



Project Area: Living Collections

Project Title: Begonia Species Bank (BSB) Scientific Photography

Earliest Start Date: 18 May 2026

Latest End Date: 21 August 2026

Reports to: Seth Hamby, Director of Living Collections & Glenn Dickerson, Collection Curator (primary); Benjamin Durrington, Plant Records Coordinator (secondary)

Overview

Every internship at Fort Worth Botanic Garden (FWBG) is important to the organization's success and contributes to the accomplishment of the strategic goals and, ultimately, achievement of its vision for the future.

The purpose of this internship is to provide real-world experience working in a public garden for a graduate student or upperclassman interested in Horticulture, Photography, and Plant Records. The intern will assist in the scientific photography, documentation, and verification of the FWBG Begonia Species Bank, a Plant Collections Network accredited collection.

Project Summary: Begonia Species Bank Photography Internship

The Begonia Species Bank at FWBG exists to prevent the loss of Begonia species worldwide. It is a vital resource for research, conservation, education, and collaboration. Our Mission is to make our collections more accessible to the public. Having an accessible scientific photographic database is critical for those who are unable to visit in person, researchers wishing to study our collection from offsite, or people generally interested in Begonias.

The BSB currently houses more than 600 species and over 800 hybrids, with 15% of the IUCN Red Listed Begonia species represented. The collection is managed by a full-time Begonia Collection Curator, an army of dedicated volunteers, and living collections staff. This project will initiate and inform the process of systematic scientific photography of the entire collection beginning with our species Begonias.

Intern Responsibilities

- Work with Director of Living Collections and the Begonia Collection Curator to capture scientific photographs of the Begonia Species Bank collection.
- Research, design, and test various methods of photography and equipment to determine best practices and protocols for capturing images of plants.
- Utilize existing best practices and protocols from previous projects.
- Deliver detailed report of project, including equipment specs, protocols, and constructive feedback.



- Work with volunteers and staff to coordinate and prioritize photographing the collection.
- Perform other horticulture-related duties as assigned.
- Keep detailed, organized records and maintain open communication with supervisors.

Supervisor Responsibilities

Project supervisors will train and instruct interns on all techniques, data entry, and other project-related tasks. Interns may also be trained by other FWBG staff for related tasks (e.g., collections curation). Supervisors will assist with these duties where necessary and as time allows. The supervisors will recognize all participant efforts through acknowledgments in publications, presentations, and web-based reports.

Time Commitment & Schedule

FWBG Living Collections interns during the summer session are asked to commit to a minimum of 200 hours. This internship position is best suited to a fixed weekly schedule, although there is room for some flexibility throughout the summer. Project tasks intended to be completed on-site at FWBG are restricted to normal business hours of 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday. For all internships, a mutually agreed upon schedule will be confirmed in writing. Expected absences (e.g., vacations) must be discussed in advance.

Skills & Background Requirements

- Current or former student in Photography, Horticulture, Biology, Ecology, or related field.
- Familiarity with Photoshop, Adobe Lightroom, and Helicon focus stacking software
- Data collection and photography experience.
- Basic knowledge of plant identification and taxonomy.
- Must have basic computer and mobile phone app skills.
- Basic computer literacy: spreadsheets, report creation, presentation creation, email attachments, files/data organization and hierarchy.
- Internet literacy relating to research (primary literature searching, etc.)
- Independent thinking and ability to work both alone and as an assistant.
- Must be at least 18 years old with a clean record; background checks are done by BRIT for all volunteers and interns; will be to be trained for safe interactions around minors.

Intern benefits include learning and growing skills in the following:

- Scientific photo documentation
- Collections curation



- Project management
- Time management
- Research, data processing, and analysis
- Interaction and networking with professional Horticulturists and scientists

Measure of Success

Interns will be given verbal feedback throughout the internship. Where appropriate, results from this project will be submitted for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals and presented at scientific conferences by FWBG staff and associates. Project participants are encouraged to contribute to publications where possible and to also make public presentations of the data as time, interests, and skill level allow. All student interns are required to create a minimum of one product (e.g., poster, report, annotated dataset, infographic) and one project reflection piece (e.g., an essay, blog post, drawing, video) which will be shared with the public via FWBG's website and social media. Additional contributions beyond these products are encouraged.

Project Goal

Initiate and standardize the process of systematically photographing the Begonia Species Bank collection.

Project Timeline

Begins: 18 May 2026- Orientation

Progress Report Due: 20 July 2026

Final Deliverables Due: 21 August 2026

Presentation: 17-21 August 2026