



VOLUME 11, NUMBER 2

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY, 2017

NEXT MEETING:

FEBRUARY 26

Greene Room – Austin Area Garden Center
2 P.M.
Pot Luck

February 27 and March 13 – Docent Training

March 4 – Austin Organic Gardeners
Plant Sale 9 A.M.–2 P.M.

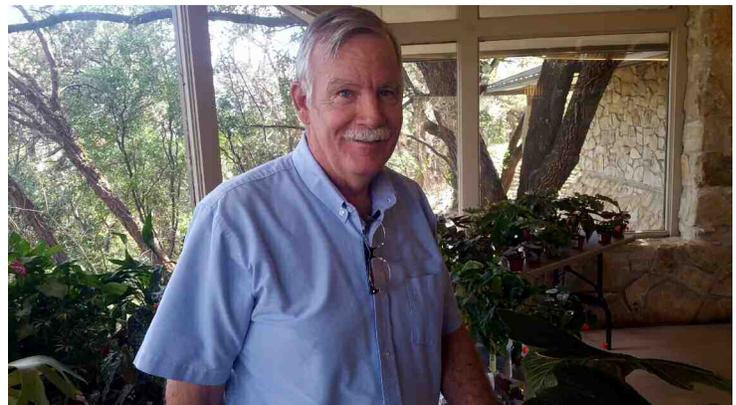
March 6 – Travis County Beekeepers
Association, Inc.
Speaker from Wildflower Center 7 P.M.

May 3-7 – National ABS Convention and
Southwest Region Get-Together
BEGONIAS: OUR MISSION
Hilton San Antonio Airport
611 NW Loop 410
San Antonio, Texas 78216

March 24 and 25 – Zilker Garden Festival

DON MILLER: Growing and Showing Cane Begonias

Don Miller, hybridizer and speaker, provided an interesting program about growing and showing cane begonias on January 22 in the Greene Room of the Austin Area Garden Center during the meeting of the Austin Area Begonia Society Branch. Don gave all present valuable tips on growing and showing cane begonias. He also brought along lots of gorgeous plants for sale from Steve's Leaves (\$10 each) and the Begonia Species Bank at the Fort Worth Botanical Garden (\$5 each). Attendees left with many new begonia treasures.



Begonias from Steve's Leaves:



B. Metallica



B. Almost Heaven



B. Starry Nights



B. River Nile



B. polilloensis



B. integerrima

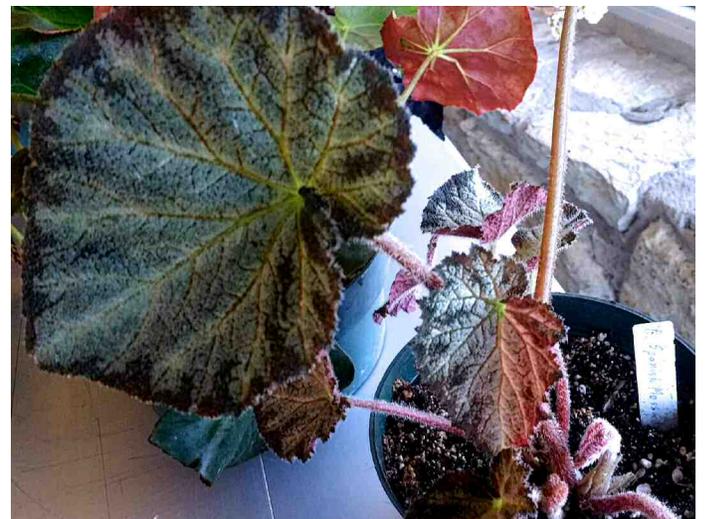


B. Freemantle

Begonias from the Species Bank:



B. Persian Brocade



B. Spanish Moss



B. Green Swirl



B. Phoe's Cleo



B. Cowardly Lion



B. Macushla



B. Black Fancy



B. Erythrophylla

MINUTES OF THE AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY BRANCH
OF THE AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY
January 22, 2017

The Austin Area Begonia Society Branch of the American Begonia Society met at 2 P.M. in the Zilker Botanical Garden's Greene Room with 17 members present. Members present included the following: Doug Byrom, Ken Fuchs, Jim Landers, Joan Estes, Jim Estes, Verlene Schoen, Jackie Johnson, Liz Caskey, Rainee Freeman, Charlotte Boyle, Betty Dunn, Deva Brown, Arlene Lantz, Valerie Morris, Julie Marcus, Carol Orozco, and Johnnie Shepard.

President Doug Byrom called the meeting to order at 2:30 P.M. and asked if any members had any new or unfinished business. No new or old business was presented by the members. Doug spoke briefly about the Southwest Region Get-Together scheduled in San Antonio in May. More information will follow. Jackie asked if we would need to bring some of our plants to make sure there would be enough plants for the sale. Doug said that plans were already made to purchase plants from some of the routine suppliers (Harmony and Fort Worth Botanical Garden) and we would not need to add our plants for the sale.

Doug introduced speaker Don Miller who presented the program "Cane Begonias." Don has been a long time member of the ABS and is well known for his begonia expertise. He works at Steve's Leaves in Fort Worth and brought plants for sale from Steve's Leaves and the Fort Worth Botanical Garden.

He has presented many programs at conventions; he attends many flower shows; he has been a show judge; and he provides the ribbons for the show awards every year.

Don identified many begonias by their scientific and common names. In addition he demonstrated how to cut back 'leggy' begonias and how to stake plants for shows. He provided some good advice for growing begonias as well.

- If you want the plants full and bushy, cut them back
- Use fertilizer on your plants (every other watering) if you want to encourage flowering
- Use good loose soil when reporting plants
- Don't put plants out if the temperature is below 50 degrees

The next meeting will be February 26 at 2 P.M. in the Greene Room of the Austin Area Garden Center, 2220 Barton Springs Road.

The meeting adjourned at 4 P.M. after the wonderful program provided by Don Miller, Hybridizer of the Year 2016, whose plants sold quickly.

Respectfully submitted,
JOAN ESTES, secretary pro tem



Begonia sutherlandii



Begonia sutherlandii

Begonia sutherlandii collected from an elevation between 3,500 and 5,000 feet in Natal province of South Africa was offered for sale in the United States around 1865. It was described by J. D. Hooker in 1868. When Irmscher completed an extensive study in 1961, he determined that 7 different begonias were *B. sutherlandii*.

Since this is a tuberous begonia it needs little water in winter during dormancy. The potting mix should be both moisture retentive and fast draining. In spring the plant returns from a dormant stage quickly to form a low mound of small, bright, light green ovate leaves with crenate margins. The flowers are orange. In early fall bulbils form in the leaf axils. When they lie on the soil and sprout in the spring, they form new plants. Cuttings from this plant can also form new plants.

Begonia sutherlandii can be used in a hanging basket, but this South African species is very mildew prone in summer according to Morris Mueller. He also notes that in hybridizing, it has been a seed parent five

times, producing tuberous, canelike, semi-tuberous, and shrub-like plants. According to records as the pollen parent, it has produced three tuberous and two rex hybrids. Three of the hybrids created by Patrick Pons-Worley became *B. 'String of Pearls'* (shrub-like), *B. 'Heartthrob'*, (a rex), and an unnamed rex.

CENTRAL TEXAS HORTICULTURE

Perhaps now since the sun has provided a little light on the begonias in the shade house, you can clean the dead leaves and discover some green leaves emerging near the parent plants. Even some canes are giving some hope that the 18-degree weather spared some of them during the protection that was provided.

If you purchased some of the newer begonias, you may have cut some of them for cuttings that have rooted for the Zilker Garden Festival March 25 and 26. The Kid's Corner can always use flowering plants to give to those children that have visited all of the areas on the fan. If you have spare plants, please donate them to the gardeners of the future.



The begonia above is 'Red Fred' as shown by Charles Jaros at the Southwest Region Show in Richardson, Texas.

Below is 'Freddie,' a giant-leaved rhizomatous pink-flowered beauty from *B. Manicata* 'Aureo-maculata' X *B. barkeri*.

