



# AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY

A Branch of the American Begonia Society

Website: [http://www.kenfuchs42.net/aabs\\_index.html](http://www.kenfuchs42.net/aabs_index.html)



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NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2025

*Nelda Moore, Ken Fuchs, Editors*

## NEXT MEETING

**Sunday, June 22** 1:30 - 3:30 P.M.

**Program: Begonia Bonsai**

Zilker Botanical Garden Center  
2022 Barton Springs Road  
Austin, TX 78746

**From Jennifer Cavazos**

Monday May 19, 2025

Hi!

Dylan Black and I are new members as of February of this year. We went to Houston on Friday for the Begonia Society Convention. – All the best, Jen



B. 'Escargot' - Steve's Leaves

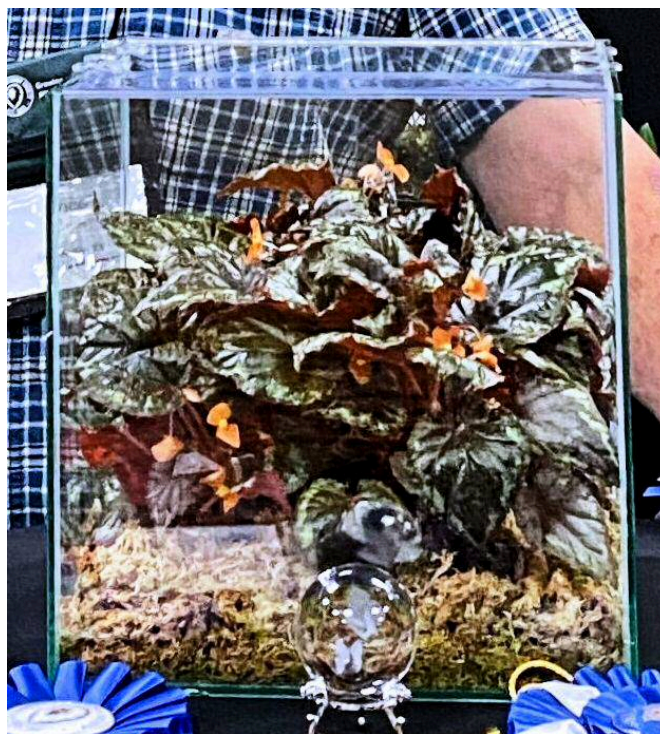


Malcolm McCorquodale's entry -  
B. 'Naples Chocolate'-

## DOUG BYROM WINS BEST OF SHOW



Congratulations to Doug Byrom, whose begonia B. 'Ignita' won best of show in Houston during the 2025 American Begonia Society/Southwest Region Convention held May 15-17



Photos by Jennifer Cavazos



Doug has been a member of the Austin Area Begonia Society since its beginning May 2, 2009. In 2011 he won the Mae Blanton Service Award. While working with many kinds of begonias, he has won several blue ribbons for his well-grown plants. He has been president and treasurer of the local society as well as treasurer for the Southwest Region. In 2015 he was awarded the Marguerite Vernon Award. Marguerite was a charter member of the Southwest Region and drafted the Constitution and By Laws, judged the regional and branch shows, and worked to keep the Southwest Region running smoothly.

Doug, as president of the local branch, has worked diligently to keep Austin area informed about begonias and how easy it is to grow them in terrariums. Saturday and Sunday he and several members of the club worked together to promote begonias and a few other plants during National Garden Week.



Jennifer Francois' entry - B. 'Speculata'

## BEGONIA BONSAI



There will be a short bonsai presentation by Don Miller of the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens. After the presentation we will start plants using *Begonia dregei* as the bonsai. The cost will be \$20.00 for the 1 plant, 1 pot and soil for the container. If you want to bring your own pot the cost will be 15.00 for 1 plant and soil for the 1 container.

Please and come join the fun.

Don Miller has dedicated almost 50 years of his life to promoting and educating people on Begonias. Don retired from a career at North Haven Garden in Dallas as Greenhouse and Production Manager, where he managed the Begonia collection and made begonias available to retail customers. He then joined the team at Steve's Leaves and began hybridizing

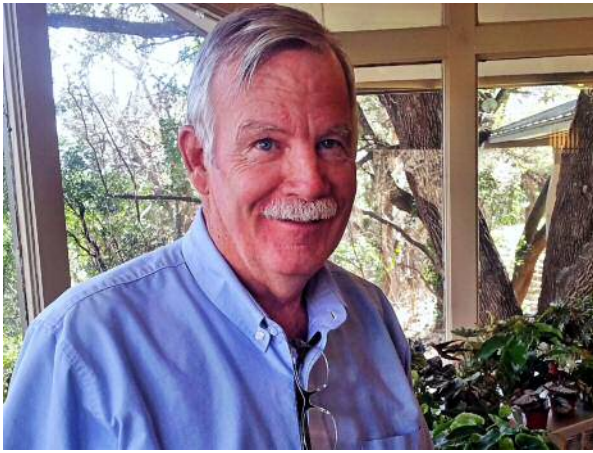


Dylan and Doug talkin' Begonias



Dylan, Doug and Jen





begonias. Today, he has 22 hybrids to his name such as B. 'Steve's Leaves Pearly,' B. 'Steve's Leaves Mirto,' and B. 'Dancing Vera.' Don is also a volunteer at the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens in the Begonia Species Bank and Collection and as such Don is regularly a top two or three contributor in terms of hours served. In terms of expertise and contribution to morale, he stands alone. He readily shares his knowledge with all the volunteers who always leave knowing much more than they did before working with him.



B. 'Steve's Leaves Mirto'



B. 'Steve's Leaves Pearly'



B. 'Dancing Vera'



## BEGONIA 'THUNDERSTRUCK'

Darren Heppel from Burleson, Texas dreamed of hybridizing yellow flowering rex-cultorum begonias. He was always successful and introduced B. 'Steve's Leaves Yellow Jacket,' B. 'Bumblebee' and B. 'Hornet.' and B. 'Steve's Leaves Mr. Miller,' named for hybridizer Don Miller.

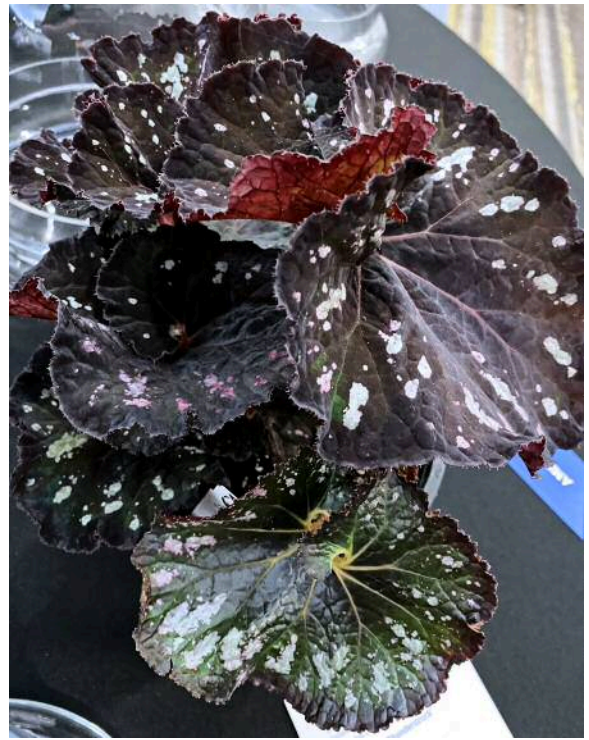


B. 'Steve's Leaves Yellow Jacket'



B. 'Steve's Leaves Mr. Miller'

Then he wanted a black-leaved hybrid with yellow flowers and B. 'Thunderstruck' eventually survived the culling process as a beautiful silver leaved begonia edged in metallic pink with a pink heart in the center of the bloom. Above the plant a cluster of yellow flowers were held high above the hybrid that was surviving 100 degrees even 111 degrees. When it was entered in the ABS National Show in Tyler the plant won Hybrid of Distinction.



B. 'Thunderstruck'

This is a winner for growing, showing, and loving in your landscape.

## TO ADJUST HUMIDITY

Usually when windows are open humidity is sufficient to keep begonias satisfied. Even placing begonias on a watertight tray in a group can increase humidity.

If pebbles are used on the bottom of the tray, the pebbles need to be washed in soapy water and rinsed thoroughly. Then add water to a point somewhat lower than the top of the pebbles. Place the begonias over the pebbles making sure that the pots are not in the water.

Misting the plants that are not in the sun will help with increasing humidity. If using florescent lights, the leaves will not burn when they are misted.

When plants are outdoors and the blowing wind can damage them, care should be taken to grow them in a structure. When the air is dry, the walks around the begonias should be misted. In other conditions when the air is too humid, plants can be spaced so that there is good air circulation. Sometimes a fungicide can be sprayed to prevent a disease.

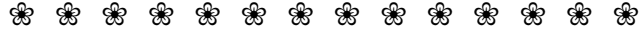


## BAN THE USE OF PEATMOSS, USE CELLULOSE

Cellulose is a linear insoluble polymer that is colorless, flavorless, no fragrance, but it is a most abundant naturally occurring material since it is a component of plant cell walls that provides stiffness and upright growth of branches, leaves, and roots. It comes from the timber industry.

Another method for getting cellulose is for us to collect all food waste—even grease, meat, and bones besides plant refuse and yard trimmings and deposit it into green waste trash receptacles for processing.

Where there is a will; there is a way!



## AABS MEETING - MAY 25

Jeff Pavlat, Zilker staff member, presented a program on succulents.



On June 27 Doug will celebrate his birthday.  
We will celebrate with him on June 22.