



# AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY

A Branch of the American Begonia Society

Website: [http://www.kenfuchs42.net/aabs\\_index.html](http://www.kenfuchs42.net/aabs_index.html)



Austin Area Begonia Society

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NEWSLETTER

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Nelda Moore, Ken Fuchs, Editors

## NEXT MEETING:

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Austin Pond and Garden Tour

June 5 and 6 2021

**NOTE: All photos in the "Terrariums" article were downloaded from Johanna Zinn's ABS webinar "Terrarium 101."**

## TERRARIUMS



*B. blancii*



*B. versicolor*

A terrarium garden in your home, basement, or indoor greenhouse can bring you joy as you watch those species grow even though your work away from home keeps you away for a week at a time.

This little world enables you to keep an endangered species of begonia from a tropical rainforest, or cloud forest, or humid area alive and protected from drafts, temperature, air pollution, disease, and animals. This is an easy to care garden that uses very little water, fertilizer, and grooming.

You may have seen Johanna Zinn's ABS ZOOM webinar "Terrarium 101." Johanna, a registered nurse from Fairfax, Virginia, has about 80 or more terrariums of various sizes in a basement under lights and in her lighted indoor greenhouse with her gesneriads. Mrs. Zinn is well-known in the American Begonia Society where she promotes the Adopt a Species, co-chairs the judging committee and Conservation and Research





Committee, and teaches judges training. She also identifies unidentified species, writes about begonias, and conducts seminars.

Johanna has been honored in Australia with a begonia named after her; she was the recipient of the ABS Charles Jaros Lifetime Achievement Award 2019, the Eva Kenworthy Gray award for contributing to harmony and goodwill, and the Hubert P. Dyckman Award for service.

To get started in building a terrarium you must find a glass or plastic container that you can use to showcase your begonia.



It can be a wide mouth pickle jar or an aquarium or a display case. Remember not to overpot terrarium plants. Then wash the container in plain water-no soap. Buy some long fibered sphagnum moss or orchid moss or even another kind of moss that you want to sterilize in boiling water. Use 4.5 cups of moss to 5 cups of water for a 7 liter bag of moss. Seal the bag and leave it to dry for a few days. When you are ready to use the moss, place it



in warm water and squeeze until it is barely damp before putting it in the container with sterile gloved hands. Next use drainage material such as perlite, chicken grit, and marble or limestone chips that are moistened. Add a few pieces of horticultural charcoal. This should cause the container to be about one third full. Place the clean root ball in a hole and spread the roots. Firm the moss around the ball.



Close the newly planted begonia in the terrarium and place the container in bright light, but not direct sunlight or use LED or fluorescent lights.







If you have to water later, use warm water and lightly water without making the soil soggy. Any excess water can be wiped with a paper towel.

Fertilize the plant with diluted houseplant fertilizer a few times a year.



When grooming the plant remove dead plant material, seed pods, and slime. Shape the begonia by using scissors or tweezers to take any spotted foliage out of the jar. Pinch to encourage branching.



B. U400



B. 'Rajah'

## HORTICULTURE

This is the time that one can begin using a tiny bit of fertilizer to enhance those begonias. This can be the fertilizer that works best for you such as Miracle-Gro. Use  $\frac{1}{4}$  strength after you water the begonia, making sure that you do not over fertilize or over water the plant. Many of the plants survived the freeze outdoors as long as they were protected. They are forgiving sometimes. Those containers that have been taken outdoors have experienced high winds. Remove damaged leaves and work with the plant to restore its beauty.

## 2021 AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY NATIONAL CONVENTION CANCELED

The Greater Atlanta Branch has canceled the 2021 ABS National Convention since many members could not plan the happenings safely during the pandemic. Johnnie Hadley, president of the branch, will publish the new information for the 2022 convention.

## AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY TO UPDATE WEBSITE

The American Begonia Society officers approved fifteen thousand dollars for a web design firm called Ask the Egghead to work with the website committee Rita Nordby, Sally Savelle, Sarah Hudson, and Julie Hagan to update the website.

## AWARDS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE CONVENTIONS

Cheryl Lenert, Award Chair, asks for nominations via e-mail or U.S. Mail for the Herbert P. Dyckman Award for Service, the Eva Kenworthy Gray Award, the Alfred D. Robinson Medal of Honor, the Rudolf Ziesenne Award and the Gene Salisbury Award. It is also time to think about nominating members of ABS and the Southwest Region for the following awards: Mae Blanton Service Award, Marguerite Vernon Award given by the Mae Blanton Branch, the Begonia Ambassador Award given by the Astro Branch, and SWR Hybridizer of the Year. The Mae Blanton Service Award is sponsored by the Austin Area Begonia Society Branch, but any member of ABS/SWR can offer any suggestions for the nomination. This also refers to the hybridizer of the year. Last time we met Freda Holley earned the Hybridizer of the Year 2019.

Send this information to Nelda Moore at 607 Westlake Drive, West Lake Hills, Texas 78746 or email at [neldamoore327@outlook.com](mailto:neldamoore327@outlook.com)

For the ABS Awards send to Cheryl Lenert by email [lenert@flash.net](mailto:lenert@flash.net) or 21744 FM 2920 Hockley, TX 77447.

The nomination must include the name of the person being nominated, the name of the award, and supporting reasons for why this member should receive the award.

## IN SYMPATHY

Thelma O'Reilly died Sunday, March 21 at the age of 103. She will have a donation page in her honor in *The Begonian*.



Thelma O'Reilly at the 2005 Awards Banquet in Dallas

## BEGONIA HATACOA



*Begonia hatacoa*, a rhizomatous group in section *Platycentrum* has short, erect leafy flowering stems, a pinkish green with white lenticels. Because it has a unique way of dispersing seeds, it is found near streams and rivers. Thomas Booth collected this begonia in Bhutan in the 1850s to take to his uncle's nursery in England. Then the plant was described and illustrated in *Curtis's Botanical Magazine* under the name *Begonia 'Rubio-venia W. J. Hooker'*, a name that is a synonym of *B. hatacoa*. David Don in 1825 first published this name based on herbarium material collected in Nepal. It is recognized by its combination of narrowly ovate leaves that are usually held upright. The male and female flowers with tepals are white with red veins. The blades are green with white or silver spots.



This begonia requires humidity; therefore, it is grown in a terrarium or a humid greenhouse.

It is a parent of a few hybrids like *B. 'Regal Minuet'* and *B. 'Spanish Lace'*—both of the *Rex cultorum* group.

This species have one long wing on the fruit and two shorter ones. At maturity the fruit's peduncle curves and inverts the capsule. The longest wing points to the ground and small slits open next to the wings allowing raindrops to become trapped by the small wings on the back of the inverted capsule. When enough water accumulates, it causes the capsule to nod up and down to shake the seeds through the slits.





B. 'Buttercup' grown by Betsy Szymczak



B. 'Black Raspberry'

### Nelda's Terrariums



B. U400



B. 'Thelmae'



B. *geurtii*



B. ???