



AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY

A Branch of the American Begonia Society

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



VOLUME 14, NUMBER 4/5

NEWSLETTER

April/May 2020

Nelda Moore, Ken Fuchs, Editors

NEXT MEETING:

MAY 24, 2020

2 P.M.

**IF ZILKER BOTANICAL GARDEN
IS OPEN**

Greene Room
Austin Area Garden Center
Zilker Botanical Garden
2220 Barton Springs Road

GOVERNOR ALLOWS BUSINESSES TO REOPEN



The Austin Area Begonia Society did not meet in April due to COVID 19. After our meeting with Mr. Jiles about our planting begonias in the area that had been the herb garden in Zilker Botanical Garden, the date for that to happen was April 22.

The garden closed. On April 25 the begonia sale with the Austin Herb Society was canceled and we stayed in a lockdown to prevent the pandemic from reaching so many more people. Then the American Begonia Society/Southwest Region Get Together had to be canceled. The Fort Worth Botanic Garden was closed due to the extra work in keeping the buildings and other surfaces disinfected with the outbreak of coronavirus in the Dallas area. Even the crowds were prohibited from attending public parks and events such as music festivals. This pandemic is extremely dangerous and deadly.

Governor Greg Abbott's order to begin the gradual reopening of Texas businesses amid the coronavirus outbreak went into effect Friday morning, May 1. The order allows restaurants, retail stores, malls, movie theaters, museums, and libraries to be open at 25% capacity to keep businesses from failing. The economy is under consideration, but the governor is not requiring them to open. Each person should continue to wear a mask and sanitize surfaces that are touched. Most individuals think that opening the economy this early will bring another surge in hospital care and perhaps another lockdown. While some people have survived this crisis lasting weeks, there are many more that have lost their life even with respirators trying to keep the attacked lungs breathing.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to all who lost loved ones during this unusual time.

Meanwhile, keep those begonias growing for showing.



Begonia amphioxus

GROWING BEGONIAS

DO NOT OVERWATER THE BEGONIA

USE THE CORRECT POT SIZE

**USE SLOW RELEASE FERTILIZER WHEN
PLANTING IN SOME GROUND TREE BARK,
GRAVEL, STYRENE BEADS SO ROOTS
CAN GET AIR**

**ALWAYS GROW RHIZOMATOUS BEGONIAS
IN CLAY POTS**

REPOIT EVERY 2-3 YEARS

**COVER BEGONIAS DURING HARD FREEZE
WITH PLASTIC THAT HAS MICROSCOPIC
HOLES THAT ALLOW AIR, HEAT, AND
WATER TO PASS THROUGH**

**FOR GROWING IN POTS USE PROMIX,
PERLITE, OR SUNSHINE MIX #3**

GROW UNDER LIGHTS

(For posters or trifolds during sales)

STAKING BEGONIAS IS AN ART

Tuberous begonias need to be staked early because the grower knows where the tuber is located in the pot and will use caution so that he does not pierce the tuber. The stakes should be straight up. All of the outside facing stems should be staked to support inner growth. Later three ties can be used: one at the base that is fairly tight, one in the middle, and one below the tip. These brown paper covered ties are looser so that there will be room for the stem to grow.

Instead of waiting until the plants are falling over, put the stakes in early and train the plant as it grows. For taking the plant to a show later in the season, wait until then to trim the stakes back to the proper height. If you keep the plants shorter and compact, they do not require much staking.

Stake any begonia that you want to grow in an upright pattern that is more than 18 inches tall or that

has weak stems. Many canes and shrubs fit the criteria. Especially stake any plant that meets these conditions that is to be transported to another location such as a sale or show.

If there are repairs that need to be made to the plant, a stake can be used to move extra growth to the damaged area. Secure the mass with a stake. This repair can cover some dead area of the plant. After a month the stake can be removed. The full growth in the container can then be moved slightly or arranged to appear that it is a full show plant.

Always remember that stakes are used in such a way that they support the plant without their being obvious. Usually the green bamboo stakes work best since the begonia is green. If the bamboo needs to be a lighter green, place the green stakes out in the sun for a few days to bleach them.

When placing the stakes, push them into the soil on the back side of the stem to be staked where it does not interfere with the growth of the plant. It should also be placed at a natural angle for the variety of the begonia. For tying to the stake use a green plastic tie to blend in the surroundings. Make these aids as invisible as possible. On the show bench most of these supports can probably be removed before the judges arrive.



Don Miller demonstrates staking at an AABS meeting Jan. 22, 2017.

IT'S A BEGONIA WORLD

(Pictures from Planet Begonia, Facebook)



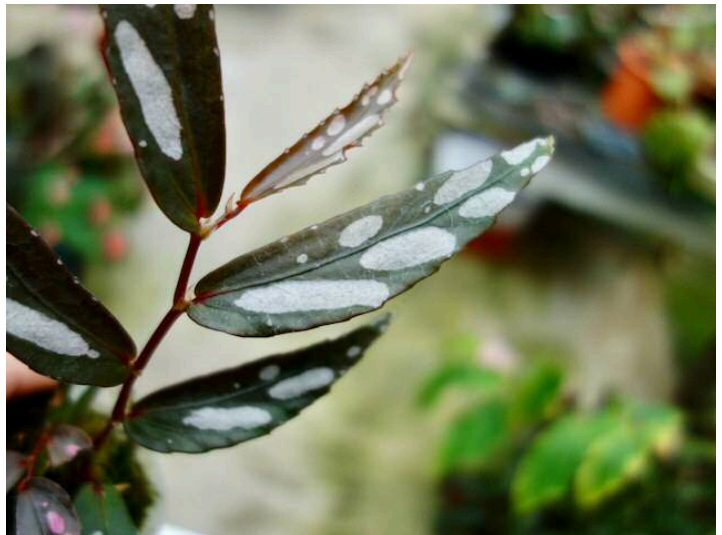
Begonia 'Black Knight' - India



Begonia *nurii* - Malaysia



Begonia *cathcartii* - India



Begonia SP 'Julau' - Japan



Begonia 'Red Fred' - Chicago



Begonia 'Sumatra Utara' - Indonesia



Begonia 'Martin's Mystery' - Mangalore, India



Begonia 'Red Bull' - India