



photo by Julie Vanderwilt

Begonia 'Madame Butterfly'

by Morris Mueller

This beautiful rhizomatous plant was created by Leslie Woodriff, a prolific hybridizer of begonias and other plants in 1977. He and his family used to operate a nursery, Fairyland Begonia Gardens, in McKinleyville, California. He passed away in the late 1980s.

It has large spiraled leaves and rose flowers in the spring. It is not a prolific bloomer.

B. 'Madame Butterfly' resulted from B. *conchifolia* var. *rubrimaculata* x B. 'Bowkit' X B. *carolineifolia*. Woodriff made at least 12 crosses using B.

'Bowkit.' (or 'Bokit'). It was registered with the ABS as #623.

From its parentage it would seem to had no special cultural requirements, but I am still trying to grow a large happy plant of it. (Perhaps I overwater it.)

It has been used as a pollen parent for hybridizing. In the early 1980s, Bob Cole crossed it onto B. 'Her Majesty Sylvia Leatherman' (a rex) and named four rex hybrids from the cross. In 1991, Walter Dworkin of New York is credited with crossing it onto B. 'Olei Silver Spot' and producing B. 'Winged Majesty.'

