

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: August 2, 2020 TIME: PLACE: CANCELED PROGRAM:</p>
<p>August 2020 ISSUE</p>	<p>www.begoniahouston.org</p>

MEETING CANCELED

Once again my hopes have been dashed that we would be able to have a meeting this month. West Gray Multi-Service Center is still closed and the cases of Covid-19 are still high. Children are not allowed to go back to school but have to take lessons on line. The news reports that deaths are down, which is a good thing. As a group, we cannot take any chances with this pandemic and must act on the side of being very cautious. We don't want anyone to get ill. We will continue to take this month by month. It is disappointing though as everyone I talk to misses our meetings and their friends in the club. Please continue keeping in touch with each other and to chat about begonias. Please send me some pictures of how well your begonias are doing with all the extra attention they are receiving, so I can put them in the Chatter for everyone to enjoy.

We will all 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.

We will meet again soon!



B. 'Dragon Wing' in a pot with 'Silver Falls dichondra

WEATHER FORECAS FOR AUGUST 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 the month of August.

Our temperatures will be slightly above normal and our precipitation will be slightly below normal. Our average temperatures should range from 79 degrees in the North to 85 degrees in the South. Our coolest temperatures for August will be August 7th through 10th, 16th thru 18th and 24th thru 26th. Our warmest temperatures for August will be August 2nd thru 6th, 12th through 14th, 20th through 23rd and 28th thru 31st. There will be bands of showers and thunderstorms at about 3 to 5 day intervals and will be heaviest late in the month. Hurricane potential increases the last week of the month.

(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 August. We hope your special day is truly a special one.

Brenda Andrew	August 23 rd
Bill Claybaugh	August 10 th
Eddie Litchfield	August 16 th
Rekha Morris	August 6 th
Geanie Riggs	August 8 th
Tony Robert	August 13 th
Teresa See	August 8 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.

“Happy Birthday”

PRUNING, PLANTING AND TRANSPLANTING

August	
1 st & 2 nd	Capricorn
5 th , 8 th & 7 th	Pisces
10 th , 11 and 13 th	Taurus
15 th , 16 th & 17 th	Cancer
23 rd & 24 th	Scorpio
28 th & 29 th	Capricorn

September	
2 nd & 3 rd	Pisces
7 th & 8 th	Taurus
12 th & 13 th	Cancer
20 th & 21 st	Scorpio
24 th , 25 th & 26 th	Capricorn
29 th & 30 th	Pisces

*** 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)**).



Begonias are Forever

by Freda Holley

Sure petunias, zinnias even roses, are unquestionably beautiful, but alas I find all to be transitory, here for a season or two and then gone. I like plants that can be my friends, that grow old along with me. I have to admit that longevity is one of their greatest attractions for me and I gravitate to those that persist year after year. I delight in hearing tales about someone's begonia that was passed along to them their grandmother and is growing still, and I love to see begonias growing on front porches in the backwoods that I know were never bought, but surely passed along.

First favorites are those where I can maintain my original plant, and I also admit that those where I have to do the least pruning, pinching, maintaining are easily at the top of my list. I have lugged a B. 'Sophie Cecile' with me across all those state lines until it is now so large and with so many stems that it rivals bamboo. You know from reading Bill Claybaugh's article here that it rarely blooms for us in the South, but since it gives me all this with practically no care and with countless new ones passed along, it will stay with me. My own B. 'Taylor Anne', 'Faint Heart' and 'Triplet' (hearty triplets born of a fling between B. *aconitifolia* and B. *maculate* var. *maculate* [B. U076, a gift from Mary Bucholtz] one cold winter in the Ozarks now rival 'Sophie' and are also carefree. They too are sparse of bloom. Friends always have a history you know. I love those big canes and their kindred thick stems, in part, because they do seem to live forever and grow and grow.

I haven't found many rhizomatous that I can count on in this way, but there are a few that are beginning to join my roster of longtime friends. B. 'Selph's Mahogany' and B. *sericoneura*, perhaps because of their thick upright stems and deeper roots are prime among those. There is also B. U331 from seed given to me by Thelma O'Rielly. It is said to be another form of the oh so variable B. *sericoneura* and always a bright and healthy green such as B. "Erythrophylla", B. 'Ricinifolia' and B. *mazae* have been around so

long and propagate so easily that I feel safe in developing affection for them without the fear of losing their friendship.

Anyway, when I pass along a begonia, I invariably tell the recipient that this begonia can be around for a very long while (with some pride in the begonia family, I admit), citing the age of those such as B. 'Lucerne' (116 years, 1892), and B. 'Erythrophylla' (163 years, 1845). They are always impressed.

When I go out to the garden in the early morning it's good to have some solid old friends with whom to share my coffee hour. They invariably cheer me up with their beautiful leaves and occasional blooms and rarely do they complain except about the lack of rain and I can certainly empathize with that!

(This article was taken from the September/October 2008 Begonian page 184)



B. 'Bashful Bandit' growing in Houston, Texas



Begonia chlorosticta Sands by Morris Mueller

This exotic-looking begonia from Sarawak, Malaysia, was first collected in 1965 or 1967 (dates vary by source). Until 1982 it went by the name "ex-Kew species" or B U038, when Martin Sands named it *B. chlorosticta*, which means green-spotted.

The illustration provided is somewhat fanciful as the flowers are closer to white and the leaf background is a lighter green and the spots are more numerous.

B. chlorosticta is in the section *Petermannia* along with other begonias that have raised spots, such as *B. serratipetala* and *B. amphioxus*. The Thompsons in their book, **BEGONIAS: The Complete Reference Guide** classify it as shrub-like, distinctive

foliage, unusual surface and/or coloring. It is a weak herbaceous plant that must be grown in a terrarium here in a moist freely draining mix. It is happiest with temperatures around 70°F. Unlike other shrub-like begonias, it can be propagated from both stems cuttings and leaves. Many other Southeast Asian shrubs can be propagated from leaves. Because the stems are so herbaceous, stem cuttings are more difficult to start than leaves. Cuttings tend to rot.

There are four hybrids created with *B. chlorosticta* as the pollen parent: *B.* 'Calico Kew,' *B.* 'Aluminum,' *B.* 'Moon Maid,' and *B.* 'Lady Amethyst.' They are all shrub-like except for *B.* 'Lady Amethyst' which is a rex.

There is also a color variant of the species called *Brown chlorosticta*.

