



AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY

A Branch of the American Begonia Society

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



Austin Area Begonia Society

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NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2022

Nelda Moore, Ken Fuchs, Editors

NEXT MEETING:

MARCH 27, 2022

2 P.M.

Auditorium

Austin Area Garden Center

Zilker Botanical Garden

2220 Barton Springs Road

Austin, Texas 78746

Pot Luck

**Nelda Moore will bring plates,
cups, forks, spoons, knives.**

DOUG BYROM ON PLANTING BEGONIA SEEDS



Doug Byrom will bring dry begonia seeds, show you how to check them to see whether they are viable, and then you can plant them and watch for tiny seedlings if you did not include chaff that eventually causes mold.



Photo by John&Jacq~s Garden



Since spring is coming soon in Central Texas, this is a good time to practice growing plants from seeds. You can learn the basics and try filling some landscapes with several plants by sowing store bought seeds stamped for this year and this season on the packet.

RHIZOMATOUS BEGONIAS

Of all horticultural classifications such as cane-like, shrub-like, thick stemmed, semperflorens, rhizomatous, rex cultorum, tuberous, and trailing scandent, the rhizomatous with over 665 different species and cultivars is the largest group. Many of the earlier species are still in cultivation.

B. rotundifolia or Begonia roseo flore folio orbiculari was discovered by Charles Plumier in 1690 in the Antilles.



B. rotundifolia

B. nelumbiifolia was discovered in 1830 by German plant hunter Ferdinand Deppe and C. J. Schiede, a physician living in Mexico City. They also found *B. heracleifolia*. In 1841 *B. hydrocotylifolia* was sent to Kew Gardens by Otto of the Royal Botanic Gardens of Berlin.



B. nelumbiifolia



B. heracleifolia



B. hydrocotylifolia

In 1837 Jean Linden found *B. manicata* in Mexico. *B. barkeri* was found in 1837 by Ross, a collector for G. Barker of Springfield, England. In 1825 David Don

described *B. hatacoa*, collected by Francis Hamilton in 1802, and *B. palmata* from the Nathaniel Wallich collection that he found in Nepal.



B. manicata



B. palmata

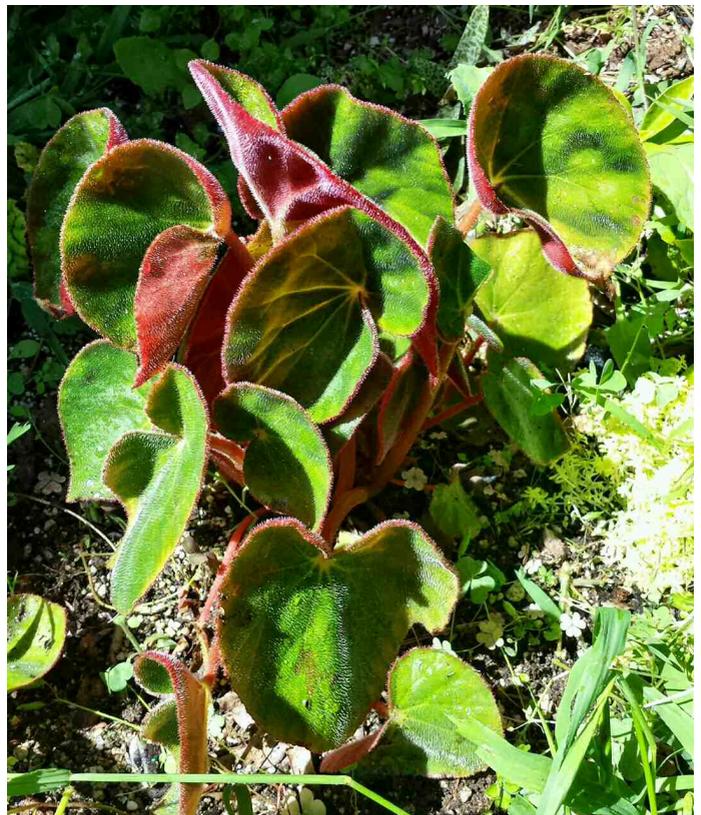


B. barkeri

B. acetosa from Brazil appeared in 1827 while the first yellow flowered begonia, *B. xanthina*, came from Bhotan, India when E. Booth found it in 1850. Two of the earliest known begonias, *B. tenuifolia* and *B. isoptera* were collected in Java.



B. hatacoa



B. acetosa



B. xanthina
Rekha Morris

B. xanthina



B. isoptera

Two epiphytic begonias were among the earliest rhizomatous species found in Brazil, *B. herbacea* and *B. velloziana*. Fernando Sello discovered *B. herbacea* near Rio Janerio.



B. herbacea



B. tenuifolia



B. velloziana

In 1859 *B. imperialis* and 3 varieties of this species were discovered in Mexico by Ghiesbrecht. In 1948 an interest grew when *B. bowerae* was discovered in Mexico by T. McDougall.



B. imperialis



B. bowerae

Rhizomatous begonias have thickened stems with short internodes. Some have creeping rhizomes, erect rhizomes, and rhizomes at or below the surface of the soil with erect stems.

The leaves are diverse in size and shape in all shades of green and mahogany and vary from one inch to 18 inches with different incisions that can be entire, subentire, lobed, cleft, and parted. Margins that are lobed have incisions that are cut not more than one third the distance from margin to petiole attachment. Cleft is used when the incisions are cut deeper, from one third to two thirds the distance from margin to petiole attachment. Margins that have incisions more than 2/3 the distance from margin to the place of petiole attachment, but not completely to the petiole are considered parted. A

crested margin is used when the margin of the leaf is undulate, curled, and tipped. Spiral leaved is when the basal lobes of the leaf overlap to form a spiral. To flourish these rhizomatous begonias need abundant light without direct sunlight, some shade, but not too dense.

They grow in sparse and shallow soil in shallow clay containers. They enjoy cool 58 to 72 degrees with relative humidity of 50-60 %, sometimes less. Extreme care must be taken to avoid overwatering. Never fertilize them when they are dormant. If the temperature remains even, these plants seldom go dormant.

CULTIVARS THAT ARE RHIZOMATOUS BEGONIAS

Small-leaved entire/subentire:

B. 'Chantilly Lace' and 'Red Eye'

Lobed - under 3 inches at maturity:

B. 'Little Joe'

Parted:

B. 'Lace Wing'

Crested margin:

B. 'Cathedral'

Spiral:

B. 'Apache'

Medium-leaved - entire/subentire:

B. 'Blue Lake'

Lobed:

B. 'Arapahoe'

Crested:

B. 'Cleopatra' and B. 'Fred Moore'

Parted:

B. Helene Jaros'

Spiral:

B. 'Bokit'

Large-leaved - entire/subentire:

B. Alamo'

Lobed:

B. 'Cool Waters'

Cleft:

B. 'Apple Jack'

Parted:

B. 'Ronnie Nevins'

Compound leaved:

B. 'Carol Mac'

Large-leaved:

Spiral-leaved:

B. 'Madame Butterfly'

Giant-leaved - over 12 inches entire/subentire:

B. 'Freddie'

Lobed:

B. 'Shenandoah'

Cleft:

B. 'Ron Cat Kitten'

Parted:

B. 'Earl-ee-bee'

RHIZOME ERECT - entire/subentire

B. 'Art'

Lobed:

B. 'Aquamarine'

Cleft:

B. 'Helen Grice'

Parted:

B. 'Carol Star'

Crested:

B. 'Essie Hunt'

Spiral:

B. 'Spindrift'

RHIZOME JOINTED AT OR BELOW THE SOIL WITH ERECT:

B. 'Charles Jaros'

DISTINCTIVE FOLIAGE:

B. 'Green Jewel' and B. 'Butterscotch' (need care in growing)

MINATURE AND DWARF:

B. 'Aladdin'

B. 'Apple Pie'

B. 'Calcutta'

B. 'Chantilly Lace'

B. 'China Doll'

The above Cultivars are just a few that you are familiar with at this point in your study. Two books of great value include *Begonias the Complete Reference Guide* by Mildred L. Thompson and Edward J. Thompson and *Begonias Cultivation, Identification and Natural History* by Mark C. Tebbitt.

**AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY MINUTES
FEBRUARY 27, 2022**

The Austin Area Begonia Society Branch met at 2 P.M. February 27, 2022, in the Austin Area Garden Center Auditorium, 2220 Barton Springs Road, Austin, TX 78746. The following members were present: **Dorcas Brashear, Doug Byrom, Vickey Cole, Betty Dunn, Ken Fuchs, Jim Landers, Nelda Moore, Valerie Morris, and Carol Orozco.**

President Vickey Cole paid dues for 16 members for \$12 each since this is what was owed after the vote during the last meeting concerning the Austin Area Garden Council. She also presented a detailed report for the Money Market, Business, and Savings Accounts.

Vickey also showed small containers such as cup cake holders that could be used for planting small begonias for the Southwest Region for Show and Share April 27-30 in Fort Worth.

The March meeting will be an exciting event when Doug shows begonia seeds and how to plant them.

PROGRAM:

Doug Byrom, Vickey Cole, and Valerie Morris each brought plants that they groomed to enter the Southwest Region Plant Show. Doug also brought several begonias to sell. Valerie and Doug shared many leaves with members who could plant them for their collection. The Point Scoring Schedule for cane-like, shrub-like, thick-stemmed, rhizomatous, and trailing-scandent was used from the American Begonia Society as each begonia was discussed. Pointed out was the importance of the shape, fullness, size, and vigor of the plant. Of high importance was the cleanliness of the container—never the white or black pot that came with the begonia when it was purchased. Even the soil needed to be replaced and all debris removed before the plant could be entered. Next, all of the plant needed to be inspected carefully for any ants, bugs, or anything else that could be used against its entrance for the judges to rule disqualification. Doug had staked his tree-like begonia that was blooming. He told about painting the green ties to match the green of the plant since all staking should be invisible. There should be no yellow or wilted leaves and no dust or dirt clinging to them. The judge knows how easy or difficult the begonias are to grow; therefore, the cultivar should be a mature begonia that does not have leaves hanging over the pot.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 P.M. and the room was cleared by 4 P.M. The March Meeting will be on the 27th..

Respectfully submitted,
Nelda Moore, secretary

Make plans soon to attend the ABS/Southwest Region Meeting!