



VICTORIAN BEGONIA SOCIETY Inc

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Next Meeting

Saturday 15th January, 2022

At the Robert Clark Centre Ballarat Botanical Gardens

11:30am: Committee Meeting

12:30pm: Lunch

1:30pm: General Meeting

Bring proof of your Double Vaccination

Wayne's Begonia News

Meeting is on 15th January.

Hi every one. We hope you are well and if not get well soon. We hope you had a good CHRISTMAS and we hope you have a very happy and healthy New Year.

Now is the time to repot your begonias. Don't over-pot them. Also take cuttings; leave three stems so your plants are well balanced for selling or for the competitions in March. Watch out for bugs and mildew. Watering is important too because the weather has been so unpredictable. I have put some begonia cuttings in water with charcoal and they are doing well. They have some roots on. Some begonia cuttings were put in pure water and they have some roots on as well. Some tubers are not as advanced because of the weather.

We got a phone call from Bruce Blanchonette's daughter to say Bruce was in hospital because he had contracted Covid. We hope he is well now. Bruce was Secretary before Peter took over.

There will be a barbecue for lunch and a Committee meeting before it at 11:30 am.

Could you please bring some goodies for afternoon tea. I would like to thank everybody for helping clean up after our Christmas luncheon.

Take care. Wayne Walters

Selling Plants at the Ballarat Botanical Gardens

Just before Christmas I received an email from Donna Thomas at the Ballarat Botanical Gardens regarding selling conditions of plants within the Gardens area. Here are excerpts from it:

Just following up from the recent Tenant meeting where Peter introduced our new biosecurity guidelines, to provide a written overview about the reasons for our changes and the online application process for your reference.

As many of you know, the Ballarat Botanical Gardens contain many valuable plant collections, including rare begonias, endangered trees and more recently many rare and threatened plants of the Ballarat region. Increasingly we are also involved in plant conservation projects—two such projects involve plant species that have only five plants in the wild!

It's an exciting space, but with that comes added responsibilities, and the need to review and strengthen our biosecurity guidelines to protect them from pests and diseases.

These new guidelines are not only for the tenant groups, but for everyone wishing to bring plant material into the entire 40 hectares of the gardens. The Friends of the Gardens nursery and Ballarat Farmers Market are already working within these guidelines.

We have created a simple online application form containing eight core questions that addresses our major biosecurity concerns, with the aim to flag potential risks before they come into the gardens.

Particular areas of concern are;

- Potting mix (We require commercial mix—no soil or compost)
- Pots (New pots only)
- Source of plants, bulbs, tubers (No field plants etc)

Of these concerns, soil and second hand pots are some of the biggest risks of introducing pests and disease into our gardens, and as such we have now banned potting media containing soil and second hand pots.

Only one application is required per group, but the group must take responsibility to ensure all members are complying with the guidelines.

.At our meeting we will be discussing this request and following your agreement, we will fill in the application form they require

Representative from Begonia Festival Planning Group

We are hoping to have a representative from the City Council's Begonia Festival task force but this has yet to be confirmed.

Pinching Tips Tricia Marriott

We pinch out growth tips to encourage shape in a plant. It is not quite the same as pruning. To pinch your begonias means to remove the growing tip of each stem where the next leaf will grow. Usually we do it by pinching or nipping with our fingers. You can use small scissors if you wish.

Watch where you choose to pinch. Pinch after three nodes have grown. This leaves you with two nodes that will send out side shoots. Let these side shoots grow out three nodes and then pinch again. Continue pinching as necessary. Pinching will delay blooming but you will be rewarded with a healthier and more bloom clustered plant later in the season.

Sourced from ABS Newsletter October 2011

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This will be your last Newsletter if you have not done so!