

# Austin Area Begonia Society Branch • of the American Begonia Society •

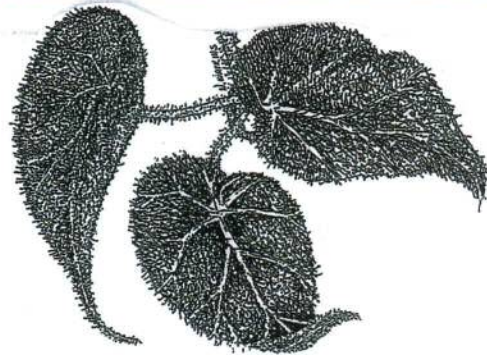
VOLUME 8 NO. 6

## NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2014



This is the Begonia Display created by the Fort Worth Botanical Garden Species Group for the Shreveport Plant Show. (100 points)



MEETING DATE:  
JUNE 22, 2014

Greene Room of the Austin Area Garden Center  
Zilker Botanical Garden  
2220 Barton Springs Road  
Austin, Texas 78746  
Pot Luck  
Barbecue and tea provided

2 P.M.

June 15, 2014  
Happy Father's Day

### **BEGONIA decora STAPF**

"Decora" means elegant, and its distinctive foliage makes this a truly elegant begonia. A dwarf plant with very compact growth, attaining a height of only six inches, it is a beautiful and unusual plant for a terrarium grouping, or as a single plant in a closed container. It is in the section *Platycentrum*.

*B. decora* was discovered in Penang, Malaya in 1892 by O. Stapf. It is rhizomatous, with a short, fleshy, creeping, (Continued on next page)

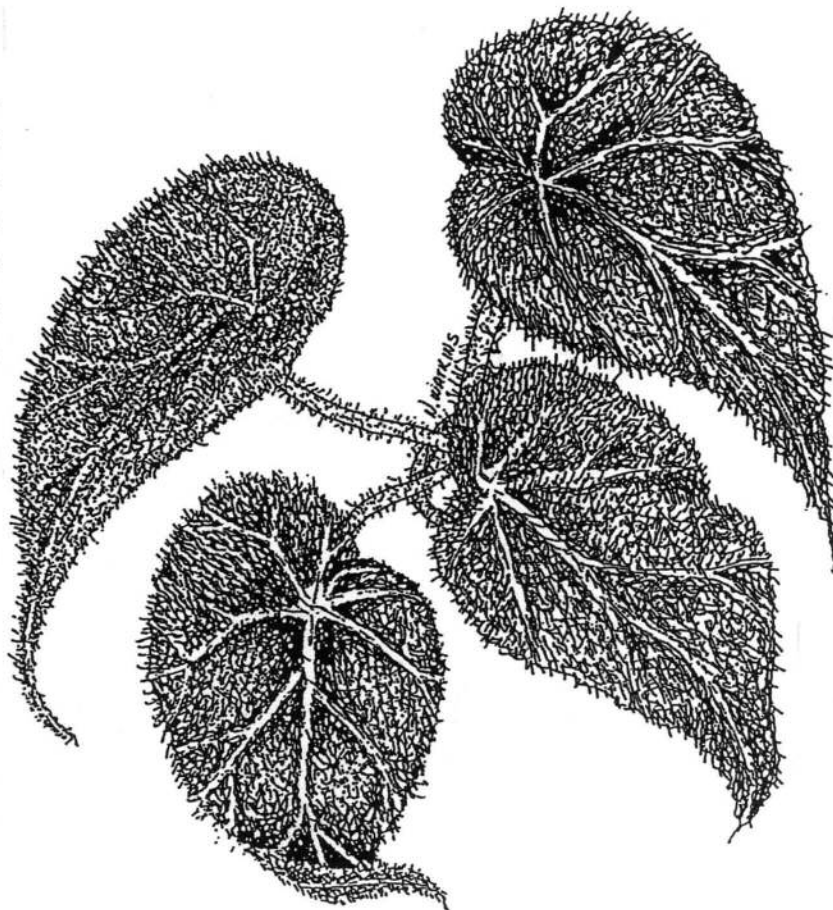
(From Front Page)

hairy rhizome. Leaves are medium-sized, cordate, dentate, of a dark maroon, with lime green veins and minute elevations. Except for the veins, the entire leaf is covered with magenta plush-like hair. Flowers are large and pink. The male has four tepals, the female five. Blooms appear in the spring on three to five inch peduncles.

This begonia requires very high humidity, and can only be grown in a terrarium or a very humid greenhouse. It likes bright light, but not where sun can burn it. Use unmilled sphagnum moss that has been soaked in very hot water. Then chop the moss in small pieces of one to two inches in length. Mix in perlite, using 1 part perlite to 5 parts of moss. At this point, a very weak solution of fertilizer can be poured over the moss before squeezing out all the liquid. After planting *B. decora* in the terrarium, leave the container top partially open for one or two days to allow excess moisture from the top of the growing medium to evaporate. There will be less chance of mildew or root rot.

This plant can be kept in this closed container for at least two seasons before changes become necessary provided the condensed moisture that collects on the glass does not overwater the plant. Partially remove the cover of the terrarium for a day, then replace the top to correct the problem. (This information is taken from Mary Weinberg's booklet.)

The picture is a drawing by Nannette Watkins.



#### SIGNS FOR PLANTING AND TRANSPLANTING FOR BEGONIAS ARE CANCER AND PISCES:

June 18 and 19, (Pisces)

June 27, 28, 29 (Cancer)

July 25 and 26 (Cancer)

and July 16 and 17 (Pisces)

For Pruning for quick growth choose Taurus  
and Capricorn:

June 14 and 15 (Capricorn)

June 23 and 24 (Taurus)

July 12 and 13 (Capricorn)

July 20 and 21 (Taurus)



Lynn Sissney with Best of Show B. 'Pink African Violet'

Lynn also created the tall display with several different begonias.

Johnnie Shepard, SWR/ABS Director, looks on as Janet Carpenter checks the booklet.

The American Begonia Society Convention will be held in Boston, Massachusetts July 29-August 2, 2015.

## HORTICULTURE

After the much needed rains and stormy weather the begonias have thrived. It is time to take some cuttings and place them in a small container of rainwater until they form roots. The four inches of rain awakened grass, trees, hedges, weeds, and flowers. It is time to trim and mow. Zilker Botanical Garden has many colorful plants besides the begonias in red, white, pink, and green. The star begonia has seeds that changed from light green to ripened brown; therefore, they need planting. Time will tell.

Do not miss the meeting at 2 P.M. in the Greene Room of the Austin Area Garden Center June 22, since Ken Fuchs will show a DVD of begonia and some other lovely plants. The reception that was to be in the Greene Room was cancelled, but the auditorium will have a memorial service probably during the time of our meeting. We can enter the building at 1:30 P.M. so try to be a little early.

### **Cheryl Lenert Earns Mae Blanton Award**

Cheryl Lenert, past president of the American Begonia Society and an active member of several branches including the Austin Area Begonia Branch, received the Mae Blanton Service Award during the Saturday night banquet in the Holiday Inn Airport West in Shreveport, Louisiana. Cheryl has promoted begonias all over the world and has accomplished much to increase membership by organizing new branches.

This award was also earned by Bobbie Price of the Fort Worth Botanical Garden, where she has been working with begonias for twenty-five years.

Johnnie Shepard, who serves as director of SWR/ABS, won the Marguerite Vernon Award. She is an active member of the Alamo Begonia Branch.

### **Local Branch Members Win Awards**

Lynn Sissney won Best in Show with B. 'Pink African Violet' (97 Points) during the Southwest Region/ABS Get-Together May 23. The show had 91 entries from 18 exhibitors with 23 winning cultural awards having 91 points or higher.

Doug Byrom won Sweepstakes with 6 plants that won 95-97 points each. Two won second place ribbons. His B. *lyallii* f. *masoloensis* received Best Species in the Plant Show.

Cheryl Lenert earned 95 points for B. *dregii* that was Best in Division.

Tom Keepin received 97 points and Best in Division L with his Hanging Basket of B. 'Withlacoochee' or Brazilian Lady.

Carol Orozco captured first place in G-Rex Cultorum with B. 'Pink Diamond.'

### **Other Awards of Interest**

The Educational Display exhibited by the Fort Worth Botanical Garden received 100 points.

Don Miller of Steve's Leaves earned three cultural awards with over 95 points. B. 'Smoky Eyes,' having 97 points, captured attendees' interest with its unusual form and color.

The People's Choice Award depended upon attendees voting for their favorite begonia in the Show Room. The winner was B. *hispida* var. *cucullifera*, which was the best in J Species Division and earned first place for Jane Anderson, who conducted a seminar on grooming and displaying begonias for a show. One unusual thing she added was reptile bark from a pet store instead of new soil to place in the top of the pot that was cleaned with WD40.

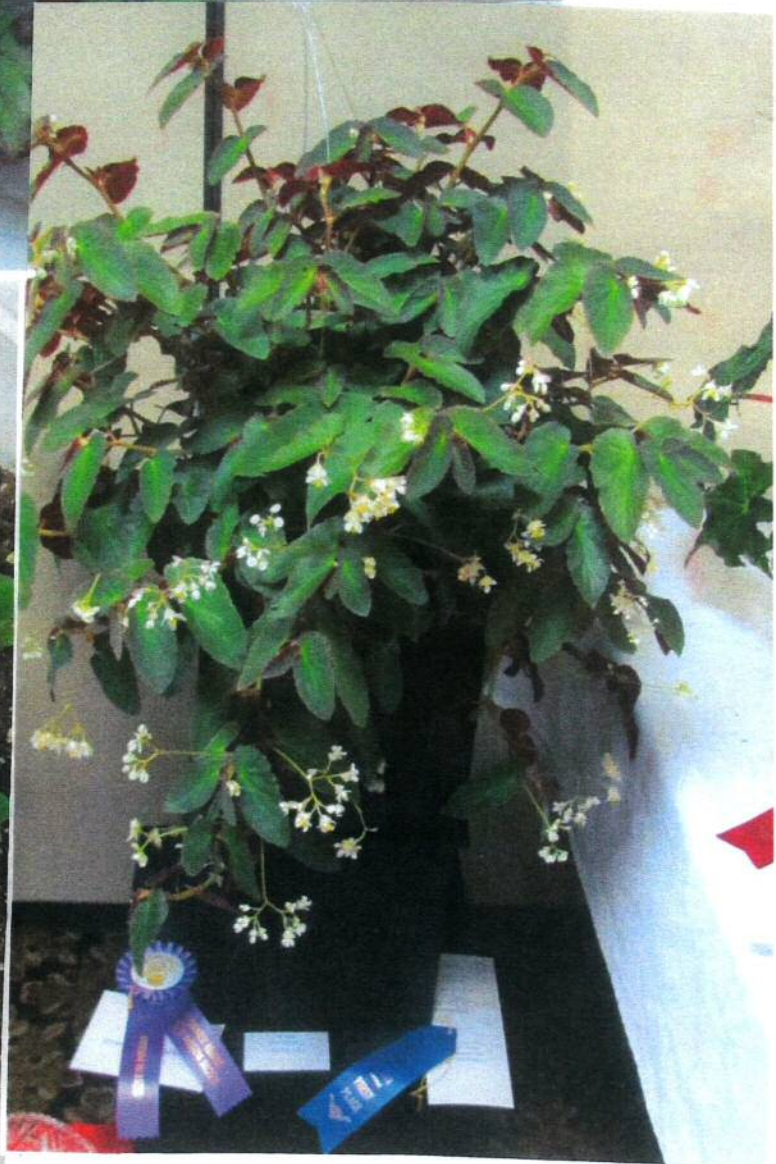
### **Seminar: Lynn Sissney**

Lynn Sissney brought in an old log from a tree that fell on her neighbor's old fence and cost her \$600 to buy a new portion to replace the lumber. She also purchased a new jacket just for this special time to begin planting tall begonias first before working with the small ones. With water container in place and string cords leading to the plants to provide moisture, Lynn carefully placed two begonias with white blossoms to the left side. Then she filled in until there were enough plants to form a beautiful display. She explained that after she completed an artistic arrangement such as this, she sat down in her chair and drank a beer.

B. 'Pink Diamond' by Carol Orozco



U476 BY Diana Wilkerson



B. 'Withlacoochee' 97 points by Tom Keepin

# THE LOUISIANA SHOW 2014

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEN FUCHS



B. 'Match Maker' by Jane Anderson



B. lyallii ssp. Lyalli f. masoloensis by Doug Byrom

Best Species in the Show

THE LOUISIANA SHOW 2014

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEN FUCHS

B. 'Tiny Gem' by Don Miller



B. 'Lana' by Jane Anderson

B. dregii BY CHERYL LENERT



The Rose Garden had boxed lunches for those who chose the tours. Joan Estes is to the left of Lynn Sissney. Carol Orozco is sitting in the front and Jim Landers is eating.



Tom Keepin with a colorful coleus. Connie Saenz, secretary of American Begonia Society, Sandy Justice, and Carol Orozco from Alamo Branch talk about loading show plants. Do we really have space for any plants from this nursery? Did you see those begonias? What begonias will be in the Sales Room?

