



VOLUME 11, NUMBER 6

NEWSLETTER

June, 2017

## MEETING: June 25

2 P.M.

Greene Room  
Austin Area Garden Center  
2220 Barton Springs Road  
Austin, TX 78746  
Pot Luck

## EVENTS

Woodland Faerie Trail  
Closes July 30

July 8-10 A.M.  
Wild in the City

August 18-20  
Beekeeper Seminar

September 9 10 A.M.  
Bulbs for Austin Area

October 28  
Show and Sale  
Porcelain Arts

## WORKDAY IN BEGONIA GARDEN

To be announced!  
New area is last home of  
the Herb Garden located  
near the Children's Garden  
and the outdoor bathrooms  
across from the Tropical  
Garden.

## PROPAGATION OF BEGONIAS

### Stem Cuttings

Tender cuttings are best rooted in a covered container, but small plastic pots may be used for a single cutting while large plastic pots are best for several cuttings of one variety of begonias. These cuttings should be taken from strong, healthy, mature plants that are free from insects and disease. By using a clean sharp sterile knife or scissors to remove a growing stem or branch of non-flowering stem with roughly 2 to 5 nodes, trim off the lower leaves. Then place the cut end, which should be just below the basal node that has a dormant growth bud, not a scar from an inflorescence, in the rooting mix that has been watered and drained. Label the variety and write the date the cutting was made.

The rooting mixture can be 1 part horticulture perlite, one part horticulture vermiculite, and ¼ part Jiffy Mix. This does not need to be sterilized by heating or baking. It is soil less.

### Other Types of Stem Cuttings Are Rhizome and Mallet.

When making a clean cut on the end of a rhizome or by cutting the rhizome into one to three-inch pieces, it is better to have a leaf or two on each cutting. Insert a cutting in the rooting medium to a depth of ½ to one inch or just barely beneath the surface of the medium.

### Mallet cuttings



For shrub-like, cane-like, and spreading begonias the mallet type method of propagation yields more cuttings from a plant. Select a long stem that has side shoots or branches along the length of the stem. Cut the main stem on each side of the side shoots. There should be about one half inch of the main stem on each side of the side shoot or branch. Place the cuttings in the damp rooting medium so that the leaves are upright and the mallet is embedded securely, but not deeply.

(Continued on next page.)



After 3 or 4 weeks transplant the cuttings to the next larger size pot in 2 parts sterile soil, 1 part perlite, 1 part Jiffy Mix, and 1 part sphagnum peat moss.

Never overpot your plant, and keep the cuttings damp, but not soggy.

### Leaf cuttings

This is the best method of propagation for rhizomatous and Rex begonias. Use a colorless glass or plastic container that is at least 5 inches high. It should have a cover and it is advisable to make drainage holes with a hot ice pick in the bottom of the container. Plastic labels should indicate the variety, the date, and the person who gave you the leaf unless it is from your plant. The growing mix should be 1 part perlite, 1 part vermiculite, ¼ part Jiffy Mix (optional).

Use whole leaves, wedge leaf cuttings, or cone

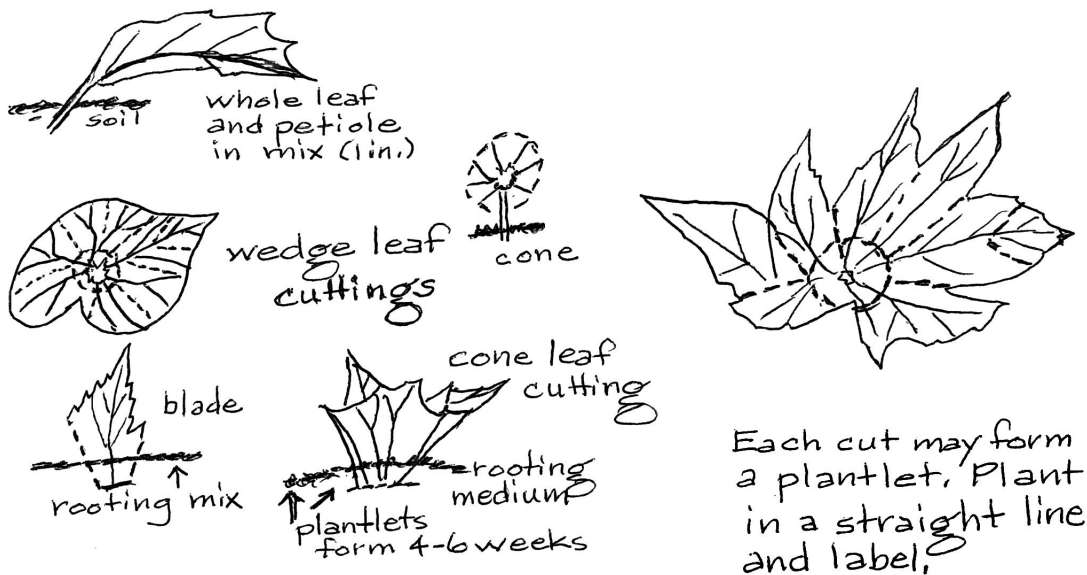
leaf cuttings.

Remember also that Greg Sytch said that propagation mixes should vary with the season and the region depending on humidity, rainfall, heat, and winds. He suggests that in SUMMER the mix should have 3/5 perlite, 1/5 vermiculite, 1/5 dry peat moss and a handful of bone meal to assist early root growth. He also adds charcoal bits.

In WINTER ½ perlite, 3/8 peat moss, 1/8 vermiculite and the bone meal. Water less. He does foliar feeding after 2 weeks with a diluted fertilizer that has some fungicide to protect the new, delicate roots.

(See Sept/Oct. 2012 *The Begonian* p.193)

Some begonias propagate themselves. For example, *B. sinuate* produces a bulbil at the base of the leaf blade. During the rains the plant can die, but the plantlets can cover the area. *B. elisabethae* has an elongated tip that arches and touches the soil to produce itself. *B. decora*, *B. ignorata*, *B. pavonina*, and *B. wyepingiana* drop old leaves that decompose and new plantlets develop from the veins when the blade separates as the leaf rots.







**Vickey Cole**, who took these photographs of her begonias, uses self-contained plastic containers such as small sweater boxes to root begonia cuttings. She revealed that she uses perlite, vermiculite, and rooting powder as the soil-less mixture. When she cuts and trims the begonias, she places the tips in one container and the leaf-less stems in the other. According to Vickey the tips tend to root faster; therefore, they are placed upright and the stems are laid horizontally halfway covered in the soil mixture. She also trims the leaves on the tips to allow more light to the soil, and she wants all nutrients to develop roots, not leaves.





AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY BRANCH  
OF THE AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY  
MINUTES OF MAY 28, 2017

The Austin Area Begonia Society Branch of the American Begonia Society met at 2 P .M. in the Greene Room of the Austin Area Garden Center in Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy, 2220 Barton Springs Road, Austin, 787 46, on May 28, 2017.

Present were **Doug Byrom, Vickey Cole, Mary Drake, Betty Dunn, Jackie Johnson, Arlene Lantz, Nelda Moore, Valerie Morris, Verlene Schoen, Lynn Sissney, and Geneva Townsend.**

After a delicious meal and a trip to the Herb Garden, President Doug Byrom called the meeting to order. He informed the society that Rekha Morris had sent a card, Charles Jaros is in Florida, but needs a heart transplant, and that all should join the American Begonia Society for the benefits of getting seeds from the Seed Fund, use of the library, and the great information that one receives about begonias.

Council Representative Vickey Cole reported that Jennifer Orr is president of the Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy. Cindy Klemmer represents PARD and needs club roster with names, addresses, and zip codes for the city. She informed the conservancy that gate prices and method of payment will change. A contest to name the streambed is also in the works. All volunteer hours will be kept by Marion Alsup. Kris Ermis, treasurer, is receiving club dues. She reported that the garden festival earned a profit of \$3000, the lowest amount in 15 years. A discussion as to how the festival will be organized next year was discussed. Sally Dickson is the

recording secretary, and Jeff Pavlat, vice president of Horticulture, revealed that \$1500 has been paid from the budget to replace stolen tools. The balance will be paid in October.

- (1) Members of the Begonia Society voted to send \$151 to the ABS Holiday Greetings.  
(Frances Drescher, 11529 Riverchase Run, West Palm Beach, FL 33412.)
- (2) They voted to accept the Herb Garden as the new Begonia Garden.
- (3) Members also voted to spend about \$320 for 40 begonia baskets from JJ&L to plant in the new garden. Some begonia plants can be placed in spaces and covered with mulch so that they can be taken out of the garden in winter. The plants will be delivered to Valerie Morris, Treasurer, who will notify us of the Work Day.

The interesting program arranged by Jackie Johnson, First Vice President, began with Geneva telling us about her begonias and how she cared for each of them. Each person with a plant talked about it and even discussed propagation. Doug provided tickets for each person so that he could select a begonia. Then everyone could purchase the remaining begonias at \$5 each.

Respectfully submitted by Nelda Moore, Secretary



Jim Landers discovers a very large begonia blooming beside a plumeria inside the Conservatory at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, May 24, 2017.



In May AABS members Jim Landers and Ken Fuchs attended the 2017 American Iris Society National Convention in Des Moines, Iowa. Inside the

large Conservatory at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden they were pleased to find some beautiful begonias growing inside the Orchid Room.



B. River Nile

