



2442 State Route 27 ~ North Brunswick, NJ 08823 ~ (732) 297-1244 ~ Open Seven Days

Rieger Begonia

Rieger begonia (*Begonia x hiemalis*), Elator hybrids also known as Winter Begonia comes from a huge family of begoniaceae. It is a hybrid cross between tuberous and wax (fibrous) begonia that was developed by Otto Rieger (not Reiger), a German plant breeder. Some consider it a toss plant but with proper care and a little know-how it can bloom up to 6 months indoors and after a rest period be coaxed to rebloom.

Rieger begonia produces a reddish, fleshy stem with glossy, asymmetrical serrated leaves. At the end of each stem, it develops a cluster of 3 double rose shaped flowers; one large showy male and two smaller females. The male flowers will drop off within 2-3 days after opening.



Care:

R. begonia does not grow in hot humid regions. It prefers cool temperatures of 70F during the day and 60-65F @ night with bright indirect sun (east window); that's why it's a popular winter flowering plant. Grow it in well-drained peat/perlite soil mix or African violet soil and feed with ½ strength houseplant fertilizer every 2 weeks when actively growing. When watering, let it to dry slightly between watering but not too dry or too wet
Be sure to remove the spent flowers to stimulate new bloom.

Re-blooming Once the plant slows down and stops blooming cut it back to several inches above the soil line and place in a cool, medium light area, keeping on the dry side or place it in the shade outdoors during the summer. When you see new growth, replot the plant to a larger container, move it to bright indirect light and start watering and fertilizing. Rieger begonia responds to short days and cool night temperatures (fall/winter) which stimulates it to bloom again.

Trouble shooting

- Direct sun will scorch the leaves
- Too much light will turn the foliage a copper color, then brown.
- Avoid getting water on the leaves as it can cause powdery mildew problems.
- Too much fertilizer will turn the foliage blue green and curled at the ends.
- Overwatering with low temps causes leaves to wilt and turn brown.
- Keep away from heating vents or cold drafts.