



Begonia 'Dragon Wings'
at Harcourt Estate

RUDY'S NEWS

Rudolf Ziesenhenné Branch of
the American Begonia Society



February—March 2010 Newsletter

**"Sex in the Garden"
Sunday, March 28, 2010—11:00 a.m.**

Our next meeting will be held on Sunday, March 28, 2010 at Julie Vanderwilt's home. The Michaels, Ludwig and Flaherty, will tell us about various propagation methods and give hands-on demonstrations. Please RSVP by March 21st to Julie at Vanderwilt@cox.net or 805-687-8033.

And we might coerce Mike Flaherty to tell us some of his adventures at the Philadelphia Flower Show where he judged Begonias! (Can you believe it???)

Lunch will be served before the meeting, and we hope to be featuring a fabulous cookie selection made by our very own Larry Falxa.

Message from President Mike Flaherty

In June we have a beautiful Estate in Montecito to visit, a real treat for Hydrangea lovers. In July we will meet at Gazebo with a preview of begonias going to the convention and how to get them ready. August we have the ABS Convention in San Francisco. We won't be having the Rudy & Gazebo show this year because the ABS committee said Paul Carlisle and Mike have to show their begonias in the city by the bay. It will be a great convention and we want all our Rudy members to attend. The convention will be at the Embassy Suites in SF, yea free breakfast!

Here are a few of the tours planned for the convention. The Hakone Estate & Gardens in Saratoga, a world historic site. The UC Santa Cruz Arboretum, Quarryhill Botanical Garden in the Valley of the Moon, the Luther Burbank House and Gardens in

Santa Rosa, the fabulous Filoli gardens owned by the shipping heiress of the Matson Line **AND MORE:**

Begonia Boy Wonder and author of Begonias: Cultivation, Identification, and Natural History, Mark Tebbitt will be presenting a seminar at the convention. You don't want to miss that. For some fun Gary and I will show "Time Lapse Begonias". I have a special treat for the big Saturday night Banquet with guest stars and good times. I hope you can attend the convention, as we want our Rudy group to be well presented.

Looks like a fun year ahead so pay your Rudy and ABS dues, then come and play begonias!

Mike

2006 Officers: President—Mike Flaherty (805) 682-2229—mikeflaherty@cox.net; Vice President—Julie Vanderwilt (805) 687-8033—vanderwilt@cox.net; Treasurer—Gary Hunt—garyhunt1@cox.net; Secretary—Diane Dunhill—(805) 682-0529
Historian—Michael Ludwig—begoniagrowing@cox.net;

Newsletter—Julie Vanderwilt—vanderwilt@cox.net; Membership—Gary Hunt/Julie Vanderwilt

We welcome suggestions, corrections or submission of material and pictures. Email to Julie Vanderwilt—vanderwilt@cox.net

To receive this newsletter electronically, please email vanderwilt@cox.net

Brad's Begonia World

Be sure to check out Brad Thompson's updated Brad's Begonia World at

<http://www.bradsbegoniaworld.com/>

You'll find lots of new pictures and information on how to store, wake up and care for your tuberous begonias. There is also information on all types of begonias, how to prune, repot and pinch to keep them looking bushy and beautiful. He also has sections on seed, indoor gardening, gardening under lights, growing for showing and much, much more. Here is a picture of Brad's glorious B. 'Miss Julie', photo by Mike Flaherty.



*** Mark The Dates ***

SWR Get-Together

May 19-22, 2010

Westchester Show & Sale

Saturday, July 11, 2010

Honoring Julie Vanderwilt (!?!)

ABS Convention in San Francisco

August 17 - 22, 2010

The convention will be held at the Embassy Suites in S. San Francisco. Cost is \$109.00 a night single or double occupancy. As is usual with Embassy suites there is a free full breakfast, and cocktail hour. There is also free parking. To make a reservation call 650-589-3400 or www.embassysuites.com or 1-800-embassy and tell them you are with the American Begonia Society. We have a great lineup of speakers, tours and events. The tours start on Tuesday the 17th at Hakone Japanese Tea Garden which was created in 1917, then on to other great adventures.

The registration packets should be out the end of February or early March. Call Carol Notaras for more information at 415-931-4912.

Join today! (\$15 individual, \$20 family) for the Rudolf Ziesenhenné branch. Send coupon below to Gary Hunt.

Please submit ABS National dues (\$25) directly to ABS Membership Chairman Paul Rothstein, 33 Kintyre Lane, Bella Vista, AR 72715 ; or register with PayPal at <http://www.begonias.org/membership/membership.htm>

Join or tell a friend about the Rudolf Ziesenhenné Begonia Branch! Members receive newsletter bi-monthly.

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Member National ABS? _____ _____

individual \$15

Family \$20

Please make check payable to Rudolf Ziesenhenné Branch, and mail to **Gary Hunt**, 948 Cheltenham Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93105



Harcourt Estate—September 2009



Pruning

by Brad Thompson

This is the time of year to start pruning your begonias. Proper pruning and shaping of your begonias now will determine how your begonias will fare and prosper for the rest of the year. There are several reasons for pruning, they are:

1. To make your begonias more compact and full. Pruning forces your plants to send up basal growth and to branch. Without this pruning, many begonias can grow rangy and tall with little side growth. Pruning is a way of training begonias to grow in a more orderly and pleasing shape.
2. To start cuttings to make more plants. There are many reasons for starting cuttings, and pruning your begonias is a perfect way to get cuttings and improve your plant at the same time. You can start the cuttings for plant tables and plant sales, to share with other growers, to increase your own collection or to improve and add to the parent plant. Cuttings can be rooted and then potted together with the parent plant to make a larger fuller plant.
3. To train your plant to grow a specific way. To grow begonias as bonsai, standards, trellis or other unusual ways require attention to pruning to achieve those desired results.
4. To force your begonia to grow to a certain shape. In order to grow begonias in baskets or as tall specimen plants requires proper pruning to train them. Most begonias grown in hanging baskets don't normally grow in a perfect basket shape. Most have a tendency to grow upright and must be pruned to keep them in a basket shape.
5. To keep your plants to a manageable size. If left to their own devices most begonias will grow large and rangy and may out grow their available space. By pruning you can keep your begonias smaller and have room for more plants.
6. To increase the amount of blooms. When you prune your plants properly you force more branches. The more branches you have the more possible blooms you have. If your begonia only has a few branches you can't expect it to produce lots of flowers since it will have limited tips to bloom from.

Pruning Basics:

1. Only prune healthy plants. Begonias that are weak or sickly will not recover well from pruning. Nurse them back to health and wait to prune them till the next season. Vigorous healthy begonias can be pruned as hard as you need to shape them without harming them.
2. Prune any time after the middle of February. Although begonias can really be pruned any time of the year, this is the best time to do it. I usually have finished or stopped pruning by the end of April. Delay pruning if the weather hasn't warmed up yet or your begonias are not actively growing. Wait to prune winter and spring flowering begonias such as rhizomatous and trailing varieties and many species. Pruning them early will deprive you of blooms.
3. Prune to encourage your begonias to grow as you want them. If you want tall begonias you wouldn't prune them back nearly to the pot, those you would prune taller. If you want a begonia to be compact and full, you have to prune them back hard. Prune your begonia with a picture of what you want the begonia to do in your mind. Prune back to buds facing in the direction you want them to grow, usually towards the outside of the pot. Begonias against a wall you may want to prune so all the buds are facing away from the wall. Begonias you want to grow upright should have all the sideways growing branches pruned back. Begonias you want to grow in a basket should have all upright growing stems pruned back and the other branches shaped.
4. Prune out old and unsightly growth. Stems that have several pruning scars from previous years growing should be pruned out completely, especially any that are going to show if not removed. When pruning basket plants remove new upright shoots as they come up, pruning to the lowest outward facing buds. The reason for this is to force side growth from that bud. If you don't prune it down low it will branch high in the basket and be visible.
5. When pruning shrubs and especially hairy leaved begonias, wait for new shoots. If you are revamping a shrub, prune out all the old growth, leaving only the new shoots that are coming up. Most shrubs have a tendency to die back to the soil line when cut so you might as well cut them out to begin with.
6. Don't prune and repot at the same time. This is too much shock for the plant. After you prune and the new growth has come out six inches or so, then repot. Repot the plant more deeply in the pot to cover your pruning scars and to force more new growth.