



Plant of the Month: *B. goldingiana* and *B. ruhlundiana*

Courtesy of the Buxton Branch and the American Begonia Society

These two species turn out to be very similar. *B. goldingiana* and *B. ruhlundiana* are both Brazilian species. Both are very attractive, adjusting well to indoor growing conditions, and not requiring any special growing environment.

B. goldingiana

- It is shrub-like, with succulent leaves that similar to *venosa*, shouldn't be touched often so that the beautiful, fine hairs aren't rubbed off
- This species is named for Jack Golding.
 - Jack Golding, an ABS member who passed away in 2009 at the age of 90. Made significant contributions to ABS, was very generous and supportive, and loved by all.
- It was described by Ludovic Kollman in 2010.
 - Ludovic grew up in France, but lives in Brazil. He is regarded as the expert on this section of begonias and described many species. Ludovic is a member of ABS, and highly regarded. He recently received funding from the ABS Conservation & Research Fund to do a series of expeditions.
- *B. goldingiana* has a vulnerable conservation status.

B. ruhlundiana

Peter Moonlight has collected *Begonia ruhlundiana*, says that both of these species are part of an extremely interesting group of Brazilian begonias.

Has a dense coating of stellate (star-shaped hairs), which is what makes them look felty. Peter used this feature to unite them all into section *Tetrachia* in a 2018 paper.

Peter said that: most begonias in Brazil are found in the Atlantic forests along the eastern and southern coast of Brazil. A few members of this section are found in the same forests, but many more of them are found either on granite outgroups in the Atlantic Forests (like *Begonia goldingiana*), or on an inland mountain range called the Serra d'Espinaca (like *Begonia ruhlundiana*). Both habitats are very dry, and the whole section has thick, succulent stems and leaves, and their coating of stellate hairs allows them to survive the dry season. Not only that, but they are often found growing in full sunshine, which is extremely unusual for begonias. I've seen a few members of this group growing next to cacti, which really highlights their drought tolerance.