



THE

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BEGONIAN

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American Begonia Society

Founded January 1932

by **Herbert P. Dyckman**

Aims and Purposes

To stimulate and promote interest in begonias and other shade-loving plants.

To encourage the introduction and development of new types of these plants.

To standardize the nomenclature of begonias.

To gather and publish information in regard to kinds, propagation, and culture of begonias and companion plants.

To issue a bulletin that will be mailed to all members of the society.

To bring into friendly contact all who love and grow begonias.

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Herbarium specimen of *Begonia tamdaoensis*. See front cover of this issue for another look at this beautiful plant.

Photo: Stephen Maciejewski

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Begonia thelmae seeds pg 7



Begonia grandis subsp. *holostylla*

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Cover photo: *Begonia tamdaoensis*. It is only known from Tam Dao, Vinh Phuc Province. It is common in this area, growing on rock surfaces on roadside slopes, in forest, at elevations of 1050 meters. The cover plant and herbarium specimen were photographed on October 25, 2019. Pg. 17

Photo: Stephen Maciejewski

Back cover: *Begonia grandis* subsp. *holostylla* (above and on back cover) which was described in 1939. It is different from *Begonia grandis* subsp. *grandis* in that it's a shorter plant with bright red flowers and less developed stigmas. It grows on slopes under shrubs along roadsides and blooms from September to October.

The photos were taken on September 11, 2019 in Gucheng (meaning old city) district of Lijiang city, Yunnan province during a survey on Chinese Wild *Begonias*. This plant was found at an altitude of 2500 mm.

Photos: by Daiké Tian

President's Message

Dear ABS Members,

For all the members in cold weather states, I trust you have your collection indoors and settled in for winter. I am accustomed to the annual migration in spring and fall over the last 40 years but it seems to get harder every year. The plants continue to grow and I buy more as though I have lots of room for them and growing older doesn't help one bit. *Begonia* addiction is hard to beat! I am envious of those members with greenhouses or who can grow outdoors year round (this is my plant filled basement, below).

The elections are over, Thanksgiving leftovers are almost gone, and COVID-19 is

raging more than ever but the good news is there are promising vaccines on the horizon. I plan on getting the vaccine as soon as the experts have it ready for my age group. In the meantime we mask up when we have to grocery shop and stay at home the rest of the time. Thank goodness I have houseplants to keep me busy even during these trying times.

Stay safe and healthy and hope that our medical experts can get us out of this pandemic soon. Hopefully we will meet for conventions and meetings in the coming year.

Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas,
Butch



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A Long Overdue *Begonia* Registration

Wen-Ke Dong, a.k.a Victor Dawn,
Cultivar Registrar

Official International Registration #1041

Begonia ‘Eaglesham’

Seed parent: *B. masoniana*

Pollen parent: *B. decora*

Hybridized by Robert Eaglesham,
the Jardin Botanique de Montréal,
4101 Rue Sherbrooke E, Montréal, QC
H1X 2B2, Canada.

Registration applied for September 30,
2020 and approved November 20, 2020.

This old cultivar was developed by
artificial hybridization in 1967 in Mon-

tréal, yet it is still popular in North America today. Unfortunately, in the past the cultivar name was often misspelled as ‘Eagleshamm’ or mis-named as ‘Eagleshamii’. Luckily, Dr. Rick Schoellhorn, ABS Director of Nomenclature, researched the plant’s origins and discovered it came from Montréal. It’s said that this cultivar was first sold in 1971 in California.

This around 20 cm high rhizomatous plant has retained much of its paternal parent’s characteristics. Hence it shares *Begonia decora*’s dark maroon foliage and a similar leaf texture, but with narrow apple-green veins. However, unlike that parent species, it’s not a true terrarium begonia, although it was advertised as a terrarium plant in the February 1973 issue of *The Begonian*. It’s probably tolerant of less humid conditions than *B. decora* due to the influence of its other parent – *B. masoniana*. In fact, the cultivar is vigorous and easy to grow. Interestingly, the accession of *B. masoniana* (accession 2341-1954) used to produce the hybrid was the one obtained by Maurice Mason (the species was named after him) and which was used as the type specimen for the species description by Dr. Edgar Irmscher. The cultivar was named after its originator – Robert Eaglesham, a gardener for the *Begonia* collection at the Jardin Botanique de Montréal.

The broadly ovate leaf blades are 13 × 9 cm, with maroon bullae which are tipped with red hairs on the upper surface. The lower surface is a striking burgundy, with white hairs on apple-green veins. Reddish-tinted petioles are ca. 10 cm long with white hairs. Stipules are persistent and measure 1.2 × 0.9 cm. The inflorescences are ca. 15 cm long with pinkish-red flowers, male flowers have 4 tepals and measure 1.5 cm in diameter; the female flowers are unknown.



Begonia ‘Eaglesham’ at the Jardin Botanique de Montréal.
Photo: Rick Schoellhorn

Taxonomy of Begonias

Yu-Min Shui, Wen-Hong Chen,
Hua Peng, Su-Hua Huang
& Zhen-Wen Liu

A high quality, soft bound English
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Lead author, Dr. Shui, is a botanist,
taxonomist, explorer and speaker.



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An advertisement for Mountain Orchids. It features a collage of various plants, including Begonias with large, patterned leaves and small flowers, and several different types of orchids with bright red, orange, and pink blooms. The text 'Mountain Orchids' is written in a large, stylized font at the top. Below it, the website 'www.mountainorchids.com' and contact information are provided. At the bottom, a banner reads 'Select Begonias, small-growing Orchids, & other choice plants'.

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Species Conservation of *Begonia thelmae*

Helenka Harmon

Why do we grow begonias? For some, it is a hobby that has been passed down through generations. For others, a passion that found them when they least expected it. For myself personally, it was a little bit of both.

As a lover of all things new and interesting, I immediately fell in love with this family of thousands to choose from. Each new begonia I found held new things to fawn over – from spots and fuzz and wild patterns to velvet and shimmer and iridescence – I felt like Alice in Wonderland, if Alice had been a botanist and her wonderland had been the wonderful world of begonias!

Determined to fill my little greenhouse with every color and texture I was able to find, but stuck in a never-ending global pandemic, I did the only thing I could. I began trying to hybridize my own new begonias from my modest collection.

They say that practice makes perfect, but in my case, practice just made me more and more frustrated. Every cross I attempted failed. Stable hybrids, complex hybrids, self-pollination of cultivars or species; no matter what I tried, nothing seemed to take. Until *Begonia thelmae*.

Thought to have been brought stateside by Frank Kerin in seed form and given to Michael Kartuz sometime in the mid 1970s, *B. thelmae* is a beautiful, compact trailing species originally from Brazil that has not been identified in the wild since around the time it was first documented (Kitson 2003). My *B. thelmae* came to me from Taylor Greenhouses as a quarantine gift from myself



Figure 1. *B. thelmae* male and female flower with female flower un-pollinated ovary in profile

Figure 2. *B. thelmae* male and female flower frontal showing male stamen and female pistils

Figure 3. Brush pollination of female *B. thelmae* flower



to myself on September 16, 2020. With its gorgeous blue-green leaves, covered in fine hairs, and already a few delicate white buds present, I was immediately smitten. Four short days later, its first male flowers opened and then four days after that, a female (Figures 1 and 2).

I'd researched many methods of pollination, all of which seemed to work for others to varying degrees of success. On the day of reckoning, I removed the male flowers and placed them into a sterilized, sealable container. After a few



Figure 4. Successful pollination of *B. thelmae* evident by swollen, greenish ovary and dried petals and pistils

Figure 5. Successful seed term of *B. thelmae* evident in papery ovary with fully formed seeds visible within

Figure 6. Seeds ready for extraction evident by dried up pedicel

Figure 7. Extraction of *B. thelmae* seeds from ovary chambers

Figure 8. Extraction of *B. thelmae* seeds from ovary chambers

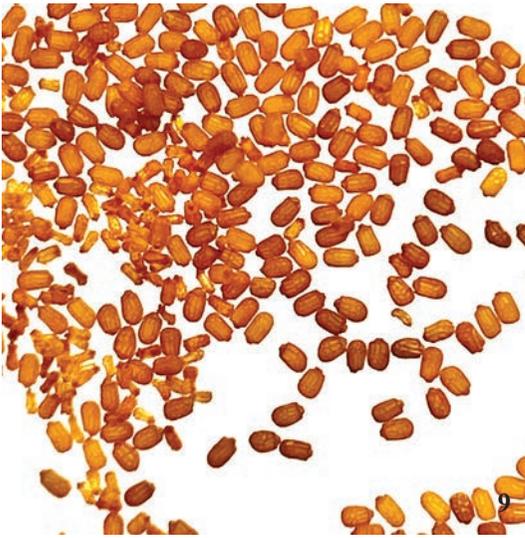


good shakes, I could see the loosened pollen clinging to my container. Loading my paint brush, I carefully painted the female flower until I could see the pollen had transferred (Figure 3). Still unsatisfied, I reloaded my brush and flicked it until little clouds of pollen burst forward and enveloped the female flower. Finally assured that my botanical Jackson Pollock method had worked its magic, I labeled the stem and called it a day.

If I told you I didn't check for progress daily, I'd be lying. But soon enough, I saw the telltale signs that life was taking place. Her petals and stigmata dried out and her once white ovary swelled and took on a green tint (Figure 4). Five short weeks later, I could see through her once opaque, now paper-like ovaries to the seeds within (Figure 5).

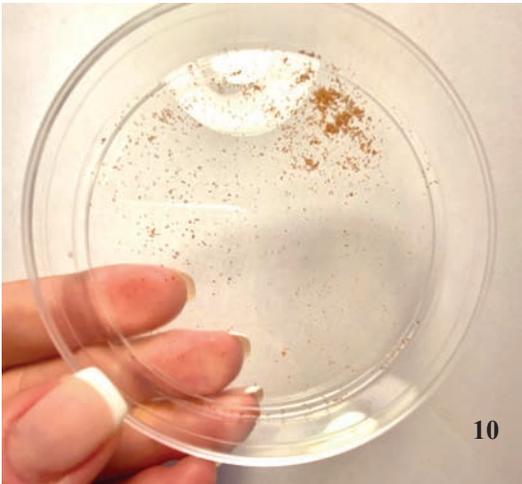
I waited until even her pedicel itself had dried up before I extracted the seed (Figure 6). Gently removing the spent flower, I opened the ovary capsule to find hundreds of tiny, perfect plants-in-waiting, each no larger than a pin prick (Figures 7 and 8). Quickly, and carefully, deploying the roll test to determine viability, I was overjoyed with the success of this venture (Figure 9). But my pride wasn't in my own efforts, or even in *B. thelmae*. My pride was in the fact that in such a small way, I had contributed to the conservation of a plant family that brings so many people such joy (Figures 10 and 11).

Regardless of our reasons for getting thrown into this hobby, one thing remains true for us all, these plants that we take time to nurture and grow become important to us. And while we are happy to have them in our homes, we probably



also wish we could see in them in the wild someday. But the truth is that without proper conservation, these dreams may always stay as just that – dreams.

Every year, millions of plants are poached from their native lands in the name of collectors abroad (Botanical 2020). Without consistent efforts in self-pollination and seed procurement, we may never see a world where wild begonias are respected. As much as we love to see them thrive in our care, no amount of greenhouses, botanical gardens, or private collections can change the fact that where they truly should be prolific is out there. We need to be our own scientists. We need to be our own conservationists. We need to be our own begoniacs! So, the next time you have some flowers, take a chance and try your hand (or brush) at pollination! After all, if the birds and the bees can do it, so can we.



References

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- Kitson, J. (2003, March). My Favorite Trailing Scandent Begonia. *The Begonian*, 70. Retrieved November 12, 2020, from <http://www.begonias.org/Articles/Vol70/FavoriteTrailingScandentBegonia.html>



Figure 9. *B. thelmae* viable seeds under 15x Macro lens with additional 5x magnification

Figure 10. *B. thelmae* seeds stored in sterilized Petri dish

Figure 11. *B. thelmae* seeds stored in sterilized Petri dish with label and adult plant

ABS Bookstore

Florida Begonia Hybridizers by Rick Schoellhorn. 2019 \$16.00

3rd Edition Brad's Begonia World by Brad Thompson/Wendy Corby 2019
Domestic \$37 / International \$57

Brad Thompson's Hybrids and Notes: Supplement to Brad's Begonia World, 2nd Edition, Wendy Corby 2019. \$15.00

Those Majestic Begonias, Growing and Hybridizing the Upright Rhizomatous Begonias, by Freda Holley, 2017
Domestic \$15.00 / International \$25.00

Tuberous Begonias: A Monograph of Begonia Section Australes by Mark Tebbitt, July 2020.
Domestic \$35.00 / International \$55.00.

The Invisible Begonia: An Introduction to Begonia Genetics with My Experiences in their Use in Hobby Hybridizing. By Freda Holley, August, 2016.
Domestic \$25.00 / International \$35.00

Begonias of The Month. Written by ABS members. Edited by Wendy Corby, 2015,
Domestic \$15.00 / International \$20.00

ABS Pin designed by Cheryl Lenert \$5.00

Understanding Begonia by Samuel Kennedy, Photographs & Artwork by Elizabeth Kennedy. Published in the UK, 2015, ISBN #978-0-9932897, Samuel and Elizabeth Kennedy were given the Eva Kenworthy Gray Award for this book in 2016.
Domestic \$20.00 / International \$30.00

Begonia Note Cards featuring *Begonias* of Borneo found in the Ruth Kiew book. \$15.00

Tuberous Begonias and How to Grow Them by the late Howard Siebold, 1998, published with the support of the ABS Millie Thompson Publication Fund. Library of Congress Catalog Card No. 98-74824 ISBN: 0-9628251-2-3
\$15.00

Begonia Hybridizing: A Primer by Freda M. Holley, 2007. An invaluable source book for the beginning or advanced begonia hybridizer.

Domestic \$15.00 / International \$25.00

Unidentified Species Listing, Update, August 2012 By Mary Bucholtz and Charles Jaros Second Edition includes U Numbers 001 through 621.

Domestic \$33.00 / International \$42.00

B. U 604–621 to add to the August, 2010 Unidentified Species Listing \$7.00

Begoniaceae, Edition 2, Part I: Annotated Species List, Part II: Illustrated Key, Abridgement & Supplement Jack Golding & Dieter C. Wasshausen, 2002, Smithsonian Institution, Volume 43: 1-289
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Seeing Begonia by Jack Golding 2003, Revised 2005, Jack Golding's last work.

"...dedicated to the many who look at their *Begonia* but do not see the details."
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Begonia Notes by Rudolf Zieshenne, Reissued by the Thelma O'Reilly Reprint Fund Originally printed in the Santa Barbara Branch, La Begonia Barbareña
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Begonias – 1984 Update by Mildred L. Thompson, reissued 2009
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Questions?

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50 Years of Growing and Hybridizing Begonias

Bernard Yorke, Australia

I started growing begonias when I was a young lawyer of 30 and traveled extensively. When I was away weeks on end, and my wife and children went to her parents in far north Queensland, there was no one to tend my small bush house. Over a period of time, I noticed while the ferns and other plants died, the few begonias I had always survived, and that started my real interest in begonias.

Begonia 'Balonne' (Fig 1) is a giant grower, only gets 2-3 leaves and overshadows all neighboring plants. *B.* 'Pride of Bowen' (Fig 2) is a hybrid of *B. sizemoreae* and *B. rockii* and as a consequence, has smooth stems and is virtually hairless. *B.* 'Yorke's Symphony' (Fig 3). While I have never grown or hybridized with rexes, when you see my hybrid *B.* 'Havillah' (Fig 4), you will wonder what I have created. *B.* 'Nite Satin' (Fig 5) has proved to be very popular in Australia since it is a descendant of *B.* 'Sir Percy' from way back.



Begonia emeiensis

Begonia emeiensis can grow to be quite large. It does have quite attractive pink flowers. This one is in a 14-inch pot. It seems to be quite easy to grow; if I forget to water it for too long it droops, then I water it and it keeps going.

Information and photos: Robert Stewart

Pots for Begonias

Butch McDole

Any pot can be a suitable candidate for growing begonias from plastic, metal, terra-cotta, glazed, resin, etc. and can vary from ridiculously small to exceptionally large. I prefer plastic these days for being light-weight, low cost, and easy to clean. Squat pots and bowls for rhizomatous and deeper pots for canes and shrubs work best for me.

I bought Panera pots (Fig 1) this year for growing plants for the convention show – except that the convention was cancelled due to COVID-19.

Panera plastic pots are inexpensive, available in various sizes and are terra-cotta colored - exactly what I was looking for to contain my plants.

Many of my plants have been moved to these pots. The plants have responded well including my *B.* ‘Fedor’ and *B.* ‘Immense’ (Fig 2) (which I added marbles to in hopes of deterring digging rodents).

I used a mix of Panera pots and green nursery “squat” pots for plants on my baker’s rack (Fig 3, left to right, top shelf: *B. foliosa*, *B.* ‘Her Majesty’, *B.* ‘Fireflush’, *B.* ‘Bunchii’; middle shelf: *B.* ‘Randy Montes Kerr II’; bottom shelf: *B. Rex Cultorum* group from Walmart, *B.* ‘Selph’s Mahogany’ in a saucer grown as bonsai, and another member of the *B. Rex Cultorum* group).

To grow large plants, I recommend large containers. I put a *B. parviflora* in a tall, big Panera pot (Fig 4) and the plant is meeting the challenge! A *B.* ‘Caribbean Queen’ (Fig 5) in an 18” resin pot has responded quite well to having addi-



tional root room. Before moving the *B.* 'Caribbean Queen' to more sun, it was on the edge of the porch with other begonias.

As a little experiment, to compare sizes of pots with the same begonia grown in them, I used *Begonia* 'Black Coffee' (Fig 6 and 7). Using different sized terra-cotta pots and a small plastic cup, I noticed a definite difference in the size of both the plants and their leaves. The plants, in most cases, took full advantage of the pot size to maximize their growth. Of course, fertilizer and water may have been variables. Terracotta pots dry out faster than plastic and perhaps offer more air to the roots. The smallest *B.* 'Black Coffee', growing in a Solo rinse cup, is rootbound and needs to be constantly checked for water.

A few years ago I started using aluminum lasagna pans as drip pans in the basement. Then I





began using them for propagation as they are cheap, lightweight, and expendable (there's no problem poking holes in the bottom). The plants seem to enjoy the community and root run of the pans. I often double up or triple up if the load is heavy. They won't win any beauty contests, but I do use quite a few of them outdoors for propagation. They are another of the many possibilities for growing my begonias in. And it's not just begonias. I have a *B. 'Torch'* (Fig 9) that shares a pan with *Cryptanthus*. Also, I can put several varieties in one pan if I'm in a hurry (Fig 10). Eventually the pans slowly rot away like my pan of *B. 'Comte de Lesseps'* (Fig 11).





Begonia Hunting in Vietnam - Part 1

Stephen Maciejewski

Wen-Ke Dong/Victor Dawn (contributing author), Beijing, P. R. China

Conservation and science are necessary to protect diversity and to improve conditions on our planet. Thinking about traveling the world in search of new plant species and adding to science, keeps us up at night. Can you imagine finding a begonia never written about before? The idea of finding a plant, especially a begonia which is new to science, is very exciting. Would your heart skip a beat knowing that you just found a plant that has never been recorded in Vietnam? Thrilled that you were able to contribute to a nation's natural wealth? Would the discovery of this treasured plant motivate someone to save the habitat AND this species as we race the clock before the land is bulldozed for "improvements"?

How about immersing yourself in a different culture where you can't even read the road signs? Are steep trails and slippery, jagged rocks an impediment, a challenge, or just part of the deal? Join us in the crazy world of the plant hunter as we take off on another adventure. Sure, there are risks, but the rewards will live on within you forever.

When the fatigue of the hunt sets in, there are always the dreams of tomorrow ... and food – new, different, delicious, even exotic, and a delight for all your senses. Then there are the people. You will meet

Begonia langsonensis and a newly discovered gesneriad species, we named *Primulina huulienensis* in Huu Lien, Huu Lung Protected Area, Lien District, Lang Son, Vietnam. Perfect companion plants. (Fig 1) Photo by Zi-Bing Xin.



many new folks, some for an hour, some for a day and, occasionally, you will start a friendship for a lifetime. One of the perks of plant exploring is forming new friendships that cross borders.



This was Stephen's third botanical trip to Vietnam and Wen-Ke's first. It was organized by Professors Wei Yi-Gang (who could not attend this trip) and Wen Fang. Both are taxonomists and botanists at the Gesneriad Conservation Center of China (GCCC) in Guilin. (This organization, co-founded by Professor Wei and Stephen, is the first center in the world, working to save gesneriads from extinction). Wei and Wen did all of the pre-trip research, scouting out locations that might be productive to explore, hoping to find plants new to science. Dr. Do Van Truong, a botanist at the Vietnam National Museum of Nature, in Hanoi, choreographed the detailed travel arrangements in Vietnam.



Others involved on the trip were, Zi-Bing Xin and of course, contributing author Wen-Ke Dong/Victor Dawn. Xin is a researcher at the GCCC in Guilin. Wen-Ke Dong from Beijing, China, is a professional horticulturist and passionate plantsman. He is also the Cultivar Registrar for the American Begonia Society and spoke at the ABS Convention in Sacramento, California in September 2019. It was easy for all of us to communicate with one another because English was the common language shared by all.

We visited locations in the northern part of Vietnam. They were exotic-sounding places like Mau Son Protected Forest Area, Tam Dao, Ba Vi, and Cuc Phuong National Parks, as well as the following Nature Reserves: Huu Lien, Thuong Tien, Ngoc Son-Ngo Luong, Xuan Nha, and Pu Luong. This

What a Welcome! Everywhere I went in China, I saw signs saying Happy 70th. Lucky me, that modern day China and I share the same birthyear! (Fig 2)

Stephen Maciejewski carried and delivered the plaque to the Dai-Ke Tian, the winner of the Rudolf Ziesenhenne Award in 2019. Dr. Tian works at the Chenshan Plant Research Center at the Chenshan Botanical Garden in Shanghai, China. (Fig 3)

Contributing author, Wen-Ke Dong, admiring a gift leaf of *Begonia chingipengii* from Dai-Ke Tian. (Fig 4)

Plant hunters' reunion (Fig 5). L. to R. Truong DoVan, our Vietnamese guide, botanist, and taxonomist. Zi-Bing Xin, researcher at The Gesneriad Conservation Center of China (GCCC) in Guilin. Wen Fang, botanist, in charge of the GCCC and Victor Dawn (aka Wen-Ke Dong), professional horticulturist and Cultivar Registrar for the American Begonia Society from Beijing, China.

Awesome first impression! We are all ready to explore. (Fig 6)

Begonia palmata (Fig 7)

was the most challenging trip I have ever been on. Traveling for a total of 34 days with 19 days just in Vietnam, was exhausting. Looking for begonias, and gesneriads, collecting other plants, and building bridges in the world of conservation were all exhilarating. My first visit to Vietnam was in 2013 (see the three-part series in *Gesneriads* 2014Q2, 2014Q3, and 2015Q1); I returned in 2017 and again this time from October through November 2019.

Overview

I flew to China first. To get a visa to China and Vietnam, I needed a Letter of Invitation from our Vietnamese and Chinese hosts. The visas cost a total of \$678. The round-trip flight, nearly 8,000 miles one way, even with flight insurance was the cheapest ever at about \$690. I flew from Philadelphia via Montreal. The cost of the trip in Vietnam, including lodging, food, transportation, park entrance fees and guides was \$2,000 per person.

Interestingly, on my first trip to Vietnam in 2013, locals were celebrating the 70th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of Vietnam. When I arrived in China in 2019, people were celebrating the 70th anniversary of modern-day China. I was flattered to see countless celebratory displays all over China saying Happy 70th – It was also my 70th birthday!

When I arrived in Shanghai, horticultural student Yan-Ci Li met me, made all the local travel arrangements, took me to the hotel and then out for a wonderful dinner. Later, I met my dear friend and traveling companion, Wen-Ke Dong. The next day we met Dai-Ke Tian, an expert on begonias and *Nelumbonaceae* (Lotus) at the Chenshan Botanical Garden in Shanghai. On behalf of the ABS, I presented him with the Rudolf Ziesenhenné Award. We got the grand tour and he showed us many beautiful plants as well as his incredible begonia collection, but that's another story, another article.

Day 1 (Monday, October 21, 2019)

Wen-Ke and I took an early morning flight from Shanghai to Nanning, China, near the Vietnam border and met Wen Fang and Zi-Bing Xin. We then proceeded to the Huu Nghi Quan international border crossing, Lang Son province. After we cleared customs, we met our Vietnamese guide, Do Van Truong, and our excellent and accommodating driver, Nguyen Van Hung. They packed everything into the spacious van,





Our first meal in Vietnam. (Fig 8)

Begonia edulis (Fig 9) at Love Fall in Mau Son Protected Forest Area.

Excitement mounts when Victor discovers *Begonia chingii* (Fig 10)

Total destruction! Karst mountains bulldozed to create fill for building roads. Habitats destroyed even before being explored. (Fig 11)



12



14



13



15

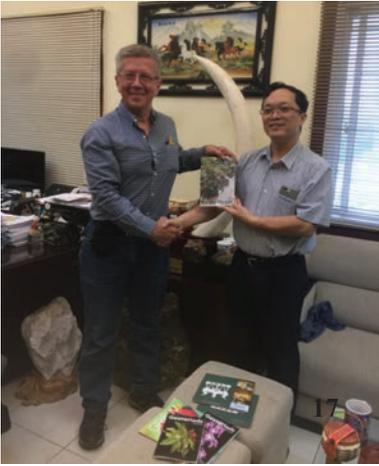
Begonia locii at its type location (Fig 12)

A view of the Huu Lien Nature Reserve (Fig 13)

Herbarium specimen of *Begonia langsonensis* (Fig 14)

Field work in the rain. Another day at Huu Lien Nature Reserve. L to R. Zi-Bing Xin, Victor Dawn, Wen Fang, and Truong DoVan. (Fig 15)

Photos 8, 9, 12, 13: Wen-Ke Dong.



and we embarked on another exciting adventure. We botanized along the route as we headed to our first destination.

We planned to spend two days exploring the Mau Son Protected Area in Lang Son province, northeast Vietnam. The highest peak, Mount Mau Son, is above 1,600 meters. Years ago, the area was only accessible to the French and there are still some historic villas and abandoned buildings left by them. Mau Son is the place to go to when you need to get away from the tropical heat. We stayed in a beautiful, old, decaying yet elegant, stone structure surrounded by gardens. In the area of Phat Chi Mountain (Mau Son, Lang Son province), we found three species of begonias.

Begonia palmata is an attractive herb growing 20 to 90 cm tall. Some individuals have charming leaf maculation patterns. It likes moist, shaded areas like the sides of a stream. Locals harvest it to use as a medicine and for food.

Begonia aff. *leprosa* is a small compact rhizomatous plant with rounded leaves. It prefers a moist environment.

Begonia aff. *chingii* is a small deciduous tuberous plant growing on rocks in moist environments in valleys.

After pressing the begonias, gesneriads and other plants, we walked to another villa for our dinner, wearing jackets in the cool, foggy night.

Day 2 (Tuesday, October 22, 2019)

The weather on Tuesday was quite refreshing and jackets were needed again. We climbed to the highest peak but had no view because of the thick fog. At a lower elevation, we stopped for breakfast

Begonia filiformis (Fig 16)

Director General Nguyen Trung Minh of the Vietnam National Museum of Nature in Hanoi (right) and Stephen Maciejewski exchanging gifts. (Fig 17)

Sharing copies of *The Begonian* with the Deputy-Director Prof. Dr. Vu Van Lien, of the Vietnam Museum of Nature. (L to R. Zi-Bing Xin, Wen-Ke Dong, Stephen Maciejewski, Vu Van Lien, Wen Fang). (Fig 18)

Begonia handelii (Fig 19)

at a place where the locals had a beautiful caged songbird, a black-throated laughing thrush (*Garrulax chinensis*). We noticed some plants drying in the sun nearby. They turned out to be the gesneriad species *Rhynchotechum longipes*, which is picked, dried, and used as medicine. It is a subshrub 30–35 cm tall that grows in forested areas.

Afterward, we started climbing up a very slippery, wide stream-bed made of massive flat rocks. Soon we found the same *R. longipes* growing along the trails. We collected some specimens for various herbarium collections in Vietnam and China. It was a new collection record for Vietnam.

We also found *Begonia edulis*, which is also used for food by locals both in N. Vietnam and Guangxi, China. It grows on shaded moist rocks in forested areas at elevations from 500-1500 meters. The plant can reach 40 to 60 centimeters in height.

As we drove to the next destination, we passed through some areas where entire karst hills were being demolished and bulldozed for use as a base for road construction. Soon these entire mountains would no longer exist! So many species in this area are endemic to a very small area. What happens to very localized plants?

Finally, we arrived at our local “home-stay” residence for the next two nights. The huge wooden building had separate rooms containing hard-woven mats to sleep on, all surrounded by mosquito netting. The government is trying to get locals involved in catering to eco-tourists to help preserve this unique environment. We stayed here to help support their endeavor.

Day 3 (Wednesday, October 23, 2019)

The next two days were spent exploring the Huu Lien Nature Reserve (Huu Lung dis-

trict, Lang Son province). It was established in 1986 to help conserve the karst limestone forest and the habitat of the musk deer. Many local ethnic people, members of the Kinh, Tay, Nung, and Dao groups, live here in various communes. They use and are dependent on forest resources. Huu Lien is part of the “Viet Bac” karst zone of the northeast section of Vietnam and is the most significant section.

Our day started with meeting the staff of the Forest Reserve who even provided us with a guide armed with a machete. There was no trail, so he made one, cutting a path straight up the mountain. Almost immediately, we saw a species of *Amorphophallus*. We then found a beautiful *Begonia langsonensis*, which is similar to *B. ornithophylla* in leaf shape and flower, from Guangxi, and right next to it - a fantastic looking gesneriad with red hairs – a perfect example of companion plants. (We recently published this new gesneriad as *Primulina huulienensis*). We were all using social media, but Wen Fang cautioned us to be careful posting photos of rare plants that we were finding. Unscrupulous plant collectors could use the GPS information attached to the images to track down the location and collect all the plants to sell. From then on, I only posted pictures of scenery and people.

Of course, we always wanted to go further in our travels even if there was a deep stream in the way. As luck would have it, there always seemed to be a fallen tree over the creek to cross to the other side. These crossings are often wet and slippery; at least this one had a handrail! A cat has nine lives; I wonder how many I have left?

We found the very attractive *Begonia locii*. It is endemic to the Huu Lung District, Huu Lien Commune. It has a silvery streak down the central vein and an interesting spiderweb-



like leaf venation near the attachment to the petioles. It resembles *B. luochengensis* from Guangxi in leaf shape and maculation pattern. It occurs on semi-shaded limestone rock at low elevations from 125-165 meters

After a long day of hiking, we returned to our “homestay” to press our plants in the courtyard. Wen-Ke was so diligent; every night he would work on, identify, and catalog the begonias we had collected. He is relentlessly cheerful and passionate about his love for begonias. He is the perfect traveling companion. Later, after the work was finished, we finally had dinner.

Day 4 (Thursday, October 24, 2019)

We started our morning explorations in the rain, armed with umbrellas and raincoats. It was warm but wet.

It was there that we accidentally came upon the lovely *Begonia filiformis*. It typically grows on limestone rocks or near moist shady

caves in the forest understory.

After lunch, we headed off for the long three-hour drive to Hanoi. In route we visited a well-known coffee shop where we enjoyed delicious Vietnamese coffee (*Coffea robusta*, not common *C. arabica*). Later we checked into the Sunset Westlake Hanoi Hotel where the large rooms afforded spectacular views of the Millennium Temple Buddhist Shrine across the street. No time to rest – we stored our luggage and went out to explore the local sites. The temple gardens were beautiful.

Later, our group met Truong and his wife, Lu Thi Ngan, Ph.D. She is also a botanist who works at the Vietnam National Museum of Nature and was one of the guides during our 2013 trip. Their very chatty young daughter, Do Lu Khanh Huyen, was also there. We

Begonia tamdaoensis at its type locality.
(Fig 20)

Photo: Wen-Ke Dong

had a feast at the very modern and trendy Pao Restaurant where we had the table height adjusted so that we could all sit comfortably, crossed-legged for some.

Day 5 (Friday, October 25, 2019)

We were happy to visit the Vietnam National Museum of Nature once again. I had previously been there in 2013 and 2017 and had given presentations on my explorations and work to conserve gesneriads. We also met with Director-General Nguyen Trung Minh.

For years now, there has been much discussion about opening a conservation center in Vietnam modeled after the Gesneriad Conservation Center of China (GCCC) in Guilin. During this visit, we finally saw the map, drawings, and plans for the new museum and the combination Begonia/Gesneriad Conservation Center of Vietnam (B/GCCV). The property was acquired, and recently had even been extended by adding a nearby karst mountain to the site. Botanists, researchers, conservationists, and plant enthusiasts from around the world will be welcomed to visit and study. Once construction is completed, visitors will even be able to stay on-site, so start thinking about your visit!

We all received a beautiful brochure about the museum from the Director-General. I gave him copies of *The Begonian*, *Gesneriads*, pins, and T-shirts. As Co-Chair of the Gesneriad Society's and The American Begonia Society's Conservation Committees, I like being a bridge-builder and am very interested in developing these long-term conservation plans.

After visiting the museum and looking at the informative natural history displays, we left Hanoi and headed back to the field. We were now on our way to Tam Dao National Park (Tam Dao town, Vinh Phuc province).

En route, we found, *Begonia handelii*. One of the most common species we found during the trip. It grows in moist forest environments from 100-1500 meters with fragrant flowers. This is a thick-stemmed plant, native to the northern part of Vietnam and SW China.

Plus, *Begonia tamdaoensis* which is only known from Tam Dao, Vinh Phuc Province. It is common in this area, growing on rock surfaces on roadside slopes, in forest, at elevations of 1050 meters. Interestingly, it bloomed twice in Wen-Ke's office this year.

Also, *Begonia longifolia* or *B. acetosella*, sometimes it's hard to identify the plant without flowers or fruits. While many begonia species have narrow distribution ranges, *B. longifolia* has a very wide range. It too grows in shaded moist environments from 200 to 2200 meters.

We found *Begonia palmata* too.

We finally arrived at Tam Dao mountain resort, just in time to check into our rooms and go for a little walk before dinner. The architecture is a mix of English, French, and Swiss design. The foggy atmosphere added to the welcoming mountain ambiance.

Day 6 (Saturday, October 26, 2019)

Breakfast was a large bowl of delicious noodle soup with your choice of meats and vegetables. It was served in a restaurant in the middle of this old town built by the French in 1907. Tam Dao means three islands and refers to the three highest peaks that often stand out over the clouds. The area was designated a Conservation Forest in 1977 and a National Park in 1996.

Soon we were off for what some signs said is "BioFun" or exploring nature. We passed by houses with decaying doors and elegant palace-like structures, side by side, as we took a short walk from the hotel to the park. To enter the



Begonia baviensis. (Fig 21) Prefers moist environments.
Note the stiff hairs.

Cheers, Gan bei in Chinese or Môt, Hai, Ba, Zô...ô, Môt,
Hai, Ba, Uống in Vietnamese (Fig 22)

park, we followed a path under tented walkways filled with smoky food stands.

A dizzying series of stone steps led us higher and higher up the mountain path through temples and heavily forested areas, very diverse environments with over eight different forest types. Along the route I got to meet “Ton Ngo Khong,” a monkey god, king, and man, who appears in the classic Chinese novel, *Journey to the West* which was later adapted into the most popular TV series in China. He’s a combination of Shakespeare’s Puck, Robin Hood, and Hell Boy, representing the inner strength that all

humans embody.

We left the park around noon and headed to Ba Vi National Park (located in the Ba Vi district of Hanoi). It was another rewarding day finding many plant treasures including:

Begonia cucphuongensis is another one of the most common species found during the trip. Originally found in Cuc Phuong National Park. It grows from a rhizome with green and dark purple foliage, sometimes with white or red-tinted spots and blotches. Prefers a damp, shady environment and thrives on limestone-derived soil in forests dominated by *Streblus macrophyllus* (Moraceae).

Begonia balansana is endemic to Ba Vi Mountains.

Begonia baviensis. Grows in moist environments along streams at elevations around 400-500 meters. It has green leaves with red or white stiff hairs.

Begonia aff. *megalophyllaria* perhaps, but it needs further study.

Plus *Begonia longifolia* or *B. acetosella*, *B. handelii* and *B. palmata*.

These begonias grow in association with a number of gesneriads.

After pressing our extensive collection of plants, we enjoyed a hot-pot feast and many, many toasts drinking Truong’s homebrew of rice wine flavored with bananas.

In the next issue: Part 2 - Delicious food, blood thirsty leeches and more begonias!

Photos: Stephen Maciejewski, unless otherwise noted.

Begonia Man: Naoyuki Uemura

The Founder of Japan Begonia Society and His Charming Cultivars

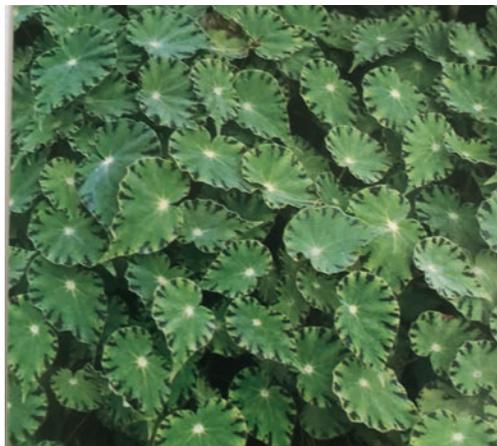
Masahiro Shiino, Yokohama City, Japan

Naoyuki Uemura is unforgettable for the role he played in the begonia history of Japan. He spent his career constructing and stabilizing the Japan Begonia Society, enabling it to become one of the country's leading horticultural organizations.

In addition to championing begonias, he served as a director of the Japan Horticulture Society where he worked as an editor of *Garden Life* magazine for many years. As a writer myself, I was acquainted with him around 1970. He generously provided details of begonias, general botanical knowledge and growing techniques.

Uemura was born in 1925 at Kagawa prefecture, (Southwestern Japan) and graduated from Chiba Agricultural College. He published the book, *How to Grow Begonia, Popular Varieties* (Green and Flower Books 1987), which was widely read as reliable guidance among plant lovers. He died in August 2006 at 81 years old. According to his family, Uemura stayed alcohol- and tobacco-free and concentrated on publishing of information on botany. Begonias were the benchmark of all plants for him.

Below are a few of Naoyuki Uemura's popular begonia hybrids:



Begonia 'Pink Chandelier' (top)

Begonia 'Hitomi' (bottom)

Photos: Naoyuki Uemura

Cane type

Begonia 'Pink Chandelier' (*B.* 'Lenore Olivier' × *B.* 'Pinafore')

Begonia 'Lubbergei' (*B. dregei* × *B. lubbersii*)

Shrub type

Begonia 'Dressi' (*B. dregei* × *B. lubbersii*)

Rhizomatous group

Begonia 'Ohizumi' (*B.* 'Verde Grande' × *B.* 'Black Swan')

Begonia 'Pinochio' (*B.* 'Nora Bedson' × *B.* 'Black Swan')

Begonia 'Hitomi' (*B.* 'China Doll' × *B.* 'Raspberry Parfait')



Irene Nuss: Looking Back at a Very Special Begonia Hybridizer

In 2002, the Los Angeles Times wrote an article about Irene Nuss called *Begonias and Beyond* in which Irene recalled how she came to love begonias. In 1959, Irene was already a member of the American Begonia Society but had not begun hybridizing yet. She helped, with John Thieben, to found the Westchester Branch of the Society and after listening to one of their speakers (Louise Schwerdtfeger – another wonderful hybridizer of that time) at a meeting one night, the bug bit her. “The evening’s speaker explained how to create new versions of these plants by gathering pollen

B. ‘Irene Nuss’ (Fig 1) is considered to be a classic, and it is clear why Irene named this one after herself. This cultivar embodies what Irene wanted for the Superba types: well-branched, attractive and disease resistant foliage, tough and easy to grow, large flowered (each flower is 1½” across), and lightly fragrant.

Photo: Karl Gercens at Longwood Gardens

Rick Schoellhorn, Nomenclature Chairman from male flowers to fertilize female flowers. Before the lecture, she hadn’t even realized that begonia plants had two sexes of flowers. The best time to fertilize a flower, she was told, was at night, so there she was running across the wet lawn of her Los Angeles house in the dark, flashlight in hand, to see if her *Begonia* plant had female flowers. She followed the advice and pollinated one flower.

Irene was 83 years old when this article was written and her hybridizing days were behind her, but she was renowned for sharing everything she learned and loved about begonias for the past 50 years! The year 2002 was also when the Huntington Botanical Gardens in San Marino, CA created a special recognition award that was given to Irene Nuss, Brad Thompson, and Rudy Ziesenhenné. The award celebrated the trio “whose passion for plants

has led them into something that benefits other gardeners.” Rudy Ziesenhenné was a lifelong friend and inspiration to Irene, as well as a source of species plants to use in her hybridizing, but Rudy’s knowledge of genetics and plant breeding was something she reveled in. In 1998 Irene said “I can’t begin to tell you how much help and encouragement he has given me. He started me on growing species and taught me how to grow rare begonias in terrariums. No problem was too large or too small — he was always willing to help. He insisted on registering my hybrids and encouraged me in every way. His many articles in *The Begonian* are treasures.” Irene always continued to collect pollen at midday when relative humidity was lowest, and to do her pollinations in the evening, just as she learned in that first meeting from Louise.

“I began hybridizing just for the fun of it,” she recalled. “I was fascinated that from a tiny seed you could grow such big plants.” By 1969, she was winning awards for her cultivars, she would continue to produce great plants through the 1970s and into the 1980s. She was at her most productive as a hybridizer for about twenty years. Her focus as a breeder was to take the cane-like *Begonia* class and create something much easier to grow in Southern California than what had been available in the past. By all accounts she was hugely successful in her goals, not only because people reported her cultivars as tough and easy, but also because her cultivars were winning awards around the USA at a startling frequency for the next 20 years. There are about 65 cultivars listed in the International Database of *Begoniaceae*, almost all are cane-like or cane-like Superba types. She finished up her list of hybrids with one *B. rex* cultorum, one rhizomatous, and one shrub-like *Begonia*, as if almost to say, “See it wasn’t ALL canes!”

Irene Nuss was known for transforming cane-like begonias that had previously been difficult to grow outdoors in Southern California. Her creations were as at home in a landscape as they were in a greenhouse. Irene’s second goal was creating plants with larger



A mature example of *B. 'Irene Nuss'* in Sherman Gardens, CA (Fig 2). where the majority of Irene’s hybrids have been kept as a collection. Note the size of the flowers, and the flower clusters. This plant is growing in bright filtered light, bringing out the reddish-pink tones in the foliage as well.

Irene Nuss and her sister Eunice Gray in 1967 with the *Begonia 'Eunice Gray'* (*B. echinosepala* × *B. venosa*) (Fig 3). This particular plant won both the Everett Wright Trophy and the President’s Challenge Trophy for best of show.

Photo: *The Begonian* May/June 1998.



Begonia 'Kent Brandon' (Fig 4)

B. 'Silvermist' (Fig 5) is noted for the strong silvering in the leaves, young leaves are almost solid silver, becoming spotted as they mature. A large and rewarding plant to grow with good branching and an extended season of bright pink flower clusters.

Photos: Elda Regimbal

B. 'Jumbo Jet' (Fig 6)

Photo: Houston Astro Branch of ABS

flowers and extending the bloom season. She built upon the work of other hybridizers of the time, like Belva Nelson Kusler, in that Irene used *Begonia* 'Lenore Olivier' often in her hybridizing, as well as Marie Turner's *B.* 'Elizabeth Lockhart'. Together, Belva Kusler and Irene Nuss really brought the class of Superba type canes to the forefront of public interest.

What also gave Irene Nuss' hybrids such stamina and landscape hardiness was that she frequently backcrossed to species begonias. As a strategy, this is fairly common, since species begonias are adapted to life outdoors, and are frequently much more disease resistant. Irene relied heavily on *B. lubbersii*, and an unknown cane simply called *B.* 'Philippines Cane', *B. dichroa*, and *B. aconitifolia*.

Irene also did some adventurous crosses using *B. dregei*, *B. rubriflora*, and *B. solan-anthera*, to impart dwarf habits and bushier growth. Finally, Irene went back to her first major success, the *Begonia* 'Kentwood', and created about 17 other cultivars using 'Kentwood' as a parent. Irene was a creative and conscientious breeder, she was strict in her trialing, wanting to prove a plant first, then worry about naming it later. Elda Regimbal was Irene's friend and primary testing location for Irene's begonias. Irene kept her releases limited to those plants which were distinctly different or improved and her list of successes underline that she was on the right track. Widespread success with Nuss hybrids inspired an article in 1998 focusing on which hybrids did best in which quadrant of the US, with recommendations from Tom Keepin, Freda Holley, Annette Boree, and Kathy Goetz.

Irene tried interspecific, or primary hybrid, crosses one time and quickly gave it up because all the seedlings looked the same.

Which is expected, but not particularly exciting for Ms. Nuss. However, this one attempt gave her *B. 'Eunice Gray'* which won her the Alfred D. Robinson award in 1972. After that she really preferred crosses where one parent was a species and one was a hybrid, in these crosses you had a mix of seedlings with a general resemblance to their species parent. Irene also said, "...and of course putting a hybrid onto a hybrid gives you great variation and interesting children." Irene would again receive the Alfred D. Robinson award for outstanding new hybrid in *B. 'Silvermist'* in 1995, 23 years later.

Irene Nuss was also a natural educator and a frequent speaker at shows and conventions. She was a good communicator and a strong organizer in functions all around southern California. Janet Brown, in an article for *The Begonian* in 1998, does a beautiful job of capturing the spontaneity and enthusiasm of Irene Nuss. "All the help and encouragement Irene Nuss had received through the years, she has returned a thousandfold to all those who ask for assistance in growing, hybridizing, propagating. She is always willing to speak at the Southern California Branches of ABS and will answer any question with unflinching enthusiasm. She shares her talent and love of begonias with everyone and her joy is infectious. She inspires everyone to make the most of their talent especially in producing new hybrids."

Irene was not operating a nursery to sell her own plants, and she was not looking to make money from her hobby. Her philosophy was "I just want people to grow my plants and enjoy begonias," she says. "My royalties are the letters I receive from people telling me how much they enjoy the plants." Back in her early days of hybridizing, Irene had won so many awards for her cultivars that she stopped entering in competitions to give someone else a

chance to enjoy the spotlight. The memoriam to Irene Nuss in *The Begonian* in March/April 2011 is a wonderful tribute, to a very engaging and real person, who bred begonias but collected many, many friends. Irene was very close to her son Kent and moved to Sacramento shortly before she passed to be close to him. He had been a supporter of her hobby all through his life and asked as a memorial to his Mom (in lieu of flowers) that everyone instead ship cuttings or plants of Irene's hybrids to Sherman Gardens in California as Irene's memorial.

Irene's Outstanding Cultivars

As time goes by, the fashion in *Begonia* breeding seems to have shifted to more compact, heavily branched cane-like begonias than it was when Irene's cultivars first came on to the market. By today's standards her hybrids are large, and somewhat slow to come into flower. However, there is always a market for larger plants in the landscape, or in larger containers and in these situations Irene's hybrids remain tough and easy plants, with excellent performance.

B. 'Kentwood' (*B. 'Elizabeth Lockhart'* × *B. aconitifolia*) – likely the first pollination Irene did, was named for the subdivision in Los Angeles where Irene lived. Though this plant was popular when Irene released it, it was actually the seedlings she produced using it as a parent that were most highly awarded and acknowledged. When she crossed this plant with *B. 'Lenore Olivier'* she got some of her best seedlings. Tall stems, easily reaching 8', host silvery frosted, deeply lobed leaves, with purple toned undersides. When mature the plant has large cymes of fragrant pearly pink blossoms fading to white, especially under warmer conditions. Like *B. 'Sophie Cecile'* (from Belva Kusler) it takes time to grow this plant to maturity. Needs good humidity and



An overview of the superba type, cane like breeding of Irene Nuss.

Begonia 'Alice N' (Fig 7)

B. 'Allegro' (Fig 8)

B. 'Pink Jade' (Fig 9)

B. 'Dolly' (Fig 10)

B. 'Elda Regimbal' (Fig 11)

B. 'Croyden' (Fig 12)

B. 'Ken Lau Ren' (Fig 13)

B. 'Ethel Albertson' (Fig14)

Photos: Figs 7, 8,10, 11, 12, 13: Houston Astro Branch of ABS

Photos: Figs 9,14: Elda Regimbal

bright light to perform, and *B.* 'Kentwood' can be chill sensitive. This is a big plant and will need regular pruning to keep it smaller. Pruning, or pinching can also be helpful to get more branches on lower stems.

B. 'Irene Nuss' (*B.* 'Kentwood' × *B.* 'Lenore Olivier') - is a considered a classic Superba type cane-like *Begonia*. *B.* 'Irene Nuss' has been awarded the Royal Horticulture Society's Award of Garden Merit. This award is given by the British Royal Horticulture Society to plants that have outstanding performance in the garden. It is a fast grower (reaching about 5' in frost free gardens) and blooms heavily for a long period of time from spring through fall. The large leaves are bronze-green with coppery red undersides and no silver markings. *B.* 'Irene Nuss' is known for having very large flowers, and for being an earlier and longer flowering cultivar than *B.* 'Kentwood'. *B.* 'Irene Nuss' produces an abundance of large 6–10" clusters of 1½ inch pink flowers which are faintly fragrant, similar to gardenia or honeysuckle.

B. 'Eunice Gray' (*B. echinosepala* var. *echinosepala* × *B. venosa*) – named for Irene's sister, this cross did not come out the way Irene had imagined at all, but it was still a very nice plant and very free flowering. It received the Alfred D. Robinson Memorial Medal for a *Begonia* Hybrid in 1972. *B.* 'Eunice Gray' will produce white flowers from February to December. It is a compact, more horizontal grower with a rather spread out habit, it also works well in hanging baskets as the stems naturally curl towards the ground. Thick and fleshy leaves, folded along the midrib, are light green. Small cymes of white flowers are slightly fragrant. It reaches about 24" cm in height and about double that in spread. Some sources say it

prefers a dry winter rest period and very bright light when actively growing.

B. ‘Jumbo Jet’ (*B.* ‘Kentwood’ × *B.* ‘Orange Supreme’) – This vigorous plant can reach up to six feet in height, with large and very dark green, almost black leaves. The leaves highlight the long-lasting, dark pink to red hanging cymes of 1 ½ flowers, some say it can have the largest flowers of the superba types. As with most seedlings of *B.* ‘Kentwood’ give this plant some space because it grows vigorously, grows tall, and likes bright light to keep those leaves as dark as possible.

B. ‘Kent Brandon’ (*B.* ‘Kentwood’ × *B.* ‘Lenore Olivier’) – named for Irene’s son Kent. Better early branching than the parent *B.* ‘Kentwood’ so lots of energy goes into growing wide as well as tall. ‘Kent Brandon’ has two-toned pink flowers and silver-speckled foliage, reaching 3–5 feet in height and width.

B. ‘Silvermist’ (*B.* ‘Kentwood’ × *B. dichroa*) – Received the Alfred D. Robinson Memorial Medal for a *Begonia* Hybrid in 1995. Wavy, lobed leaves are narrower than other Kentwood hybrids and heavily splashed silver, especially on younger leaves where only the green veins may be visible due to the silvering. *B.* ‘Silvermist’ is still a tall Superba-type, with distinctive foliage and a vigorous growth habit. The light, peachy-pink clusters of flowers are very nice. Overall, an easy one to grow.

B. ‘Hannah Serr’ (*B.* ‘Kentwood’ × *B.* ‘Lenore Olivier’) – Named after Irene’s mother. Going back to that original cross of *B.* ‘Kentwood’ yet again, *B.* ‘Hannah Serr’. *Begonia* ‘Hannah Serr’ is an intermediate size plant with nodes close together. The leaves are green with paler green veining. The flowers continue from spring to early summer and are fragrant and showy. The flowers are held close to the stems and can have as many as 50 blooms on one cyme. In 1968, *B.* ‘Hannah Serr’ won the Herbert P. Dyckman Perpetual Award for the most distinctive new fibrous *Begonia*, and the Edna Korts Perpetual Trophy for the best cane, and the Effie Chapman Challenge Cup for the best fibrous *Begonia*, as well as the ABS Cultural Award.

Table 1. The Hybrid Preservation Committee is looking for these lost cane-like cultivars of Irene Nuss. If you or someone you know has these plants in their collection, please let us get a cutting or two to build up for preservation in the Fort Worth Botanic Garden's *Begonia* Collection. Just email us at hybridpreservation@begonias.org and the committee can show you how easy it is.

Name	Origin
<i>B.</i> ‘Bea Roberts’	1978
<i>B.</i> ‘Catherine N’	1997
<i>B.</i> ‘Chet Nave’	1973
<i>B.</i> ‘Claire Christensen’	?
<i>B.</i> ‘Concerto’	1998
<i>B.</i> ‘Donna Marie’	1998
<i>B.</i> ‘Easter Parade’	1978
<i>B.</i> ‘Elsie Manahan’	1998
<i>B.</i> ‘Flora Lei’	?
<i>B.</i> ‘Glendora Champlin’	?
<i>B.</i> ‘Goldie Frost’	?
<i>B.</i> ‘Jackie Brookshire’	1989
<i>B.</i> ‘Jana Ross’	?
<i>B.</i> ‘Katharine Alberti’	1978
<i>B.</i> ‘Laura Rokey’	1978
<i>B.</i> ‘Linda Nuss’	1978
<i>B.</i> ‘Marion Lindgren’	1998
<i>B.</i> ‘Minuet’	1998
<i>B.</i> ‘Pat McElderry’	1998
<i>B.</i> ‘Peaches ‘n Cream’	1998
<i>B.</i> ‘Petaloons’	1998
<i>B.</i> ‘Rain Dance’	2000
<i>B.</i> ‘Regis Way’	1998
<i>B.</i> ‘Rhapsody’	1978
<i>B.</i> ‘Snowflakes’	1998
<i>B.</i> ‘Staccato’	1998
<i>B.</i> ‘Westchester’	1991

Two Similar U Number Begonias

Robert Stewart

Similarities and differences. Here's a look at two vaguely similar rhizomatous *Begonia* leaves. Both have good-sized leaves about 8" long so far, with lots of silver markings.

Begonia U400 only grows enclosed for me; it gradually declines in the greenhouse. *Begonia* U607 grows just fine in the greenhouse.

The leaves on *B. U400* are "more silvery"; silver covers everywhere but the veins and the edges. The leaves on *B. U607* show more "clusters of silver spots between veins on green leaves".



Begonia U400 has redder petioles. The leaf veins on the back side are red.

Begonia U607 has greener petioles with a red flush, and the leaf veins on the back side are greener with red hairs around them.

The lobes of the leaf next to the sinus tend to overlap on *Begonia* U400. On *Begonia* U607, they overlap in young leaves but develop a gap on older leaves.

The male flowers on *Begonia* U400 have red hairs on the back side. I don't have flowers on *Begonia* U607 right now to illustrate those.

Begonia U607 (left)
Begonia U400 in bloom
(pg 15)





The Inauguration Ceremony of Chinese *Begonia* Committee

Wen-Ke Dong, a.k.a Victor Dawn, Cultivar Registrar

Dr. Dai-Ke Tian's and I have been trying to organize a group in China to conserve begonias for a long time. Finally, on October 18th, 2020, we held the Inauguration Ceremony of the Begonia Committee of the Chinese Wild Plant Conservation Association (CWPCA) at the Shanghai Chenshan Botanical Garden. The main goal of this new project is to help conserve begonias effectively and rationally.

This Committee is the first and the only begonia society in China. Dr. Tian, the winner of the 2019 Rudolf Ziesenhenné Award, is the Director of the Committee. I serve as an Associate Director and the Secretary-General. Dr. Yu-Min Shui, who gave a talk during the 2018 ABS Convention in New Orleans, is also an Associate Director. We have over 80 adult members around the country, plus two teenagers, aged 15 and 18. They are the future! The annual fee is around \$15.

Before the Ceremony, we staged a begonia show with over 100 species and cultivar plants. It was opened from October 16th to November 1st. We gave awards to five begonias for their outstanding dedications, and to nine out from 75 entries.

We also held a symposium on October 17th with nine speakers, including three worldwide guests— Dr. Mark Hughes from Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Yu Pin Ang from Singapore, and Stephen Maciejewski from ABS. These three talks were virtual via Voov (Chinese version of Zoom).

The Committee will organize its second convention in Fall 2021 in Pingbian County, Yunnan Province, with a symposium and an expedition in Dawei Mountains where around 50 species occur. Are you ready? Please contact me at Victor Dawn <victor_dawn@163.com>for further information.



Judged *Begonia* show (Fig 1) Photo: Kai Li

A huge *Begonia* specimen at the show (Fig 2) Photo: Wen-Ke Dong

Begonia symposium (Fig 3) Photo: Kai Li

Attendees visiting *Begonia* Collections (Fig 4) Photo: Kai Li

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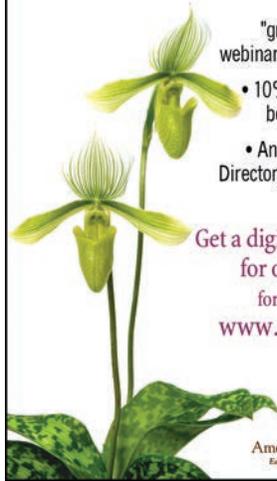
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Begonia ciliobracteata

Looking its best, this *Begonia ciliobracteata* (top) is part of the collection at Botanical Garden of Tête d'Or Park (or the Lyon Botanical Garden in France).

Photo: Sally Savelle

Full spectrum lights, left on for 12 hours a day, seem to be enough to initiate and sustain bloom. The photographer's plant (bottom) has been blooming for more than five months, and has had more than sixty blooms and/or buds at times.

Photo: Johanna Zinn, courtesy IDB <https://ibegonias.filemakerstudio.com.au/browserecord.php?action=browse&-recid=1045&p=culture&-recnum=1>

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