



AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY

A Branch of the American Begonia Society

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



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NEWSLETTER

JULY 2025

Nelda Moore, Ken Fuchs, Editors

NEXT MEETING

Sunday, July 27 1:30 P.M.

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

Program:

Freda Holly will be giving a program on "Hostas as Companion Plants for Begonias." She says that all attendees wanting one will receive a gift hosta.



Don Miller's B. 'Steve's Leaves Extra Grande'



B. 'Jim's Cotton Candy'

THANK YOU, NELDA MOORE!



A special thanks to Nelda Moore, who has decided to retire as the AABS Newsletter editor. It was Nelda who made this newsletter possible from its very beginning. The AABS Newsletter began Sunday, August 11, 2006, with a 1-page letter announcing the meeting. August, 2007 Volume 1, No. 1 marked the real beginning of the Austin Area Begonia Society Newsletter, edited and produced by Nelda.

Before the digital age, Nelda used her typewriter and wrote the texts of begonia-related articles and minutes of the meetings. She hand-drew illustrations and created page layouts, inserting her own photographs to add color to the newsletter. After having the newsletter professionally printed, she then hand-addressed and mailed out copies of the newsletter to AABS members. Beginning with the June 2013 issue, all of Nelda's newsletters are online on our website: (https://www.kenfuchs42.net/aabs_newsletters.html)

RAFFLE

Don Miller's B. 'Steve's Leaves Extra Grande' and B. 'Jim's Cotton Candy' will be in the raffle during the meeting. Please plan to purchase some raffle tickets!

BEGONIA AND HOSTA: NATURAL COMPANIONS

By Freda Holley

Reprinted from the June-July issue of "Begonia Leaflet."

When I lived in north Louisiana and then in Ozark, Missouri, my favorite companion plants became begonia and hosta. Begonia in winter had to go into my greenhouse in Louisiana and into a lighted garage and house in Missouri which meant a lot of lifting and moving so it was a relief to just leave the hosta outside in their pots in Louisiana and in the ground in Missouri. The big thing these tropical plants and far north plants share in their southern home is their love of shade! I have visited natural displays of each in their preferred environments and their beauty there cannot be denied. My effort was to bring them together during the spring, summer, and fall. The photo below illustrates the hosta under one large oak where they were surrounded mostly on side by begonia.



I must tell you if you too become a hosta lover, you must look carefully at the zone recommendations - anything that says 4-9, you should be able to grow as far south as Austin — take a look at the big box stores in your city to find those that can probably take the heat of your location.

Some that I loved in north Louisiana, I am now trying in Austin. But first let me tell you that hosta are considered by the color of their leaves — greens and variegations of shades of yellow and white. The next thing to look at is their size which comes in dwarf, medium, tall, giant, and colossal. Of course if you know me, just as with begonia I love both in the BIG sizes! In recent years a new colossal hybrid has appeared named H. 'Empress Wu' that stands 3 to

feet tall with a spread of 5' to 6'. I had one in Louisiana but she turned out to be a slow grower and was still not huge by the time I left there.



H. 'Empress Wu'

There is a recent new colossal Hosta 'Jurassic Park' by the same producer and I ordered one but it is still barely a bud. However, there are many that will grow in zone 9 in every size; in fact if you prefer small most dwarfs seem to be the most adaptable to zone 9.



H. 'Jurassic Park'

Another, word of warning for southern gardeners about these far north plants — don't plant them in the ground! They will die to the ground in late fall and their roots need to get very cold for as long as they can. So also, leave those pots out in shade areas away from house and garage walls. Reward? No winter care at all!

Although hosta are treasured for the diversity and color of their leaves, they do bloom with white or purple flowers on tall stems and just lately one in yellow on a new hybrid.

Below are a couple I'm now trying to grow here in Austin. H. 'Wide Brim' is a medium hosta, and H. 'Sunset Grooves,' is a tall hosta (15" with a spread of 48"). And to add a final note you can order a catalog from George H. Wilde and Son from their internet web site or view hosta, day lily, iris, and other perennials there.



H. 'Wide Brim';



H. 'Sunset Grooves'

BEGONIA CULTURE

(Reprinted from THE SHADE HOUSE, the Begonia Society of Tampa Bay newsletter, July 2025)

CANE LIKE CULTURE

Light: Bright to sunny; most need sun to bloom
Temperature: 45-85°F.
Humidity: Tolerate a wide range, 40-60% ideal

Soil: Well drained

Pot: Heavy, deep pot for tall canes (so they don't fall over), short types do well in hanging containers

Feeding: Balanced, constant feed

Propagating: Seed for species; tip, mallet and stem cuttings for hybrids

REX CULTURE

Light: Bright, indirect or filtered light; florescent is often ideal

Temperature: 70-75°F., day; 45-70°F., night; avoid sudden changes and drafts

Humidity: 50% or more

Soil: Must drain well

Pot: Shallow; clay or sphagnum-lined wire basket best

Feeding: Mild, constant, only during active growing season

Propagating: Leaf, rhizome tip

RHIZOMATOUS CULTURE

Light: Bright, indirect or filtered light

Temperature: 45-75°F., ideal

Humidity: 50-60% ideal, tolerate lower

Soil: Must be well drained

Pot: Shallow, clay or sphagnum-lined wire baskets work best

Feeding: Balanced, constant feed

Propagating: Seed for species; leaf (whole leaf, wedge, cone, disk), rhizome tip for hybrids

SEMPERFLORENS CULTURE

Light: Shade to full sun; increased light brings more bloom

Temperature: 45-85°F., ideal

Humidity: 40-60%, but tolerate a wide range

Soil: Well drained

Pot: Any

Feeding: Balanced, constant feed

Propagating: Seed, basal tip cuttings

HAPPY JULY BIRTHDAY WISHES TO

Arlene Lantz July 1

Nelda Moore July 12

Jennifer Cavazos July 24

AABS MEETING SUNDAY JUNE 22, 2025

Thank you, Jennifer Cavazos, for taking and sharing pictures of the meeting on Begonia Bonsai with guest program presenter Don Miller.

