



VOLUME10, NUMBER 3

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2016

**WORKDAY
MARCH 20**

**Begonia Garden
Zilker Botanical Bed
2220 Barton Springs Road
Austin 78746**

OFFICERS:

President:

Doug Byrom

1st Vice President:

Jackie Johnson

2nd Vice President:

Valerie Morris

Secretary:

Nelda Moore

Treasurer:

Lynn Sissney

Director:

Joan Estes

National Director:

Wanda Macnair

SWR/Get Together:

May 5,6, and 7

Richardson, TX

www.begonias.org/events.htm



ON PLANTING BEGONIAS MARCH 20TH

The Austin Area Begonia Society Branch of the American Begonia Society will meet at 2 P.M. in Zilker Botanical Garden, 2220 Barton Springs Road, Austin, TX 78746, to plant begonias in the adopted bed on the first day of spring. Please bring gloves, begonias, hoe, shovel, or any other garden tool that you wish to use to clean the garden and work the soil for planting. No food will be eaten in the area, and there will be no access to the Greene Room or the auditorium.



Plan to attend this March meeting to learn more about plans for setting up the booths, pricing plants, and working either Saturday or Sunday selling begonias or talking to the public about the begonias in the special exhibit in the Greene Room during the Zilker Garden Festival April 2 and 3. Set up for the Flower Show will be March 30 or 31 from 9 A.M. until 4 P.M.

LYNN SISSNEY JOINS IN HOSTING AAGC

Last month when the Austin Area Begonia Society and the Cactus and Succulent Society hosted the council meeting, Lynn Sissney surprised us by being present after her medical problems. She brought food to help all of us who set a beautiful table with begonia plants and cactus and succulent cupcakes to represent the clubs. The article that appeared was written in advance of the celebration. Thank you to everyone.

AABS Website – http://www.kenfuchs42.net/aabs_index.html

**AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY BRANCH
OF THE AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 28, 2016**

The Austin Area Begonia Society Branch of the American Begonia Society met Sunday, February 28, 2016, in the home of Joe and Nelda Moore at 2 P.M. with the following present: **Vickey Cole, Elaine Dill, Rainee Freeman, Ken Fuchs, Jackie Johnson, Jim Landers, Arlene Lantz, Joe Moore, Nelda Moore, Carol Orozco, Connie Saenz, and Lynn Sissney.**

Jackie Johnson, president pro tern, called the meeting to order in the absence of Doug Byrom.

Since Zilker Garden Festival will be held April 2 and 3 from 10 A.M. until 4 P.M. with set up on April 1, the society will plant begonias March 20 in the Zilker Botanical Garden and fill in later with any baskets that are not sold in the 2 booths.

Doug Byrom has many plants that he will deliver, and 60 baskets will be delivered to Valerie Morris' home on March 30 or 31. Several begonias need to be on display in the Greene Room and someone from the society will be present to encourage the public to grow begonias.

Vickey Cole, club representative to the Austin Area Garden Council presented a detailed report about the volunteer dinner Friday, April 1, at 6:30 P.M. in The Oaks, where volunteers cleared the area for the beer garden. Two tickets for club members will cost \$4. Other tickets are \$8 until the day of the festival

when they will be \$10 per adult. Donna Friedenreich has selected several places where the festival will be advertised. The expenditures were handed out to the members about the publicity. The festival will have authors present who will be selling their books and there will be food demonstrations near the Austin Area Garden Center. Syd Teague is still looking for a band that will provide music in the Beer Garden. ZilkerGarden.org

The minutes of January 24 were approved as published.

Lynn Sissney presented a financial report: Money Market – \$2004.49, Checking – \$1152.75, and Share Account – \$338.20.

The begonia booths cost \$400; therefore, the society has decided that any money should be spent on begonias and if needed \$150 more on baskets to fill in the Adopt-A-Garden. A motion was made by Lynn Sissney to spend \$150 for baskets for the garden. This was tabled and amended to add "if the baskets were needed, then we could spend the additional \$150."

The next meeting may be a tour, but the society will meet May 1 before the Get Together.

Respectfully submitted,
Nelda Moore, Secretary



JACKIE JOHNSON'S PROGRAM: GROWING BEGONIAS IN TERRARIUMS

All participated in using tiny begonias in the small terrariums that the members brought for the excellent program instructions of placing horticultural charcoal and some perlite in the bottom of the container. Then the prepared sphagnum moss that was barely damp was placed on top of the charcoal mixture. Jackie provided the seedlings from her greenhouse, and each person carefully



placed one in the glass container. Since the fiber sphagnum moss had gone through a boiling water stage, a cooling period with a few drops of fertilizer added to the bucket, and then a time for excess water to evaporate after Jackie tried to squeeze all of the water out of the moss, it was cut in pieces. She said that the terrarium did not need any more moisture added to the planting, but she cautioned to watch for condensation on the glass. This closed world could then be stationed under florescent lights or kept in light, but not direct sun light.

HORTICULTURE:

It is now time to fertilize the begonias with a weak solution of your favorite type of food for them. To provide food for good roots use a bit of bone meal or phosphorus. Do not over-water the



begonias. Use a very loose porous mix. The soil mixture should be the type to allow the excess water to flow out of the container. Never allow the plants to stand in water. If you grow all of your begonias in tiny pots in a fish tank under a fluorescent fixture with one cool and one warm tube, then place damp moss in the bottom of the tank. About once per week check the pots. If the moss is damp and the pots are not dry to the touch, everything is working the way it is supposed to do. All one needs to do is water the pots if they are dry to the touch.

Planting and transplanting in March can be done on 16, 17, and 18 for the Cancer sign, one of the best for good results. Other times are the 26, 27, and 28. In April the Cancer sign falls on the 13 and 14.

CONVENTIONS:

The Southwest Region Get-Together/ABS will be held May 5, 6, and 7 in the Richardson Holiday Inn, 1655 North Central Expressway in Richardson, Texas 75080.

Entries for the show with the Entry Form will be received May 6 from 4:30 P.M. until 7:30 P.M. Tours include Dallas Arboretum and the Fort Worth Botanic Garden for \$95. The registration fee is \$35 for an individual and \$45 for the family with the late fee of \$55 after April 21. The business meetings will follow the buffet luncheon that costs \$37.50. The banquet will be \$50 per person.

The American Begonia Society Convention will enjoy the Los Angeles, California area so make plans to attend the interesting educational meetings and meet begonia growers from around the world. Contact the Ayres Hotel in Los Angeles before September 6th.





BEGONIA 'WINTER JEWEL'

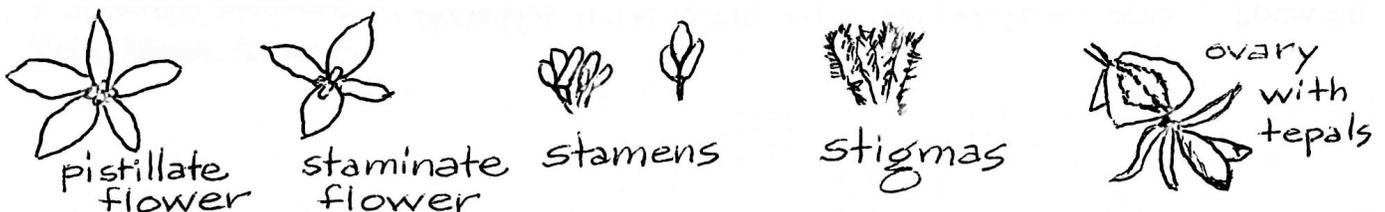
According to M. Weinberg's book given to each attendee at a Get-Together, the 'Winter Jewel' arrived in this country in 1944 from Puerto Rico, and was for many years thought to be a species. For several years it was called *B. bartonea*, then *B. bartonea hort.*

It is a low-growing shrub-like begonia having small ovate-acuminate-crenate leaves of olivegreen with a silvery sheen and sparse white bristles scattered over the upper surface. The underside of the leaf is light red, with dark red surrounding the mid-rib and faintly reflecting through to the upper surface of the leaves. Stems are light red and slightly zig-zag. Peduncles are pink. Petioles, which have a channel on

the upper surface, are also pink. Stipules are small, pink, acuminate. The flowers are tiny, rosy-pink in their bud stage. Females have 5 tepals, 3 of pink and 2 almost white. Male flowers have 4 tepals: 2 are pink, and 2 very narrow ones are almost white. It is everblooming.

Since it is difficult to grow, it can be used in a terrarium. It likes warmth and humidity.

If there is a drop in temperature or a draft, this begonia will suddenly shrivel and die back. Despite this, it has been successfully grown in greenhouses and glass-covered lath houses.



AABS Meeting – February 28, 2016



Joe and Nelda Moore's Greenhouse

