



# The Tree Shrinker

Volume LX, No.11

A MONTHLY BULLETIN

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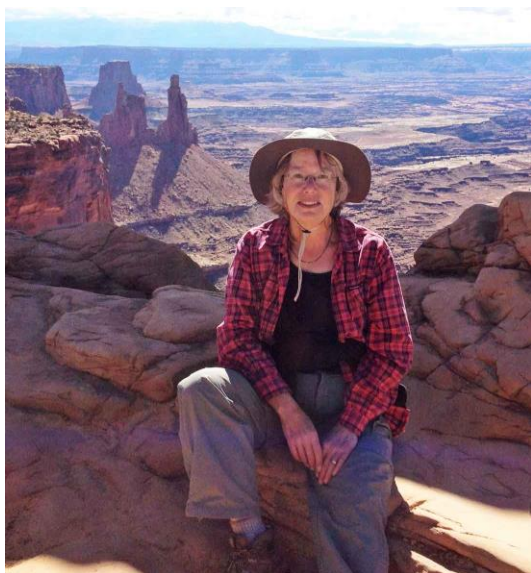


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**East Bay Bonsai Society**  
**Monthly Meeting: November 10, 2021 7:30 PM**  
**Lakeside Garden Center, Lake Merritt**

## Do you Suiseki?

What is Suiseki? you ask. Well, come to the monthly meeting to find out. Our presenter this month is Janet Roth of the Suiseki Societies of Northern California. She will be displaying and explaining the art of suiseki as well as how to obtain your own viewing stone collection.



Janet is a suiseki enthusiast and collector in Oakland, California, where she has been actively engaged with the bonsai and suiseki communities since joining the East Bay Bonsai Society in 1983. Janet was introduced to suiseki by Felix Rivera, who founded the California Suiseki Society (CSS), of which she was a founding member.

Through her interest in suiseki she had the profound good fortune to meet, and marry, Mas Nakajima (1948-2018). Mas was one of the pioneers of suiseki art in California and was recognized throughout the

world-wide suiseki community for his craftsmanship and artistry. He exhibited his fine art, which was rooted in his suiseki practice, at the Triangle Gallery in San Francisco.

In 2005 after meeting Mas, she joined his club, the San Francisco Suiseki Kai (SFSK) which was one of the two original Japanese-speaking clubs in the Bay Area. Janet was asked to serve as President in 2010 and completed the club's transition to being an English-speaking society. In 2019 they re-united the SFSK and CSS into the new umbrella organization of the Suiseki Societies of Northern California. She is currently also a member of the California Aiseki Kai (in Southern California) and was a founding member of Bay Island Bonsai.

Janet and Mas collaborated in studying and writing about Suiseki Art for their website which can be found at <https://suisekiart.com>. Janet is currently the curator of the suiseki collection at the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt.

Feel free to bring a suiseki for Janet to critique.

## Octobers Mini Show meeting

By: Lisa Harper

What a fabulous meeting we had! So many beautiful trees showed what a great and diverse club we are! Many thanks to everyone who came out on a Saturday, helped set up, took pictures and enjoyed the afternoon.

Also, many thanks to Jonas who led us through creating a beautiful itoigawa juniper. Jonas started his engaging and educational demonstration with a discussion of what we look for in great juniper bonsai: deadwood and movement - in particular twisting movement.

Jonas first talked about our large club-owned San Jose juniper. EBBS bought this tree in late 2019 for Tony

Tickle to use as a demonstration tree at our show in 2020. But, well, covid happened. This tree has a fabulous trunk, but the branches are straight and the growth is too far from the trunk. His advice is to graft on shimpaku juniper close to the trunk in January 2022. Then over the next 3-5 years, remove the larger straight branches, heal the wounds, and then style the shimpaku. This could be an amazing bonsai in 5-7 years!

Next Jonas gave us a demonstration of the styling of an itoigawa juniper. First, he went over the 5 items he considers when choosing a front: trunk, surface roots, branches, good features you want to show off, and less compelling features you want to downplay. Jonas also showed us the tree from different angles, some thought it would make a good semi-cascade, others an informal upright. A very important issue when styling a juniper, is to “clean-up” the tree before deciding on a final plan. This allows you to see more of the branch structure and get a better idea of the long-term possibilities. Clean-up consisted of removing unhealthy branches, cutting back growth presently far out on branches, and pruning to allow light into all areas of the tree. After this, we again considered the front and angle.



Jonas then invited us to come up and ask questions while he wired the whole tree...The result was fabulous! Congratulations Michael Szabo on winning the auction of this wonderful tree.



## A few pics from the mini show





## Board Elections coming in November!

Time is almost up! We will be voting on the 2022 board at the November meeting, so get your nominations in now! Being a board member is a great way to see and participate in the workings behind the scenes, learn more about bonsai and make long lasting bonsai connections with other bonsai enthusiasts.

Just submit your election nominations to [EBBS\\_Distribution@Yahoo.com](mailto:EBBS_Distribution@Yahoo.com) at any time before the November 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.



## Bonsai Calendar

- To enjoy fall color, gradually move maples and other shaded trees into the sun.
- Review exposure of trees to the movement of the sun.
- Continue fertilizing all trees.
- Rotate trees twice a month.
- Remove wisteria from the pan of water after foliage has yellowed.
- Insect and disease control –Remove dead plant material. Watch for and treat insect infestations.
- Good time to start grafting a variety of trees
- Last opportunity to sever air-layers having adequate rootage.
- Good time to collect conifers from the High Sierras with permits to do so.

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



## From the Archives!

From: Tree Shrinker June 1999 (By: John Callaham)

### From Whip to Yamadori – 10 steps

Step 1. Gather about 5 to 8 strands of raffia to make a bundle about like a heavy shoelace. Knot them together at one end, then coil around your hand & again around the coil to hold all together. Soak in warm water.

Step 2. Remove some of the small branches from the main trunk(s) So that those that remain are about 3/4" apart. Save the largest branches & don't take off too many of the small ones- we just need room to apply the raffia.

Step 3. Squeegee the raffia with your fingers to remove excess water and stretch all the fibers equally. Wrap the raffia: Righthanders - wrap clockwise when viewing from

the top of the tree. Lefthanders - wrap counterclockwise. Make it tight, really tight, from the soil level to near the top, where the trunk changes from brown to green. Overlap the knotted end on itself to start at the bottom and tie it off at the top.

Step 4. Anchor the heavier wire in the soil and wrap - in the same clockwise or counterclockwise sense as the raffia- with about 3/4" between the coils. Most of us will have to concentrate on getting the wire tight. A very few people already wire super tight, so they shouldn't overdo it. If the wire is perfectly tight all along the trunk, the tree will be damaged when we twist and bend the trunk.

Step 5. Anchor the thinner wire and wrap it between - not next to - the coils of the heavier wire. Again, make it tight. Always use two wires.

Step 6. Using your Right Brain, and without thinking about any bonsai design, simultaneously bend and twist the trunk to accentuate any curves it has and make lots of new ones. Don't try to make it pretty. Don't evaluate what you are doing. In fact, try not to think about what you are doing, just get lost in the process. The goal here is crooked and, probably, ugly. Keep going until it is as crooked {and maybe as ugly} as you can make it.

Step 7. Return to your Left Brain. Now, look at what you have made as if you have just dug this tree up from the wild. It surely isn't a good bonsai design, but it probably has some interesting curves. These trees usually become Slant Style, Informal Upright, Cascade or Windswept bonsai. Does your tree suggest any of these? Make some changes, if you can, to make it be a better bonsai candidate.

Step 8. If you like what you have, great. Usually there is something wrong with the design that we can't resolve in our Left Brain. If so, return to step 6 and make a change or several changes without thinking about them. Then back to step 7. 1. I often spend an hour or more cycling one tree between steps 6 and 7 before I am satisfied with it.

Step 9. Now you like it (or you are tired). Remove all the branches that are straight up, straight down or inside bends.

Two choices:

1. Repot into a 1 to 5 gallon can to induce rapid growth, take the wire off in one year, rewire and refine the design, add shari, etc., for one to several years.

2. Wire all the little branches. Pinch and prune to final shape. Repot. Take the wire off & start adding shari after the wire has definitely scarred the branches - 2 years or more if it is in a small pot.

Step 10. Enjoy!

## Hornbeam

By: Tom Colby

The genus *Carpinus*, better known as hornbeam, consists of about 40 species scattered around the world in the northern hemispheres. The genus contributes more than its fair share of excellent bonsai candidates. The United States features *C. caroliniana* which is native to the eastern part of the country and collected plants can be found in bonsai collections there. Europe has both *C. orientalis*, growing in Italy, and *C. betulus* growing from Europe to as far east as Iran. Asia outdoes itself with two species from Korea, *C. coreana* and one with the somewhat indigestible name of *C. turkzaninowii*. Both are sold in the bonsai world as Korean hornbeams. Japan's offerings are *C. japonica*, *C. laxiflora* and *C. tschonoskii* and are sold collectively as Japanese hornbeams. To further gum up the taxonomic issue, Japanese hornbeams are sold sometimes as Korean hornbeams. The minor differences between these species are the life blood of the botanical world, but as bonsai material they all pretty much look and grow alike. What is of significance is that if your "Korean hornbeam" is a little different from a "Korean hornbeam" that you see in a bonsai show, it probably means that you are looking at two different species of *Carpinus*.



All of the species of Hornbeams grown as bonsai are splendid trees. They happily grow in bonsai pots for many years and can patiently endure a bit of neglect. As a group the trees all have small leaves that have a rather crinkled texture, as well as smooth and fluted gray bark. When the leaves have fallen in winter, the fine branch structure and the gray bark provides wonderful winter silhouettes. As an added benefit, the leaves turn a beautiful color in the fall which is usually a bright yellow, but in some trees, that color can be red or a yellow-bronze. The fall color presents a pleasing contrast to the gray trunk. Hornbeams are relatively slow growing trees and so you can take a more relaxed approach to them as bonsai in contrast to lushly growing trees such as redwoods, for example which require a lot of constant attention. A disadvantage of slow growth is that it takes a lot of time to develop a significantly thick trunk.

A common name for the European species is Ironwood because the wood from hornbeams is very hard and heavy. The wood has been used (and still is) for bodies of woodworking tools such as planes. As a result, it is not surprising that bending of major branches of hornbeam bonsai trees is a job for the Pacific Coast Crane, Dredge and Pile Driving Company and their heavy equipment. Major branches can, in fact, be bent but the process is slow and difficult. On the other hand, young branches are quite pliable and can be easily bent. The moral of this story is that you need to carefully place young branches because once they are mature bending them is a hassle.

The trees grow by sending out long thin shoots which require several years to enlarge into significant branches. These new branches can be easily wired into place or, if desired, can be cut off just above the last two leaves above the branch they are emerging from. This approach to styling the tree makes the clip-and-grow technique a valuable tool in achieving your design for the tree.



Hornbeams make splendid candidates for group plantings because of fine branch structure and the beautiful gray bark. Unfortunately, group plantings of hornbeams are very rarely seen at local bonsai shows. Hornbeams are understory trees in nature which means that they grow below the forest canopy. As a result, they get along just fine in bright shade although they grow more vigorously in full sun. The leaves can be scorched by very hot sun or windy days. It appears that they would enjoy a little protection from the sun and wind in the hottest days of summer east of the hills in the bay area but they should be fine west of the hills.

Hornbeams are wonderful trees for bonsai on many levels. They are easy to grow and style and they are attractive all year long. They are great trees for beginners. Unfortunately, they are underappreciated by the bonsai community. If you see them offered for sale at a bonsai nursery or at a show, do strongly considering adding one to your collection. You will be handsomely rewarded.



#### 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).

#### Many Thanks!

We owe a Big Thank you to many members of EBBS:

To Suzanne Muller, Tom Fedor and Bob Gould for working with Tony tickle to select the large club tree.

To Suzanne Muller for caring for the club tree for the last 2 years.

To Rick Trumm and Janet Nelson for currently caring for the Club Tree.

To Lisa Harper for donating the itoigawa juniper in a Jim Gremel pot.

To Dennis Miu for auctioning off the tree.

## Events by Others

### 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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Newsletter Editor: Beverly Martinez

Contributors: Tom Colby and Lisa Harper

### 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>
Nov 1	EBBS Board Meeting
Nov 10	Monthly meeting – Janet Roth - Suiseki
Nov 28	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Michael Jensen-Akula
Nov 29	EBBS Board Meeting
Dec 8	Monthly Meeting – Member's workshop