



# *The Bayou Begonian*

*Newsletter of the  
Louisiana E-Branch of the American Begonia  
Society*

*April-June 2019*

## **President's Message:**

I'm happy to report that you will be reading minutes from our Hammond meeting! Cheers for Donna and Ron Broussard who graciously agreed to take on the job - I think they both contributed to the report in this newsletter. When we adjourned for lunch, they played the role of any true Begonian - buy plants first! Then they kindly shared their swag with other members as all good begonia lovers do - trading plants makes us happy.

March proved to be full of conflicts so many members were unable to attend. This led to a decision to change our yearly meeting to September in hopes more can come. That means it would be almost a year and a half until the group meets again and that seems way too long. So I would like to sponsor a meeting this fall, perhaps Sept 7 or 14, and hold it in Baton Rouge. When I get a count on who can come, we can decide on a venue that will fit the attendance. So, we'll give a heads up in the next newsletter (July 1) to see who's on board. Having the meeting in September is also a better opportunity for members to bring plants that have made it through the summer-a real goal for Louisiana growers.

We took a "care package" on Sunday to Michael Higson, one of our charter members. He was unable to come so we took begonias to him and of course, he gave us some in return. A cutting from his "Torch" hopefully will restore that old favorite to my collection, it has been missing for many years.

The club voted to pay for a year membership with Brazil Plants - run by a gentleman who collects seed and maintains a collection there. He needs support to pay an assistant to care for his collection while he is botanizing in Brazil. That country is the home of a great many species important for warm weather growers - that certainly includes us! In return for membership, he will send seeds to our branch, so let us know if you want to try germinating and growing on these gifts from the tropics.

Freda, R.L, Harry and I will be attending the South-west Region Get-Together in Austin, May 1. One tour will take us to the LBJ Wildflower Center and a tropical nursery. I will take some show plants-grooming now hoping for the perfect entry. Freda's "Merlot" from last year's convention is a promising candidate. It is classified as an upright rhizomatous which seems to be a vigorous class for our area. If you have never attended a begonia convention, you are missing a lot of fun. It's not too late-click on the ABS website, [www.begonias.org](http://www.begonias.org), and sign up. Hope to see you in Austin.

*Cindy Moran*

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## **Photo Upper Left**

Spring is finally here and this for me is a favorite time of the year. Just now all the rhizomatous and thick stems are blooming in the greenhouse. These blooms are at eye level because they are on benches so I can see their mysterious beauty. Some are tiny and would be plain except they are in such profusion. Others are strange such as this one on my newly minted Rex cultivar *B. 'Homeland'*. With *B. sizemoreae* as a parent, its flowers are hairy all over, even the peduncle and pedicel. See page 7 for even more flower photos. FH

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## ***Louisiana E-Branch Branch/ABS Meeting, March 23, 2019***

Meeting called to order by President Cindy Moran.

Treasurer gave his report. The club showed a current balance of \$2,689.18

The President expressed that the club was in need of a secretary. She asked Ron Broussard to fill the position. Ron accepted.

Freda Holley spoke about a begonia project in Brazil, [brazilplants.com](http://brazilplants.com). The project cultivates many begonia species and supplies seeds to contributing clubs in the states. The club voted to join at the highest level of support or Visionary Member, making a yearly contribution up to \$300 maximum to the conservation effort.

The subject of attracting new members was brought up. It was decided a flier would be made and sent to members via-email, which the member could print out and distribute to willing garden centers in their area. The need was also discussed about the application for an electronic presence on the internet. The club secretary was assigned to form a Facebook page for the club.

The subject of changing the yearly meeting date was discussed. Due to a lot of competition from other spring time plant clubs being a contributing factor to members not being able to attend, it was decided to move next years meeting date to a Saturday in September, 2020.

Freda Holly gave a class on the propagation of rhizomatous begonia leaves. Members were given prepared containers and allowed to choose from several species of rhizomatous leaves and shown how to properly cut and plant them into the soil in the containers.

Cindy Moran gave a talk about germinating begonia seeds, including the proper types of soil to use.

The members took a lunch break, then picked plants for the plant sale.

The meeting was adjourned and everyone left will arms full and smiles.

***Ronald Broussard, Secretary***

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### ***Treasurer's Report***

Expenses this spring were \$75 to the Hammond Research Center, \$78.72 expense for meeting and program supplies, \$262.50 to BrazilPlants and \$10.00 dues to Southwest Region.

Proceeds from sale at the Hammond meeting were \$272.00. Our profit from last spring national conven-

tion was \$1789, after sending \$16,083 to ABS, \$3570 to the Southwest Region and \$2197 to the Fort Worth Collection.

Our current balance is \$2579.96

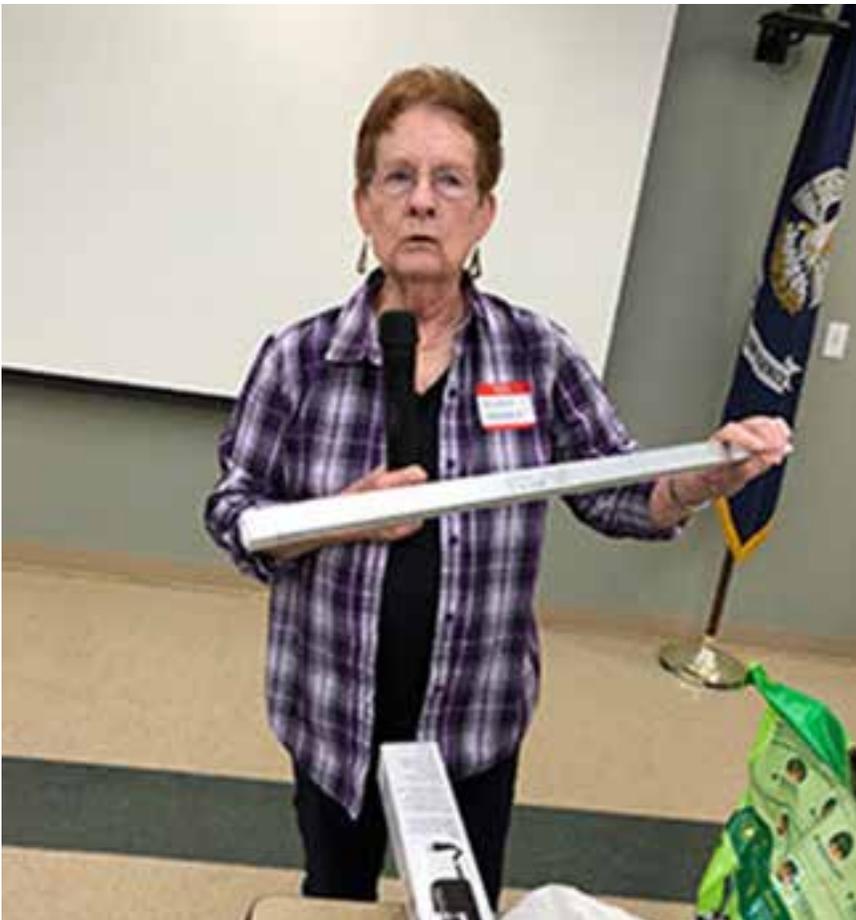
***Harry Moran, Treasurer***



*Cindy Moran, Branch President, led our meeting.  
Photo by Ron Broussard.*



*Freda Holley discussed an easy method of  
rhizomatous leaf propagation. Photo by Ron  
Broussard.*



*Above, Yan Chen of the LSU Research Center and future member of our branch and Eddie Martin dissect and plant their leaves in the provided propagation boxes. Photo by Ron Broussard.*

*At left, Cindy Moran talked about soil to use in propagation and showed a cheap and easy to install light source.. Photo by Francis Shackelford.*



*Above, new member Frances Shackelford, plants her leaves. Kay Clark works with her leaves in the background to the right. Below is the big selection of plants and leaves from which members could choose in the plant sale.*

Photos by Ronald Broussard.



## *Begonia kui*

Many members at our meeting received a leaf to propagate or a small new plant of the species *Begonia kui*. This is a relative new plant for us. The IDB tells us that it was published by Ching-I Peng in 2007 and is possibly from N. Vietnam. It is a begonia in Section *Coelocentrum* which is one of the botanical divisions for begonias and has 30 chromosomes. An internet search indicates it is available both from Taylor Greenhouses and Mountain Orchids. The latter specializes in bring us new and unusual begonias and has this to say about *Begonia kui*:

“*Begonia kui* is a rare treasure related to *B. versicolor*. It is nicely compact, clumping Begonia that does best in a humid greenhouse or in medium to larger sized terrariums.

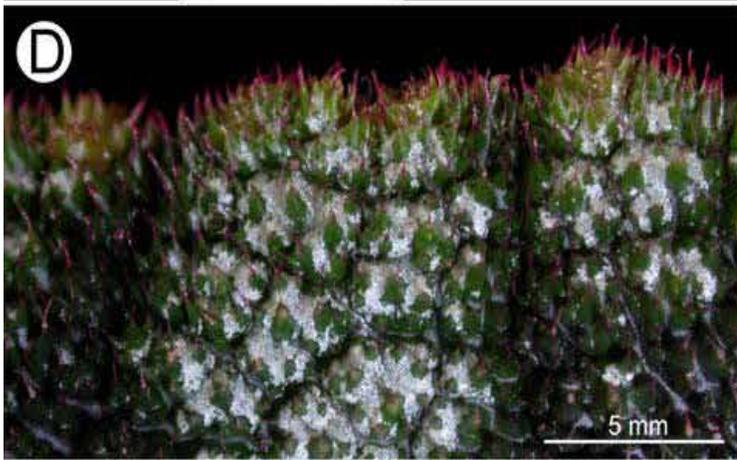
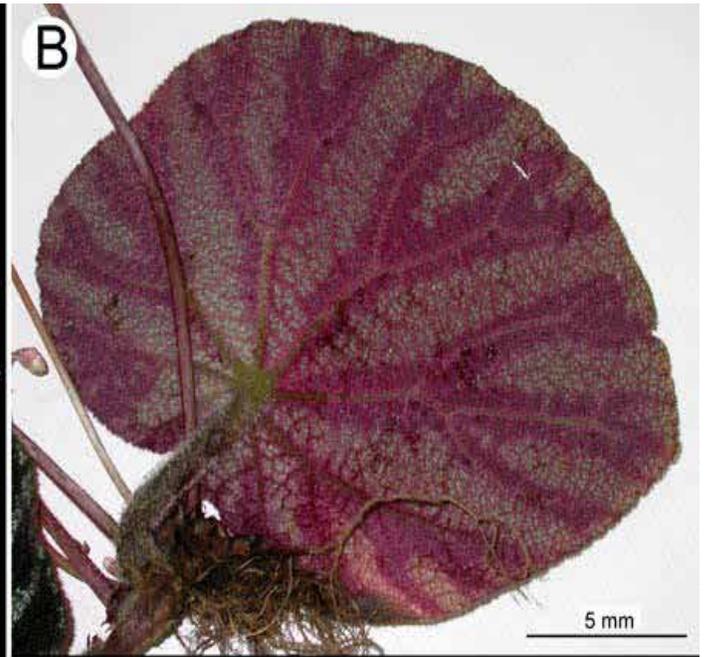
“The foliage on a well grown *Begonia kui* commands attention. It is an intriguing blend of green, red-brown margined veins, and a similar texture to that of *B. versicolor*. The new growths emerge with a paler, almost orangey tint.

“Their size, growth habit, and preference for humidity makes them terrific terrarium plants and are good int-warm greenhouse orchid companions! These plants are currently in 2-3” pots.”

If you are interested in knowing more, I have and can send you a pdf of the original description written by Ching-I Peng. I include a page of photos from that description here.



*Here is a photo of *B. kui* in a terrarium taken by Charles Jaros from the IDB. It will be interesting to see if it would grow outside in South LA either outside or in a greenhouse. On the next page, 7, is a photo page from Peng's original description.*





### *Spring Flowers*

Counterclockwise from top left: The greenish, hairy flowers of *B. U521*; precious future seeds will come from the endangered *B. ludwigii* blooms; *B. sericoneura* buds with their unusual husk like covering; and flowers come in colors as in the coral *B. 'Siam King'* buds with their very hairy pedicel and 'Sea Lion' buds that drape.

