cloaked in rainforest. (**Figure 5.** - see front cover.) **Figure 6.** Close up of *Begonia cremnophila* from the second population.

# A Scanning Electron Microscope Study of the Seeds of *Begonia cremnophila*

Mark C. Tebbitt and Sara Gmutza, California University of Pennsylvania, PA

During a survey of the seed micromorphology of Andean begonias (Gmutza et al., in prep; De Lange & Bouman, 1999) the seeds of a newly described species, *B. cremnophila*, were found to differ slightly from other begonia seeds collected from this region of South America. Seeds of this species are unusually small (their mean seed length is 287  $\mu\text{m}$ , while most begonia seeds measure between 300-600  $\mu\text{m}$  [De Lange & Bouman, 1999]), and they have strongly undulated anticlinal walls of their testa cells (most begonia seeds have testa cells with straight anticlinal walls [De Lange & Bouman, 1999]). These features likely represent an adaptation that facilitates seedling establishment on the bare cliff faces that *B. cremnophila* inhabits, particularly since they enable the seeds of this species to roll much more readily than those of most begonia, as we have tested by racing seeds of a number of Andean begonia species down an inclined sheet of card!

A description of the seeds of *Begonia cremnophila* was compiled using a scanning electron microscope. Scanning electron micrographs of the seeds are shown in Figures 1 and 2. Mature seeds were sputter coated with platinum for five minutes using an Anatech Hummer VI-A sputter coater and were observed using a Joel JSM-5300 scanning electron microscope. Seed was obtained from the following herbarium collections: Nee 34217 (NY) [one seed], Cárdenas 4696 (US) [five seeds], and Tebbitt 700 (USZ) [four seeds].

## *Begonia cremnophila* seed description

Seeds ellipsoid, 269-300  $\mu\text{m}$  long, 159-190  $\mu\text{m}$  wide (mean 287 x 178  $\mu\text{m}$ ). Ratio length : width 1.6. Collar cells about 13 in seed circumference, of similar length within a single seed, 69-138  $\mu\text{m}$  long (mean 107  $\mu\text{m}$ ), 37-43  $\mu\text{m}$  wide (mean 38  $\mu\text{m}$ ). Ratio collar to seed length 1 : 2.6, longitudinal walls of the collar cells straight. Testa cells polygonal, (2-)4 along long axis of seeds but not arranged in distinct rows, the anticlinal walls strongly undulated. Operculum nipple-shaped, 31-54  $\mu\text{m}$  long (mean 42  $\mu\text{m}$ ).

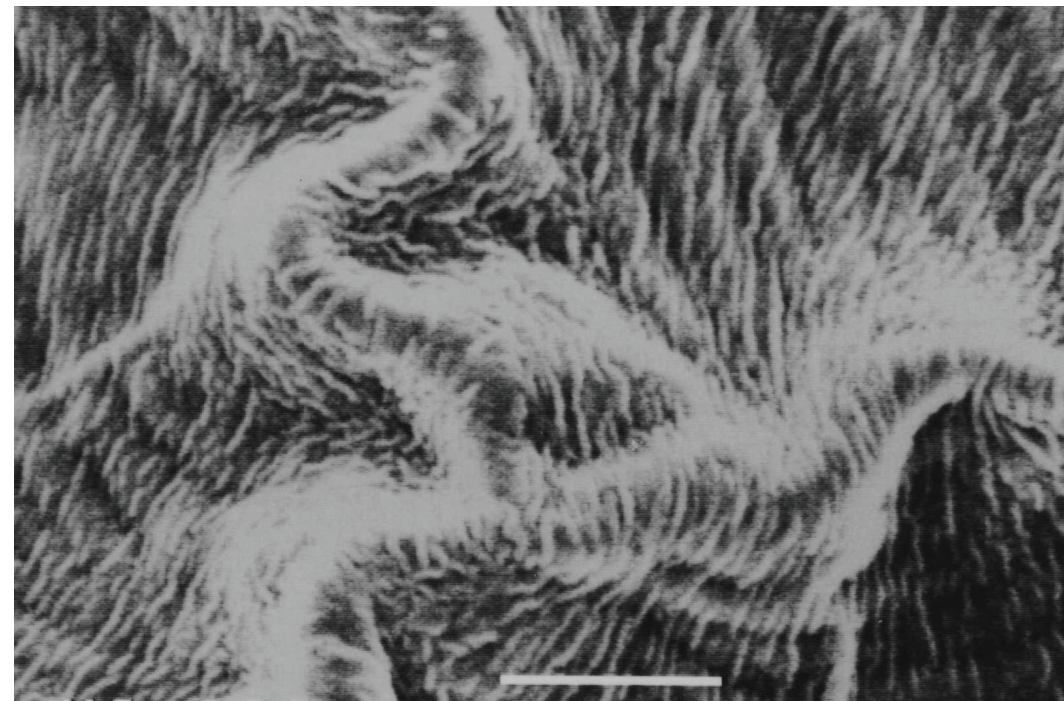
*Seed micromorphology:* Anticlinal boundaries not sunken. Cuticle of collar and testa cells faintly to prominently ridged (the ridges of adjacent cells often running in different directions), pitted and covered with undulated striae, the striae 5-10  $\mu\text{m}$  long, lacking distinct patches.

## References:

De Lange, A. & F. Bouman (1999) Seed micromorphology of Neotropical Begonias. *Smithsonian contributions to botany*. 90: 1-49.

Figure 1. Seed of *Begonia cremnophila* [Cárdenas 4696 (US)]; scale bar = 50  $\mu\text{m}$ ].

Figure 2. Wavy anticlinal walls of testa cells: *Begonia cremnophila* [Cárdenas 4696 (US)]; scale bar = 10  $\mu\text{m}$ ].





# Sabah's New Species is a Tasty Vegetable: *Begonia lazat*

Dr Reza Azmi, Founder and Executive Director of Wild Asia, Malaysia

When I was younger (actually it wasn't that long ago), I used to imagine that the great discoveries of new species were often made in remote, unexplored areas of the Bornean hinterland. Usually the explorers were bearded, machete-wielding men who exclaimed "By Jove!" or "Good God!!", as they marveled, peering over the shoulders of their troop of porters, the native landscape and its wonders. Although hardly a remote locality, our new begonia was found modestly enough near Sandakan, close to a small riverside village called Buang Sayang on the Kinabatangan River.

Buang Sayang lies several miles upriver from Bukit Garam. Between 1994 and 1995, I had been making botanical collections of useful plants known to communities in the area. On one occasion, whilst collecting useful plants from the nearby forest areas, I had been accompanied by two elders from the village. We had followed an old tractor path, and came across a peculiar looking shrub-like plant, with distinctive white-spots on the upper leaf surface. I had never seen this before (this was not an uncommon reaction at that time, for when you were as naive of the local flora as I was, even the bayam spinach could be mistaken for an exotic vegetable!), but one of my guides told me his wife often uses these leaves as a vegetable. So a collection was made, and was later shown to my guide's wife. She told me that this plant was known as riang and leaves are cooked

with chillies and dried prawns to make a very tasty vegetable dish.

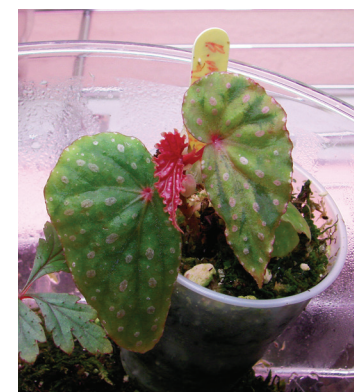
The identity of this 'tasty' vegetable remained unknown to me until I was back in the herbarium in Sandakan, where I learned that this vegetable was a begonia. However, it wasn't until some time later that I was able to show my collection to Dr Ruth Kiew who specialises in this plant group. It didn't take long for her to deduce that, indeed, this was a new species! So there you are, who would have thought of discovering a unique plant to science in a tractor-trodden degraded landscape. We eventually named the species *Begonia lazat* Kiew & Reza Azmi (Garden's Bulletin Singapore 50 (1998) 43-48) - the species epithet reflecting its use as a delicious and tasty vegetable (lazat is Malay for delicious).

Over several hundred species of begonias are known in the South East Asian region alone. Sabah, a mere 73 750 sq. km is but a small portion of Borneo, but yet harbours at least 60 species of begonias! Most of these are herbs or shrub-like, and many of them occur commonly in the lower and mid-montane rainforest. *Begonia lazat* or riang, is a tall cane-like shrubby begonia. The stems are reddish and can extend to about 100 cm tall. The leaves are borne on long, dark red, leaf-stalks. The mature leaves are glossy, dark green with large and small silvery-white blotches. In this respect, its leaves resemble another Sabah begonia, *B. malachosticta* Sands, an endemic to limestone and apparently only known to one limestone outcrop in



eastern Sabah. Another striking feature of riang is the relatively large size of its fruits (about 3-4 cm long) - few Bornean begonias possess such large fruits. The closest known allies of riang are *B. erythrogyna* Sands (known from Poring) and *B. tawaensis* Merr. (also from eastern Sabah), which are both cane-like begonias with large fruits. Riang however is unique from all other Bornean begonias, by a combination of characters: its habit, leaf-structure, fruit-size and inflorescence. Riang was discovered on a low river terrace of the Kinabatangan river, in a disturbed periodically flooded area. It grew along the path of an old-logging trail, on the fringe of shrubby-secondary vegetation. Despite the species being known to some local residents, we were unable to relocate any more specimens of riang. Furthermore, riang appears to be intolerant of either prolonged flooding or competition, as we were unable to locate this species again a year later.

In the shadow of this new discovery, there lies a sombre tale. Riang, although rare, was at least known to some local older members of Buang Sayang. If efforts in documenting such local knowledge had not been initiated, regardless of the thrill of new discoveries, a small but significant part of the heritage of the people of Kinabatangan would have been lost. Such knowledge even in Kinabatangan villages are sadly neglected - youths growing up in these areas have no need for their forest, they find little opportunities



Top: *Begonia lazat* or riang as it is known by the local people. Photo from Rezi Amzi

Bottom: This young *B. malachosticta* is another begonia that is native to Sabah, Malaysia. Grown and photographed by Laurie Bounsall



Malaysia. See the Sabah region in purple. Courtesy of worldofmaps.net

here for earning a livelihood and the attraction for life in towns and cities is too strong. As rural life no longer centers on the use of native forest, rural communities are inadvertently losing touch of their local knowledge of the forest. However, the decline of forest use amongst local communities is unavoidable as there has been a dramatic loss of natural forest in the region and, of the forested areas remaining, most are badly degraded. Large tracts of forest in the last decade has been lost due to forest conversion to oil-palm. Recent estimates in the Kinabatangan region show that there has been at least a 50% loss of natural forest in the last two decades! The only remaining native forest is found largely within protected areas (i.e., Forest Reserves, the SAFODA rattan plantation or the proposed Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary). These forest remnants of the Kinabatangan are important refuges for biological diversity, but are also an important part of Sabah's heritage. We must seriously consider con-

servation, not only for the protection of biological diversity, but also efforts need to be directed for the conservation of local knowledge. The forest, and the elders that still know of its value, are Sabah's living heritage. Once they are lost, they may be lost forever.

Reza is the founder and Executive Director of Wild Asia. He is a certified ISO 14001 (Environmental Management) Lead Auditor and has developed his audit experience in both forestry and oil palm certification assessments using FSC (forestry), MTCC (forestry), and RSPO (oil palm). He has over 14 years experience in botanical research (floristics, taxonomy and ethnobotany), and in issues relating to biodiversity conservation (protected areas, sustainability standards and trade).

Wild Asia works with businesses to promote sustainable practices that will minimize adverse impacts on the environment and ensure that local communities are engaged and empowered.

Learn more about Wild Asia at  
<http://www.wildasia.org/>

Article originally published at [http://www.wildasia.org/main.cfm/ideas\\_lab/New\\_Species\\_of\\_Begonia](http://www.wildasia.org/main.cfm/ideas_lab/New_Species_of_Begonia) on July 31 2002

# Travel to Gabon

2010 May 24 / 2010 June 14 - Part 2

Article & photos by Jacky Duruisseau, Bois, France

**Sunday May 30:** In the morning, we have fog and when the mist has scattered, the sky becomes grey and threatening. Each day we have gone up the rivers, all are tributaries of the Mbei River. But no more. We go on towards the north and on the roadside, we can see some terrestrial orchids, *Eulophia* species, with flower spikes about 2 m long, and on the other side of the road an enormous begonia, *B. letouzeyi* (photo 9)! We return from Makabane village and on the way Colette discovers Ali Baba's cave, a hollow near the road, absolutely invisible to passersby. In fact, it is not a cave but a space left by erosion between big rocks. At the entrance, on right, is a line of *B. susaniae* growing on a rock (photo 10), the dark form of this species. On the sandy floor is a carpet of *B. letouzeyi*! Suddenly, on a vertical rock on the right, I see a wall of *B. vittarifolia* (photo 11) - about a hundred stalks! Wonderful! Unfortunately, no flowers, no fruit! A great day! We celebrate in the evening with the last two beers of our supplies!

**Monday 31:** Morning fog after night rains. We decide that we'll go again on the river Mbei tributary we visited yesterday, on the Tchimbélé road. We go upstream by this torrent further than yesterday and we find, maybe, *B. loranthoides* subsp. *rhopalocarpa*, an epiphyte, one with white flowers. A picnic in the forest and, in the afternoon, we go up a small brook, a tributary of a tributary, difficult and acrobatic, but wonderful! We are at the end

of the world, in a primordial place; many plants in blossom and unknown ones, including a very small *Impatiens* sp. But only one begonia: *B. heterochroma* (photo 12), a very nice one with dark and hairy leaves. We are at an altitude of about 400 m and it would be worth going up more. The crests above are 800 or 900 m high and we would need more time - 3 or 4 days - with more supplies, water, hammocks and porters. Unfortunately, we cannot find them here.

**Tuesday Jun 1:** Today, we move. We get some fuel at the SEEG (the Gabon Electricity and Water Society) Actually we are afraid to be short of it for we are going to Tchimbélé which is about 40 km to the north. We stop at Madouaka, a small village where we can see some traditional houses without sheet metal roofs. We greet the policemen but it seems we disturb them! We stay at the "case de passage" [temporary housing - ed] used by engineers during the dam building. Superb weather and a very nice view of the Crystal Mountains (photo 13) (In 2003, pine trees blocked it, now they have been cut down). We visit the Jean Philippe Biteau orchids shade installation: unfortunately ants and termites have invaded this abandoned place. We turn back south to visit some small rivers that we have seen before. A difficult approach and only one begonia - but very interesting: *B. erectocaulis* (photo 14), a rare one. We'll see it only once. We come back to the dam and walk again on the path we followed



Photo 9 *B. letouzeyi* Photo 10 *B. susaniae* (a form of this species) Photo 11 *B. vittariifolia* (a very rare species) Photo 12 *B. heterochroma*

Photo 13 The Crystal Mountains from Tchimbélé Photo 14 On the Moabi track Photo 15 The savannah in the morning



16



17

**Photo 16** On the Moukalaba river, Doussala  
**Photo 17** In the distance the Doudou Mountains

in 2003, with the same *B. susaniae* plants. Finally, we start on the old road towards Asok. It is abandoned and from the start it is more and more narrow! How do we return? Whew! This road leads to an aerial and we can return. We have a final dinner at the SEEG canteen with the staff, as we did in Kinguélé.

**Wednesday 2:** Saying bye bye Crystal Mountains, we return to Libreville. At Madouaka, people are waiting for us... "Can you take us to the crossroads?" I ask. "Yes, of course..." We stop at PK 59, near a small and rocky stream where we found *B. vittariifolia* in 2003. None this time but maybe we didn't go high

enough. Again we have the same problem: we need more time! We didn't recognize this place when we passed here yesterday. In the deforested places, under the power line from Kinguélé to Tchimbélé, a tall fern grows and it invades everywhere and it is difficult finding again the places we found in 2003 (I didn't have GPS in 2003 but now I can note the waypoints). To get to the Asok track, I use the private

SEEG road (rather than the Asok road again that we used on the way there because it would be longer). What an error! The road is broken up with about ten bogs! A 4x4 is blocked by one and I must tow it. Two and a half hours for 40 km! We arrive to Libreville at 4 pm. Whew! Rest!

**Thursday 3:** Shopping before starting south. The weather is fair but hot in Libreville. However, the sea is nearby and we have a pleasant breeze.

**Friday 4:** We are in the dry season, but we had rain during the night! Let's go towards the Doudou Mountains. Four checks when we leave Libreville: police, army, road safety and another one by the police. Each time, the same discussion about my driver's license which is not a Gabon one, nor an international one (keep smiling!). The controllers end up accepting that I am in Gabon for less than 30 days and so my French license is OK! Anxiety on the way at Ntoun (50 km from Libreville): an ongoing strike blocks the road! Nevertheless, we pass without any problem! Blacktop until Fougamou and we stop there at the Auberge du Rond

Point for a fresh beer (the manager runs to buy two at the nearest shop!), and for a Basque chicken and an air-conditioned room. In the distance, in the south, we can see the Youmbi Mountain. I plan to visit them a day...

**Saturday 5:** Fougamou is the end of the paved road. We have a track up to Mouila -two police checks, rather likeable ones, with good intentions! Savannah replaces forest and we leave the main road to Moabi (Photo 14). By a small, sinuous and broken, but good side road, we see a dilapidated sign - "To Mourindi". At Moukalaba-Doudou Park there is a gate. Nobody around and the gate is open! We go in. We have no permit to enter this park; at Libreville, we heard that this park is no longer "operational." I hope the gate will still be open when we come back! We bivouac on the Doussala road to the PK 12 from Mourindi.

**Monday 6:** We de-camp at 6.30 am to try to see some animals in the savannah at daybreak. Nice misty scenery (photo 15) and very high humidity. The grasses, two meters high, are wet and bent over the road. No animals, but some birds that fly before the car, land, and fly away when the car approaches. We reach Doussala at about 8.00 am. Joly, the official guide arrives wearing a cap and sunglasses with a GPS slung over his shoulder! "Do you want to go to Mount Doudou?" "Yes, we do!" Joly doesn't know that there is no Mount Doudou, but a range that is called Doudou Mountains. Negotiations! A second guide, Yaya, comes (with sunglasses and GPS as well), and a porter, Isidore. Two guides and a porter to go to the Doudou Mountains, bivouac in the forest, ascend the mountain, search for begonias (they don't

know begonias!) and return, all for 50,000 F CFA (about \$75 US). Another guide in white shirt and pants with the same equipment comes by for greeting, but he keeps out. Someone lets us know that the village chief would like to greet us (we always do when we stop in a village) and leave some money for earning the kindness of the spirits who inhabit the forest... all right! The departure is planned for 11:00 am. We have a bite to eat and we leave the 4x4 in the village (and in the sun). I carry my backpack and Isidore carries Colette's. Let's go! The bridge over Moukalaba River has been broken for a long time and nobody's thought of repairing it! We cross the river in a pirogue [a flat-bottomed fishing boat -ed] (Photo 16). Another bridge (not broken, but very tired) crosses the Doughougou River and further, a third one spans over Oubetsi River where we see an otter playing in water. These rivers run under gallery forests separated by savannah areas, where it is hot. Very hot! In the distance, we can see the Doudou Mountains (photo 17). They are about 15 km away. A very long and difficult approach walking! First on a trail (maybe the old trail to Cachimba where we were in 2003 from Igotchi. Next walking in very tall grasses before finally entering in the forest. Our two so-called guides lose their way (they exchange their GPS battery! I regret having kept mine in the car!) Joly and Yaya find the way again. We reach the bivouac area after walking 6 hours - it's a small clearing in the primary forest! We put up the hammocks and the guides make a fire to keep away mosquitoes. A scanty meal, then to sleep at nightfall, 6.30 pm! Tomorrow, we must wake up early.

## *Begonia lymansmithii*

By Johanna Zinn, Fairfax, VA

*Begonia lymansmithii* was described and published in 1987 by K. Burt-Utley and J. F. Utley in Brittonia. It was named for the late Dr. Lyman Smith, a botanist at the Smithsonian Institution and international authority on Begoniaceae. It is native to Oaxaca, Mexico where it grows in limestone cliffs.

*Begonia lymansmithii* is a rhizomatous

begonia in the section Gireoudia. Under my growing conditions [terrarium], the rhizomes are approximately ½ inch in diameter and light green. Petioles are 6–9 inches long and cranberry red at the base gradually changing to light green at the umbo. The petioles are covered with short rust colored hairs.

In a terrarium, the mature leaf blade is a flat green with a faint bluish tint on the top,

and cranberry-red with raised green veins underneath. When light is focused on the backs of the blade, the surface sparkles with tiny, shining, red flecks. The blades are asymmetrical, and broadly oval with an obtuse apex. They grow to 4.5 to 5.5 inches long and 4 to 5 inches wide. They have thin, reddish-brown margins of rust-colored hairs that appear to be shallowly notched or slightly indented at intervals that usually correspond with the ends of veins. Except for the margin and a few, scattered, rust-colored hairs along the veins, blades are glabrous on the top and covered with short rust-colored hairs on



Johanna Zinn

There are many ways we can promote conservation of begonias. For little or no financial investment, we can grow, study, and share our begonias, give an Adopt a Species program to our branches, or donate begonia species to a botanic garden. With contributions, we can provide financial support for students studying Begoniaceae or fund more research or collecting trips.

Dean Turney, Show Chairman for the 2012 ABS Convention in San Diego has arranged a meeting time and space for those convention attendees who are interested in conservation to meet and discuss ways ABS might promote conservation of begonias. This will not be a seminar; it will be a conversation about conservation with interested parties. For those who would like to attend the meeting, please come with suggestions to share. If you are unable to attend the convention, please e-mail me your thoughts so that I can share them at the meeting.

It would be interesting to know what and how many species are being grown by ABS members. Please send me a list of the species that you are growing. Members' names and the species they are growing will not be shared. Perhaps a list of species grown with no identifiers can be published in the Begonian or placed on the ABS website.

I hope to see many of you in San Diego. Contact Johanna at [jazinn@cox.net](mailto:jazinn@cox.net)

### *Begonia lymansmithii* - continued

the underside.

My plant has not bloomed, but Mark Tebbitt in his book, *Begonias: Cultivation, Identification, and Natural History* states that the male bloom has 2 tepals and the female has 5 tepals. Both are dark pink on the outer surface, and lighter pink on the inner surface. He also described the ovary as greenish with three, unequal, pale pink wings.

My plant grows in a 14-inch terrarium under full-spectrum lights for 12 hours each day and receives a small amount of natural light from the basement doors. I don't know anyone who is growing it out of a terrarium, but the leaf is thick, and almost waxy, and it may be able to tolerate normal household or greenhouse growing conditions. *B. ly-*

*mansmithii* is planted in long-fibered sphagnum moss cut into short pieces, placed over a layer of perlite and a layer of charcoal. I fertilize two or three times a year and use a dilute solution to avoid stimulating the plant to outgrow its terrarium. If larger terrariums were readily available, I would fertilize more often. The temperature in the basement ranges from high 50s on a very cold winter night to the high 70s in the summer. The ballasts of the lights add heat when they are operating during the day.

Mark Tebbitt described the habitat of *B. lymansmithii* as a "small area of limestone hills in northern Oaxaca, Mexico". Although ABS members cannot enlarge the habitat of *B. lymansmithii*, perhaps we can help ensure its survival by keeping it in cultivation in our homes.

# *B. silletensis* (A. DC.)

C. B. Clarke emend. M. C. Tebbitt

Article & photos by Dr. Rekha Morris, Pendleton, SC

As the largest and most imposing begonia species in India, it is surprising that *B. silletensis* has such a long history of being inaccurately described and misidentified. Dr. Mark Tebbitt's excellent summary of the confusion and errors in describing this species by both A. De Candolle (1864) and by C. B. Clarke (1879) is a much needed corrective especially as this summary also isolates the herbarium specimens of *B. aborensis* which were confused with those of



*B. silletensis* (Mark C. Tebbitt & Guan Kaiyun, Novon 12:133-136, 2002). These two species, *B. silletensis* and *B. aborensis*, continue to be confused with each other although there are clear distinctions between the two species.

Dr. Tebbitt describes the Indian species, *B. silletensis* subsp. *silletensis*, as having leaf blades which are 10-17 x 10-15 cm, or approximately 4-7" x 4-6". These dimensions are probably based solely on herbarium specimens of juvenile rather than the mature foliage of this species. My documentation of *B. silletensis* subsp. *silletensis* in Arunachal Pradesh in the eastern Himalayas of India between 2005-2012 (flourishing in widely dispersed loca-

tions between 1000'-4000') indicates that the foliage of this species is considerably larger. The largest one measured to date was approximately 26" x 44", i.e., between six to seven times larger than the dimensions given by Dr. Tebbitt for *B. silletensis* subsp. *silletensis*, and approximately four times larger (not smaller) than the Chinese form, *B. silletensis* subsp. *mengyangensis*. Both surfaces of the leaf blades of *B. silletensis* subsp. *silletensis* are glabrous.

*B. silletensis* is dioecious, and its much larger and glabrous leaf surfaces and petioles, as well as larger flowers and ellipsoid fruit, distinguish it from *B. aborensis* which has soft, fine hair on its stem and foliage [see my article on this species in The Be-



1. Flower of *B. silletensis* 4-5 inches in diameter.

2. Leaf which measured approximately 44 inches in length.

gonian, May/June, 2011]. The stems of *B. silletensis* subsp. *silletensis* are not prostrate as described by Dr. Tebbitt but grow upright, forming tall and robust, many stemmed plants as tall as 5' and as wide if not more so when mature and well established.

Arunachal is unrivalled for the wealth and diversity of its flora for which it is rightly included among the world's 18 "hotspots" of biodiversity. Despite being surrounded by the myriads of unusual and striking plants, shrubs, trees, and ferns of this prolific and

verdant habitat *B. silletensis* subsp. *silletensis* maintains a stunningly regal and imposing presence. The huge asymmetrically ovate, bright green leaves, sometimes with an undulate margin, rise above the surrounding foliage, and shimmer like satin in sunlight.

The large camellia-like female flowers, approximately 4"-5" in diameter, are sometimes rose flushed or have a soft, wide rose-red vertical stripe at the base of the reverse side of each tepal. At certain times of the day these flowers have an indescribable fra-



3

grance combining a fruity scent with that of jasmines. I located my first mature, flowering plant of this species (at an elevation of about 2000') on a chilly April afternoon in 2005 by literally allowing my nose to lead me as a light drizzle and heavy fog obscured visibility. When I reached a spot where the fragrance was strongest, I climbed the hillside and began searching beneath the tangled mass of vines, prostrate branches, foliage and fern fronds. Moving aside a heavy layer of huge leaves matted down by the rain, I was transfixed by my first glimpse of the large, pristine white flowers with prominent orange-gold centers, and their heady fragrance. Although the male flowers have only four tepals, the female flowers have many more perianth segments than the four mentioned in most descriptions of this species. I have counted as many as 12 perianth segments (see photo of flower accompanying this article).

As in the case of several other begonia species from India, *B. silletensis* subsp. *silletensis* does not have a uniform number of styles, which in wild specimens vary from four to five, and in one instance 6. The apex of each tepal, although rounded, is not smooth edged but articulated with irregular, shallow incisions which create a delicate feathered or ruffled contour.

Each mature plant may produce as many as 6-10 flowers/fruit held on sturdy, maroon-red, 6-8" tall peduncles hidden

from view under the canopy of large leaves. The fruit are deep carmine-maroon with a textured surface due to the white/cream pinhead size pustules. Although the fruit of *B. silletensis* subsp. *silletensis* are generally ellipsoid in shape, I have also recorded spherical or globose ones, as well as some fruit with an irregular, short ridge as in the Chinese form described by Dr. Tebbitt.

Contrary to Clarke's description of the fruit as being densely covered with hair (*C. B. Clarke, Begoniaceae, Flora of British India, 1879, p.636*), the fruit of *B. silletensis* subsp. *silletensis* are hairless. It is the fruit of *B. aborensis*, which have short, fine hair. When dry, the fruit of *B. silletensis* subsp. *silletensis* are dark brown and extremely hard and brittle, requiring a very sharp blade to cut them in order to extract the seeds. Each fruit may have from 4 to 6 locules.

C. B. Clarke's decision to change the name of this species to *B. silhetensis* (with an "h") was probably determined by his awareness of the more accurate spelling of the name of the district & town of Sylhet (not Syllet or Sillet), which was part of eastern Bengal in the 19th century and is now in northeastern Bangladesh. Dr. Tebbitt lists Wallich 9107 from the Sillet Mts. as the holotype specimen (Novon 12; 134), however, there are no mountains of this name. Sylhet district and town are located south of the Khasia and Jaintia Hills (both of which are now in Meghalaya in India). The Chittagong Hill Tract is the only major hill region in Bangladesh and situated in the SE section of this country. Wallich's "Sillet Mountains" is both a misnomer and misspelling of the name of the district of Sylhet whose undulating topography is renowned for tea gardens and

low elevation tropical rain forests. Clarke's *B. silhetensis* is a closer approximation in rendering the find spot of the specimen on which accurate descriptions of this species are based.

Reverting to "*silletensis*" continues the long history of inaccuracies and errors in the description and identification of this magnificent species, which appears to have succumbed to massive human encroachment of its habitat in the Khasia hills [one of the find spots of this species mentioned by C. B. Clarke], and no longer flourishes in this region of NE India. (During my survey of the Khasia Hills, Meghalaya, NE India in 2008, I was disturbed by the extensive habitat destruction in the region, and disappointed to find such few begonia species in an area where so many had been recorded in the 19th century. *B. silletensis* subsp. *silletensis* was not among the few species I documented in this section of NE India.)

- 3. Dry fruit showing the locules and seeds
- 4. *B. silletensis* fruit and flower in profile
- 5. Sturdy, upright stems of *B. silletensis*



4



5

## A Word with You: Section or Group?

By Claudia Goodridge, New Haven, CT

**Kingdom**  
**Phylum**  
**Class**  
**Order**  
**Family**  
**Genus**  
**Species**

Doc Farrow, my supremely memorable, high school biology teacher spelled them out, explained them, had us memorize them (never to be forgotten), and tested us on them. It was the same sequence in college, completely intact. That was that. So, I found it somewhat confusing to see 'section' used quite often in begonia literature. Simple enough word, but where did 'section' fit on that ladder of terms I remembered?

Research immersed me in all kinds of new (to me at least) ranking vocabulary, more Latin, and opened a small window onto what seems like a minefield in the taxonomic wars. *Section* falls right after *subgenus*. *Subgenus*? Another new one; it falls right after *genus*. It seems that the standard ladder becomes an extension ladder just by adding 'super,' or 'sub.' A *subclass* would be down the ladder from *class*, but above *order*. *Superfamily* would be above family, but below order. Got it? So a new sequence is really *Kingdom*, *Phylum*, *Class*, *Order*, *Family*, *Subfamily*, *Genus*, *Subgenus*, *Section*, *Species*, *Subspecies*; (no 'super' included.) Below that we get into *cultigens* or *cultivars* which have seen the hand of man inter-

vening in their creation. Then there are *hybrids*, *varieties*, *formas*, *groups*, *greges* (plural of *grex*), and more. Apparently there is a lot of disagreement about what goes where in this ladder of classification – and even the rungs on the ladder are disputed – which is why these terms aren't often used.

*Section* then is a group of *species*; it's higher up the ladder. In *Begonia* (the genus name), there are now 66 sections. Experts say this makes things faster and easier taxonomically. It looks like few begoniacs use those taxonomic divisions of begonias for good reason – possibly too much Latin and too many botanical buzzwords. They group begonias by physical features instead – 8 'groups' – cane-like, rhizomatous, semperflorens, shrub-like, tuberous, rex, trailing/scandent, thick-stemmed. Group designations are not part of the ladder. Mark Tebbitt, in his book *Begonias*, starts each *Begonia* description with the *genus* and *species* name, but also includes the *section* and *group* in which it belongs.

Bottom line – begonias are in the plant Kingdom, flowering plant Phylum, dicotyledon Class, Violales Order, Begoniaceae Family, *Begonia* (angiosperm) Genus, 66 Sections, and distinct species (which are always spelled with the first letter in the lower case), such as *coccinea*, *heracleifolia*. That old order, with a few often ignored rungs, still works. Thanks Doc.



### *Begonia cornitepala*

A new species from Brazil. This one was grown from seeds from Mauro Peixoto of Brazilplants. It has been easy to grow for me but has not yet flowered. Mauro's website says the plant can grow to a little over 3 feet tall. It is also listed as "a semi-trailing plants that likes humid shady areas." Perfect drainage is also recommended. Photos and information from Michael Kartuz





# Is *B.* 'Arthur Mallet' Dead and Gone?

Is *B.* 'Arthur Mallet' dead and gone? Certainly the man has been gone for well over a century now, but what about the famous begonia named after him? In 1884 Lionnet made the cross of either *Begonia subpeltata* or *incarnata* with *Begonia rex* and named the best seedling after his boss, Arthur Mallet. Otto Froebel of France introduced all three resulting seedlings around 1885. Octavie Mallet apparently never amounted to much in the world of horticulture, but Noemi Mallet was still being grown in California as late as 1945 and I have found advertisements for sale in *The Begonian*, as late as 1972, for 'Arthur Mallet'. 'Tingley Mallet', a *B. rex* "EIDorado" X *B. incarnata purpurea* cross, was introduced in 1886 and is still widely grown even today. Apparently, 'Arthur Mallet' and 'Tingley Mallet' were not from the same seedpod, or maybe not even the same cross, as is often assumed.

Both 'Arthur Mallet' and 'Tingley Mallet' were offered in American catalogs by 1890. It is remarkable that any variety, known to have a severe problem with mildew, as most mallet type begonias do, would survive in cultivation so long. But it is always a tragedy when any variety that has survived for over a century is lost - especially one such as *B.* 'Arthur Mallet', which was always highly regarded and made it onto the list of "top 10 begonias" in a survey in the 1940's. *B.* 'Arthur Mallet' was always described as the most attractive of the mallet class varieties. Indeed, it must have made quite a strong impression on growers to have an entire class of begonias named after it!

Eva Kenworthy Gray, writing in "*The Begonia Book*", refers to 'Margaritaceae' as

By Michael Underwood, St. John, MI being "another form of *B.* 'Arthur Mallet'." This certainly was not the case, but writing this in 1931, she would have been familiar with both varieties and the similarity in appearance between the two, must have been close enough to give her that impression. 'Margaritaceae' is still in cultivation today. *B.* 'Arthur Mallet' was still being offered commercially as late as 1972 in the USA. Does any one still grow this variety in the USA today?

While searching the web, I came across a photograph reproduced on several web sites, of a plant identified as 'Arthur Mallet', taken in a botanical garden somewhere in Europe. Further searching listed it as taken by someone from Sweden while on a European vacation. I only know of two women in Sweden who would spend their vacation time taking pictures of begonias. After email enquiries, I found that it was indeed my friend Ann-Sofie Johansson. She graciously sent me the original photographs that she took at the Irmischer Begonia Collection in Stuttgart, Germany. The cross listed below the name on the tag in the photo (*B. rex* EIDorado X *B. subpeltata*) would suggest to me that it may actually be *B.* 'Tingley Mallet', which was the EIDorado clone cross. I wanted to compare the photo of the plant in Germany to the chromolithograph of 'Arthur Mallet' published in 1886 in the French journal, *Revue Horticole*. I located a copy of the journal, now in the Michigan State University Special Collections library, that I could photograph. (Research librarians are unsung heroes that not only make research for people like me easier, but possible. One librarian there, Kriss Ostrom, actually called in from California, while dealing with the sudden death of her mother, to let us know that the volume I needed was locked in her



Figure 1. In the Irmischer Begonia Collection in Stuttgart, Germany, a plant reported to be *B.* 'Arthur Mallet'.

Photo by Ann-Sofie Johansson

Figure 2. *B.* 'Tingley Mallet' in one of my terrariums, the closest cross still in cultivation today.



desk and not in the special collections room as we all thought it was.)

If anyone doubts that we live in an international world, let us compare the photograph, taken by a Swede, of a plant in Germany, reputed to be *B.* 'Arthur Mallet', with the chromolithograph of *B.* 'Arthur Mallet', published in the French journal (on page 123), and the photo of the related variety, known as *B.* 'Tingley Mallet' in the USA, in my terrarium at home here in Michigan. To my eye, all three look the same and if you take into consideration the effects of local growing conditions, the answer becomes even more uncertain. The next obvious step would be to grow both *B.* 'Arthur Mallet' and *B.* 'Tingley Mallet' plants side by side and then compare them to each other. The same vendor was offering both varieties in the 1970's so they must have been distinguishable then. It would not surprise me if, after a century and a quarter, plants became misidentified. On the other hand, if *B.* 'Arthur Mallet' does still exist, we need to confirm

that and take steps to preserve it. Many, if not most, of the old varieties are gone now and we should try to preserve any remaining classic varieties.

I would love to hear from anyone who might happen to have 'Arthur Mallet' tucked away somewhere, hopefully with a clear provenance.

P.S. If you would like to view old horticulture journals, the MSU Special Collections staff is most helpful and the collection is extensive. They can be reached at <http://specialcollections.lib.msu.edu/>

Write or email me at: 4477 South Williams Rd., St. John, MI 48879 USA

Email [mike@avi-sci.com](mailto:mike@avi-sci.com)



*B. 'Ramirez'* (top) at a home in Santa Barbara. The plant, including the pot, is about 5 feet tall with spectacular color. Photo by Mary Mauck  
 From last year's Palos Verdes Show (above) *B. 'Looking Glass'*, grown by Arlene Hoskins.  
 Photos by Becky Coffey

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# In Memory: Houston Knight

By Joy Paris, Houston, TX

I am sorry to report the passing of one of our long-time members in the begonia society. Houston Knight passed away on March 26th in Houston, Texas. He spent the last 5 years near his nieces and other family in Texas. He moved there when we found out he hadn't been taking good care of himself. He spent that time at a board and care facility to make sure he ate well and got the care he needed.

Houston loved all plants and people. He was a member of many clubs and spent lots of his own money to keep them going. When I first joined the begonia society I saw in the newsletter that Houston was giving a culture class in his home once every month. Well, I called him up and asked if I could come he said, "Please do." Every month we went and he taught us to grow begonias in all the different ways. Some nights we would plant seed, sometimes we would cut up leaf sections and, sometimes transplant the small begonias we had started several weeks before. We learned a lot from him and from each other. It was a good experience. He was very interesting and made a good teacher. We learned to love all plants.

Houston was always interested in growing things. We will miss Houston and we will never forget him.

**Society Shows and Sales**

**Palos Verdes Begonia Society 22nd Annual Begonia Show and Sale**  
 Unusual begonias on display by club members as well as sale plants from members' collections and specialty vendors. Saturday August 25, 2012, 9 AM to 4 PM, South Coast Botanic Garden, 6300 So. Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274 (310) 544-1948. Free parking and admission to the show & sale after garden admission of adults \$8, seniors \$6 children 5-12 \$3, under 4 free.

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**Doug Frost Branch 3rd Annual Begonia Exhibition and Sale**  
 Join us at the Sherman Library and Gardens, 2647 E. Coast Hwy., Corona del Mar, CA. It's two blocks south of MacArthur Blvd. The dates are Sat. & Sun., August 25 & 26, 2012. The hours are 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Members of the American Begonia Society will discuss the care and propagation of begonias throughout the show. Admission to the Gardens with access to the Show is \$3.00. The public is invited. For more information call Bobbie West at (714)816-0717 or e-mail [bboopfans@aol.com](mailto:bboopfans@aol.com).

## Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund

The Margaret Lee Branch  
San Diego County, CA

The seed fund is a service to members only. It is a privilege of your membership. Please self-pollinate your species begonias, collect the seeds and send them to the seed fund. We depend on your contributions of seeds to make a wider variety of species available to the members.

The Seed Fund now offers a PayPal option. This option is available through the ABS Website. Go to the Seed Fund Page and select the link "Current Seed Listing pay with PayPal". There is a small "PayPal" fee plus the "shipping and handling" fee to cover the cost of using PayPal. Choose the fee amount in the drop down menu at the bottom of the page as with the shipping and handling drop down menus. By policy, new seed additions are made after they are first published in *The Begonian* and updated as supplies vary while filling orders. This is the best source for the current available seed list. By policy, new seed additions are made after they are first published in *The Begonian* and updated as supplies vary while filling orders. This is the best source for the current available seed list. Packets of seeds are \$2.00. Very rare seeds and newly collected seeds will be \$3.00 or more per packet when noted. California residents please add 8.75% sales tax. All orders must be accompanied by check or money order, payable in US funds ONLY to the Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund.

American Begonia Society,  
Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund,  
Dean Turney, 467 Fulvia Street,  
Encinitas, CA 92024.

E-address: dean@deansmail.us

Cost of mailing: US only: 1-12 packets \$1; 13-24, \$1.35; 25-36, \$1.71; 37-48 (2 cans), \$2.30; 49-60, \$2.66.

New seeds from Kit Jeans Mounger

*B. U074*

*B. 'Lana' X B. aconitifolia*

New seeds from Beatrice Huckriede

*B. malabarica*

*B. unknown rhizomatous with dark green foliage with white flowers (limited \$3.00)*

Thanks, also to Kathy Knoblauch and Ed and Phyllis Bates.

Canada only: 1-12 packets, \$1.10; 13-24, \$1.46; 25-36, \$1.82; 37-48 (2 cans) \$2.35; 49-60, \$2.71. Mexico only: 1-12 packets, \$1.15; 13-24, \$1.51; 25-36, \$1.87; 37-48 (2 cans), \$2.50; 49-60, \$2.81. All other international mail: 1-12 packets, \$1.85; 13-24, \$2.68; 25-36, \$3.68; 37-48, \$4.68; 49-60, \$5.68.

**DISCLAIMER:** The seeds distributed by the seed fund are identified as received from the donors. The species names (in italics) reported here are correct based on the latest information from *BEGONIACEAE*, Ed. 2; Golding, and Wasshausen. Hybrid names are made consistent with the *ABS Check List of Begonia Hybrids* edited by Howard Berg dated 9/13/2005.

## Correction: "Begonia shilendrii" should be Begonia shilendrae

An article in the March/April 2012 issue of *The Begonian* published a new species "...named *B. shilendrii* to honor the memory of His Excellency S. K. Singh, the late Governor of Arunachal..." The "S." stands for the name Shilendra. According to the internationally agreed rules for the naming of plants (ICBN Melbourne Code) the correct Latin ending in this case is "ae" rather than "ii". The specific section of the code reads as follows:

**60C.1.** When personal names are given Latin terminations in order to form specific and infraspecific epithets formation of those epithets is as follows (but see Rec. 60C.2):

If the personal name ends with a vowel or *-er*; substantival epithets are formed by adding the genitive inflection appropriate to the sex and number of the person(s) honoured (e.g., *scopoli-i* for Scopoli (m), *fedtschenko-i* for Fedtschenko (m), *fedtschenko-ae* for Fedtschenko (f), *glaziou-i* for Glaziou (m), *lace-ae* for Lace (f), *gray-ifor* for Gray (m), *hooker-orum* for the Hookers (m)), **except when the name ends with -a, in which case adding -e (singular) or -rum (plural) is appropriate** (e.g.  *triana-e* for Triana (m), *pojarkova-e* for Pojarkova (f), *orlovskaja-e* for Orlovskaja (f)). [emphasis added]

**60C.2.** Personal names already in Greek or Latin, or possessing a well-established latinized form, should be given their appropriate Latin genitive to form new substantival epithets...

Note: Since the name is not Greek or Latin, Rec. 60C.2 does not apply.

This correction has been submitted to the online International Plant Names Index (<http://www.ipni.org>)

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## Attention All ABS Branches

Please send the names of your officers to the Treasurer, the Membership Director, the President and the Secretary.

Those e-mail addresses are:

President Charles Jaros; [cjbegonia@yahoo.com](mailto:cjbegonia@yahoo.com)

Membership Director - Paul Rothstein; [paroan2001@yahoo.com](mailto:paroan2001@yahoo.com)

Secretary - Richard Macnair; [RNmacnair@msn.com](mailto:RNmacnair@msn.com)

Treasurer - Carol Notaras; [cnotaras@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cnotaras@sbcglobal.net)

## The Begonian September/October 2012

### Deadline - July 28

Send your photos, growing tips, or articles to:  
[begoniaskc@yahoo.com](mailto:begoniaskc@yahoo.com)



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**1st Vice-President...**Virginia Jens, 2483 Waterside Dr, Lake Worth, FL 33461; Phone 561-568-0124; [vjens2483@gmail.com](mailto:vjens2483@gmail.com).

**2nd Vice-President...**Mike Flaherty, 1505 East Valley Rd, Santa Barbara, CA 93108; [mikeflaherty@cox.net](mailto:mikeflaherty@cox.net)

**Secretary...**Richard Macnair, 59 Walker St., Cambridge, MA 02138; Phone 617-876-1356; [RNmacnair@msn.com](mailto:RNmacnair@msn.com)

**Treasurer...**Carol Notaras, 2567 Green St., San Francisco, CA 94123; Phone 415-931-4912; [cnotaras@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cnotaras@sbcglobal.net)

### Appointed Chairmen & Directors

**Audit...**Paul Tsamtsis, 1630 F St., Sacramento, CA 95814-1611

**Awards...**Ann Salisbury, P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653; Phone 580-628-5230; [geneann@sbcglobal.net](mailto:geneann@sbcglobal.net)

**Ballot Counting...**Ingeborg Foo, 1050 Melrose Way, Vista, CA 92083; Phone 760-724-4871

**Book Store...**Jan Brown, [begoniabrown@yahoo.com](mailto:begoniabrown@yahoo.com) Phone 310-670-4471.

**Branch Relations...**Tom Keepin, 4513 Randwick Drive Houston, TX 77092-8343; Phone 713-686-8539; [thefrogman@earthlink.net](mailto:thefrogman@earthlink.net)

**Business Manager...**Gene Salisbury, P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653; Phone 580-628-5230; [geneann@sbcglobal.net](mailto:geneann@sbcglobal.net)

**Conservation...**Johanna Zinn, 4407 Jensen Place, Fairfax, VA 22032, 703-323-7513, [jazinn@cox.net](mailto:jazinn@cox.net)

**Convention Advisor...**Mary Sakamoto, 9682 Featherhill Dr., Villa Park, CA 92861; Phone 714-637-8787; [m.sakamoto@sbcglobal.net](mailto:m.sakamoto@sbcglobal.net)

**Convention Chair...**Carol Notaras, 2567 Green St., San Francisco, CA 94123; Phone 415-931-4912; [cnotaras@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cnotaras@sbcglobal.net)

**Entries/Classification...** Vacant

**Grants Committee...** Mike Flaherty, 1505 East Valley Rd, Santa Barbara, CA 93108; [mikeflaherty@cox.net](mailto:mikeflaherty@cox.net)

**Internet Editor...** Dean Turney, 467 Fulvia Street, Encinitas, CA 92024; Phone: 760-942-1919; [B.deanturney@gmail.com](mailto:B.deanturney@gmail.com)

**Historian...** Jeanne Jones, 1415 Via Margarita, Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274-2143; Phone 310-378-7527

**Horticultural Correspondent...** Gregory Sytch, 6329 Alaska Avenue, New Port Richey, FL 34653-4301; Phone 727-841-9618; [gsytch@cs.com](mailto:gsytch@cs.com)

**Judging...** Maxine Zinman, 2770 Kimble Rd., Berryville, VA 22611; Phone 540-955-4555; [begonia@visuallink.com](mailto:begonia@visuallink.com)



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**Membership...** Paul Rothstein, 2 Flock Lane, Bella Vista, AR 72714; Phone 479-855-1665; [paroan2001@yahoo.com](mailto:paroan2001@yahoo.com)

**Nomenclature...** Gene Salisbury, P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653; Phone 580-628-5230; [geneannsbcglobal.net](mailto:geneannsbcglobal.net)

**Parliamentarian...** Linda Lawson, 525 Terrace Place, Norman, OK 73069-5034; Phone 405-364-2425

**Public Relations...** Gene Salisbury, P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653; Phone 580-628-5230; [geneann@sbcglobal.net](mailto:geneann@sbcglobal.net)

**Research...** vacant

**Save Our Species Coordinator...** Rekha Morris, 318 Woodland Cir., Pendleton, SC 29670; [shivavana@gmail.com](mailto:shivavana@gmail.com)

**Seed Fund...** Dean Turney, 467 Fulvia Street, Encinitas, CA 92024; [dean@deansmail.us](mailto:dean@deansmail.us)

**Slide Library...** Charles Jaros, 106 Pine Valley Ct. DeBary, FL 32713; Phone 407-687-5621; [cjbegonia@yahoo.com](mailto:cjbegonia@yahoo.com)

**Unidentified Species (U Numbers)...** Co-Chairs: Charles Jaros, 106 Pine Valley Ct., DeBary, FL 32713 Phone 407-687-5621; [cjbegonia@yahoo.com](mailto:cjbegonia@yahoo.com)

Mary Bucholtz, 1560 Lancaster Terr., #1008, Jacksonville, FL 32204; Phone 904-353-9111

