

BEGONIA CHATTER



Astro Branch American Begonia Society <i>4513 Randwick Drive</i> <i>Houston, Texas 77092-8343</i> <i>(713) 686-8539</i>	Next Meeting: DATE: August 3, 2014 TIME: 2:00 PM PLACE: West Gray Multi-Purpose Cntr. PROGRAM: Annual Plant Swap
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ANNUAL PLANT SWAP

The August 3, 2014 meeting of the Astro Branch of the American Begonia Society will be held at the West Gray Multi-Purpose Center, 1475 West Gray Street. The doors will open at 1:00 P.M. President Susan Daugherty will preside over this meeting. There will be a short business meeting to keep us all up to date on what is going on with the Astros, Southwest Region and National

Our Refreshment Hosts and Hostesses for this meeting are **Tony & Donna Robert** and **Johnny & Donna Williams**.

Our Program for this month will be our very popular Annual Plant Swap. Members may bring plants and cuttings to trade with other members. All plants are welcome. (They don't have to be begonias). Remember: any plants and/or cuttings left at the end of the meeting must be taken home by the member who brought them. The way this works is as follows: Members who bring in plants and/or cuttings to Swap are given a raffle ticket. Each member that brought plants and/or cuttings will be asked to briefly tell us what they brought. Upon completion of the plant

introductions we will draw tickets so members can choose a plant or cuttings, depending on how they were to be given away. After all the tickets have been drawn members are free to trade or swap what's left.

We will have our Name Tag Plants and our Raffle Plants (if available). Our refreshment Hosts and Hostesses will have lots of tasty treats on hand to tempt our taste buds and lots of cool drinks to wash them down.

We are looking forward to seeing you at this meeting. The August meeting is always a lot of fun.

See you there!



MINUTES OF THE JULY 6, 2014 MEETING OF THE ASTRO BRANCH

The July 6, 2014 meeting of the Astro Branch of the American Begonia Society was called to order at 2:10 P.M. by President Susan Daugherty. Our meeting was held at the West Gray Multi-Purpose Center in Activity Room 1 located at 1475 West Gray Street.

Susan thanked our Refreshment Hostesses **Elaine Riquelmy, Cheryl Lenert** and **Kathleen Murphy** for the wonderful array of treats they provided for this meeting. Next meeting our Refreshment hosts/hostesses will be **Donna & Tony Robert** and **Donna & Johnny Williams**.

Two new members Gail Warren and Geanie Riggs were welcomed.

Minutes from the June meeting were approved as printed in The Begonia Chatter. Tom Keepin gave the Treasurers Report. Our checking account is still very healthy.

Under Old Business: Cheryl Lenert said the Southwest Region Get-Together next year could be in April or May. The dates have not yet been confirmed, but our club will be hosting it here in Houston.

Under New Business: Tom Keepin, who is also Branch Relations Director for the ABS, said there is a new branch forming in Florida and will be Chartered at the Annual Board Meeting in August. ABS gives \$35 start-up for new branches. Tom would like our club to donate additional start-up monies. Cheryl Lenert suggested we give \$100 to any new branch that forms and that we should call it the Tom Keepin Award for new Branches. This was approved unanimously. Tom then asked about the Holiday Greeting in the Begonian. In the past we have donated the Platinum amount of \$151.00. It was voted unanimously that we do so again this year.

Susan then asked Ruby Lewellyn about the cards being circulated. One was for Paul Downey who turned 75 just prior to the meeting. The other was for Malcolm McCorquodale whose mother had just suffered a stroke.

The following companion and begonia plants were exhibited. They were: "Chicken Gizzard"

(companion) by Ruby Lewellyn, B. peridot (begonia) by Sandra Riggsby, caladiums (companion) by Jane Anderson, Mikania ternate "Plush Vine" (companion) by Jane Anderson, B. dregei (bonsai begonia) by Johnny Williams, B. 'Gideon' (begonia) by Gail MacGregor, B. 'Dangling Pearls' (begonia) by Brenda Andrews and B. bipinnatifida (begonia) by Tom Keepin. Tom announced that the last of the JJ&L plants were on the sale table for \$3.00 each and there was also bags of SLO-COTE slow release fertilizer also for sale for \$3.00 each.

After a pause for refreshments and purchases at the plant sale table, we began our program which was an open discussion on taking care of our begonias in the summer heat. Tom and Jane showed us a variety of plants that included, B. 'Ginny', B. 'Orangeade', B. 'Cotton Candy', B. 'Immense', B. 'Matchmaker', B. 'Flamingo Queen' and B. 'Cathedral'. Tom and Cheryl went over Brad Thompson's Tips that Tom had sent as an addendum to our monthly Begonia Chatter and discussed the few areas that might be different here in South Texas. Tom also demonstrated how to "pinch" and "root prune". Cheryl asked us to begin a list of our most dependable begonias.

We then had our drawings for Name Tag, Door Prize and Raffle Plants and the winners were as follows:

Door Prize:

- B. 'Brazilian Lady' won by Gail Warren
- B. 'Dragon Wings Red' won by Cheryl Lenert

Raffle:

- B. 'My Special Angel' won by Tony Robert
- B. 'Hot Tamale' won by Irene Bragg
- B. convolvacea won by Johnny Williams

Name Tag:

- B. 'Dancing Girl' won by Molly Reed
- B. 'Dotsy' won by Fukumi Smith

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted
Donna Williams
(for Debra Norris, Secretary)

PRUNING, PLANTING AND TRANSPLANTING

August

4 th & 5 th	Scorpio
8 th & 9 th	Capricorn
13 th & 14 th	Pisces
16 th & 17 th	Taurus
21 st & 22 nd	Cancer
31 st	Scorpio

September

1 st	Scorpio
4 th & 5 th	Capricorn
8 th & 9 th	Pisces
13 th & 14 th	Taurus
17 th , 18 th & 19 th	Cancer
27 th & 28 th	Scorpio

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

WEATHER FORECAST FOR AUGUST 2014

According to the United States Weather Service, Houston and surrounding area fall in Region 7 of the National Weather Map. Here is what they predict our weather will be like for the month of August 2014.

Our temperatures will be near normal and our precipitation will also be near normal. Our temperatures should average from 78 degrees in the north to 83 degrees in the South. Our coolest temperatures will be August 4th thru 7th, 19th thru 21st, 25th and 28th thru 30th. Our warmest temperatures will be August 1st & 2nd, 10th, 15th thru 18th and 24th. The highest hurricane threat will be the first week and at mid-month. Showers and Thunderstorms will be most numerous in the west, north and along the Gulf at about 4 day intervals

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

Birthday wishes go out to all our members born in this month of August.

Brenda Andrews	August 3 rd
Bill Claybaugh	August 10 th
Marion Claybaugh	August 3 rd
Anna Belle Hicks	August 20 th
Gail MacGregor	August 22 nd
Janice McPhee	August 26 th
Geanie Riggs	August 8 th
Tony Robert	August 13 th

“Today is a day to enjoy being with friends. To look back on where you’ve been, and to look forward to the special time the future holds for you”

Happy Birthday!

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

Please welcome our new member to the Astro Branch. Please be sure to add her to your Membership Roster.

Lonah Buncak
P.O. box 10828
S. Lake Tahoe, CA 96158
Telephone: 775-720-0358

Welcome Lonah to the Astro Branch. We are pleased to have you as a member of the Astro’s



HI! FROM WALTER DWORKIN – SEARCHING!

I recently received an email from Walter Dworkin a hybridizer from New England (I don't remember exactly where, but will find out). Walter hasn't hybridized any new plants for quite a few years due to his hectic work schedule. Walter is now retired and is back in the ABS and is looking to start hybridizing once again. Walter is looking to find his own hybrids as well as others. Here is the list he sent:

Virginia Kettler Hybrids

- B. 'Fancy Face'
- B. 'Astro's Pride'
- B. 'Sassy's Mate'

Irene Nuss Hybrids

- B. 'Madame Butterfly'
- B. 'Chet Navre'
- B. 'Catherine N. Dunfield'
- B. 'Hanna Serr'
- B. 'Katherine Alberti'
- B. 'Pat McElderry'

Other Hybrids Walter is interested in finding

- B. 'Window Pane' (caviness)
- B. 'Sugar Moon' (Dworkin)
- B. 'Barbara Ann'
- B. 'Laura Englebert'
- B. 'Dumbo'
- B. 'Heart's Delight'
- B. 'Spook'
- B. 'Posey Whal'
- B. 'Superba Kenzie'

If you have any of these in your collection please let me know. Perhaps they can be brought (as cuttings) to the August meeting.

Walter would also like to know if we are interested in trading cuttings with him? We can discuss it at the meeting. I hope we can help him out with some of these.

A LOOK AT

B. echinosepala

by Greg Sytch

The group of begonias known as shrub-like

contains a wide range of growth habits, patterns, colors, and sizes. It also has some of the most unique begonias we grow. B. echinosepala is one of them.

Classified as "shrub-like, bare leaved", B. echinosepala is characterized by long, slim, crinkled leaves that are highly glossy, deep green to almost olive if fed properly, with a weeping habit of growth.

The weeping habit makes this species from Brazil an ideal candidate to grow in hanging baskets as the stems cascade over the rim and allow the pearly white blossoms to come into full view. The blossoms are also fragrant, with a hint of rose in their aroma. Blooming begins in spring, and by early summer this species is covered in pungent flowers. But then comes the unique part.

After blooming, B. echinosepala goes into a semi-dormant state; it begins to look scraggly, drop some older leaves, and growth remains stagnant for about two months. By summer's end, the beautiful specimen that was groomed in spring will resemble a plant in neglect no matter what care it receives. This is natural, and the best care is to keep it on the dry side and wait until it breaks this dormancy.

When dormancy starts to break, it is time to prune. Since I have never been a heavy pruner, I will usually cut one-third of all the top and side growth off, using these cuttings to start new plants. Then I look inside the plant for debris and additional damaged or aged leaves, and remove them too.

After pruning is finished, I begin the normal twice-weekly regimen of fertilizer, water the plant well, and place it in a place where it will receive bright light-even a few hours a weak sun. Allowing it to dry out slightly will also benefit the plant. Then I will watch the plant carefully, with a minor prune towards winter to prepare the plant for the next season of beautiful blooming.

So the next time you see this unusual species begin to decline, and it is summer don't worry – it is normal. Just wait until growth begins again, treat it well, and soon B. echinosepals will be beautiful again.

(Taken from the March/April 196 issue of the Begonian Volume 63 page 61)

Pictures from the Astro Branch's July 2014 Meeting



B. fisherii



B. dregei var *partita* grown by
Johnny Williams



John Cole with his grandmother Brenda Andrews
holding a 4" pot of *B. 'Selph's Mahogany'*



Our photographer Tom Anderson and
his wife Jane.



B. 'Immense'



Tom Keepin's
B. 'Matchmaker'



Brenda Andrew's
B. 'Maurice Amy'



B. Immense'



Jane Anderson's
B. acerosa



Tom Keepin's
B. 'Flamingo Queen'



B. 'Ginny'



B. 'Immense'



B. Fisherii grown
by Johnny Williams



B. 'Immense'



Dandra Rigsby's
B. peridot



Very last batch from JJJ Nursery
for sale



Tom Keepin demontating tippinhing
to Fukumi Smith



Tony Robert with
B. "My Special Angel".



Johnny Williams with
B. convolvulacea



Irene Bragg with
B. 'Hot Tamale'



Gail Warren with
B. 'Brazilian Lady'



Cheryl Lenert with
B. 'Dragon Wing'



Molly Reed with
B. 'Dancing Girl'