



# 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)



VOLUME 19, NUMBER 1

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2025

*Nelda Moore, Ken Fuchs, Editors*

## NEXT MEETING

**Sunday, JANUARY 26** 2 P.M.

Zilker Botanical Garden Center  
2022 Barton Springs Road  
Austin, TX 78746

**Dues are due!**

## OFFICERS FOR THE AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY:

President - Vacant  
Vice President – Doug Byrom  
Program Chair - Jackie Johnson  
Treasurer – Vickey Cole  
Secretary – Nelda Moore  
Newsletter – Nelda Moore and Ken Fuchs

Please volunteer to be an officer.

## CONGRATULATIONS, NELDA MOORE!

Nelda's article "Begonias in a Contained Atmosphere," which was the lead article in our October 2023 newsletter, has been reprinted in the current, January/February 2025 issue of THE BEGONIAN. Thank you, Nelda, for another excellent, informative article.



B. 'Beaugonia Funshine Begonia'

## NEW BEGONIA DEVELOPED AS HYBRID IN 'GARDEN GATE' MAGAZINE



A begonia hybrid that is drought tolerant and perfect for hanging baskets on a sunny patio is featured in "Garden Gate Magazine" that is displayed until March 4. It is B. 'Beaugonia Saffran Glow,' one of a series of varieties that come in eleven colors and resemble tuberous Begonias. It is one of the Garden Gate Top Picks for 2025's Best New Plants. This tuberous hybrid features large flowers, heavy branching and upright to mounding habits.







B. 'Beaugonia Crème Fraiche Begonia'



B. 'Beaugonia Poppy Peach Begonia'

### RHIZOMATOUS BEGONIAS

Rhizomatous begonias grow from modified stems called rhizomes that produce leaves forming a ball-shaped plant. The rhizome stores water and nutrients that enable the begonia to survive neglect, irregular watering, and temperature variation.

They vary in size from those grown on a windowsill to giants. Star begonias have multi-pointed leaves, but there is a group that has heavily textured, colorful leaves known as “distinctive foliage.”



B. 'Beaugonia Harlequin Begonia'



*B. masoniana*

Some are iron cross begonias, *B. masoniana*. There is a group with frilled lettuce-like leaves; and the “beefsteak,” *B. 'Erythrophylla'*.





B. 'Erythrophylla'



B. 'Buttercup'



B. *acetosa*



B. 'Cleopatra'



B. *bowerae*



B. 'Crestabruchii'

They come with names — B. *acetosa*, B. *bowerae*, B. 'Buttercup,' B. 'Cleopatra,' B. 'Crestabruchii,' B. 'Joe Hayden,' B. *rajah*, B. 'Tiger Kitten.'

To grow most of these successfully use a shallow clay pot — unless your water is high in salts use plastic pots — and a standard coarse, fast-draining planting mix. Do not overwater or overpot. When the begonia has filled the pot with roots, move the plant up to one size larger. During active growth in spring through fall — the time of active growth — water



only when the surface of the soil feels dry to the touch. In winter during dormancy water sparingly until growth resumes.



B. 'Joe Hayden'



B. rajah



B. 'Tiger Kitten'

Distinctive foliage begonias that require high humidity can be grown in a closed container or terrarium.

They are cool temperature plants 58 to 72

degrees F.

Fertilizer has nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium to be a complete formula 15-30-15 on the label. Use sparingly. Do not feed them during dormancy.

Begonias need adequate light without direct sun.

### MRS. THEODOSIA BURR SHEPHERD



Theodosia Burr Shepherd (October 14, 1845, Keosauqua, Iowa – September 6, 1906, Ventura, California) was an American botanist, horticulturist and pioneer in plant breeding. Called the "Flower Wizard of California," and "The Pioneer Seed-grower," Shepherd was the first woman in California, and possibly the first woman in the United States, to hybridize flowers. (Wikipedia)

### CANE-LIKE BEGONIAS

Most of the cane-like species of begonias originated in Brazil. Hybrids were developed in this country by Mrs. T. B. Shepard at the turn of the century. Many types and sizes with various leaf shapes and colors ranging from very dark to pale green with a texture ranging from papery to leathery make this group popular.

These cane-like begonias also Mallet type that have mahogany red foliage are enjoyed because their pendulous long lasting flowers are on bamboo-like stems. Some must be staked while B. 'Miyo Berger' can be dwarf when grown in a container atmosphere but can grow to 2 ft. in a greenhouse or area with sufficient humidity.

The proper amount of sunlight is extremely important for these begonias to have sturdy stems and foliage that has good texture and color as well as



an abundance of flowers. They grow well outdoors when temperatures are between 58 and 72 degrees and humidity is 40 to 60 %. Water when the surface of the soil is dry to the touch.



B. 'Miyo Berger'

#### MINUTES OF THE AUSTIN AREA BEGONIA SOCIETY MEETING DECEMBER 1, 2024

The Austin Area Begonia Society met at 2:00 P.M. in the Auditorium of Zilker Botanical Garden on December 1, 2024, for a delightful meal, a business meeting, and an assortment of beautiful plants offered for sale. Jim Landers and Doug Byrom assisted with sales of cactus, pansies, cyclamen, and many begonias.

Present were **Charlotte Boyle, Doug Byrom, Jim Estes, Joan Estes, Freda Holley, R.L. Holley, Syria Holley, Rick Holley, Jim Landers, Arlene Lantz, and Nelda Moore.**

Doug brought 10 hanging baskets to sell at \$20 each. These were rhizomatous begonias. He related his experience with keeping these begonias alive and healthy. From experienced growers he learned not to over water or over-pot them. From "Brad's Begonia World," *The Begonian*, Vol.47 of July 1980, and Wedgewood Gardens of Glen Mills, Pennsylvania 19342 "Caring for Fancy Leaf Begonia (Rex Cultorum and Rhizomatous)," he provided additional care so that everyone had a better chance of success. Mrs. Johnson, program chairman, had found this excellent information. He had also asked a speaker and grower for advice about hoyas, but a special event at Zilker

prevented the program from happening.

Members will grow plants and begonias to sell to the public at Tillery and Jones Road in March.

Money Matters: The Austin Area Begonia Society voted to spend \$100 for begonias to take to the National, Regional, and Southwest Get Together in Houston, May 14-18 at Hilton Garden Inn 7979 Willow Chase Blvd.

The Austin Area Begonia Society also voted to donate \$100 to the American Begonia Society for conservation of begonias.

The meeting adjourned at 4 P.M. The next meeting will be held January 26, 2025 in Zilker.

Doug, Arlene, and Nelda cleaned the room and straightened the chairs before leaving.



Photos by Syria Holley

