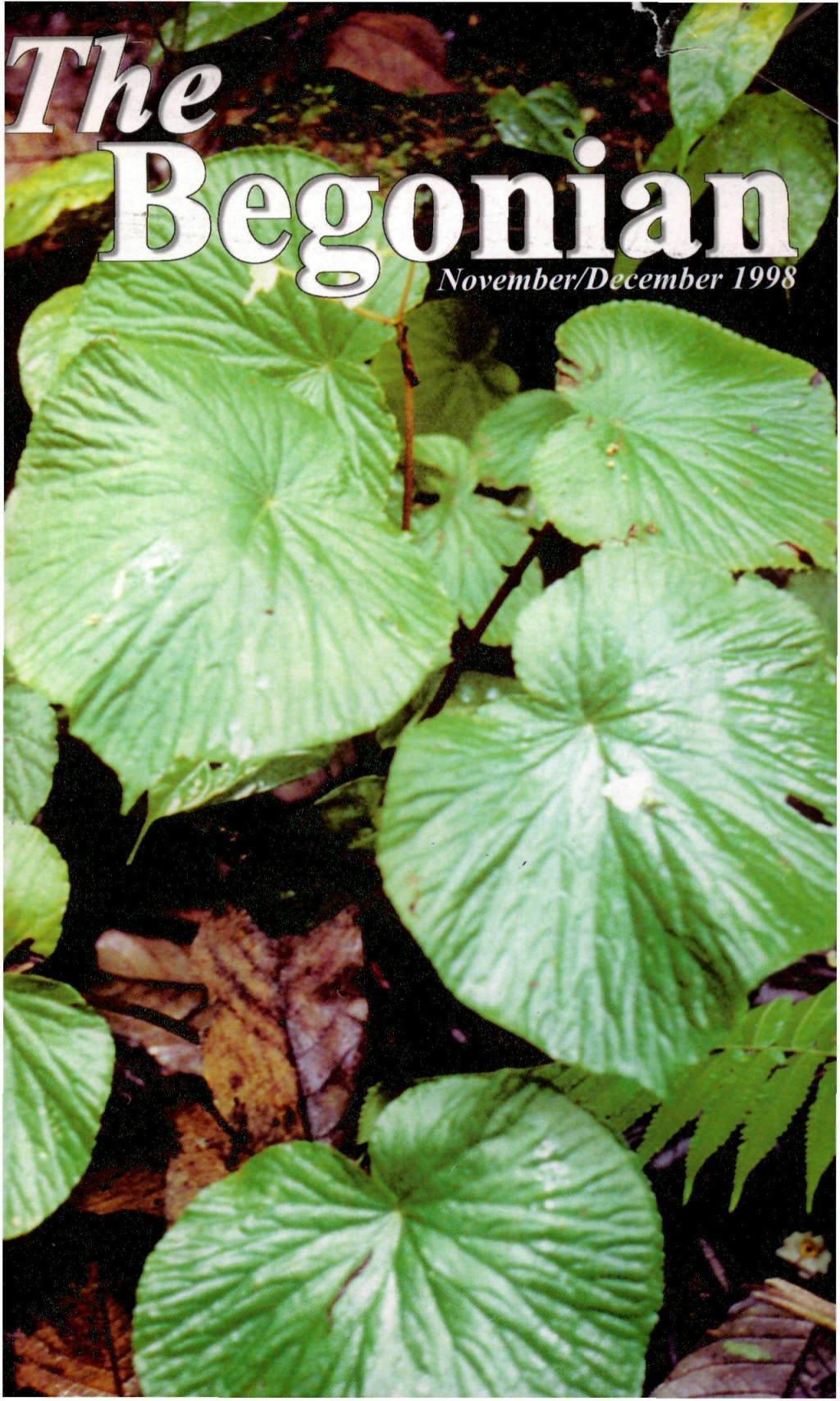
The Begonian

November/December 1998



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: Unfortunately, the beautiful unidentified begonia in this photograph taken by **Scott Hoover** on his Indonesian expedition is not one for which he was able to bring back viable seed. Perhaps a lure to return. Read about the difficulties of collecting there in the article beginning on page 206.

Back: *B. nelumbifolia* is only one of the many begonias to be seen in the New York Botanical Garden. Photo by **Anne Persico.**

Begonia Species:
Finding Them, Keeping Them

It has been a year of weather trials for many of us: Fires, drought, and heat in many areas prolonged cold, wind, and floods in others. As this year comes to an end, we are thankful fo those begonias that have stood the test and all of us wish for new ones in our stockings Perhaps this is a good time to consider the difficulties involved in finding and saving specie that are being lost at an alarming rate. Few can help us realize the hardship, but also th wonder involved in finding them better than **Scott Hoover** who has collected so many specie for us over the years. Read in this issue about his latest expedition to Indonesia. Finding them however, is only half the task. Keeping them may be even more difficult. The Species Bank such as those at the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens and the University of South Florida are wel known to us for their work on this, but other Botanic Gardens also play a role as we saw at th Myriad and Atlanta Botanic Gardens this year. This month **Anne Persico** takes us to the Nev York Botanic Garden to learn about their contributions. Still, perhaps the most importan contribution may be that of the individual member who grows, loves, and spreads a species **Kit Jeans Mounger** is undertaking a series on species that will help inspire each of us to b such a member.

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Quick

Check your mailing label. If it reads **1/99 or 2/99**, your membership is about to expire. Please renew! We don't want to lose you.

President's Notes....

Tubers are now dormant, yet safely cradled in flowing air; pots are soaking so we can easily scrub the salts from them. Greenhouse plants have been trimmed back and prop boxes have cuttings for spring renewal.

A favorite essayist, a college professor in virology, once wrote that he did his best thinking while scrubbing petri dishes and test tubes; essential tasks, but mindless in effort. And, a colleague enthused that, "A newsletter should be fun to read!" as we sought the best articles (and writers for the next edition).

A recent *Guideposts* article on the influence that the late Mother Teresa had on particular lives, tells about a young carpenter, seeking her guidance, who had received a letter from her telling him to "always do small things with great love." What more wonderful words to guide us all, entering this season of "Good Will."

~Bruce C. Boardman

Letters to the Editor

My experience with *Begonia gehrtii*: It is a begonia that impresses me; its surface and its blooms are extraordinary. In spring 1998 the plant bloomed for the first time. I pollinated it and to my surprise it made seed. The germination was 100%, so now I have a hundred seedlings. Let it be a stimulation for other growers. The Seed Fund needs offerings!

Beatrice Huckriede
Gaelstraat 9
2291 Wateringnen
Netherlands

Thank you so much for all the extra excellent photos in the Sept/Oct. issue. I like the larger print, but I gladly sacrifice it, just to get more photos.

Jack Simene
601 21st St., apt. 104
Colorado Springs, CO
81601-4208

Jack's thoughts reflected most of the feedback received; the small print was acceptable if the content and photos warranted. Ed.

The honor dinner for Rudy once again reminded me that in the next few years we will be losing a lot of our Begonia pioneers. Back when I was ABS President in the 1960's I suggested that someone use a video camera and interview begonia pioneers that were alive at that time. Many have now died. At that time video cameras were fairly expensive so we had no takers. Now, lots of people have video cameras. It would be a shame if we missed the opportunity to record our history on video tape!

Wally Wagner
4560 39th NE
Salem, OR 97305

How, about it, those of you out there with video cameras? Interviews might be set up at future ABS meetings.

My thanks for printing my article on "Begonias in the Open Garden." It is a real honor to be published in your prestigious Journal. I thought that your readers may be interested in the following: "Further to my article in the July/August issue...I would like to report that we have just suffered the worst ten days of rain for many years. Twenty-four inches fell in that period, the worst day producing six inches of incredible downpour! It was also cold during the period with temperatures falling to around 41°F. The begonias in the open plantings at the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens didn't seem to mind at all, although some of the large leafed varieties did sustain leaf damage due to the intensity of the rain. Begonias take my award for toughness in the face of extreme adversity."

Peter Sharp
2/238 Jersey Road
Woollahra NSW 2025
Australia

Excellent story on Rudy...And, of course, new begonia species still must be published in Latin to be valid. An expanded description and discussion in a modern language is usually added--but, when it's Chinese, I'm thankful for the Latin!! Helps me with German too.

Carrie Karregeannes
3916 Lake Boulevard
Annandale, VA
22003-2319

Share your ideas and opinions with other members. Send your letters to: Editor, P.O. Box 99, Ozone, AR 72854.

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Summary of the 1998 Indonesian Botanical Expedition

by W. Scott Hoover,
Founding Director, New England Tropical Conservatory

A second botanical expedition to Indonesia has been completed. Half the island of Sumatera was transected again and a "Reconnaissance Mission" to Sulawesi was undertaken. The expedition lasted from mid-January to the end of March of this year. Searching for new species of Begonia was the principal objective, though some general botanical collecting efforts were undertaken as well. An agreement was made to leave all Begonia and general herbarium specimens with the Bogor Herbarium in Bogor, West Java, repeating the same arrangement that was made in 1995. A duplicate set of all herbarium specimens were sent to the Botany Department at Andalas University in Padang, West Sumatera. Andalas University is the fifth largest university in Indonesia. Additionally, seed material was collected for the Bogor Botanical Garden. These collecting arrangements have been made possible through a developing collaboration with Dr. Harry Wiriadinata, a staff taxonomist with the Bogor Herbarium. Harry has recently become a member of the ABS and has accompanied me on different phases of the 1995 and 1998 expeditions.

I began planning for this expedition 3 years ago, based on the success of the 1995 Martin Johnson Memorial Botanical expedition to Indonesia. As it turns out much luck was involved with that trip because the mountains I chose to climb were relatively easy to access. I used this 1995 model and mapped out 16 different mountains to explore, ranging from Lampung Province in the Southeast to North Sumatera Province to the Northwest. Ache Province in the extreme Northwest of Sumatera remains to be explored for our begonias. When all is said and done, I was able to access only three of the 16 mountains targeted. Most of the mountains I had planned, on paper, to explore were inaccessible from one of several perspectives. 1. No roads led to a sufficient elevation to begin collecting; 2. Where there was a road, it was only passable by 4-wheel drive vehicle; 3. There was no road, period. In the future, I would like to obtain topographical maps of Indonesia, if they are available, LandSat photographs and a global positioning device. In light of these difficulties, we decided to explore fewer mountains with greater thoroughness.

The following summary will describe briefly the collections and their geographical region. The table on page 208 summarizes the collections for both the 1998 and 1995 expeditions.

Begonia *isoptera* was collected on January 16, 1998 on the upper forested slopes of Mt. Tanggamus in Lampung Province. Louis des Cognets accompanied me on this mountain and was with me until the end of January. The next several days after were spent attempting to reach other mountains, but unsuccessfully. A return trip was made to Mt. Dempo in South Sumatera Province and we recollected on Jan. 20 a lovely, white flowered rhizomatous vine, likely being a new species to science and cultivation. The following several days were spent reaching progressively higher elevations on Mt. Dempo and recollecting a new species similar to B. *acutifolia*, having 2" white flowers with yellow centers. We packaged our seeds and placed them in the back of the truck for the next long drive. Heading up the coastal highway on Jan. 23, we discovered a seed bag was missing. Someone had stolen it, likely thinking it was a money bag. Several seed collections were missing, but fortunately not the B. *acutifolia* type. By Jan. 26, we had reached the Northwest slope of Mt. Kerenchi, followed a stream filled with fallen trees, boulders and debris up to a waterfall. With the rain pouring down, we discovered a rhizomatous species, reminiscent of B. *stigmosa*, a Gireoudia from Central America



Above is the begonia which becomes U379.
Photo by Scott Hoover.



May the Holidays bring you Loads of Plants and Tons of Happiness!

The Santa Barbara Branch

Summary of Collections for 1995 and 1998 Indonesian Botanical Expeditions

	Approximate No. of Collections					
Type of Collection	Java	Sumatera	Java	Sumatera	Sulawesi	Approximate Total # of Collections
Begonia Herbarium Collection	20	120	8	144	60	352
General Herbarium Collections w/Seed	0	0	5	175	15	195
Begonia Species	3	21	2	19	7	52
Begonia Populations	5	30	2	36	12	85
Epidermal Peels	50	300	20	360	120	850
Leaf Sections	50	300	20	360	120	850
Begonia Photographs	25	150	10	180	50	415
General Photographs	50	400	5	300	150	905

and northern South America. This was quite a treat since no seed was available from the populations I collected in 1995; furthermore, I had not gone this far up the stream to find the waterfall and all this begonia covering the cliffs. By Jan. 27, we were in W. Sumatera province holed up in a little town called Surian with barely a hotel. The purpose of this stop was to attempt exploring Mt. Patia Cermin, a 2700 m. mountain. After an excruciating climb up a river littered with boulders the size of houses, we finally, at the very end of our days journey, discovered 4 species of begonia at 4000 ft. Two species I had never seen before. The next time we return to Mt. Patia Cermin, it will be necessary to bring hammocks in order to sleep on the mountain. I suspect more species remain to be discovered at high elevations.

Louis and I were exhausted and needed a break. We wound up on Lake Singkarak for some rest, and a couple of days later proceeded to Bukittinggi, a beautiful, small city nestled in the valley between Mts. Singgaland and Merapi. On Jan. 30 we collected another rhizomatous vine creeping on cliffs at the base of a waterfall on the north slope of Mt. Singgaland. This mountain's eastern slope I had visited in 1995. Three species altogether were collected on this day, which was Louis' last venture into the Sumatera Mts. before leaving for the U.S.

The following day Jim Hunter arrived to help with collecting operations. Jim is Vice President of the New England Tropical Conservatory and had worked with Harry Wiriadanata and I on the 1995 collecting trip across Java, along with my daughter Cytandra and Jim's daughter Sara. After a day of catch up, we discussed our new method for collecting and mapped out a strategy for the next 3 weeks. We decided to target intensive collecting for Mts. Merapi and Singgaland and recollected several species from the 1995 trip and a number of new ones, as well.

On Feb. 2 Jim and I proceeded to a higher elevation on Mt. Singgaland, leaving

off from where Louis and I collected, and captured a new delicate, finely serrated leaf margin shrub at 4800' along with a different rhizomatous vine and our commonly collected B. *tricornis* or B. *longifolia*. An unusual herb on a stream near Lake Singkarak, at 1650', was found; the center of the leaves was nearly black in color. Work on Mt. Merapi produced a swarm of species seemingly related to B. *isoptera*, but with different characteristics both for the flower and the leaves. The complexity of this group of shrubs is great and will certainly make for a taxonomic nightmare; the horticultural aspects of these species should be delightful though. A variety of an earlier rhizomatous vine with red hairs was collected, though it was three times the size in all characters than the previous collection, again making for possible horticultural benefits.

At one point Jim and I, and our trusted and faithful guide, Jonni T. from Avis, headed to Western W. Sumatera with the full intent of tackling 3 new mountains. Exploration was thwarted by the lack of roads.

Jim and I made our last collection on Feb. 18 at 5700' on Mt. Merapi, it was a beautiful scarlet haired, horned fruit species that was a recollection from the 1995 trip. Jim headed back to the U.S. and I was soon to embark to Sulawesi with Harry Wiriadinata and my two daughters Cytandra and Meghan. Cytandra had received a grant from The Explorers Club to undertake work with us.

Prior to leaving for Sulawesi, I had a few days in Bogor so the question arose as to what I should do with this time. Such decisions are quite simple for botanists: go collect. So off Jonni T. and I headed for Mt. Salak in W. Java, where I collected B. *pseudoisoptera* and B. *muricata*. This was the first collection I had made of B. *pseudoisoptera* in Indonesia, after having collected it several times in Southern Thailand and Western Malaysia. B. *muricata* is a new introduction to horticulture and unlike most species from Sumatera, this species has a name.

After meeting my daughters and getting Harry, we flew to Sulawesi for a "Reconnaissance Mission." Sulawesi is another large Indonesian island between Borneo to the West and New Guinea to the East. Harry and I mapped out a collecting plan involving a number of mountain locations in South Sulawesi Province. A gorgeous large begonia shrub was collected at 5000' on the western slope of Mt. Bawakaraeng above the village of Molino. This species had huge pink flowers in cymes that were nearly a foot across. Leaving Molino, we headed north and collected a lovely, tiny, pink flowered tuberous species at Bantimurung waterfall, in a karst formation area. By March 2, we were in Mamasa, a somewhat remote area with no hospital, minimal medical facilities, and little more than a village. The next 4 days were spent exploring various streams, mountains, and valleys, collecting a few different species several times but each one being very interesting. One species was a tall herb with white flowers arising from the leaf axils, much like a couple of collections I made in Ecuador. Another was a beautiful thick, variegated leaved shrub with whitish/pink flowers; and perhaps the grand marvel, was an herb, reminiscent of B. *bipinnatifida* from New Guinea. This Sulawesi species had a compound, pinnatified leaf to 3" and small white flowers, much like its New Guinea relative. Each leaflet was a miniature sculpturing in itself, distinct from others of its shared petiole. This species is spectacular and should be highly prized for its horticultural qualities.

By March 9, we were driving through the town of Mekele, having a beautiful central park with a small lake. A small limestone cliff at one end of town near the lake harbored a tall, white flowered Begonia herb. We were in the Tana Toraja area and found a wonderful hotel from which to make our collecting trips. Several more collections were made, one being a species exhibiting "residual meristematic tissue" and having stomatal clusters, a wonderful find for my anatomical work. On a shaded stream on the road from Rantepao to Polopo, on Bone Bay, we captured this interesting begonia, where a leaf had broken off the stem and was lying on some soil near the main plant. The leaf had sprouted roots into the soil and the base of the petiole was producing new shoots. This was the first time I've ever observed this characteristic in the wild. This collection and one of B. *longifolia* or B. *tricornis* were made on March 12, be-

fore we headed back to the U.S. As the 1998 expedition has been completed, it is now time to consider plans for returning to Indonesia in early 1999.

Several mountains in West Java have been targeted for exploration. As the collections from Mt. Salak proved, there are new species of Begonia to be gathered for cultivation. Furthermore, it is my intention to advance the collaboration with Dr. Harry Wiriadinata of the Bogor Herbarium. Our first botanical research effort is a taxonomic revision of the Begonia of Java. Field collecting on upper mountain slopes of W. Java where exploration is limited, could result in some new species to science, and of course, new species to cultivation. Finding a new species on Java would be very exciting since the island has received so much botanical collecting effort over the last 400 years. It is expected that Jim Hunter and Louis des Cognets will work on this upcoming Java expedition also since they are seasoned, and trusted, expeditionary veterans. The plan is that each of the four of us will lead a collecting party of guides and Indonesian students up a different slope of each mountain. This increases the chance of finding new Begonia and other plant species also.

You may write Scott at P.O. Box 93, Williamstown, MA 01267

Acknowledgement for Support of the 1998 Botanical Expedition to Sumatera and Sulawesi

by W. Scott Hoover

Twenty-five years ago the ABS granted me funds to collect begonia in Columbia, South America. I was a student at Colorado College at the time. Since then, the ABS has supported many expeditions of mine all over the world. I have made 892 collections over these years and we are now approaching a new millennium; perhaps we can make collection 1000 during the year 2000. I want to extend my appreciation to all those individuals and branches of the ABS who have supported my expeditions over these years. We have developed a wonderful working partnership. The following lists all doneors to this last expedition. Thank you again and let's continue to learn more about begonia and introduce wild species to cultivation.

Contributors to Scott Hoover's 1998 Sumateran and Sulawesi Expedition

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Santa Clara Valley Branch
Alamo Begonia Society Branch
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Lillian Transue
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Tom Zoellner

The New York Botanical Garden:

A Place Where Begonias Are Maintained

by Anne Persico

It all started quite innocently with a single 'Beefsteak' begonia leaf given to me by an elderly neighbor. Encouraged by my success of turning that lone leaf into a lush plant, I found myself placing a large order the next time Logee's beautifully photographed catalog came through the mail slot! However, living in a suburb right outside New York City, I do not have the climate nor the room to grow and care for many begonias. The thirty I own grow under lights in the winter, and half of these summer outside on a shady deck. Although I don't have the accomodations for my heart's desire--to own every begonia that exists--when I need a "begonia fix" I drive twenty minutes away to The New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx. In the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, a beautiful Victorian greenhouse that opened to the public in 1902, are eleven interconnecting pavilions filled with over 3000 plants from around the world. The greenhouse, or glasshouse as the Victorians called it, was built by Lord and Burnham, the premier greenhouse designers of that era. The Victorians had a passion for exotic plants from the tropics and they had to have a glasshouse as, if not better, than London's Kew Gardens. Today, the Conservatory is a New York City landmark and is the centerpiece and official symbol of the Garden.

The Enid A Haupt Conservatory is C shaped and laid out in a rectilinear pattern more than 500 feet wide. In the tropical rooms many beautiful begonias are displayed in natural settings. I can "ooh" and "ahh" my way around the different rooms, marveling at the diversity of leaves, textures, flowers and scents. I feel like I'm in a begonia scavenger hunt, finding two mammoth B. *manicata*, a B. *acetosa*, and a B. *nelumbifolia* in the Tropical Lowland Rainforest Room. The Special Collections Room has enormous moss lined baskets containing B. 'Bob-O-Link', B. *solananthera* and B. 'Raymond George Nelson'. On a ledge filled with splendid begonias I poke around in their pots to read the tags: B. 'Maley's Comet', B. 'Flamboyant', B. 'Speculata', and B. *bowerae* var. *major*, B. *urophylla*, B. *sanguinea*, and B. *oxyphylla*--all beautiful begonias with beautiful names. Displayed on tiered shelves are B. *involucrata*, B. *U049*, B. *U031*, B. *epipsila*, B. 'Snow Cap', B. 'Sophie Cecile', a beautifully blooming B. 'Irene Nuss' and my favorites B. 'Marmaduke' and B. 'Looking Glass'. In another part of the room a tall B. 'Juanita's Jewel' reigns supreme. It is a heady experience and I leave there feeling content, but wistful. Of course I have photographed the whole experience so that I can look at these pictures in the future. And since they came out well, I thought Freda would like to have them on file for the *Begonian*. Naturally, she would, and she also requests that I write about my experience there. I agree and contact Beth Castellon who works in the Botanical Garden's propagation greenhouses. She would be more than happy to meet with me.

Our meeting is set up for a Monday, the only day of the week when the Garden is closed to the public. A security guard escorted my car across paths bordering beautifully landscaped gardens and lawns until we arrived at the propagation area where Beth works. Beth, as many of you will recall, was once in charge of the ABS Seed Fund and is a member of the Knickerbocker Branch in NYC. She is the gardener in charge of the begonia and upper rain forest plants (tropicals that grow at higher elevations, also called canopy plants) collections. Her duties include the acquiring, propagating, feeding, pruning, and spraying of these plants. The propagation area consists of 14 greenhouses bursting with begonias in every shape and size. I knew she was talking to me, but my eyes could not help wandering around that room, trying to drink it all in. "This is the Garden's permanent collection of begonias,"

she explains. Many of them were donated by Millie and Ed Thompson in 1988. Others were obtained by swapping with other botanical institutions or grown from seed provided by the ABS Seed Fund. One of the oldest plants is a descendent of B. 'Cleopatra' which was brought there by the Garden's then president, T. H. Everett in 1956. By 1990, the Garden's collection had grown to over 1200 hybrids and 300 species that filled three greenhouses! But due to the expense of maintaining the collection, it was culled down in 1996 to those begonias originating in the New World, and a few unusual plants from other parts were saved for display. Those not kept were dispersed to different institutions, such as Wave Hill in the Bronx, the Fort Worth Botanical Gardens, B & K Tropicals, and to Ann and Gene Salisbury. Today Beth cares for the 50 hybrids and 145 species left in the collection. Still these begonias completely fill one whole greenhouse, parts of two others, plus what is exhibited in the Conservatory.

I feel very fortunate to be here, as most of the public never gets a look at this "behind the scenes" area. However, last year, Dr. Jin Xiaobai, a noted begonia expert from China came by. He lectured the staff and showed them what he had discovered and collected in China. Also, Pfizer Pharmaceuticals came by recently and asked the Garden for begonias to do research for developing new medicines. The Garden is a world leader in botanical science. As deforestation and species extinction reduce the number of begonias that exist in the wild, the role the Garden plays in future development of medicines will increase the importance of its collections of begonias and other tropical plants. I learned from *A Walk Through the World of Plants*, a book written about the Garden by Allen Appel, that twenty-five percent of all prescription drugs dispensed in the United States over the past several decades contain active ingredients extracted from plants.

Beth explained to me that the visitors to the Conservatory love to see unusual and strange plants. She shows me B. *bogneri*, which is growing in pumice under a domed lid. I thought I was looking at blades of grass, but she assured me that *bogneri* is definitely a begonia. She likes using pumice to germinate this plant because it is light, has a neutral ph, and holds water well. Next, she presented a begonia that is on the opposite side of the scale for size--the giant B. *crassicaulis*. It has large twisting arms and she compares it to an octopus. I was quite captivated by its wide leaves, and beautiful thick stems. She told me that in December it will drop all its leaves. Then, in a month huge flower spikes come up and white flowers will appear. I am amazed at B. 'Fischer's Ricinifolia', a tall star shaped begonia with hairy collars under its leaves. Another charming begonia is B. *lyman-smithii*. I fell in love with its huge green leaves with edges covered in brown velvet. B. *prismatocarpa*, growing in a terrarium, reminded me of a miniature Christmas cactus with yellow flowers. Beth spoke of visitors expressing their surprise upon learning the B. *foliosa* is not a member of the fern family!

Next, we compared B. 'Fiji Island's' with its small closed up leaves, to B. 'Cathedral'. 'Cathedral' had huge fluted green and red leaves, displaying the stained-glass effect so hidden in the smaller plant. I marveled at the mottled leaves of B. 'Nora Bedson' and all the *bowerae* varieties, touched B. *venosa's* cottony down, added B. 'Venepi' (a hybrid of *venosa* and *epipsila*) to my must-have list, and recognized B. 'Orococo' from photos I had seen in the *Begonian*. I can go on and on, but it would take up a whole edition just describing what I saw. In fact this visit was just making my begonia addiction worse, and I was trying to figure out how I could stow away in this greenhouse like the white rabbit who hopped in from outside and was hiding in a corner!

Beth pointed out several metal boxes hanging on wires from the ceiling. These are sensors that monitor the humidity, temperature, and light levels. They are connected to louvers that open and close as necessary. The plants are grouped according to light needs. So far, only one of the greenhouses has an automatic retractable shade. Underground bench misters add humidity to the air in the summer, and those needing high humidity are grown on modified cutting benches where a microclimate can be easily maintained. Every two weeks all of the begonias are fertilized with



Happy Holidays
Orange County Branch

As your Begonias sleep
don't weep
Christmas is here and Spring
is near
Have a happy growing year...

Palos Verdes
Branch
Wishes

You a Happy
Holiday
Season

Joy
Peace,
Delight,
Christmas Candy,
Cosie,Silver Jewel,
Peppermint Promises,
Red Berry,Merry Christmas,
Green Velvet,Northern Lights,Confection,
Fantasy,Evening Star,Cathedral,Magic Elf,
White Christmas,Crimson Glow,Krinkle,
Splish Splash,Fond Memories,Carol,
Bethlehem Star,Ivy Ever,Winter Jewel,Charity,
Winter Hollyhock,Silvermist,Moonfall,Heirloom,
Merry Memories,Mulberry,Lyric,Toy Soldier,
Snow Capped,Purity,Black Taffeta.
Begonias

Peter's 20-20-20 by a machine that proportions the fertilizer with water. The fertilizing stops in October, except for the rhizomatous plants which receive a blossom booster of 0-45-0. Because it is open to the public, when mealies are a problem in the Conservatory they use Safer soap. Once a year, Marathon, a systemic granular, is applied to the soil. If an invasion is extensive, the gardeners must suit up wearing protective coverings and masks and spray Orthene.

Other pests include aphids, white flies and thrips, which eat the pollen from flowers. If they are seen, Beth will remove the flowers to deter them. Powdery mildew can be a problem in the spring, so the surface of the leaves are made hostile to it by spraying them with a mixture of a teaspoon of baking soda in a quart of water.

Before I left, Beth took me to another greenhouse where B. *egregia* presides. It had a thick trunk and towered over us! I departed feeling there was so much to learn about these fascinating plants. That day I witnessed begonias that ranged in size from a blade of grass up to a tree! I couldn't help thinking that she was one lucky lady to be able to work with such beautiful begonias. And, I urge all of you ABS members to stop by the Botanical Gardens in the Bronx and check out the greenhouse the next time you are in the area. You too will leave appreciating the wonderful world of plants we live in.

The New York Botanical Garden is located at 200th Street and Southern Boulevard in the Bronx. Call 1-718-817-8700 for their hours and transportation methods on getting there.

You can write Anne Persico at 11 Rockridge Rd., Mt. Vernon, N. Y.10552

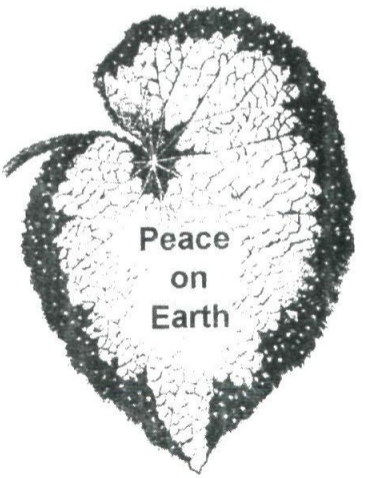
B. involucrata is among the many species to be seen at the New York Botanic Garden. Photo by Anne Persico.





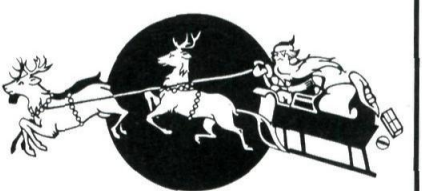
May all the
special sights
and
pleasures of **Christmas**
live on in
your memories

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Holiday Greetings

WITH EVERY GOOD WISH
FOR THE NEW YEAR



Happy Holidays from Sunny Southern California



South Bay Begonia Branch

Wishes you all a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year

Grant our Holiday Wish
and come to the
SWR Get-Together in Fort Worth,
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to see



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Members of the
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Easy B. aconitifolia

by Kit Mounger

When I set out to do a series on species for the *Begonian*, I thought I would begin with one which is not only spectacular, but easy to grow. After all, the whole idea is to entice begonia growers to try and put more species in their collections. Well, you can imagine my surprise when my friends, both in letters and on the Internet, started regaling me with horror stories about how difficult this species was for them to grow. This was not a very encouraging state of affairs. So I'm going to tell you what I know about this begonia species and hope that, in learning more about it, *aconitifolia* will become much easier and, hopefully, rewarding for you to grow.

If it were not a fairly easy plant to grow, it would not be as available and as widespread as it is.

I'll begin with the controversy, inasmuch as plants can generate controversy. *Aconitifolia* and *sceptrum*--and *faureana*--are all the same species; the first is the valid name, the others being invalid synonyms. So speaketh Jack Golding. And this erudite and dedicated scholar should know. Dr. A. de Candolle discovered *aconitifolia* in Brazil in 1857 and named it after aconite (Monkshood) because he thought it resembled that perennial herbaceous plant. A gentleman named Rodigas came along in 1884--again in Brazil--and found a similar species and named it *sceptrum*. (*B. faureana's* discovery was more of the same in 1895).

This happens more often than you might think, but it's usually all sorted out eventually. Besides, you would expect to find variations in different populations of any species and, push come to shove, *aconitifolia* and *sceptrum* are more similar than different. As to that, the lovely specimen of *aconitifolia* which Charles Jaros brought to the show in Atlanta is, to some degree, different from mine (which I had left at home because it's huge and I can't manhandle tubs as Charles can. We won't discuss which one was more handsome.) But while the experts decree and debate, I will tell you that *aconitifolia* (and its littermate, *sceptrum*) are the grandparents of many of the Superba type canes. Rudy Ziesenhenne says much the same: "Begonia *aconitifolia* (A. de Candolle) and its varieties are good examples of a begonia tuber. This may be a surprise as we have known this begonia to be a tall, woody stemmed plant. Underground, however, the plant sends out a growth which develops into an inverted cone with a rounded bottom. Buds, stipules and stipule scars cover the surface. These plants shed their leaves in winter and remain dormant for a few months. In a protected environment, the stems endure and send out new leaves and stems from the old stems as well as from the tubers. B. *aconitifolia* and its varieties . . . have been used to produce the superba type canes. Two examples of these are B. 'Irene Nuss' and B. 'Sophie Cecile.' Not one of all the hybrids I have grown in this group has produced a tuber." (Rudolf Ziesenhenne, "Begonia Notes #4", *June 1988.*)

Now come to exhibit A, as it were: the 4' specimen which summers on my shady deck and winters in my glass studio. This plant is some eleven years old. When it was younger and I was trying to put some heft on it, I planted it directly into a raised flower bed on the east side of my barn in New Johnsonville. There it thrived (it has never bothered me to put begonias directly into summer beds and repot them in the fall. I do not have nematodes and begonias are not 'spreaders.' Their root balls stay rather compact under the plant itself.) When we moved, I put it in a 12" pot and there it stayed until this summer when the tubers had proliferated so I put it into a taller 14" pot. And while Rudy's *aconitifolia* has been observed with its tuber below the soil level, mine are above. The plant does this; I don't. New shoots will pop up and when it's about 2" tall,

pretty bronze lacey leaves will appear and as the shoot grows taller, the bulbous base becomes fatter and fatter. On top of the soil mix. This is not beauty as a fancier of rhizomatous begonias might prefer. But I find it very interesting and handsome in the manner of those



If you look carefully, you can see the growths at the base of B. aconitifolia. Photo by Kit Jeans Mounger.

Holiday Wishes to All from Palm Beaches Branch



Shearing your Begonias Increases Everyone's Happiness!

Have a Wonderful Holiday Season.

Carol and Peter Notaras

Wishing You a Harmonious New Year!



The "Thick-Stems"

plants which are grown as bonsai. And while it grows no new leaves in winter, some of the old remain on the plant. Mine has never gone naked when it goes dormant. But I trim it in spring, not fall. (This is when mine starts to form buds.) One must be able to get it in the door come the time of falling temperatures and shorter days.

It's potted in Ma Mounger's seat-of-the-pants begonia mix: a pinch of this, a soupcon of that: peat and lime, orchid seedling mix to keep it light and unpacked, all mixed in with mag-amp--should I forget to feed it. I do use real soil as well. Lightness and drainability are the keys here. I don't know where geographically in Brazil Dr. de Candolle found it, but I would bet, because of that water-storing tuber, that it normally grows in arid, almost desert-like conditions. Or in, paradoxically, rain forest conditions where there are six months of very rainy weather and six months of hot and dry. Outside in summer, I water it only during very hot or drought conditions. In winter--and I keep the building just warm enough to keep pipes from freezing when I'm not working--I might water it once a month. It does get warm in the studio; all the wintering begonias sit in front of a huge south-facing plate glass window which warms things up nicely. But the point is: this begonia is a not a drinker.

In the mountains of East Tennessee, we don't have the humidity of Florida or the dryness of Southern California, but my *aconitifolia* thrives with very little attention from me. Years ago, I mentioned in an article for the *Begonian*, my theory of 'benighn neglect.' It seems to work quite well with *aconitifolia*. And it's quite lovely, if I do say so myself. And best of all: I don't have to work at it!

Early on, it was mentioned that most of the Superba canes using *aconitifolia* showed very little if no evidence of a caudiform tuber. At least none I know of crossed with the canes. Howsomeever, several years ago I crossed *aconitifolia* with *U062* looking for a begonia with *U062*'s good looks and without her weakness for mildew. The seedlings were interesting: white or silver with red veins, tending to pink with vivid pink flowers. The leave were glarous; pure satin. And almost as finely 'fingered' as *aconitifolia*. They were less prone to mildew, but not as resistant as I would have liked. I kept 2 of the seedlings which I named "Pink Minx" and "Sweet Suzanne'. Propagating these, I gave one to Suzanne Thornburg of Myakka City, Florida (Suzanne is one of my 'honorary children whose cattery provides me with my Main Coon cats) and the other to Cynthia Bishop in Northern California. Last fall, both of my seedlings died. (Suzanne and Cyn both grow theirs in a greenhouse and, at last reports, without any mildew.) Happily, I simply left my bare babies on the window shelf in my sewing room after their pots went bare. In the spring when I brought all my begonias outside and under the carport to harden off, those pots were brought out too, to be washed and reused. Before I could do that chore, however, tiny leaves formed at the base of the 'dead' stems of my dead crosses. Because I want very much to get them back to the point where I can take more cuttings for insurance, I have not washed all the soil from the base of the plant to see if there's a tuber there. But tuber or no, I suspect that these hybrids went dormant during my shortened winter and this trait, I should think, comes from *aconitifolia*.

If this were not a fairly easy plant to grow, it would not be as available and as widespread as it is. (I don't think my growing it well is the exception.) Remember the awful fire Fort Worth Botanical Garden had several years ago in one of their greenhouses? *Aconitifolia* was one of a bare handful of begonias which came back from the ashes. So if you've tried and failed before, give it another go. Just keep your soil mix light so its tubers won't rot. And most of all water it sparingly. Cut it back as you would any cane after it blooms (and it has clusters of large, lovely creamy blossoms.) Make sure it has plenty of light--and then hope the sheriff doesn't spot it when he drives by. From a distance, this rank grower does resemble the infamous cannabis!

Kit Mounger produces beautiful stained glass art (see 175 of the last issue of the Begonian), incomparable drawings, and begonias at 485 Cottontail Lane, Afton, TN 37616-6543. E-mail her at KitJeans@aol.com.



Happy Holidays
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Wishing all our begonia friends Good health, Happiness & Joy

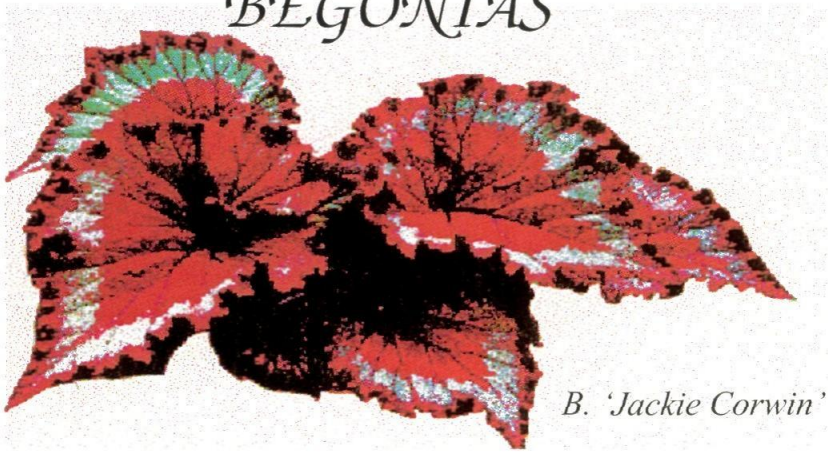
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Happy Holidays

Ann & Gene Salisbury

The Sacramento Branch
extends holiday cheer to all of the
wonderful people everywhere
who love and grow
BEGONIAS



B. 'Jackie Corwin'

Season's Greetings



From the Long Beach Parent Chapter

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from
OUR GREENHOUSE
TO YOURS

SAN JACINTO BRANCH, ABS

Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund Listing

The San Miguel Branch, San Diego County, CA
Eleanor L. Calkins, Seed Fund Administrator

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The Seed Fund would appreciate receiving donations of any fresh seed. Our supply is very limited at this time. Thank you! Please be careful to identify open pollinated seeds and keep them separated from known self-pollinated seed. Thank you!

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CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND
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910 Fern Street
Escondido, CA 92027-1708

The CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND is a project of the San Miguel Branch of the ABS in San Diego County, California. Donors of seed in this issue were **Scott Hoover, Jackie Davis, Masako Yamaguchi, Irene Nuss, and Eleanor Calkins.**

Species Seeds

ND98-1: *U340*
ND98-2: *U365*
ND98-3: *B. isoptera (Collection B)*
ND98-4: *U378*
ND98-5: *U347*
ND98-6: *B. tricornis*
ND98-7: *B. cinnabarina*
ND98-8: *B. johnstonii*
ND98-9: *B. pearcei*
ND98-10: *B. sanguinea*
ND98-11: *B. tomentosa*

Sorry, descriptions were not available by the closing date for this issue. Ed.

Double Duty from Rhizomatous Leaf Cuttings
by Brad Thompson

I don't know about you, but if I'm going to go to the trouble to propagate begonias, especially rhizomatous leaves, I want to get as much from my efforts as possible.

This little tip I've learned over the years began for African Violet leaf cuttings. First you need an explanation of how things usually go. When you use an entire leaf for a cutting, as opposed to wedges, etc. and it roots, it puts up several small shoots around the leaf. After this happens, you usually have two options: Either you can pot up the entire batch together into one pot for one full plant or you can take the leaf out of the mix and pull each little individual shoot from the parent leaf and grow on each in its own pot. Both of these have merits. With keeping the little family together you get a full plant fast and it's also less trouble. With separating them you will end up with more plants.

So here comes the tip. Each leaf cutting has a little more life in it than you're giving it credit for. Follow the steps as below: 1. Root the leaf as you normally would in your favorite medium. 2. When the leaf has rooted well and the side shoots have grown to a sturdy size that are easy to handle, remove all of them by pulling them gently from the main leaf. This will involve gently loosening the mix from the cutting so you can see where they attach to the leaf. Any that seem too small yet can be left for another time. 3. Pot up each small shoot individually and grow on. 4. Replace the rooted main leaf back into the rooting medium and in a couple of weeks or so it will start sending up another batch of small shoots. 5. You can then either repeat the first four steps if the leaf still looks fairly thrifty or you can now pot it into its own pot to be grown on for one larger full plant.

I sometimes just put the rooted leaf directly into a pot and grow it on after removing all the side shoots. I did this method this spring and after starting out with 3 or 4 trays of cuttings I ended up with three hundred small plants and about 80 six inch plants. The leaf can conceivably be used over and over many times before running out of energy and being thrown out or finally potted up. Another tip you may want to experiment with is splitting the leaf petiole a half-inch or so lengthwise or cutting the end at an angle which may increase the mount of shoots each leaf sends up.

Editor's Notes...

This year's 65th volume of the *Begonian* concludes with the addition of something else that readers have asked for....letters in the new Letters to the Editor column. I hope this coming year you will make it a point to share with others your views and thoughts on begonias or the *Begonian* so that this can become a regular feature.

Remember too that if you include begonias in your holiday decorations, I'd love to have a photo for next year's holiday issue.

Janice Keck collected the B. 'Quinebog' offered last month by being first with a "Member's Favorite" submission. Look for her article in an upcoming issue.

The time for starting tuberous begonias is almost here and tuberous fans are anxious for articles about them. So is the editor! You tuberous growers send us an article.

May each of your have precious hours with family, friends, and begonias this holiday season!

Corrections:

Our apologies to **Don Miller** whose gorgeous *B. microsperma* should have been listed as winner of the Contained Amosphere Division at the Atlanta Show in the September/October issue. Also, in the listing on the Officer's Page his correct phone area code is 214.

B. *mannii* was spelled correctly on page 167 as it should have been on page 191 and 192.

B. *glandulosa* W.J. Hooker is a valid species name and Jack Golding gives us the complete information on it and those with which it has been confused on page 230.

Conservation News

by Tamsin Boardman, Conservation Chair

Running 'Way Behind':

1. Save Our Species (newsletter of the Adopt-A-species Project) #12 is belatedly in the mail, to be followed shortly by #13.

2. The current list of begonia species we know to be in cultivation has increased tremendously by the addition of lists from overseas, and collating is behind schedule. If at the Convention in Atlanta you signed up for a copy of the list, don't despair of ever getting it. Hopefully it will be done before the end of the year.

Haven't sent in your species list, or haven't updated it in the past year? Please do it now! We'd like to have a census that is as accurate and current as possible, so we can determine where to concentrate our efforts. Send your list to:

John Howell
123 Trillium
San Antonio, TX 78213-2514

Correction:

B. glandulosa

Jack Golding tells us that we were incorrect on page 189 in the last issue and that **B. glandulosa** is indeed a valid species name. To clear up some of the confusion surrounding this species, excerpts from his Revised Species List for the coming update to *Begoniaceae* on the valid species and various species that have been confused with it are quoted below. Note that here only boldfaced print indicates a valid name, while italics indicates an invalid name. Too, note the importance of the attachment of the person who described the species to the species name. See also the **Begonian** 57:62, 1990.

Begonia

glandulosa W.J. Hooker, Bt. Mag., 87: pl. 5256, 1861.—L.B. Smith & B.G. Schubert, Fieldiana: Bot., 24:178, 1961,—J. Golding, Phytologia, 40:456, 1978 [nomen confusum, sphalma].—R. Ziesenhenne, Begonian, "49," 48:178, 1981 [non **pinetorum** A. de Candolle 1859, sed sphalmate = *nigrovenia* hort. Linden ex W.J. Hooker, 1861], —K. Burt-Utley, Brittonia, 36:233, 1984, nomen legitimum. Mexico. **R**

nigrovenia hort. Linden ex W.J. Hooker, 1861
nigrovenia Regel, 1867
dayi hort, 1947
hidalgensis L.B. Smith & B.G. Schubert, 1950.

glandulosa auct. non W.J. Hooker: A. de Candolle, Prodr., 15 (1): 339, 1864. —Standley, Field Mus. Nat. Hist. Bot. Ser., 18: 744, 1937.—J. Golding, Phytologia, 40: 456, 1978.

=**multinervia** Liebmann, 1853

glandulosa auct. non W.J. Hooker: J.D. Smith, Enum. Pl. Guat., 4:182, 1895, — L.B. Smith & B.G. Schubert, Ann. Missouri Bot. Gard. 45:46, 1958 **R**

=**plebeja** Liebman. 1853.

dayi hort., Begonian, 14:174, pl. 183, 1947.—R. Ziesenhenne, Begonian, "49," 48:178:178, 1981 [=*nigrovenia* hort. Linden ex W.J. Hooker, 1861].—J. Golding, Phytologia, 40:458, 1978 [=**pinetorum** A. deCandole, 1859, sphalma].—K. Burt-Utley, Brittonia, 36:233, 1984.—J. Golding, Begonian,

57:62, 1990 **R**
= **glandulosa** W.J. Hooker, 1861

hidalgensis L.B. Smith & B.G. Schubert, J. Wash. Acad. Sci., 40:241, pl. 1b-g, 1950.—R. Ziesenhenne, Begonian, "49", 48:178, 1981—L.B. Smith & D.C. Wasshausen, Phytologia, 52:443, 1983 [=**pinetorum** A. de Candolle, 1859, sphalma].—K. Burt-Utley, Brittonia, 36:233, 1984.—J. Golding, Begonian, 57:62, 1990. **R**
=**glandulosa** W.j. Hooker, 1861.

nigrovenia hort. Linden ex W.J. Hooker, Bot. Mag., 87:pl. 5256, 1861, pro syn **glandulosa** W.j. Hooker, 1861.—L.B. Smith & B.G. Schubert, Fieldiana: Bot., 24:178, 1961—J. Golding, Phytologia, 40:456, 1978, [=**pinetorum** A. De Candolle, 1859, sphalma].—K. Burt-Utley, Brittonia, 36:233, 1984.—J. Golding, Begonian, 57:62, 1990 **R**
=**glandulosa** W.J. Hooker, 1861

nigrovenia Regel, Gartenfl., 16:163, pl. 456, 1867.—L.B. Smith & D.C. Wassenhausen, Phytologia, 52:445, 1983 [=**pinetorum** A. de Candolle, 1859 sphalma].—K. Burt-Utley, Brittonia, 36:233, 1984.—J. Golding, Begonian, 57:62, 1990. R
=**glandulosa** W.J. Hooker, 1861.

pinetorum a. de Candolle, Ann. Sci. Nat. Bot., IV, 11:131, 1859.—L. B. Smith & B. G. Schubert, Fieldiana: Bot., 24:178, 1961—J. Golding, Phytologia, 40:458, 1978 [sine syn. **glandulosa** W.J. Hooker, 1861, nomen confusum; *nigrovenia* hort. Linden ex W. J. Hooker, 1861, et Regel, 1867]—R. Ziesenhenne, Begonian "49" 48:186, 1981.—K. Burt-Utley, Brittonia, 36:233, 1984. Mexico, Guatemala, Fig. 22.4 R
tuerckeimii C. de Candolle, 1895

tuerckeimii C. de Candolle, 1895, Bot. Gaz., 20:542, 1895.—L. B. Smith & B. G. Schubert, Fieldiana,: Bot., 124:178, 1961.
=**pinetorum** A. de Candolle, 1859.

Sources

Sources could be located for the following begonias that were featured or pictured in this issue. Numbers following each begonia refers to the source list below. Information is latest available to the editor.

B. aconitifolia 1, 2
B. *nelumbifolia* 3

B. 'Quinebog' (from Last Issue) 4

1. B & K Tropicals, 5300 48th Terrace North, St. Petersburg, FL 33709, PH 813-522-8691

2. Golden Hill Nursery, P.O. Box 247, Macdoel, CA 96058, PH: 530-398-4203

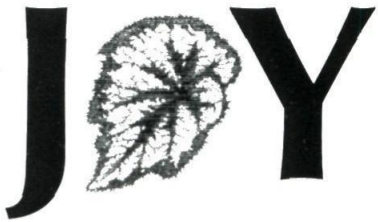
3. Kartuz Greenhouses, 1408 Sunset Dr., P.O. Box 790, Vista, CA 92085-0790, PH: 760-941-3613

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Pronunciation of Begonia Epithets for the *Begonian*, 65: November/December, 1998

by Jack Golding

aconitifolia	uh-koh-ni-ti-FOH-li-uh
syn. *faureana*	fow-re-AY-nuh
syn. *sceptrum*	SKEP-trum
acutifolia	uh-kyew-ti-FOH-li-uh
bipinnatifida	beye-pin-nay-ti-FID-uh
bogneri	bog-NEER-eye
bowerae	BOW-er-ee
var. **major**	MAY-jor
carolineifolia	kar-oh-lin-e-eye-FOH-li-uh
cinnabarina	sin-na-bar-EYE-nuh
crassicaulis	kras-si-KAW-liz
epipsila	e-pip-SIL-uh
foliosa	foh-li-OH-suh
glandulosa	gland-yew-LOH-suh
syn. *nigrovenia*	nig-roh-VEE-ni-uh
syn. *dayi*	DAY-eye
syn. *hidalgensis*	hi-dal-JEN-sis
involucrata	invol-yew-KRAY-tuh
isoptera	iss-OP-ter-uh
johnstonii	john-STON-i-eye
longifolia	*long-i-FOH-li-uh*
lyman-smithii	lyman-SMITH-i-eye (named for Lyman B. Smith)
manicata	man-i-KAY-tuh
multinervia	mul-ti-NER-vi-uh
muricata	myew-ri-KAY-tuh
nelumbifolia	nel-um-bi-eye-FOH-li-uh
oxyphylla	ox-i-FIL-luh
pearcei	PEARCE-eye (named for Richard Pearce)
pinetorum	peye-ni-TOH-rum
syn. *tuerckeimii*	toork-HEYEM-i-eye (named for Hans von Türcheim)
prismatocarpa	pris-ma-TOH-car-puh
pseudisoptera	syew-doh-iss-OP-ter-uh
sanguinea	san-gwin-EE-uh
solananthera	soh-lan-ANTH-er-uh
stigmosa	stig-MOH-suh
tomentosa	toh-men-TOH-suh
tricornis	treye-KOR-nis
urophylla	yew-ROH-fill-luh
venosa	ven-OH-suh

Also, from last issue:

acida	ASS-i-duh
hispida	HISS-pi-duh
var. **cucullifera**	kyew-kul-LIF-er-uh
mannii	MANN-i-eye
rex	REX
scharffiana	scharff-i-AY-nuh (named for D. Scharff)
soli-mutata	sol-i-myew-TAY-tuh
thelmae	THELMA-ee (named for Thelma O'Reilly)
ulmifolia	ulm-i-FOH-li-uh

Growing Organic, or: *Stress!*

by Tamsin Boardman

Stress is a fact of life. We've all felt it -deadlines, pressure on the job, pushing too hard to get things done, too many responsibilities, not enough money, missing meals or hours of sleep, tragedies minor and major.

Plants feel stress, too. Okay, so they don't worry about paying bills; but, like us they react to lacks - or surfeits - in their lives They require watering, feeding, the right combination of light and shadow, the right temperature range. Most of the time, we, our begonias' caretakers, can supply their basic needs. Some of us go the extra mile and play Mozart for them!

But there are abnormal times when Mother Nature herself turns on us all. What can you do when temperatures soar, or plummet? When drought plays havoc with the humidity levels to which you and your begonias are acclimated? When power outages occur as utility companies can't keep up with unusually high demand, or wires break under a load of ice? When water pipes freeze and burst? When hail, fire, high winds, and tornados, bolts of lightning, earthquakes, flood kick in? These times are difficult enough for people; but we can at least move about, jump in the shower to cool off or cuddle under quilt

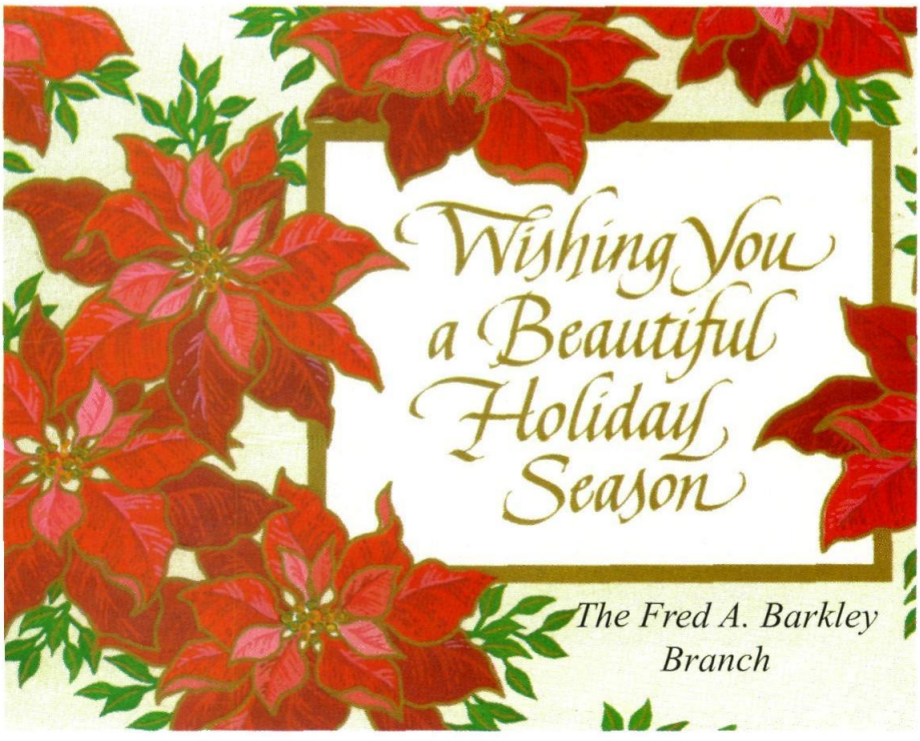


May Peace and Joy be Yours at Christmastime and Throughout the New Year



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Edgar & Phyllis Bates
Elaine Burden
Eleanor Calkins
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for warmth, phone for help and expect relief. Plants can't run away.

There's nothing you can do about a major disaster. But the smaller more frequent ones can often be handled. Plan ahead. There are things you can do now to help your begonias and their companion plants survive some of the stress times this winter and next year. Spend a few minutes thinking about what emergency you're likely to have, and consider how you might mitigate it. Keep emergency supplies on hand--notice how often the words "stored water" appear in this article.

For example: does a freeze come occasionally to your normally mild area? Plan on keeping some makeshift shelters (there's an excellent article by H. Alton Lee in the *Begonian*, Nov./Dec. '92 about steps you can take) and store water in case pipes freeze. Bedsheets, or the better (but harder to find) crop covers, or even just cardboard boxes can be used for overnight protection; spraying with liquid seaweed or an anti-transpirant (even hairspray!) before covering gives a plant some protection against temperatures that are lower than usual.

Is summer sometimes hotter-n'-Hades compounded by drought? Be prepared with a shaded area--we've used shade cloth on tent poles when there were no trees--and stored water. Shade cloth and the time-honored cheese cloth will also keep grasshoppers from decorating your leaves with holes. Plants find a fan a blessing, too. If water-saving regulations allow, mimic the nonexistent dew by hosing down the plant area early in the morning (yes, leaves and all; they'll dry off all too soon).

For protection from heat or cold (down to 25° F.) styrofoam coolers are great. Place the plants inside, close up, leave in sun. These can also be used for transporting plants in temperature extremes, for starting cuttings, for isolating sick or pest-infested plants. The only problem is they don't hold enough plants!

Do heavy rains occasionally flood your garden? During the rainy season raise your pots to avoid drowning begonias and other decorative plants. This helps with air circulation, too, which can be of major consideration in humid areas. In areas where high humidity is the problem, keep leaves dry and set plants far enough apart that leaves don't touch.

Bear in mind that healthy plants, like healthy humans, handle stress better than sick ones. Poor health is, in itself, a major stress. Begonias in peak condition have better resistance, and it's easier to keep them at their best using organic methods: things like compost, sphagnum moss, oak leaf mold in your soils, seaweed and fish emulsions and compost or manure "teas" for feedings. Do cut back on feedings during stress times. Your begonias have enough problems surviving. They don't need the additional pressure of putting out new growth or flowering. Oddly, you may even want to cut back on watering in drought times: saturated soil is a definite stress for begonias and cuts down on oxygen to the roots. It's difficult to hit the right balance, and you'll have to watch each plant carefully.

This covers only a few of the things that can go wrong for your begonias. You can't of course prepare for everything, nor should you spend a lot of time worrying about things that probably won't happen. But you can protect from some of the stresses that could prove fatal to your collection. Store water.

Sometimes tragedy turns out well. The spring when high winds tore the roof off our greenhouse was followed by a hot, hot summer. Instead of moving the begonias outside as usual, we threw shadecloth over the top and left the begonias inside, protected from bugs (and our goats, horses, dogs, cats) and enjoying slightly higher humidity than they would have gotten outdoors. They loved it.

Above and beyond all the little practical things you do is the Big Imperative: SHARE! Release any thought of superiority, of being envied, of being the only one on your block to have the rare and beautiful Begonia craved by the less fortunate. Not only is the feeling ignoble, but sure as shooting your prize will wither away and you will join the throng of poor unfortunates. Even worse, the begonia may be lost in cultivation. So spread the joy!

~Tamsin Boardman

News: ABS, Branch, and International

Arlene Hoskins won the Doug Frost Branch (CA) Best in Show in July with her B. *venosa* and a Cultural Award with 99.5 points; then she went on to win Best of show at the Palos Verdes Show in August with it as well.Will we see it in LA in 1999? After that, Arlene won Best of Show at the Long Beach Parent Show on August 29 with an astounding B. 'Maurice Amey' on a trellis. Arelene has to be California's grower of the year.

Willie Mae Wilson won Westchester Branch's Best in Show (CA) with her B. 'Ginny' and a Cultural Award with 98.5 points.

Houston's San Jacinto Branch had as guest speakers **Tamsin** and **Bruce Boardman** for their July meeting.

San Francisco Branch (CA) reports that a summer begonia trip to Antonelli Brothers and Half Moon Bay Nursery brought out 46 people who almost couldn't find room on their return bus trip because of all their purchases.

The Long Beach Parent Chapter of the American Begonia Society held its first Show and Sale on a very hot and humid day, August 29, in Long Beach. President **Vivian Hill** and Show Chairman **Margaret Fisher** put on a lovely and interesting show with many beautiful begonias and ferns. But the star of the show was **Rudolf Ziesenhenne**. It was a real treat when the guest of honor appeared at the doorway with son **Skeezar (Rudolf Henry Ziesenhenne)**. Everyone stopped what they were doing and applauded Rudy for several minutes and from then on he didn't have a free minute. Long Beach had prepared a table with "Rudy's Creations"--a sampling of his 70+ hybrids. The show was a great tribute and the Long Beach Parent Chapter showed him how much he is loved and respected. By **Janet Brown**

The Dallas Area Branch (TX) enjoyed a presentation on "windowsill gardening" by member **Chuck McGough**. Their newsletter reports that his approach to planting a container for windowsills was very unique. He plants his cuttings (quite a few at a time) directly into the container. He does not place them in a rooting medium as we are used to. What he does is add a little Rootone on the roots and plants them. ...Yes, he says he loses some, but that is why you plant many in one container. Your chances are greater when you have more than one cutting in a container. If you lose a few cuttings, it doesn't hurt anything

Mickey Meyer presented the New South Wales Begonia Society with a copy of **Mildred** and **Ed Thompson's** book together with many back numbers of the the *Begonian*. **Ross Bolwell** reported that he is establishing a data base of all known begonias, both species and hybrids.

Carol Smith is the new President and **Vanessa Young**, 2975 Bainbridge Avenue, Bronx, NY 10458 the new National Rep for the Knickerbocker Branch (NY).

The Potomac Branch (VA) held their Begonia show and Plant Sale on September 26 and 27 in Annandale, Virginia.

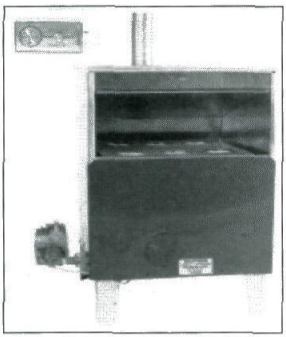
The Houston Sattelites Branch (TX) had a farewell party for **Joan Kessinger** who is moving to Dallas. they presented her with a crystal clock so that "she would think of us when she checks the time." **George Macias** takes over as editor of *The Shuttle*, the Sattelites Branch newsletter.

The Monterey Bay Area Branch (CA) at their October meeting honored **Leslie Woodriff** who passed away in Febrary 1997, distributing a list of his hybrids compiled by **Don Englund**.

The ABS Board will meet in Tampa, FL the first weekend in February. More details are on page 238.

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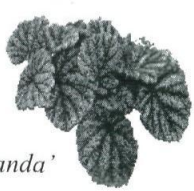
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COMING EVENTS

November 14-15, 1998: The Miami Begonia Society will be participating in the Fairchild Tropical Garden "Ramble" in a joint effort with the Gesneriad Society. The Ramble is famous for its plant sales, arts and crafts, food, plant sales, plant displays, workshops, books, music, guided tours, and of course plant sales. *(Do you get the idea that plant sales are big for this event? Ed.)* For information, call Karen Lawrence at 305-266-1571.

November 15, 1998: Annual General Meeting of the New South Wales Begonia Society (Australia), at Bloomin' Greenery Nursery, 226 Annangrove Rd., Annangrove, commencing at 1:30 P.M.

February 6-7, 1999: ABS Board Meeting hosted by the Florida West Coast Branch., Tampa, FL. ABS Meeting Saturday morning, tour to University of South Florida Species Bank Saturday afternoon, visit to Florida State Fair, Horticultural Division, Saturday evening. Tour of member gardens, Sunday morning. Hotel information available next issue. For information, call Dale Sena at 813-221-0567.

March 6/7, 1999: The New South Wales (Australia) 1999 Begonia Exhibition will be held at Bloomin' Greenery Nursery. Members are encouraged to begin growing plants for the plant sale.

May 6-9, 1999: Southwest Region/ABS Get-Together at Fort Worth (TX) Botanic Gardens. More information to come.

September 1-5, 1999: Begonia Kaleidoscopes, ABS Convention, hosted by Westchester Branch, Los Angeles, CA. The first tour will be on Wesdnesday morning, September 1, and the Show will close at 4 p.m. on September 5. Hotel information will be available by the next issue. For information, call Janet Brown, 310-670-4471.

Closing Date for Items for January/February Issue is *November 20!*

The Begonian

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Did you know that in 1982 when the Begonian went from a monthly to a bimonthly publication, each issue had only24 pages, 23 of which were black and white? Today it has 40 and many with color. Still, the older issues make great reading. Contact Ann Salisbury, Back Issues Chair, at the address shown at the left above for some great holiday reading.



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