



# The Tree Shrinker

Volume LX, No.10

A MONTHLY BULLETIN

<http://www.eastbaybonsai.org>



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**East Bay Bonsai Society**  
**Monthly Meeting: Saturday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 PM**  
**In Person at the Garden Center Lake Merritt**

## Get ready for the Mini Show!

The annual show is coming to town, but with a twist. Covid has impacted everyone's lives and it continues to do so. Your board knows how much everyone wants to show their trees after the long draught of no shows, so Saturday, October 9<sup>th</sup> will be our chance to lighten the mood and see how well our trees are doing. Be prepared to bring a tree or two, well dressed, with an accent plant and on stands if possible.

Each tree should have a simple card in front of it with the Tree type, age and any other pertinent information. If you put your name on the back of the card the security team will be able to identify your tree to you as you leave the building, ensuring your tree does not go home with someone else.

Our headliner will be Jonas Dupuich of *Bonsai Tonight*, one of the Bay Area's top bonsai masters. Jonas Dupuich is a Northern California bonsai teacher and writer. He began growing bonsai in 1993 after meeting Boon Manakitivipart while working at his family's nursery. Boon showed Jonas how to style a maple and Jonas was hooked! This kicked off more than two decades of study with Boon during which time he became a founding member of Bay Island Bonsai.

Jonas also studies with Boon's senpai, Daisaku Nomoto, during his visits to the U.S. In 2011, Jonas spent two months studying with bonsai grower and artist Junichiro Tanaka of Aichi-en nursery in Nagoya, Japan. Jonas worked on trees in Tanaka's collection and participated in the Gomangoku and Taikan-ten exhibitions.

Jonas is the author of the *Bonsai Tonight* blog. Created in 2009, the blog features over one thousand articles on a wide range of topics with new posts published every Tuesday and Friday. Jonas has also just published a new book – *The Little Book of Bonsai*. Although written



with newly budding bonsai artists in mind, it serves as an excellent guidance for all.

Jonas will be demonstrating on a juniper that has had plenty of time to grow and bush-out so should be interesting to see how he restructures it. After the demo the tree will be auctioned to the highest bidder.

After the demo and auction we will be able to catch up with old friends, meet new members and enjoy the fabulous member's trees.

## New Member Table of Trees

Are you having trouble sorting through all of your trees on their benches? Are you new to bonsai and need a tree? Problem solved! At the Mini show on Saturday, we will have a table of trees free to new members searching for a bonsai.

If you have healthy trees that you would like to donate because you just have too many and need to acquire room on your benches, this is the place to bring them. There's nothing better than sharing the wealth with our fellow bonsai enthusiast members.

## September meeting

In September we were finally able to come back as a group and enjoy a live demonstration. Randall Lee, who had been canceled in March of 2020, picked up where he left off providing us with a demonstration and discussion of rock plantings. He brought several examples that he had worked on during the Covid lockdown. The most difficult part of the chore seemed to be the gluing of the rocks together. Randall had purchased several rocks of various types which he presented. He had also glued the demo sculpture prior



to the demo as it takes considerable time. He left one rock out so we could see how difficult this is. Setting the rock properly to sustain a tree is key and several different positions were tried. Finally settling on a position, Randall proceeded to "glue" the piece in to the structure. Randall's glue mixture recipes are:

CA glue or cyanoacrylate super thin glue, (this one allows the cement and sand mixture to be fully saturated with the glue and sets in 1-3 sec)  
Hydraulic cement (available at hardware stores)  
Can also use Portland cement  
Coarse sand (I use a #3 sand)  
Mix is roughly 60% cement, 40% sand  
Epoxy pc-7 two-part epoxy adhesive mixed 50/50

The glue takes approximately 2 seconds to set, so planting can begin right away. Randall uses a sphagnum moss and akadama dust composition for planting and then tops with moss. He proceeded to plant two junipers and a cascading plant for a waterfall effect.

The sculpture was auction off and Michael Jensen-Akula became the new owner of the beautiful rock planting.



## The search for ancient EBBS Artifacts

In an effort to preserve our history we are looking to document prior newsletters and rosters (especially those prior to September 2011 which we have in the website). If you have a paper or electronic (e-mail) copy, please notify Bev Martinez at 925-437-2347 or through [EBBS\\_Distribution@yahoo.com](mailto:EBBS_Distribution@yahoo.com). Bev will contact you to set up a time to either photograph your paper copy or send the copy through email.

## Board Elections coming soon!

Do you want to help run the club? Got some great ideas for events or a special talent that can aid the club in making decisions or bringing about events? Then We need you! Elections are coming soon. Officer terms are for 1 year and can be reelected annually. Director's terms are 2 years and can continue for multiple terms if desired. You can submit your election nominations to Stephen Lysaght at [smlysaght@sbcglobal.net](mailto:smlysaght@sbcglobal.net) at any time.

## Bonsai Calendar

- Sun – Continue to move shaded deciduous trees into sun to promote fall color.
- Watering – Adjust watering for fall, but don't under-water.
- Fertilizing – Use low or zero nitrogen fertilizers.
- Repotting – Repot when plants become dormant. Begin repotting flowering and fruiting varieties of prunus.
- Styling/Pruning – Shape both evergreens and deciduous trees.
- Insect and disease control – Remove dead plant material. Watch for and treat insect infestations.
- Propagating/Collecting – Begin root cuttings.

*Refer to the EBBS Bonsai Seasonal guide for more information on care*

## Manzanita

By: Tom Colby

Manzanitas are shrubs that grow pretty much all over California. One probably notices them particularly in the foothills of the Sierra where a single species is abundant. They have red berry-like fruits which lead to the common name. Those of you who are linguists recognize the name as Spanish for little apples, which is just what the fruit looks like. Those of our dear readers who are botanically inclined know that the Manzanitas are in the genus *Arctostaphylos* which, of course, is Greek for bear berry, because the bears love to eat the little fruits when they are ripe.



Manzanitas are all that you could ask for in a fine bonsai. In addition to lovely fruit, they have pink flowers in the spring and trunks with a lot of movement. The bark is naturally a deep reddish-brown, and the foliage makes a beautiful contrast to the trunk because it is a soft gray green. Best of all, because of their abundance, they are easy to find and collect. Manzanitas are truly rivals of the current divas of the bonsai shows, the collected junipers. There is only one teeny little insignificant problem. Conventional wisdom flatly states that manzanitas cannot be grown as bonsai.

The pessimistic view about manzanitas as bonsai originated a number of years ago. Many were collected from the foothills, and in spite of all possible (and some not so possible) variants of soil composition and growing conditions, all died. Some departed instantly and some lingered for a very short time, but the result was always the same. This led to the statement, manzanitas cannot be grown as bonsai. Because of the great potential of manzanitas as bonsai, it is worthwhile to look once again at these wonderful plants.

First, a thought about establishing collected manzanitas. They generally grow in areas of very dry summers. Generally, plants growing in dry areas have specially adapted roots for coping with periods of summer drought. These adaptations normally allow the plant to survive, but also make it difficult for the plants to quickly grow new roots. Native California Junipers also grow in areas with dry summers, and knowledge gained from

establishing these plants may prove to be useful for establishing collected manzanitas.



Many Junipers were collected in past years and simply potted up and watered like established bonsai. Success in establishing the plants using this cultural technique was usually 50% or less. The problem with establishing collected plants, and junipers in particular, is that the plants slowly lose water through the leaves, but the roots have not yet begun to function after the trauma of collection. They are unable (or unwilling) to replace the lost water, so basically the tree dies of thirst.

Lately, the technique of spraying the trees with water repeatedly during the day has greatly increased the success rate for establishing collected junipers. Either some of the water is absorbed by the foliage, or perhaps the presence of the water on the foliage reduces the amount of water lost by the tree. Regardless of the explanation, the technique works for the junipers. Is it possible that this might also work for manzanitas? Rooting hormones are now commonly available, and is it possible that dusting the roots of the collected tree with a rooting hormone might also encourage the growth of roots?



But wait, don't give up just yet. There is more. There are two questions here that are totally different. How do you establish collected manzanitas and, secondly, can you grow manzanitas as bonsai? Establishing collected manzanitas has proved to be tough at best, but due to the bad publicity the plants have received, the second question has not been really addressed by the bonsai community.

If working with collected manzanitas presents an overwhelming challenge, all is not lost. Botanists tell us that there are about fifty species of manzanitas native to California, and they range from low mat forming plants to tall shrubs that grow into small trees, so there are a lot to choose from. Landscape horticulture offers several clues that should be important to us.

First, there are a number of manzanita species offered for sale in local nurseries. These plants are happily growing in nursery containers, indicating that at least some manzanitas can grow in a pot after all.

Second, these trees are propagated from cuttings, and some of the cuttings are easier to root than others. The manzanitas available in the trade are by definition the easiest plants to grow from cuttings. This suggests that these will be more amenable to grow as bonsai than others growing in the wild such as the oft-collected manzanita growing in the Sierra foothills.

Third, several of the varieties grown commercially are hybrids, either occurring naturally or accidentally produced from cultivated landscape plants. There are many cases in the horticultural world of hybrid vigor. In this case, two different species can be difficult to grow, but the hybrid of the two is much easier to grow.



Experience with native California junipers tells us that the hard part of growing collected plants is to establish them as potted plants. Once established, they are fairly easy to grow, happily responding to a careful repotting with a smile on their lips. Since nursery grown manzanitas are already established in pots, it is possible that they could well continue to easily grow as bonsai. Nursery grown manzanitas readily grow as landscape plants in the Bay Area so local conditions of sun and rainfall are fine. Further, these plants are pretty tolerant of soil composition as long as it is well drained. All in all, Bay Area, climate and bonsai soil should present no problems for culture of manzanitas as bonsai.

All of this suggests that manzanitas available from local nurseries may be the source for interesting bonsai material. The down side of using nursery stock as bonsai material is that most of the available manzanitas are in one-gallon cans, and are only occasionally available in larger sizes. As a general statement, starting material of most plant species in gallon cans is two or three years at a minimum away from being a presentable bonsai. The upside is that manzanita nursery stock has the potential of being outstanding bonsai. For someone with patience and a willingness to explore an uncharted area, there is no better place to look for new and exciting bonsai than at manzanita nursery stock. Once in a very great while someone who has not gotten the message that manzanitas are impossible to grow as bonsai subjects will show a manzanita grown from nursery stock as a bonsai, proving that it can be done.

**Make your tree a Social Media Star!** Our Facebook page is in need of member's trees to display. If interested in showing your tree, send a picture to [EBBS\\_Distribution@Yahoo.com](mailto:EBBS_Distribution@Yahoo.com).

#### Tree Shrinker Ads

Each membership household, free of charge, may place a five-line ad related to bonsai in two newsletters each year. Please submit your ad by the preceding Monday of the month to appear in the next publication. Send your ad to [EBBS\\_Distribution@yahoo.com](mailto:EBBS_Distribution@yahoo.com).

## Events by Others

### October 2 and 3, 2021 Santa Nella, California

Golden State Bonsai Federation (GSBF) will host the 2021 GSBF Bonsai Rendezvous. The event theme is "Bonsai Rendezvous." A two-day event for renewal and celebration for the love of bonsai. No registration fees. Open to the public. Free bonsai demonstrations both days. Free professional bonsai critiques, Bring Your Own Bonsai and Do It Yourself Bonsai settings. Vendors from Northern and Southern California in one huge location. There will be silent auctions for quality bonsai and related items. There will be no banquet dinners. Additional information and schedule of activities is now available at the [GSBF website](#). For further information or to volunteer in support of the event, contact Rich Guillen at [richguillen@att.net](mailto:richguillen@att.net) or call 831-233-1612.

### October 16 and 17, 2021 Union City, California

**YAMATO BONSAI KAI 50th Annual Exhibition:** Saturday from 11:00 am until 5:00 pm. and Sunday from 10:00 am. until 5:00 pm at the Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church.

Location: 32975 Alvarado-Niles Rd., Union City, CA 94587.

Exhibition of bonsai trees, plant sales, and vendors. Free admission and free parking. Demonstration by Sensei Johnny Uchida both days at 1:30 pm with demonstration tree raffled off as grand prize. For more info and updates find us on Facebook by searching "Yamato Bonsai Kai".

### November 6, 2021 San Rafael, California

**Marin Bonsai Club Fundraiser Sale and Silent Auctions** Saturday from 11:00 am until 3:00 pm.

Location: Outdoor Basketball court at Terra Linda Community Center at 670 Del Ganado Rd, San Rafael CA.

Sale and silent auctions include Bonsai, Pots, Stands, Tools and Soil. Cash, Check or Venmo for payment. Masks required for entry and shopping. Limited number of shoppers for social distancing. For additional information, go to website [www.marinbonsai.org](http://www.marinbonsai.org).

### February 19 and 20, 2022 Oakland, California

Annual Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt Mammoth Auction & Sale will be held on Saturday, February 19 and Sunday, February 20, 2022 at 666 Bellevue Ave., Lakeside Park Garden Center in Oakland. You are invited to the biggest auction and sale of bonsai, pre-bonsai, pots, books, stands, and related material. A Mammoth fundraiser with all proceeds going to support the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt. Saturday auction preview starts at 12:00 p.m. with auction starting at 1:00 p.m. Sunday sale from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., large showing of vendors, plant sales, and much more. Purchase your bonsai needs. For further information, contact George Haas at [gwhaas@comcast.net](mailto:gwhaas@comcast.net) or stay tuned to [BGLM Website](#).

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## East Bay Bonsai Society—Schedule for 2021

**Regular Meetings:** Second Wednesday, in person every month (except July, August and October) @ 7:30 pm.  
Place: Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland. Visitor's welcome.

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Program</u>
Oct 4	EBBS Board Meeting
Oct 9	Mini Show (no Wednesday meeting)
Oct 24	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Janet Nelson
Nov 1	EBBS Board Meeting
Nov 10	Monthly meeting – TBD
Nov 28	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Michael Jensen-Akula
Nov 29	EBBS Board Meeting
Dec 8	Holiday dinner