

BEGONIA CHATTER



<p>Astro Branch American Begonia Society <i>4513 Randwick Drive</i> <i>Houston, Texas 77092-8343</i> <i>713- 686-8539 or 713-299-2661</i></p>	<p><i>Next Meeting:</i> DATE: July 5, 2020 TIME: PLACE: CANCELED PROGRAM:</p>
<p>July 2020 ISSUE</p>	<p>www.begoniahouston.org</p>

MEETING CANCELED AGAIN THIS MONTH

I was hoping to bring you better news this month about Club meetings. West Gray Multi-Service Center is still closed and the cases of Covid-19 are higher than they have ever been. So far the deaths haven't risen in conjunction with the new cases. As a group, we can't take any chances with this pandemic and must act on the side of being very cautious. We don't want anyone to get ill. It appears that we will need to take this month to month. It is disappointing though as things were looking so positive just a week or so ago that we could look forward to an August meeting. Let's all stay in touch with each other and I will do my part to send you tidbits we find interesting or funny from time to time. We will get through this well and happy. We look forward to hearing how well your begonias and their companion plants are doing. Please stay safe, be well, and above all smile and laugh a lot!



B. 'Silver Point'
 developed by Jurassic Rex Begonias
 as grown in Tom Keepin's garden.

WEATHER FORECAST FOR JULY 2020

According to the United States Weather Service, Houston, and the surrounding areas fall in Region 7 of the National Weather Map. Here is what they predict for June.

Our temperatures will be above normal and precipitation will be near normal. Our average temperatures should range from 82 degrees in the North to 86 degrees in the South. Our coolest temperatures for July will be July 5th & 6th, 13th thru 15th, 21st thru 22nd, and 29th thru 30th. Our warmest temperatures for July will be July 1st thru 4th, 8th thru 12th, 17th thru 20th, and 24th thru 28th.

There could be a moderate hurricane threat in the last week of July. Otherwise, there will be widely scattered showers and thunderstorms at about 4-day intervals. Rainfall will be most widely spread, along the Gulf.

(The weather forecast above is taken from the **Harris Farmer's Almanac for 2020**)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

Happy Birthday wishes to all our members born in July. We hope your special day is a truly special one.

Mel Babb	July 28 th
Sara Chumley	July 26 th
Gloria Hunter	July 10 th
Tom Keepin	July 18 th
Shirll Manes	July 25 th
Janice Shaw	July 30 th

“Take a few moments to remember all the good things you’ve seen and done, ways you’ve grown and things you’ve learned. Celebrate your memories and your dreams....everything that has made you the wonderful person you are today.

“Happy Birthday”

PRUNING, PLANTING AND TRANSPLANTING

July

1 st	Scorpio
5 th & 6 th	Capricorn
9 th , 10 th & 11 th	Pisces
14 th , 15 th , & 16 th	Taurus
19 th & 20 th	Cancer
29 th & 30 th	Scorpio

August

1 st 2 nd	Capricorn
5 th , 6 th & 7 th	Pisces
10 th , 11 th & 12 th	Taurus
15 th , 16 th & 17 th	Cancer
23 rd & 24 th	Scorpio
28 th & 29 th	Capricorn

*** Planting and Transplanting are best done in Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces with Cancer being the best.

*** Best pruning for quick growth is first Taurus and then Capricorn.

(The pruning, planting and transplanting dates above have been taken from the **Harris Farmer's Almanac for 2020**)



B. ‘Cotton Candy’
grown beautifully by Kathlene Murphy

LUCY MELARA'S UNUSUAL BEGONIA

In the June 2020 issue of the Begonia Chatter, I shared with you a photograph of a begonia Lucy Melara is growing in her beautiful garden. We asked if anyone knew the begonias name and if two different color bloom influences' on the same plant are normal. We received an answer to our inquiry from Stewart Price of the Atlanta Branch.

Stewart wrote the following:

Thanks for sending out the Astro Branch newsletter. I was fascinated to see the photo of Lucy Melara's begonia. The leaf resembles that of the cane-like cultivar B. 'Ralph Nelson'. The Begonia database shows this cultivar with two different leaf colors-all green or green with silver splotches. The B. 'Ralph Nelson I grew had pure green leaves with the characteristic slightly serrated leaf-like Lucy's. Unfortunately, I was never able to get my plant to bloom, and then I lost it to the plant pathogen *Pithium*. In regards to the odd flower display, it almost reminds me of a sport, except that rather than producing an unusual leaf color, the begonia produced an unusual flower morph. But I'm not sure that ever happens. In ornamental horticulture, this effect is achieved by grafting, but I sincerely doubt that Lucy grafted one begonia limb onto another begonia's trunk and then forgot she did it! (I'm not even sure begonias can be grafted!)

Regards,
Stewart



The pictures below are of another unidentified begonia growing in Lucy Melara's beautiful garden. This begonia grows much smaller but produces the same different color inflorescences as B. 'Ralph Nelson'



If anyone can add further light on this we would greatly appreciate it. If you can't, but do think of someone else who can please feel free to send it to them and they can contact Tom Keepin at thefrogman@comcast.net. with any information, they may have.
Thank-you!



photo by Mike Flaherty

Begonia 'Careless Whisper'

by Greg Sytch

New Port Richey, Florida

B. 'Careless Whisper' was developed on a whim in the mid-1990's out of a cross between B. 'Cowardly Lion' (rhizomatous) and B. *venosa* (thick-stem). The idea was to create a curly-leaved thick-stem that grows like a rhizomatous. Well, it almost worked!

This award-winning beauty does grow like both, and is easily propagated by leaves or stems like either, but it does go somewhat upright in its growth. I would consider its growth more shrub-like, and if pruned early, definitely not lanky.

It blooms with all the other rhizomatous, which is late winter into spring. Its blooms are mostly a hairy white, perhaps tinged with pink in brighter light. They are held above the foliage. But it is the leaves that create all the buzz.

Gifted with Best New Introduction at the 2000 ABS Convention at Palm Beach, its

leaves are a combination of both parents. They are rather thick like B. *venosa*, yet bronze and brown like 'Cowardly Lion;'. They twist and curl in all directions, usually staying under 5" at maturity, and culminating in a curled leaf like a spiral-leaved rhizomatous.

It prefers dry roots in between thorough waterings. It tolerates most light levels but remains more compact and colorful in brighter light. Dull light brings out more green - while bright light brings out more copper - just like the lioness it was borne from.

Overall, I have enjoyed creating and growing this beauty for years, and most everyone who grows it has little trouble.

Propagate it anytime, and combine small plants together for a really full plant. It has never exceeded two feet for me, so it can fit almost anywhere. I hope you enjoy it as much as I enjoyed creating it!

