



photo by Julie Vanderwilt

B. 'Charles Jaros' grown by Shirley Brown at the 2006 Miami Convention *Begonias: I Never Knew It Could Be Like This*.

Begonia 'Charles Jaros'

by Morris Mueller

This begonia was named for the ABS President from 1999 to 2001. Paul Lowe, a Florida hybridizer, created it in 1980 with the cross of *B. hatacoa* X *B. deliciosa*. Lowe created over 80 named hybrids including such well-known plants as B. 'Emerald Lacewing,' B. 'Daisy,' B. 'Chuck Jaros,' B. 'Helene Jaros,' B. 'Teal Wing,' and B. 'John Sousa.' *B. deliciosa* (the male parent) contributed more to the overall appearance of B. 'Charles Jaros' than did the seed parent. This plant was first known as B. 'Lowe's Rubro-Venia.'

B. 'Charles Jaros' is a rhizomatous plant with upright stems that is jointed at or below the soil surface. As the rhizomes spread a very nice, upright shrub is formed. It does not grow much taller than eighteen inches in height for me. Its flowers are pink.

I could find only one hybrid that used B.

Charles Jaros' as a parent. Brad Thompson created a cane-like plant he named B. 'Mariposa Blanca' where B. 'Charles Jaros' was the pollen parent.

The Thompsons, in their book ***BEGONIAS: The Complete Reference Guide*** list B. 'Charles Jaros' as for the Advanced Grower.

Like its *B. deliciosa* parent, this is not the easiest plant for me to grow. Both plants need filtered sun and seem fussy about watering, wanting neither too much nor too little. The old upright stems break apart as the plant puts forth new growth. If hit by too much cold in the fall, the whole plant 'disassembles' right down to the rhizomes and will stay dormant until spring when it will shoot up from all the rhizome tips in the ground.

Despite its challenges, it is a plant well worth growing.

