



Phytotaxa *Begonia* Special Issue 2018

Begonia is a pan-tropical, mega-diverse genus of economic value as ornamental and medicinal plants. As the fifth largest genus in the angiosperms, *Begonia* has a huge diversity with over 1,900 known species, which are mainly distributed in the tropical regions of Asia, America and Africa. The size and distribution of the genus gives it the potential of becoming a model plant for genomic, biogeographic, systematic and evolutionary research. *Begonia* species are extremely sensitive to habitat, and most are locally endemic, with many of these being endangered. The wild species with particularly beautiful foliage or value as traditional medicine face excessive collection and illegal trade. In the past 20 years, the number of accepted species names in *Begonia* has increased considerably, from 1200 to 1900+. However, due to the micro-endemic nature of *Begonia* species and inadequate field surveys, many new taxa still await discovery and description. Furthermore, in order to provide up-to-date reliable data for scientific research, conservation and utilization, most previously described taxa deserve taxonomic revision. To address this knowledge shortfall, we proposed publishing a series of special issues on *Begonia* to present current advances in classical taxonomy, phylogeny, speciation, population genetics, biogeography, natural hybridization and conservation biology related to this genus.

Special Issue Editors

DAI-KE TIAN¹, YU-MIN SHUI², MARK HUGHES³, RUTH KIEW⁴, MARK TEBBITT⁵ & PETER W. MOONLIGHT⁶

¹Shanghai Chenshan Plant Science Research Center of CAS, China. E-mail: dktian@sibs.ac.cn

²Kunming Institute of Botany, CAS, China. E-mail: ymslui@mail.kib.ac.cn

³Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, UK. E-mail: mhughes@rbge.ac.uk

⁴Forest Research Institute, Malaysia. E-mail: ruth@frim.gov.my

⁵Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences, California University of Pennsylvania, USA.

E-mail: tebbitt@calu.edu

⁶Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, UK. E-mail: pmoonlight@rbge.ac.uk