



The Tree Shrinker

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A MONTHLY BULLETIN

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East Bay Bonsai Society

Annual Show:

October 8-9, 2016

Meeting:

October 12, 2016 **CANCELED**

President's Note

October is nearly upon us and that means one thing, our annual bonsai show, in this case, our 55th year. I hope you can contribute in one or many ways. First, we need help setting up the show on Friday, October 7th, starting at 6 pm (pizza and drinks provided). We also need volunteers to assist the sub committees with various tasks during the two days (e.g. security, front desk, etc.). Finally, we need help taking down the show on Sunday afternoon. Your help is greatly appreciated.

As you know, we've gone far and wide to get this year's show headliner, all the way from France, JP Hoareau. JP's love of bonsai started when he saw a small Elm tree in a rock pot. It drew him to learn more about bonsai. This interest turned into obsession, and his love for bonsai and Japanese aesthetics became stronger. After visiting Japan, and reading about Ryan Neil's journey from a six-year Japanese apprenticeship to moving to Oregon to start his own school and garden, JP decided to apprentice at Ryan's studio and garden from May 2012 to July 2013. That experience fueled his passion about bonsai. We are excited to have him as our headliner, a first for him in North America.

In November we have our very own Mike Pistello back for his great presentation on Junipers, which we call "Juniper Jubilee". Please make sure you come for that.

Michael

It is Show Time!

Our annual show will be held on Saturday, October 8 and Sunday, October 9 at the Lakeside Garden Center. Show hours are 10:00 to 5:00 on Saturday and 11:00 to 4:30 on Sunday. Setup for the show is from 6:00 to 10:00 on Friday, October 7.

The headliner for the show is JP Hoareau. He is from France and this will be his first trip to the United States. Europe has a thriving bonsai community and JP is one of the up and coming young bonsai masters. We

welcome him and are looking forward to seeing a new face in the bonsai world.



Saturday morning he will present a program to BABA and EBBS members are welcome to attend as silent observers. Saturday afternoon he will preside over a workshop. On Sunday morning he will conduct a critique of trees in the show, and in the afternoon he will do a demonstration on a

Larch tree. He has a considerable presence on the web and as a preview to the demonstration, he can be seen working on a European larch tree on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mg6V58zmFsU>.

The best way to enjoy the show is to participate. There are a lot of opportunities to participate because a successful show requires the help of a lot of people doing a wide variety of activities. Every member should volunteer to help with at least one of the many activities that are responsible for a smooth running show. Help is particularly needed for security, although all of the various committees could use a hand. If a committee chairperson calls, be prepared to give generously of your time. Better yet, give our show chair, Roger Brady a call at 415-350-9999, and find out where you can help out.

All types of trees are welcome in the show. Since this is a fall show, deciduous trees in fall color and trees with fruits or berries are especially welcome. Everyone should exhibit at least one tree in the show. Many of us only have trees that are in the early stages of becoming finished bonsai, and rest assured that these trees are most welcome in the show. As usual, there will probably be some bonsai masterpieces on display, but while these trees are wonderful additions, they are not where the action is for an EBBS show. Our show is for all the members to participate and enjoy, and the result is that

everyone is welcome regardless of the quality of their trees.

If you have not displayed a tree before, you'll be surprised at how nice it looks when dolled up for the show. Preparing your tree for the show is not hard. Be sure that your tree is bug free, the weeds are removed, dead leaves and unwanted small branches are trimmed and the pot is cleaned. A coat of mineral oil on an unglazed pot will show it at its best. If you do not have a stand for your tree, there usually are a few stands available for loan at the show set up.

The show is the high point of the year for the club. The fun comes in knowing that you actively participated in the show by displaying a tree, and volunteering to help on one of the many committees needed to make the show run smoothly.

Your Trees

Tree labels are created for all of the bonsai in the show **except for shohin and mame**. Please send Don Meeker a list of the trees you may display no later than October 1 so that he can create labels for your trees. Contact him at dmeeker@astound.net or 925-933-4472. Also, if you are interested in doing a Tokonoma, a more formal display of your tree, please contact Janice Dilbeck at janicedilbeck@comcast.net.



Schedule of Events

The schedule of the weekend activities are as follows:

Friday Night

6:00 pm Show setup starts
10:00 pm Set up finished, doors locked

Saturday

9:00 am Hall Open
9:30 am - 12:00 pm BABA Critique in Ebell Room (EBBS members welcome)
10:00 am 55th ANNUAL EBBS Bonsai Show & Sale Open to the Public. Silent Auction begins.
11:30 am - 2:00 pm Hospitality Room Open for Lunch
12:30 pm - 4:30 pm Workshop in Ebell with JP Hoareau
3:00 pm Silent auction closes
5:00 pm Show and Sale End for the Day

Sunday

9:00 am Critique of the show by JP
10:00 am 55th ANNUAL EBBS Bonsai Show & Sale Open to the Public. Silent Auction begins.
11:30 am - 2:00 pm Hospitality Room Open for Lunch

1:00 pm - 3:30 pm Demonstration with JP Hoareau in the Ebell Room
3:30 pm Benefit drawing begins
3:30 pm Silent auction closes
4:30 pm Show closes to the public. Teardown begins.

Show Set-up Friday Evening

Volunteers are needed to arrive early and to help with installing the tables and backdrops. Doors to the Lakeside Garden Center will be open for work to start at 6:00 pm. You don't have to go home for dinner before helping with set up because the club will provide pizza and beverages for all workers.

All trees and accent plants are to be delivered to the central hallway before 7:00 pm. Trees can be placed on the tables along the wall. It is helpful if trees intended for tokonomas are so identified.

Come and join the camaraderie of the show set up. In addition to a lot of work, it is also a lot of fun.

Potluck at the Show

It has been a long honored tradition that EBBS provides free lunches for its members and invited guests. This, of course, depends upon the members contributing both days to the potluck which we serve. The Club will provide beverages and a certain number of sandwiches, but the real fullness of the lunches comes from the members honoring the feast with their contribution as they do at our August and December pot lucks. The Board thanks you in advance for helping make this a success.

Assignments for both days are as follows:

Appetizer	Last name M-R
Entrée	Last name S-Z
Side dish	Last name A-G
Dessert	Last name H-L

In each case, make the dish for 8-10 people and be sure to provide serving utensils if required.

Thanks!

Your hospitality chair, John Nackley

Show Plant Sale

The show is very important to the club in many ways. It is easy to overlook the fact that the sale of plants and bonsai related items such as pots, scrolls and stands, is a real money maker which goes a long way toward funding the cost of the show. Look at your collection and see if there is something that you would like to send to a new and loving home.



Our recent auction featured trees that were well along in development as opposed to small cuttings. For many of the folks who drop by the show, this is their first

look at what bonsai is all about. They are thrilled to take home a small cutting in a pot, and as a result, these little plants sell like hot cakes. Above all, it is important to remember that something you no longer have interest in may be a treasure to someone else.

As with the auction, items may be donated to the club where 100% of the selling price goes to the club, or may be sold on consignment where 20% of the selling price goes to the club, leaving 80% to the seller. The more attractive you make your tree, the more likely that it will sell. Simple things you can do to improve the appearance of the tree help a lot. Remove any weeds, remove dead leaves and trim that awkward branch. Here is a place to practice your merchandising skills by turning your tree into a bit of eye candy.

The fine print for the details of the sale is exactly the same as for our recent auction. Forms and tags will be available and each seller must complete an inventory form listing and describing each item, and showing the selling price, or clearly designating that the item is a donation. A completed tag must be placed on each item. You may reduce the price of an item, but be sure that you have amended the inventory sheet to reflect the new price. Donated items must be clearly identified on the inventory sheet.

Silent Auction

For the last four years EBBS has featured a silent auction as part of the many events at our show. These auctions have proved to be very popular and have been a significant source of income for the club. All the items in the auction have been donated to the club. You can be part of the fun if you have any item that you would like to offer in the silent auction. Most of the items have been bonsai related, but anything in good taste such as a bottle of wine is most welcome.

Workshop at the show

On Saturday afternoon JP will lead a workshop where members bring and work on their own trees. He will provide his expert guidance on styling, pruning and wiring your tree as well as describing future care of your tree. The cost of the workshop is \$50 and attendance is limited to 6 members. If you are interested in coming to the workshop, sign up promptly because spaces are going fast. Janet Nelson is in charge of the workshop and can be reached at rjn@pacbell.net for reservations. Participants should arrive by 12:15 in order to set up and be ready to begin the workshop promptly at 12:30.

The workshops are open to silent observers who may circulate around the room to learn from listening to the discussions and observing the work in progress. Observers are expected to respect the priority and work space of the paid participants and the workshop leader.

Sunday morning critique

A critique of the trees in the show will be conducted by JP on Sunday morning starting at 9:00 am. This is a wonderful experience for each of us and is by far the most valuable part of the show. No matter where your

tree is in its development, he can point out changes that will make the tree even better. He will also comment on how the trees are displayed, i.e. the choice of pot, stand and scroll if used. Seeing the show through the eyes of an experienced bonsai artist is always a privilege and always expands our knowledge of bonsai.

Demonstration

The demonstration on Sunday will commence at 1:00 and will feature JP working on a larch tree. This will be a double treat because larches are not seen on the local scene as much as they should be, although they are very popular choices for bonsai in the northwest United States as well as in Europe. Larches are interesting because they look like conifers but are deciduous.

Most of the artists that we see locally are heavily influenced by Japan. Europe has a very active interest in bonsai and they have developed a unique style, so it will be interesting to see the vision that JP has for the demonstration tree. The demonstration will be a fine opportunity to see a European artist in action.

A Plea

Do plan to spend at least a little time at the conclusion of the show at 4:30 pm on Sunday to help with the clean up before you depart the scene. At the end of the show, all of us are tired and we are all anxious to grab our trees and go home once the show is over. This is perfectly understandable, but it leaves tear down of the tables and general cleanup all too frequently to a few hardy souls. These folks would greatly appreciate your help.

November Meeting



The November meeting will be our fifth annual celebration of the Juniper Jubilee (JJ5) which focusses on the humble workhorse of the bonsai world, the juniper. Many of us started our journey in bonsai with a small juniper. Not only is the juniper forgiving of our misguided early attempts at culture and styling, but in many cases can be developed into truly spectacular bonsai. Mike Pistello will show us how it is done. Mike

gave a fine presentation for JJ4 last year and we are fortunate to have Mike back again.

September Meeting

The September meeting was a presentation on oaks by John Thompson (JT). Oaks are widely found in California, and examples surround us. John offered several comments on how to best develop oaks as bonsai.

Oaks should be styled with rounded canopies as a reflection of how they grow in nature. The form should be like a fountain with an up and outward direction. The most important part of styling an oak is to create a super structure of meandering branches. With his own trees, he showed how the apex tends to disperse so that you can't really see a single apex.



In general, a short heavy trunk should have a canopy of compact foliage, where as a tall tree can have sparser foliage.

JT recommends growing your own trees from seed. Plant acorns in winter to protect them from birds and squirrels. JT likes to use pond baskets when starting trees because they provide good aeration. Wire the trees at a young age to get movement in the trunk and main branches. JT doesn't recommend digging up seedlings that pop up in the garden because they have a tendency to die when they are potted.

John collected the demo tree about 5-6 years ago. He kept it in an Anderson flat to grow well. The flat is a plastic, rectangular container with holes in the bottom. The flat is a little large for the tree, so JT placed wood blocks in the flat to reduce the potting area.

Aluminum wire is a better choice than copper wire for wiring oaks because it is somewhat less likely to leave wire scars on the tree.

Oaks do not lend themselves to jins in their design because dead wood on oaks can quickly rot. This is because oak wood does not have the resins that the wood of other trees has, such as junipers, which can act to prevent rotting.

JT uses all kinds of fertilizers. He uses fish emulsion and has made his own rape seed cakes.

When asked about the tap root, JT said that its primary purpose in a young tree is to bring water to the tree and to stabilize the tree. As lateral roots develop, they provide more energy and less comes from the tap root. Eventually, the tap root doesn't mean a thing and can be removed.

During the presentation John certainly made the case for oaks as attractive bonsai and he provided all you need to know to grow them to perfection.

Survey

The results of the EBBS membership survey are being analyzed and will soon be available. Many thanks are due to all who took the time to respond to the survey. It was your chance to tell the board your view of what is going well and what needs improvement, as well as what new directions the club should take. The survey will help shape the future actions of EBBS.

Zen Buddhism

If you have been to a bonsai show recently, it is almost certain that you will have seen a massive collected juniper among the trees on display. Your first reaction was probably "Wow, what a great tree". There is more to see and to fully appreciate what the tree has to offer.

First, it is not going anywhere and so will allow you to spend as long as you would like to enjoy the tree. The tree is almost saying "slow down and look at me". There is a lot to see and a lot that you do not see that you can wonder about. The tree appears to be very old and, in fact, it is actually very old. Forestry people have studied the growth rate of our native junipers and have found that the trunk increases in diameter an inch about every 50 to 75 years. Many of the collected junipers have trunks that are as much as eight to ten inches in diameter, suggesting that they are several hundred years old.

Although the tree is old, it looks like it has not changed for a very long time. It probably does not occur to you when you are looking at the tree, that it has been sometimes radically changed by the artist who styled it, and this change has been recent. Also, the tree will change a lot in the next few years as the branches grow and thicken. This means that the tree you see in front of you is really just a relatively fleeting glimpse in the long life of the tree.

All collected trees are very dramatic with deadwood and sparse foliage, yet there is an element of restraint in the look of the tree. There are no long, straight branches sticking out away from the tree. The tree has a relatively compact shape in spite of its large size and the deadwood and foliage are arranged to complement each other. The pot and the stand are chosen to enhance the presentation of the tree, giving an elegant look to the whole composition.

As you stand looking at the tree, you realize that you do not see the entire tree because the tree has been positioned to show you only one side. Have you ever wondered what the back of the tree looks like? Also have you ever wondered where the tree was collected

and what it looked like when it was collected? The point is that there is more to the tree than just what you see in front of you.



None of these comments seem to be out of the ordinary, but it may surprise you that these comments are exactly what Zen Buddhism defines as criteria for judging art. In the west we use very different vocabulary to assess the artistic merit of a Beethoven string quartet than we use for a Picasso painting. The Japanese say that the same yardstick applies to all art.

Some of us have confronted the Zen concepts in the course of pursuing suiseki. For most of us the idea is very new that bonsai and suiseki can be judged using exactly the same criteria, and further, that these criteria apply to all art. In the Zen view, an object is great art when it has understated elegance, simplicity, an illustration of fleeting glimpse of time, great age and a sense that there is more to see than just what in in front of you. Fine bonsai trees have these attributes. See if you can see these concepts in the trees in our upcoming show.

Bonsai instruction at Merritt College

Instruction is in the form of workshops and is a splendid opportunity to learn how to develop your trees into first class bonsai. In these workshops you work on your own tree under the guidance of an experienced bonsai artist. The workshops are open to all experience levels and are usually held at 7:00 pm on the fourth Monday of each month when the college is in session.

The meetings are in the Landscape Horticulture Building at Merritt College which is located in the Oakland hills off Redwood Road. The workshops are free, except for a small parking fee. Leading the workshops are two members of EBBS, Bill Castellon and Randal Lee. You can contact Bill at 510-569-8003 or Randall at 510-846-0841.

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 Calendar for more details on seasonal care.

Events by Others

GSBF's Bonsai and Suiseki Garden: open Tues. - Fri. 11:00 am – 3:00 pm, Sat. 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, Sun. 12:00 noon – 4:00 pm Enter at gate across from Boat House.

September 17, Placerville, Gold Country Bonsai Club: 2nd Annual Show at Rainbow Orchards, 2569 Larsen Drive, Camino, the lovely Apple Hill destination at El Dorado County, known for its apple cider doughnuts. Show hours are 10 AM – 4 PM with Bonsai Clinic to be held by club members. Renowned bonsai trees and suiseki by renowned member collectors will be exhibited. For more information, contact Scott Chadd at (530) 622-9681 or scottchadd@lotusbonsai.com, or check their website at www.goldcountrybonsaiclub.com.

September 24 – 25, Penryn, Sierra Bonsai Club: Annual Show at the Placer Buddhist Church, 3192 Boyington Road, in conjunction with the 52nd Annual Food Bazaar. Show hours are 11 AM – 5 PM Saturday and 11 AM – 4 PM Sunday. Bonsai demonstration will be held in the temple both days, along with other cultural events throughout the day. It is a yearly celebration for the whole family to enjoy. For more information, contact Lucy Sakaishi-Judd (916) 300-8103

Wanted to Buy (or for free)

Each membership household, free of charge, may place a five-line ad related to bonsai in two newsletters

each year. Send a copy of ads to your editor by the fourth Monday of the month to appear in the next publication. To place an add call (925) 458-3845.

East Bay Bonsai Society—Schedule for 2016 - 2017

Regular Meetings: Second Wednesday, every month (except August and October) @ 7:30 pm

Place: Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland.

Visitors welcome.

Website for Bonsai Garden Lake Merritt: www.gsbf-lakemerritt.org/

Meeting Program

Oct 23 BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Don Meeker

Nov 9 Juniper Jubilee - Mike Pistello

Nov 27 BGLM Introduction to Bonsai – Tom Colby

Dec 14 Holiday Party

Special Events

Oct 8-9 Show

Preparing trees for show

This article was assembled from a variety of sources, edited and written by Bob Callaham. It was published in a past Tree Shrinker and is presented here because of its timely content. Thanks Bob

Watering

- Trees become desiccated during shows, so water your tree thoroughly on Friday morning, before you apply top dressing

Crown

- Fine wiring is the key to detailed grooming, but for a tree to be shown this fall it should have been wired in March or last fall
- Remove wire that has served its purpose; no wire should be seen crossing the trunk
- Shorten or remove elongate new shoots, so-called water sprouts
- Reshape carefully and only slightly to avoid crown having a static (symmetrical) shape; prune only coarse branching to leave fine branching; apply fine wire and move branches to appropriate positions
- Remove undergrowth on each branch; show undersides of major branches
- Cutback foliage that interferes with viewing of trunk; shorten to two leaves or remove entirely
- Pay particular attention to the apex; as a focal point it needs special attention; assure that it bows to the viewer (except on a formal-upright styled tree)
- Remove any yellowing or brown foliage
- Examine critically the trunk and branches, remove any unsightly stubs of branches, and apply cut-paste

Trunk

- When appropriate, spray trunk with water and rub with tooth (or wire) brush to remove bark flakes
- Remove white deposits of minerals from watering when present on base of trunk and exposed roots; start this process with a toothbrush; progress to a nylon brush; finally go to a soft brass metal brush

Growing mix

- Add mix to cover exposed roots up to just below their departure from the root collar; sever small exposed roots or cover them with mix
- Remove all moss and liverworts growing on either the trunk or exposed roots
- Remove debris from soil surface

Top-dressing

- Apply a very thin layer of relatively fine, uniform particles; make the layer level with pot's rim; extend it to trunk but not over exposed roots
- Consider using 1/8"–1/4" screened fir bark, 1/16"–1/8" screened expanded shale, black lava, or combinations (sources are Clarke's Rocks at Clwitter and Wilson in Hayward and American Soil Products in Richmond); press down firmly and then brush lightly for uniform texture
- Moss, if appropriate as a top-dressing under your tree, should be fresh and green; mixes or mosaics of mosses and lichens give a more natural look; moss should be patchy, not "wall-to-wall"; islands of moss in a top dressing of black lava are attractive; screened fine bark sprinkled over moss and then lightly brushed off gives a natural look

Accent and companion plants

- Plant(ing) should be about 5 in. high for an average tree or 7 in. for a very large tree. In Japan, where stands are tall, plants are not taller than top of stand
- Clean out dead and dying vegetation, except when it gives the very desirable appearance of natural growth in fall where dead and dying members bend over and touch the ground while living members stand tall
- Remove debris, moss, and liverworts, as above
- Apply moss or appropriately sized top-dressing

Pots and stands

- Remove mineral residue on pots by applying white vinegar or rubbing alcohol to a cloth and rubbing; stubborn deposits may require rubbing with a green "Scotch" scrubber; erasers for cleaning tools also are effective on pots; do not remove pot's patina and leave it shiny; pot's feet are hardest to clean but most obvious if not cleaned; Kathy Shaner recommends leaving calcium deposit and dying it with India ink
- Just before the show, wipe unglazed pots with mineral or vegetable oil on a "hard," lint-free rag (old toweling); buff with a dry lint-free rag; may spray with kitchen olive oil, rub off excess, and buff
- Apply felt pads to feet of pots to prevent scratching of stands
- Polish stands and apply scratch remover where needed