

BEGONIA CHATTER



<p>Astro Branch American Begonia Society <i>4513 Randwick Drive</i> <i>Houston, Texas 77092-8343</i> <i>(713) 686-8539</i></p>	<p><i>Next Meeting:</i> DATE: October 6, 2019 TIME: 2:00 PM PLACE: West Gray Multi-Service Center PROGRAM: Processing & Growing Seed</p>
<p>OCTOBER 2019 ISSUE</p>	<p>www.begoniahouston.org</p>

PROCESSING AND GROWING BEGONIA SEED

The October 2019 meeting of the Astro Branch of the American Begonia society will be held at the West Gray Multi-Service Center located at 1475 West Gray Street. Our Refreshment Hostesses for this meeting will be **Donna & Tony Robert** and **Faye Stansberry**.

The doors will open at 12:30 for us to set up for our meeting. If you can help with set up it would be greatly appreciated. Between 1:00 and 2:00 members can enjoy refreshments and socialize with members and friends we only see at meetings. Vice President Midge Gorman will preside over this meeting for President Janet Carpenter who will be out of town. Please remember to wear your name tags.

Our Program this month will be **PROCESSING AND GROWING BEGONIAS FROM SEED**. This will be member participation program. Cheryl Lenert and Tom Keepin will moderate this program with the help from other members that grow begonias from seed.

We were scheduled to have this program last month, but due to facility scheduling we rescheduled it because of lack of space.

Now that our branch is responsible for the Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund it is important that all our members are proficient in processing, packaging and labeling that is donated by other members of the American Begonia Society. The Seed Fund has seed and we will plant a sampling of some of that seed to it is still viable. Testing will involve keeping a record of when the seeds were planted, how long it took for them to germinate, what percentage of the seed germinated. We will go over this in detail so that there is no question. This is a very important part of maintaining the Seed Fund. Growing begonias from seed is very exciting. Lots of growers have said that when they plant seed they check on them constantly and when that first plantlet appears they are as happy as a new parent.

We hope that you will be able to join us and experience growing begonias from seed. All you will need to bring is a small plastic container or two w/lids to transport and grow your planted seed and an ice pick that you can transport safely.

See you there

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 8, 2019 MEETING

The September 8, 2019 meeting of the Astro Branch of The American Begonia Society was held at West Gray Multi-Service Center located at 1475 West Gray Street. Vice-President Midge Gorman called the meeting to order at 2:30 P.M. Midge thanked all for attending and thanked our hostesses who were **Sandra Rigsby, Glenda Perry** and **Janice Shaw** for their wonderful array of treats for us to enjoy.

There were no guests present at this meeting.

Treasurer, Tom Keepin said that our balance is still healthy. Tom told us that he made a deposit of \$222.00 from dues, raffle, and plant sales from the August 4, 2019 meeting.

Sunshine Lady, Donna Williams passed around a card for Irene Bragg as she has been unwell lately.

There was no old business:

Under new business Tom asked whether we wanted to keep our standing meeting on the first Sunday and during those months when holidays occur on or one side or the other of our meeting dates, we either cancel or plan to meet at a member's home. If we do this, we have our October 6th and November 3rd meetings but will cancel the December meeting. The holiday party will be held on January 5th at our usual first Sunday meeting. Everyone agreed to this new plan and prior to the months in which a holiday occurs the first Sunday the group will decide whether to cancel or meet at another location.

Tom then told us that a new branch has started in Portland, Oregon and a Charter has been issued to them. This new Club will have members from both Oregon and Washington State. Our Astro Club gave a \$25.00 donation as start-up funds. This is something that our club has done in the past. Cheryl asked whether we want to continue this practice and after discussion made the proposal to continue the practice, but we will increase the amount to \$50.00. This will be called the Astro Branch Starter Fund. The proposal passed by acclamation.

Cheryl announced that we have received our

first order for seeds since our club is now managing the Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund. Janet offered to set up a spreadsheet once we are fully up and operational. Thus far the seed fund has been listed on the ABS Website, but has not been announced in the Begonian. Once we are ready Tom will write an article for the Begonian. Tom and Cheryl reminded everyone that we have a very excellent website for our club which was written by Bill Claybaugh. It has lots of very nice detailed information on a very large number of begonias. This site is now being managed by Malcolm McCorquodale. We were encouraged to visit the site. The website address for it is www.begoniahouston.org and, if you forget, the address is listed in the header of the monthly *Begonia Chatter*.

Lastly, Tom announced that John and Grant Cole will have their 20th Birthday on October 1st. Tom presented John with a BIG cupcake and a birthday card that all of us had signed. We then sang Happy Birthday to him. Unfortunately, Grant was not at this meeting though we wish him a very Happy Birthday as well. Both young men have been with our club for several years and always are very, very helpful to all our members (they are Brenda Andrews' grandsons).

PROGRAM:

This month's program was "**Getting Our Plants Ready for Winter**" It was changed to this topic because we were unable to meet in our usual room and had much less space and fewer tables and chairs..

Tom showed us how to clean, prune back and repot several different canes and on rhizomatous plant that he, Brenda, and Cheryl had brought for demonstration. Brenda then explained and demonstrated how she takes the cuttings from the process and prepares them for planting. She has a very smooth and organized way of doing this and has great results with these propagations. Cheryl showed us how to "pinch" a plant while it is growing – leading to a much fuller, prettier plant. It was a very interesting program. We were able to ask questions and have the answers demonstrated. A big THANK YOU to Tom, Brenda and Cheryl!

We then had our Raffle, Name Tag and Door Prize drawings with the following results:

Raffle:

B. U508 – won by Ann Stiefel
B. ‘Bashful Bandit’ – won by Janice Shaw

Name Tag:

B. U578 – won by John Cole
B. ‘Lois Burke’ – won by Donna Williams

Door Prize:

Mini rose – won by Janice Shaw
Mini rose – won by Sandra Rigsby

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 P.M. by Vice President Midge Gorman

Respectfully submitted by

Donna Williams

Donna Williams (for Gloria Hunter, Secretary)

**PRUNING, PLANTING AND
TRANSPLANTING**

October

1 st & 2 nd	Scorpio
5 th & 6 th	Capricorn
10 th , 11 th & 12 th	Pisces
16 th & 17 th	Taurus
20 th & 21 st	Cancer
27 th & 28 th	Scorpio

November

1 st , 2 nd & 3 rd	Capricorn
6 th , 7 th & 8 th	Pisces
11 th , 12 th & 13 th	Taurus
16 th & 17 th	Cancer
25 th & 26 th	Scorpio
29 th & 30 th	Capricorn

- Planting and Transplanting are best done in Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces with Cancer being the best.
- Best Pruning for quick growth is first Taurus and then Capricorn.

(The pruning, planting and transplanting dates above are taken from the Harris Farmer’s Almanac for 2019)

**WEATHER FORECAST FOR
OCTOBER 2019**

According to the United States Weather Service, Houston and the surrounding areas fall in Region 7 of the National Weather Map. Here is what they predict our weather will be like for the month of October.

Our temperatures will be near normal and our precipitation will be near normal. Our average temperatures should range from 62 degrees in the North to 68 degrees in the South. Our coolest temperatures for the month of October will be October 7th thru 9th, 13th thru 16th, 23rd thru 25th and 30th. Our warmest temperatures for October will be October 2nd thru 5th, 12th, 18th thru 21st and 28th & 29th. There will be showers and thunderstorms, especially in the North about October 6th thru 8th, 12th thru 14th 22nd thru 24th and 29th thru 31st. There can be isolated thunderstorms at other times, especially along the Gulf.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY
TO YOU!**

Happy Birthday wishes to all our members born in this month of October. We hope our special day is truly a special one.

Diana Bukey	October 31 st
Martha Burg	October 29 th
John A. Cole	October 1 st
Grant M. Cole	October 1 st
Kathleen Murphy	October 3 rd
Sandra Rigsby	October 30 th
Johnny Williams	October 10 th

“Take a few moments to remember all the good things you’ve seen and done, ways you’ve grown and things you’ve learned. Celebrate your memories and your dreams...everything that has made you the wonderful person you are.”

Happy Birthday!



photo by Paul Tsamtsis

Begonia leathermaniae O'REILLY & KAREG by Morris Mueller

We all know about identity theft and mistaken identity. The latter is often the case in botanical taxonomy when a plant is mis-identified. That was the case with *B. leathermaniae* for almost one hundred years. It was discovered before 1898 in Bolivia close to the Brazilian border in mountainous terrain. When it was described in 1898 by Otto Kuntze, he named it *Begonia platanifolia* var *acuminatissima* and so remained until 1983. At that time Thelma O'Reilly and Carrie Karegeannes, two ABS members and devoted amateur taxonomists, identified it as a new species and named it in honor of another ABS member, Sylvia Leatherman. Sylvia Leatherman brought this plant into modern cultivation in 1957 and recently passed away in the Marysville, California area. So if you seek information in literature about this plant in publications dated before 1983 search under the prior name.

The Thompsons in their book,
BEGONIAS: The Complete Reference

Guide classify this plant as cane-like, superba-type. It is in the Section *Knesebeckia*. It has typical woody cane-like stems, rarely branched and rising from a caudex-like base.

It flowers sparsely in winter and early spring and the white flowers are mostly male. Leaves develop white, beaded, crystal-like glands on the undersides of leaves, and have a whorl of red hairs around the petiole where it attached to the leaf (umbo). The natural tendency of the plant is to lose lower leaves along the stem leaving only a 'tuft' of leaves at the tip.

B. leathermaniae can grow 9 or 10 feet tall with new stems occasionally growing from the caudex.

It has no special cultural requirements, but should not be over-potted or over-watered. I suspect it is somewhat cold tolerant with tips dying off if temperatures go below 32° F and new growth sprouting from the caudex in spring. There are two listed hybrids using *B. leathermaniae* as the male parent: *B. 'Phantom'* grex and *B. 'Spook.'*



ASTRO'S SEPTEMBER 2019 MEETING



Refreshment table.



Janet Carpenter & Tom Keepin chatting.



Raffle & Name Tag drawing plants.



Tom Keepin getting program started.



Members at meeting



Janet Shaw winner of
B. 'Bashful Bandit' raffle plant.



Janet Carpenter passing out young
plants of B. 'Raspberry Torte'



Brenda Andrews explaining how
she prepares cane cuttings.



Cheryl Lenert watching the presentation.



Tom Keepin explaining how to
prune and repot a begonia.



Begonia 'Acutangula' from
Begonia Portraits by Alice M. Clark



Donna Williams won B. 'Lois Burke' in the Name Tag Plant.



Ann Steifel won B U508 in the Raffle Plant drawing.



Sandra Rigsby was the winner of a potted rose in the Door Prize drawing.



Janice Shaw also won a potted rose in the Door Prize drawing.



Midge Gorman preparing to conduct the Business Meeting.



Potting soil sample from Costco.



B. rigida



B manicata aurea-maculata



B. Rubro venia silver



B. limminghei



B. 'Grey Feather'



B. scharffiana

Illustrations from
Begonia Portraits
by Alice M. Clark