



VOLUME 12, NUMBER 11

NEWSLETTER  
NO DECEMBER MEETING

November 2018

**NEXT MEETING:**

November 25, 2018  
Austin Area Garden Center  
2220 Barton Springs Road  
Austin, TX 78746  
Greene Room 2 P.M.  
Pot Luck

January Meeting: January 27, 2019

**EVENTS:**

November 17 10 A.M. - 2:30 P.M.  
Decorate Club Christmas Tree

November 22 **HAPPY THANKSGIVING**

December 1  
Santa in the Garden

December 29 10 A.M. - 2:30 P.M.  
Remove decorations from Club Tree

December 25 **MERRY CHRISTMAS**



**SWR/ABS GET TOGETHER COMES TO AUSTIN MAY 1-5**



Friendships, education, begonias, the excitement of visiting another city — all play an important part in your life when you choose to attend a Southwest Region/American Begonia Society Get Together. May 1-5, 2019, the Austin Area Begonia Society Branch will host this exciting convention in the Wyndham Garden Austin located at 3401 South IH 35 in Austin.

One of the important speakers will be Dr. Rick Schoellhorn, who graduated from Colorado State in Fort Collins, Colorado in 1989 with a Bachelor of Science Degree. In 1992 he earned a Master's Degree from the University of Florida in Gainesville, where he continued his education, obtaining a PHD in 1996.

Dr. Schoellhorn worked for 12 years in Colorado and for five years in retail nursery production and sales in Alaska. In California he maintained a golf course for 3 years.

He has also toured the United States, Indonesia, Holland, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Costa Rica, Japan, South Africa, Argentina, Mexico, and other places collecting plants and consulting with growers.

He has worked for Proven Winners for 7 years. He has been involved with plant breeding, communications, research, and industry since his career is focused on new plants and new introductions. As a writer and professor he has published articles on production of plants and genetic issues. He is also a co-author of *Your Florida Guide to Perennials* with Dr. Sydney Park Brown.

Make plans now to attend this event.

NO MINUTES since the Austin Area Begonia Society Branch did not meet in October.



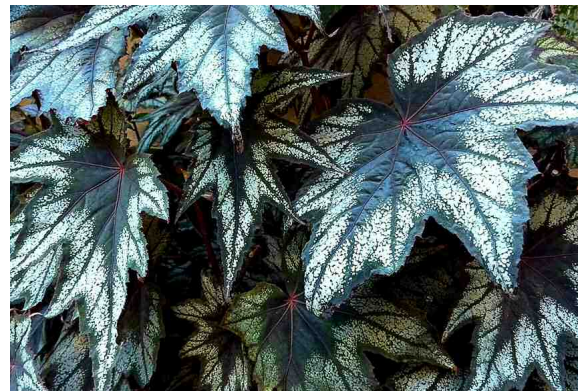
B. 'Connee Boswell' (1978)



The Boswell Sisters – Connie, 'Vet,' Martha



Trailing begonia 'Jelly Roll Morton' (1985)



B. 'Little Brother Montgomery' (1993), a cane-type begonia with rex-like leaves

Begonia 'Connee Boswell' was hybridized by Jazz lover Johnson, who is also responsible for B.'Jelly Roll Morton' and B. 'Little Brother Montgomery' — all named for jazz legends.

B. 'Connee Boswell' bears the name of one of the three famous Boswell Sisters who performed in the 1930s. Connee was born December 3, 1907, in Kansas but grew up in New Orleans, Louisiana. Originally named Connie, she changed her name to Connee in the 1940s. Her sisters were Martha and Helvetia ('Vet').

This rhizomatous begonia performs well in an east or west window in partial sunlight. Its leaves are deeply lobed with lavender highlights on the silvery-green leaf edges and in the leaf center.

In 1978 in California this begonia was introduced as a parent of *palmata* var. *pa/mata* X *diadema*.

**BEGONIA 'TOM MENT'** by Paul Tsamtsis

Tom Mentelos, introduced this begonia in 1973. When he submitted it for ABS registration, he received Number 350 for this cross between B. 'Di-Erna' and B. 'Orange Rubra.' The leaves are spotted and remain at maturity of the plant. The flowers are ever-blooming and pink-orange in color since B. 'Di-Erna' has coral flowers and B. 'Orange Rubra' has orange flowers.

This cane-like begonia is easy to grow and is relatively fast growing. It can reach between 2 and 4

feet tall.

It can branch from below the soil level, thus giving rise to a nice full plant that can also be grown in a hanging basket. It propagates from cuttings as long as the lowest node does not have a bloom cluster. This hybrid is also pest free, but can be mildew free if a systemic fungicide spray is used on the plant in early fall.

Other hybrids from Tom Mentelos include B. 'Tom Ment II' and B. 'Fabulous Tom.'



photo by Paul Tsamtsis



Sacramento Branch, American Begonia Society. June 2002



B. 'Tom Ment II'



B. 'Fabulous Tom'

**AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY WILL HAVE THE 2019 NATIONAL CONVENTION SHOW AND SALE**

**September 3-8 Sacramento Marriott**

**Rancho Cordova**

Hosted by the Joan Coulat-Sacramento Branch and San Francisco Branch of ABS  
**BEGONIAS, CALIFORNIA STYLE**

## GMO OR NO GMO

Begonias remind us of the hybridizers who constantly strive for new cultivars that will survive during the winter as well as in the summer without protection at all.

Changes are always taking place as far as plants are concerned because hybridizers are trying to get new plants that produce high yields without harmful insect or disease attacking them. With so many people in the world, change is inevitable. Even though the vegetable can's label says "Farm Fresh no GMOs" there is no seed planted today by farmers that has not been genetically modified. The organic vegetables and fruits and non GMO crops cost more but consumers do not know the whole story about the grower's soil improvement, compost, chemicals, and processing.

Hybrids keep the world fed, but when their seeds are planted, sometimes the new plants are different and inferior. This is why seeds from heirloom plants and native trees are secured and saved in some safe places in case of some disaster. This is why hybridizers collect plants and study how they can be used as food to feed the multitudes.

Eat, drink, and be merry! moderation!

## HORTICULTURE

During the welcome rains that finally came to Central Texas, every plant and tree experienced springtime. Then it rained almost every day. Weeds grew taller than the flowers that we were trying to grow.

At Zilker Botanical Garden Weeding Wednesday is every Wednesday unless the day is too cold and rains prevent you from driving to Austin.

This is the time to plant flowers, bulbs, winter vegetables, and trees.

Since the begonia society did not meet on Sunday, October 27, it was a good day to take begonia cuttings and fill the containers, clean pots, and remove dead leaves and spent flowers. Grooming them was fun.

From the article on "Flower Pot Mushrooms" in *The Begonian* Walt Sturgeon mentioned that some fungi are parasites and can kill certain plants. Can they kill tough iris plants? Many popped up next to the new rhizomes in the garden soil at Zilker, and the plants are no longer there.

