AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY

A Branch of the American Begonia Society

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



VOLUME 20, NUMBER 10 **NEWSLETTER** **NOVEMBER 2026**

Freda Holley, Ken Fuchs, Editors

NEXT MEETING

Sunday, December 6 2 P.M.
Zilker Botanical Garden Center
2220 Barton Springs Road
Austin, TX 78746
Christmas Party

Correction:

Former active AABS member Elizabeth Crepeau, who moved to Ohio and formed the Central Ohio Branch, sent me (Ken Fuchs) the following message after receiving the AABS October newsletter:

"Looks like a photo of B. 'manicata' was inserted where it should have been a photo of B. maculata on the first page, fyi. I was a bit confused for a minute."

Thank you, Elizabeth. Here is the correct photo of B. maculata





WHITE ELEPHANT GIFT SWAP

Our next meeting will be a "Christmas Party" on Sunday Dec. 6th at 2pm. To celebrate we will have food and a gift swap. Joan will bring sliced turkey and rolls for sandwiches. Doug will bring tea and lemonade for drinks. If you can, please bring items like chips and desserts to share.

If you would like to participate in the White Elephant Gift Swap, bring a wrapped gift of no more than $20. We hope to see you there.



POPULAR BEGONIAS

By Freda Holley



Begonia ‘nelumbiifolia’

If you like begonias with large leaves, you cannot find a better one to grow than Begonia ‘nelumbiifolia’, sometimes called the lily pad begonia. It can sport leaves as much as a foot across. Its stems are attached at the umbo or center below the leaf. It will have tiny white blooms in late winter to spring. The male flowers have abundant pollen which can be used to pollinate the plants own female flowers to produce seed. I and others have used its pollen to create hybrids. I used it to create my hybrid Begonia 'Holleymoon'. Rudy Ziesenhenne of California used it to create his very popular Begonia 'Freddie'.



I found Begonia ‘nelumbiifolia’ very easy to grow, not demanding in any way. I hope you will give it a try.



Begonia 'Holleymoon' - Rhizomatous



Begonia 'Freddie' - Rhizomatous



DEAR FREDA

I was asked 'How often should you water your begonias?'

Begonias can be finicky about their watering. They like to have a drink when they need it, but not too often. Usually a good watering about once a week is enough, then let any excess drain (assuming they are in a pot). After several days, you can test to see how dry they are at several inches deep. Only when it is thoroughly dry should they be watered again.

Alternatively, you can set the pot in a plastic pan of water and let them soak until the top is wet, then drain them thoroughly

The above, of course, applies to adult plants. Seedlings and rooting cuttings will need to remain damp to their top; it will be best to keep them enclosed under a plastic top under sufficient light (but no direct sun which would quickly kill them!).

All of the above assumes you have them planted in an appropriate soil such as a good Canadian peat mix (Promix) with about 1/3 perlite added. Never use anything labeled organic since this would likely contain diseases. I have found a seed planting mix also works well; it also contains a small amount of fertilizer.

As a final note, when watering, always use rainwater if you can. If you do not have that, let your tapwater sit a day or two to let any bad chemicals or pesticides evaporate.

FROM OUR AABS FB PAGE



September 20, 2026, Granny Mack wrote, “Also growing out from FWBG, B. sp. Miri [r.] and B. 'Lamoon' are about ready to chop n prop.”

