



VOLUME 12, NUMBER 7

NEWSLETTER

July 2018

NO MEETING IN JULY

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, **August 22**

Trip to Fort Worth

Botanic Garden

Bring paper and pencil

to write plant names of begonias
that you would like to grow from
leaves that will be sent to you.

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PROPAGATING BEGONIAS

Propagating begonias is easy and a great way to increase the number of begonias in a beloved collection. One must remember that cuttings need ample atmospheric humidity. They benefit from being grown in an enclosed transparent container or under a mist unit. Always place the container in a well-lit area away from direct sunlight. To help prevent rot never allow the begonias to get soggy, or take the advice from growers who soak their cuttings in a 5% bleach solution for 5-10 minutes before placing them in a mixture usually made of 2 quarts of cut, screened sphagnum moss, 1 quart horticultural vermiculite, 1 quart perlite, and 1 tablespoon ground limestone. Some growers also add bark and a little slow-release fertilizer or a weak solution of 20-20-20 or 18-18-18 after 3 weeks.

Tip or Basal Cuttings

Although cane-like and shrub-like begonias can be rooted in rainwater, the tip or basal cuttings are the most satisfactory method of propagation and even works with semituberous varieties or even some tuberous varieties. Never use old woody plants. Take cuttings from healthy vigorous plants. The cuttings should have at least 2 joints or nodes and the cut should be made just below the joint. The cutting should be about 2 inches long. Remove the lower leaves and insert the stem in a rooting medium at a depth of ½ to 2 inches depending on the size of the cutting. A good root system will form by the third week.

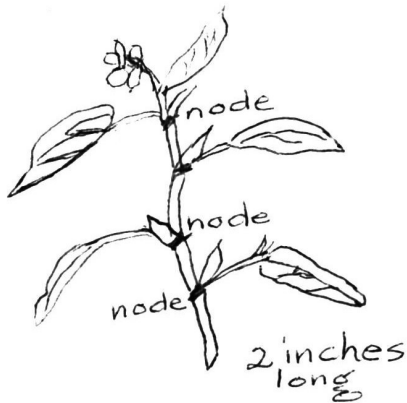
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AABS WEBSITE http://www.kenfuchs42.net/aabs_index.html

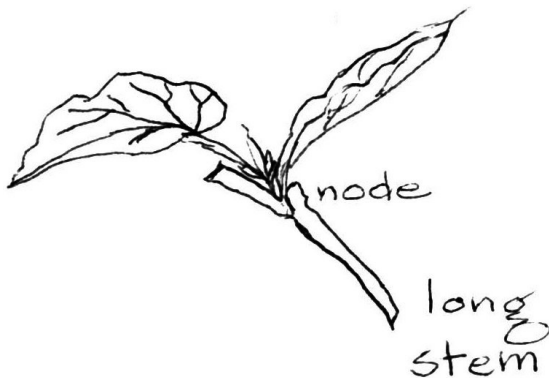
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Remember that the basal node has a dormant growth bud, not a scar left from a bloom or the cutting will be reluctant to produce roots.



Mallet Cuttings

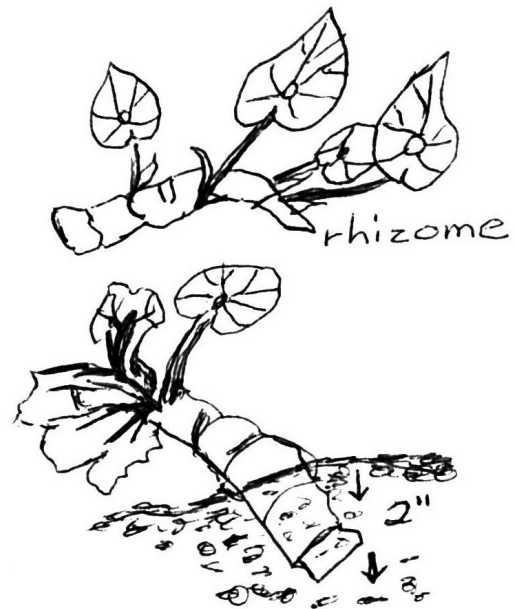
Mallet cuttings can be taken from most shrub-like and cane-like begonias that are spreading types. You can usually get more cuttings from your plant by selecting a long stem with side branches along the length of the stem. Cut the main stem on each side of the side branches. There should be about ½ inch of the main stem on each side of the side branch. Insert the cuttings in a rooting medium so that the leaves stand upright. The mallet should be embedded in the medium securely, but not deeply.



Rhizome Cuttings

Sections of the modified fleshy root stems with nodes can be cut in any length with a clean cut using a sharp knife or you may want a long rhizome and root it in water as you would any stem cutting, but these fleshy cuttings in water are slightly more prone to rotting. Tip cuttings from the ends of the

rhizome or sectional cuttings of 1-3 inch pieces depending on the length of the rhizome should have a leaf or two on each. Insert the cutting in 2 inches of wet rooting medium (not soggy) to a depth of ½ to 1 inch, depending on the thickness of the rhizome. It takes about 3 weeks for a good root system to develop.



Now read Albert Sng Chay Jian's "Growing Rhizomatous Begonias in a Mop" in the July/August 2018 *The Begonian*. This is an interesting article about effectively using the mop material for water wicking.





When the cutting has developed a good root system, transplant the cutting with some of the mixture still clinging to the roots into a small plastic pot. Use the same medium of long fiber moss and perlite. Then place the pots in a contained atmosphere and fertilize them with a weak solution after 2 or 3 weeks.

Leaf Cuttings

For rhizomatous and Rex begonias leaf cuttings are the most popular method of propagation.

Select a transparent, colorless glass or plastic container that is at least 5 inches high. It should have a cover or plastic wrap to cover the rows of leaves that have been labeled with other information other than the name of the cultivar or species such as date planted. Make drainage holes in the bottom of the container and in the cover with an ice pick. Place at least 2 inches of damp medium in the container. Then use whole leaves, wedge leaf cuttings, or cone leaf cuttings. Plant them in rows in straight lines near their label.

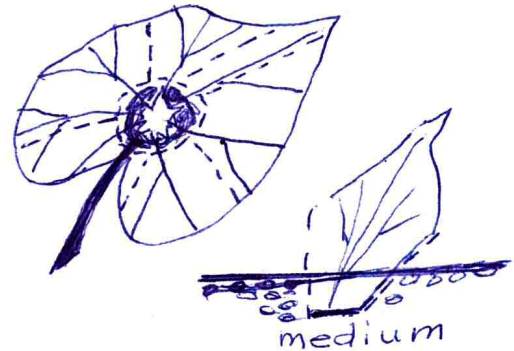
Whole Leaf

Plant the small leaf above the soil to prevent rot.



Wedge Leaf Cuttings

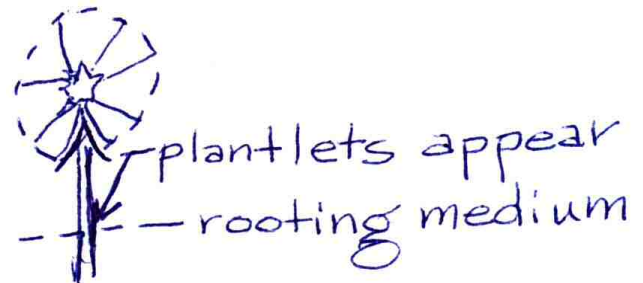
For large-leaved begonias cut the leaf from the plant and then remove the petiole or leaf stalk. Cut the center out in a circle.



Plant in the medium to a depth of about $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ the length of the wedge.

Cone Leaf Cuttings

Cut the center of the leaf blade and petiole and place in a rooting medium. Form a loose cone with the remainder of the leaf.



Plantlets will appear in 4 to 6 weeks.

AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY BRANCH OF THE AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY
Minutes of June 24, 2018

Present were **Charlotte Boyle, Douglas Byrom, Vickey Cole, Jim Estes, Kenneth Fuchs, Jim Landers, Julie Marcus, Nelda Moore, Valerie Morris, Carol Orozco, Verlene Schoen, Lynn Sissney, and Geneva Townsend.**

At 2 P.M. Doug Byrom, President of the Austin Area Begonia Society, invited all members to the delicious snacks on the table so that each person could begin propagation of the begonias that he brought with plenty of damp soil mix, perlite, and trays. Some tables that were covered provided the spaces needed in the auditorium for all of us to select the leaves that we wanted and the labels for the names of the begonias.

During the short business meeting President Byrom asked for any information that should be presented to the members.

Vickey Cole, the Austin Area Garden Council Conservancy Representative, reminded all that our society will be a hostess to the council in September. Joining us will be The Docents, who will also provide food before the meeting at 10 A.M. September 11. The Woodland Faerie Trail Exhibit will be a featured attraction until August 10th. Vickey also sent an announcement

about an art exhibit in the auditorium.

The treasury has a great balance.

Nelda Moore reported on Capital Cruises and Lonestar Riverboat about their 2-hour tours on Town Lake since Austin will be hosting the Southwest Region Get Together in April 2019. Doug had mentioned the downtown hotels; therefore, she contacted JW Marriott, the Omni Downtown, the Westin, and La Quinta. She will continue to search for the best rate for the group.

We will not meet together in July and August. On August 22 those interested in traveling to the Fort Worth Botanic Garden Species Bank will take a paper and ink or pencil to jot down any begonia plants that they are interested in growing from the leaves that will be sent to them. More information will follow.

All excitedly reached for the trays, filled the medium in each, and selected a leaf or two, and worked until 3:30 P.M. in perfect harmony.

Respectfully submitted,
Nelda Moore, Secretary



