



photo by Julie Vanderwilt

## Begonia 'Madame Queen'

by Morris Mueller

B. 'Madame Queen' was hybridized by Beth Bath of Santa Ana, California in 1957, and registered with the American Begonia Society as #150 in 1958. The cross is B. *manicata* 'Aureo-maculata Crispa' X B. 'Leslie Lynn.' From the first plant of the cross (the seed parent) it gets its ruffled edge on the leaves. The second plant (pollen parent) contributed leaf color and red flecking on the petioles.

The rhizome is erect and the plant is very large at maturity.

The Thompsons, in their **BEGONIAS: A Complete Reference Guide**, classify this plant as For The Collector. They further report that it can be grown outdoors in a moss hanging basket in the shade.

B. 'Madame Queen' has a long list of progeny including B. 'Bess,' B. 'Copper Twist,' B. 'Doug Frost,' B. 'Macushla,'

B. 'Magux' grex, B. 'Muddy Waters,' B. 'Oliver Twist,' B. 'Porgy,' B. 'Small Majority,' and B. 'Green Queen.' The latter is a B. 'Madame Queen' sport identified by Michael Kartuz in 1974.

While the culture of this begonia should be the same as for most rhizomatous begonias, I have never been successful in growing it into a mature plant; nor, for that matter, have I had much success with many of its hybrids.

The one exception is B. 'Green Queen' which I do grow successfully under lights.

B. 'Madame Queen' demands to be dry during the winter.

Propagation is by leaves, wedges and rhizome cuttings.

Additional information about these crested rhizome forms can be found in **the Begonian** (October 1980, pp. 264-267) in an interesting article by Elda Haring.

