

We are pleased to have this great line-up of speakers at the ABS National Convention in Sacramento.

September 3-7, 2019

(speakers, dates and times subject to change)

Stephen Maciejewski

Exploring for Begonias and Gesneriads in the Wilds of China

(Tuesday evening, 9/3/19)

Join Stephen, his Chinese botanical colleagues, and his band of adventurous plant enthusiasts on a recent trip as they travelled to familiar, remote, and new locations in China in the hopes of seeing begonias and gesneriads in their native habitat and discovering new species. Come wander with them as they go exploring from Guiyang to Guilin and then from Mount Qiyunshan to the Lingyan Cave in Anhui Province. Get a rare glimpse into a collector's private garden. See new hybrids and new species not yet published.

Plus visits to botanical gardens, Hong Xin's wedding, the opening of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Gesneriad Conservation Centers, botanizing in the dark, getting lost in the Thousand Demons Cave, drifting down the Luxi River on a bamboo raft in the rain, while observing a Chinese burial high up in the karst mountains and thinking WOW! Planted among friends! What a place!

Stephen Maciejewski is President of the ABS Delaware Valley Branch and Philadelphia's Liberty Bell Gesneriad Society Chapter, and co-chair of the GS Student Convention Grant Committee as well as co-chair of the Conservation Committees for GS and ABS.

Stephen has travelled to Ecuador, China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Fiji, and Cuba in search of gesneriads and begonias. He is also the co-founder of the Gesneriad Conservation Center of China (GCCC). To share his enthusiasm for exploring and finding new gesneriads and begonias and to build support for their conservation, he has co-lead five groups to China with the help of Wei Yi-Gang, Wen Fang, and Hong Xin. He is presently planning his first begonia group field trip to China. Have you signed up?

Stephen Maciejewski
(Ma-chay-YEF'-ski)
Philadelphia, PA



Begonias at the 2019 Philadelphia Flower Show

(Tuesday evening, 9/3/19)

The theme of the 2019 Philadelphia Flower Show (PFS) was **Flower Power**, and Stephen will present his annual review of the Show to us. He'll take us on a sort of "Magical Mystery Tour" of the show, featuring displays reminiscing of the 60's, which is the 50th anniversary of Woodstock and then highlight entries made by members of Delaware Valley Branch (DVB) of the ABS and others. Many of our DVB members were involved on so many levels and made quite a significant contribution to the PFS. Some entered plants, while others volunteered throughout the week, helping to make the PFS a major success.

There were three judgings during the 11 days of this very long Show. When not entering plants, Stephen spent his time taking photos of others entering plants, volunteers helping with the entry process and eventually taking photos of the plants and those admiring the plants, including the dogs on Fido Friday. He also collected images and stories to share with you about all the people who helped make the PFS the biggest and the best flower show in the entire world. This is the best Flower Show on planet Earth. Don't miss this fun, exciting, eye candy rich program that shows what we can accomplish through shared love and dedication to a cause greater than us yet including all of us.



Ernesto Sandoval
UC Davis



**Plant Hormones:
Knowing and
Managing Them for
Better Results**

(Saturday morning, 9/7/19)

Have you ever wondered why your plant has a sudden burst of growth after transplanting? Or how the plant "knows" to grow new parts when pruned or how a cutting knows to make roots? Maybe you've even wondered about how a banana knows to ripen or why leaves all of a sudden turn yellow when you bring a plant home? Find answers to these questions and others about why your plants grow the way they do during this informative yet not so technical presentation by Ernesto Sandoval, Director of the UC Davis Botanical Conservatory.

Ross Bolwell
Australia



**Begonia Breeding
the Aussie Way**

(Wednesday evening, 9/4/19)

Ross will present the methods he uses to get new Begonia cultivars, including parent selection, timing, tools and equipment, growing conditions, and techniques used. This will include photos of his successes, some of his failures, and reference the IDB (International Database) during the talk. Ross will encourage attendees to have a go themselves as this is a most rewarding hobby that has brought him a great deal of pleasure over the years.

Begonia Botanical Diversion

(Saturday morning, 9/7/19)

Ross used to teach botany at college (morphology, not genetics) and was always pleased by the way he could use begonias for botanical purposes. They were always a point of difference from the usual plant examples used in illustrating botanical features. So, this talk will focus on seed, stipules, leaf shapes and textures, flowers and inflorescences, stamens and stigmas among other features that make begonias what they are.

Sacramento Branch Panel

**Growing Begonias in the
Sacramento Valley**

(Monday evening, 9/2/19)



Members of the Sacramento Branch will discuss how they grow begonias in the Sacramento area. Sacramento temperatures generally range from a heat wave in the summer (many days of 100+ degrees) to lows in the winter dipping just below freezing.

Marlene Carroll, Paul Tsamtsis, Dennis Hollingsworth, Joan Coulat, Shelly Berlant, and Bob Hamm are all Past Presidents of the Sacramento Branch and will be on-hand to discuss how they grow and care for their begonias in the Sacramento region.

Dr. Daike Tian
China



Knowing Begonia

(Tuesday evening, 9/3/19)

Dr. Daike Tian will help us know begonias better by sharing his vast experiences, from his research as a Fellow at the Shanghai Chenshan Botanical Garden and the Shanghai Branch of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, where he currently works, to his extensive fieldwork, including many surveys of Chinese wild begonias and their habitats. He'll also review published papers and herbarium specimens to give us greater insights into knowing the plants we love. Then he'll explore ideas about what's involved in growing and hybridizing begonias, plus lab work, particularly cytological and molecular analysis. Based on his vast experience in field surveys, classical taxonomy, molecular biology, horticulture science, and industry, he will share with us how he understands the concepts of species and taxon and how to identify a begonia in the right way. You'll be on the road to being an expert after hearing this talk.

Daike Tian is a Life Member of ABS. He previously spoke at the 2012 and 2016 Conventions. He's a busy man, either involved in research, publishing papers, teaching at the University, horticultural extension services or going into the field to explore for new plants. His primary focus is on Chinese natives, especially new species, natural hybrids, biodiversity, and conservation. He has one of the largest begonia collections in the world including 200+ (nearly 90%) Chinese begonia species and 100+ species and cultivars from outside China. He co-chaired the begonia section of World Botanical Conference in Shenzhen, China in 2018. He also founded the website for Online Begonia, based in Shanghai, China. To promote the scientific research and conservation of begonias, he is also acting as the lead editor of the Special Begonia Issue in *Phytotaxa*, the world largest journal of plant taxonomy. Part I of the first special issue was published in December 2018.

(<https://biotaxa.org/Phytotaxa/issue/view/phytotaxa.381.1>)

Wen-Ke Dong
(Victor Dawn)
China



All Roads Lead to Begonia

(Wednesday evening, 9/4/19)

In 2003, British and Chinese botanists and horticulturalists discovered Blue Diamond Impatiens (*Impatiens namcharwensis*) in Tibet. It is the only true-blue colored impatiens in the world. I wanted to introduce it into cultivation in China, so I decided to visit its natural habitat – Medog County, SE Tibet. Luckily, I found it and even found some unusual begonias. So, I brought back some seed. They turned out to be *Begonia aborensis*, a newly recorded species in China. Unfortunately, it was stolen by a fellow employee. What to do? Of course, go back to SE Tibet and look for begonias again! From then on, I visited SE Tibet twice and found 10 begonia species, including another species new to science, *B. pseudoheydei*.

Meanwhile, some of my friends also visited SE Tibet many times and discovered two additional new species. As a biodiversity hotspot, SE Tibet has many unknown plants waiting to be acknowledged by science. Tibet also has a reputation among travelers as being an extraordinary place, a beautiful location, and as close to heaven as we earthlings can get. Join me, as I look for a blue diamond and discover Begoniaceae jewels in SE Tibet.

Wen-Ke Dong spoke at last year's ABS convention and is one of the authors and the book "Cultivating and Appreciating Wild Begonias."

Begonia Conservation Meeting

Panel led by Stephen Maciejewski
(Thursday evening, 9/5/19)

Discussion of conservation and preservation efforts and needs for begonias worldwide.

Mike Flaherty
Santa Barbara, CA

**Tribute to
Brad Thompson**

(Wednesday evening, 9/4/19)

Brad Thompson was one of the best growers and most prolific begonia hybridizers ever and inspired Mike to grow all types of begonias. Brad introduced him to novel growing methods like standards and wreaths. Brad created over 630 hybrids and Mike test-grew many of them and will show some of Brad's most popular creations. Having known Brad for over 20 years, Mike has many amusing and interesting stories about this mercurial man who made begonias the center of his life and did so much to enrich ours.



Mike Flaherty standing next to B. 'O'Flaherty's Folly' by Brad Thompson.

Wisnu Ardi
Indonesia

**A Decade of
Begonia
Research and
Conservation
in Indonesia**

(Saturday morning, 9/7/19)



Join horticulturalist Wisnu Ardi from the Bogor Botanical Garden in Indonesia, as he shares his insights into his research, expeditions, and discoveries in the world of begoniaceae. Although Indonesia is known as one of the biodiversity hot spots, the study of Begonia has been late in starting here. The first Begonia House at the Bali Botanical Garden was established by Ms. Tuti in 2005. Its primary purpose was to conserve native Indonesia begonias.

In 2008 and 2009, he joined Daniel Thomas (a student of Mark Hughes) for Begonia research in Sulawesi and collected more than a dozen new species. He published his first-ever new species in 2009.

With the Bali Botanic Gardens in 2010-2011, they carried out two significant expeditions to the Moluccas. The Bogor Botanic Gardens then collaborated with The Fairchild Botanic Gardens in 2011 working on the begonias of the Moluccas. In 2014, he published two new species from Halmahera. In 2015-2016, three new species from the Moluccas were published. In 2017, he received a grant from Mr. Tan Jiew Hoe or John Tan (President of Singapore Gardening Society), who commissioned Wisnu to write a guidebook on the Begonias of Sulawesi. In 2017-2018, he carried out three expeditions to Southeast, Central, and South Sulawesi. Recently, this work was also supported by a grant from the American Begonia Society. This support made the 4th expedition to North Sulawesi and Luwuk in Jan-Feb 2019 possible. All of these expeditions have resulted in recollecting many poorly known species, plus the discovery of many new species, including six new species published in 2018.

So join Wisnu Ardi as he claws his way through thick jungles, forges rivers without bridges, hopes volcanoes won't erupt, deals with the aftermath of an earthquake and tsunami, and explores the unknown, to gather information and collect new plants for science, for the Bali and Bogor Botanic Gardens and to delight begonia enthusiasts.

Please support the Convention
by making a donation to the
American Begonia Society.

www.begonias.org/events

Donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

