

Blooming Begonias Newsletter
April, 2023 – June, 2023

President: Rebecca Stallard
Vice-President: Lois Petzold
Treasurer: Frances Drescher
Secretary: Marcia Bedasse
National Representative: Beverly Lichtenstein

Next Meeting: July 10, 2023 @ 7:00 p.m. – Howard Huang to present on Rex begonias.

Upcoming events:

July 25 - Evening tour of Gene Joyner's Unbelievable Acres (With Evening Herb Society)
Weather permitting

August 14 – Annual Potluck and Sell-Swap-Share

President's Message

Summer Greetings to all! In the midst of heat, rain and humidity that we enjoy here this time of year, here's hoping our gardens will flourish. Our Board has been busy planning for upcoming meetings and events. We have wonderful meeting topics planned and we're working on some great field trips. We've been pleased to welcome new members recently. It's wonderful to see the new faces and their enthusiasm for Begonias. We have the fun Summer Potluck/Sell, Swap and Share meeting coming up in August. Please start searching your gardens for plants, cuttings, garden pots, garden tools and anything else that is garden related to bring in for that meeting.

Rebecca Stallard, President

Minutes - Begonia Society of the Palm Beaches
April 10, 2023, Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Begonia Society of the Palm Beaches was held Monday, April 10, 2023, at 7:00 P.M. in the Mounts Auditorium.

The meeting was called to order by President Rebecca Stallard at 7:15 P.M. with 12 members present. President Stallard opened the meeting and thanked Frances for the keeping door open. She shared that the Palm Beach Garden Club will host a flower show at the Four Arts garden Saturday and Sunday, April 14 & 15 from 10 AM to 4PM

Snacks were provided by Lois & Rebecca.

Reports

Vice President

Tentative May program is Betsy Szymczak from the Bessie Buxton branch. Members voted on *How to Grow & Show a Blue-Ribbon Begonia* as the program.

Cuttings from the Ft. Worth Botanic Garden will be shipped in May.

Treasurer

Frances reported on the trip to Harmony where plants were secured for the Mounts sale.

Application and forms were submitted for a 10 x20 booth. Volunteer sign-up was circulated to secure coverage for the sale. Names of volunteers must be submitted as the society is limited to eight nonmember volunteers. Set up is on Friday 8-9 AM; Saturday set-up must be complete and ready by 7:45AM for an 8 AM start; Sunday breakdown is

between 3 – 5 PM. Tables being provided: Folding card table (Frances); 2: 6' tables (Society); 2: 4' tables (Society); 3: 6' table (Leslie). Parking by vendors/volunteers: All volunteers must park in the Hutchinson lot.

Discussions around the educational aspect at the sale were to have one example of each type of begonia with an informational sheet. It was also suggested that terrariums should be on display.

Due to the limited number of plants available for sale, purchase by members is limited to one plant on the day of the sale.

Membership

Dan Salkin joined at this meeting.

National Rep

No report

Newsletter

No report

Webmaster

No report

Old Business

Mounts sale (See above)

New Business

None

Announcements

Doug Pridgen is asking anyone with B. Amber Sweet to share with him. His goal is to preserve the hybrid.

New Business

None

Program

VP Lois Petzold shared information and pictures from Philadelphia Flower Show

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Bedasse, Secretary

***Minutes - Begonia Society of the Palm Beaches
June 12, 2023 Meeting***

The regular monthly meeting of the Begonia Society of the Palm Beaches was held Monday, June 12, 2023, in the Mounts Auditorium with 14 members and guests in attendance. President Rebecca Stallard called the meeting to order at 7:15.

The following information shared: The Boca Garden Club will be having a program November 14. Betsy Szymzak will present on *How to Grow & Present a Blue Ribbon Specimen*.

The August meeting will feature our annual summer Potluck and "Sell- Swap-Share". Members are encouraged to start planning what plants, cuttings and garden-related items they can bring. Members will keep 100% of any sales.

The board will meet in August to finalize programs for the remainder of the year and plans for the up-coming year. Rebecca recalled that the society had two very special tours so far this year at Pauline's and Frances' gardens.

A workday for tending to the garden at Mounts will be decided on in the near future.

Reports

Vice President

Lois shared that Frances was awarded the Marge Lee award for promoting Goodwill in the American Begonia Society, ABS. Lois noted that Frances was the only person from the eastern region to receive an award.

Frances expressed her gratitude to the members who wrote letters to nominate her. Beverly suggested that all letters submitted be given to her as keepsakes.

Lois shared that Kristen, who recently moved to the region will do the July show on terrariums. Lois also suggested that we follow Kristen on Instagram @ begoniasarawak.

Treasurer

Frances reported on the balances in accounts which are in good standing.

Membership

Sandy reported that we have new members. Maria Wolfe joined during this meeting. Yomar attended as Celeste's guest. Dan, Dale, Bruce and Celeste have joined since April.

National Rep

Bev will send the BSPB Annual Branch Report before the ABS Annual Meeting in August.

Newsletter

The newsletter will be out in the coming weeks.

Webmaster

No report

Old Business

NONE

New Business

Frances gave a brief overview of ABS' Holiday Greetings. Branches are able to support ABS through donations to the Holiday Greetings fundraiser. Income from this fundraiser is approximately 15 % of ABS' budget. Frances moved that the society donate \$300. Sandy 2nd the motion which was unanimously voted on. Additionally, Frances suggested that \$300 be donated to the ABS Conservation Fund. After a discussion it was suggested that \$150 would be a more suitable donation. It was voted unanimously to donate \$150.

Snacks were provided by Celeste, Yomar, Nancy and Leslie. Thank you all!

Program

Frances Drescher and Lois Petzold shared information and pictures from the 2023 ABS Annual Convention/SWR Get-together held last month in Tyler, Texas.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Bedasse, Secretary

We've had an action packed few months. We participated in the Mounts Botanical Spring Plant Sale, after having been absent for several years. We had a very successful weekend thanks in no small part to Lois, Marcia, Sandy and Frances who all traveled to north Florida's Harmony Foliage to procure plants for the sale. We had many beautiful Rex, rhizomatous and cane begonias for sale together with a nice selection of different shade plants such as peperomia and primulina. Set-up was "a breeze" thanks to Sandy and her husband who graciously shared and set up their tents. We were fortunate to be assigned a shady spot in the garden. Speaking of breezes, the sale was held on a rather breezy and rainy weekend. On Saturday, fortunately, the storms came later in the day. Frances, Sandy and Lois barely made it out of the garden at the end of the day before a major storm hit. Sunday's sale was rain-drenched, and a tornado warning sent all vendors scurrying to safety for about 30 minutes. While waiting for the storm to pass, we learned the high winds had overturned one of our tents. Some kind vendors set the tent back upright. We returned from shelter to quite a mess of plants strewn all over. We cleaned up and were able to continue a great day of sales. We met all sorts of nice people, and our membership has increased as a result! *Read below about Lois' interview by Nature Nel at the Spring Plant Sale.

Our May meeting featured a zoom presentation by ABS Accredited Judge Betsy Szymczak who spoke on how to grow begonias for show. Betsy's program was quite informative and provided great insight to all

involved in growing and presenting plants for show. This presentation sparked a desire for some of us to participate in future opportunities to show plants with various garden societies such as Wellington Garden Club and Boca Raton Garden Club. Perhaps our own society will host a flower show at some point in the future! In addition to the interesting information on how to grow begonias for show, the presentation was also super helpful in providing great tips on how to grow begonias beautifully for our own personal enjoyment. Betsy is a fountain of information having been accredited as a judge by numerous societies – American Begonia Society, American Dahlia Society, Gesneriad. She is also a certified master gardener in Massachusetts and a garden consultant for the National Garden Club. Check out her website at <http://www.betsyszczak.com>.

We were thrilled to be invited back to visit The Lake House, Kit Pannill's meticulously designed and award-winning garden, on May 13th. We were graciously welcomed by Kit who guided us along meandering paths decorated with stunning hanging orchids and unusual ferns. Her garden contains numerous varieties of tropical plants – unusual and colorful gingers, landscape begonias, crotons, Medinilla, alocasia, philodendron, beds of dwarf chenille, Acalypha and bird of paradise to name a few. Beautiful and mature shade trees adorn the backyard which are further enhanced with hanging orchids and underplanted with dwarf mondo grasses, begonias and bromeliads. We enjoyed seeing several different varieties of colorful smaller, ornamental trees such as *Drypetes Pendula* with vibrant orange powderpuff type blooms and light pink jatropha, together with numerous rare and unusual palms. Those who toured the garden previously will remember the story of how one of the banyans in Kit's garden was terribly damaged during a hurricane many years ago. At the time, she thought it best to remove the tree, but she was convinced by a landscaper to keep it in place, shear it up with stakes, and baby it along with hopes it would survive. And, survive it did! Today, the tree is the focal point of the north section of her garden, with an almost otherworldly look. The landscaper selected some of the downward growing roots and placed them inside PVC pipes/stakes, and within a year those roots had sunk into the ground and burst from the PVC. We learned these PVC pipes are known as the "Pannill Pipes." Today the tree's branches are huge in diameter and have grown outward perfectly supported by the selectively grown root system. The piece de resistance is the expansive glass-ceiling greenhouse which houses perfectly grown enormous potted begonias and orchids and a few other special plant varieties.



Kit Pannill showing off Drypetes Pendula



Stunning hanging orchid!

The 2023 ABS Annual Convention/SWR Get-together was held in May in Tyler, Texas. Two of our members, Frances Drescher and Lois Petzold attended. Our June program featured a slide show and report on the convention. Lois took many pictures of the begonia show, in which she participated as a judge. She walked us through many of the plants that placed in the show and gave us informative explanations of how the plants came to win ribbons. The American Begonia Society has several annual awards, one of which is the Marge Lee Award, bestowed upon a “person who contributes something of spiritual value toward cementing goodwill and harmony among members.” At this convention, our own Frances Drescher was given the Marge Lee Award! We are very proud of Frances and this well-deserved recognition for all of her unwavering dedication to our chapter with keeping thorough books as our treasurer, organizing all financial aspects of our events and procuring and keeping track of plants for our sales. She also has served for almost four years as Secretary at the national level of ABS.



2023 ABS Marge Lee Award



Frances Drescher – Recipient of the 2023 ABS Marge Lee Award

Maria Jessilely L. Marzan was also present at the ABS Convention. Maria is from the Philippines, studies in Mineral Wells, Texas and is quite a talented artist. She was a recipient of an ABS Student Convention Grant. These grants are awarded to students interested in or actively studying the plant family Begoniaceae with the aim of promoting student and future researcher’s participation in ABS and to encourage new research in Begoniaceae. She spoke on the topic of *Painting Philippine Begonias as a means of Plant Appreciation and Biodiversity Conservation*. See below for some of Maria’s botanical artwork.



Common name: "Tandang Begonia"
Scientific name: *Begonia tandangii* C.I. Peng & Rubite
Family: *Begoniaceae* L.

Locality: Baler, Aurora, Philippines
Distribution: Endemic to the Philippines
Habitat: grows on limestone rocks (epilithic lithophytes)
Plant: Flowering, dicot, monoecious perennial herb, rhizomatous
Conservation status: **Vulnerable (VU)** (DAO, 2017-11)

"Tandang Begonia"
B. tandangii C.I. Peng & Rubite
Watercolour on paper
6x9 inches
2019
maria

Begonia tandangii C.I. Peng & Rubite
"Tandang Begonia" - 2



B. halangandae Rubite, S.H.Liu & K.F.Chung
Watercolour on paper
12x18 inches
2020
maria

*Finally, a shout-out to Nature Nel, who hosts an increasingly popular YouTube channel “based on a variety of plants, focusing mainly on orchids.” His focus is to introduce his viewers to his world of botanicals. He has “a passion for nature and the resources to share it.” He visited Mounts Botanical Garden for the Spring Plant sale – his first visit. While walking into the Garden, he bumped into our own Lois Petzold who recognized him from his YouTube videos. They had a pleasant conversation and, being a begonia lover himself, he stopped by our booth. He was filming for his YouTube video and asked Lois if he could interview her on camera. He posted a great video of his visit to Mounts, including a totally spontaneous chat with Lois, which you can access by following this link: <https://youtu.be/BhyyRF8rpcl> The video is titled “Breathtaking botanical park holds its yearly plant and orchid festival. Special begonia cover.” Lois’ easygoing nature and vast knowledge of begonias made Nature Nel’s interview of her a highlight of the video. Be sure to check it out. The link will also be shared in an email to our members.

Mark your calendars for upcoming events:

July 25, 6 to 8 pm – Evening Tour - Gene Joyner’s Unbelievable Acres in West Palm Beach. Donnie Brown has offered to include our group together with the Evening Herb Society to tour this wonderful rainforest garden. Details will be ironed out at our next meeting, but early information is as follows: There is donation suggested of \$10.00 per person. To ward off mosquitos, we should wear long sleeves and long pants and bring bug repellent.

August 14 Meeting – Annual Potluck and Sell-Swap-Share

Happy Summertime to all,
Leslie Fee, Newsletter Editor