



The Tree Shrinker

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A MONTHLY BULLETIN

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East Bay Bonsai Society

August Potluck Picnic: August 11, 2018 @ 2:00 pm – sunset
Nelson-Trumm Home

(No regular meeting in August)

August Meeting

The August meeting is our annual potluck picnic which will be held this year on Saturday, August 11 at the home of Janet Nelson and Rick Trumm in place of our regular meeting on Wednesday at the Garden center. The picnic will start at 2:00 pm and will continue until sunset. This is one of the social highlights of the year and should not be missed. Janet and Rick have a large collection of spectacular bonsai which they are happy to show off. The chance to see and enjoy their beautiful bonsai is alone worth your visit. Best of all, the picnic is a chance for members to socialize on an informal basis. The meal is potluck and the food assignments are as follows:



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

Be sure to bring utensils required for serving your contribution. The club will provide wine and soft drinks.

The Oakland hills can occasionally be a bit cool and breezy so dress in layers. Hats and sun screen are also a good idea.

Directions are as follows: If coming from the north or east, take Highway 24, or if coming from the south take Highway 580 to Highway 13 (the Warren Freeway). From either direction proceed to the Redwood Road exit and go east (up the hill) on Redwood road. Take a right at Skyline Blvd which is at the summit. Proceed to Balmoral Drive (at the stoplight) and make a left turn on to Balmoral and find #5749. The house will be on your left on a corner a short distance up the hill. If lost or you need more information, call 510-482-8428.

Auction



The July auction is a major fund-raising event for the society and this year was a great success. It is clear that our treasury benefited from all the efforts of the many club members who helped to organize and stage the event, as well as those who bought and sold plants. Many thanks are due to many people, but perhaps most specifically to Janet Nelson and Suzanne Muller for coordinating the



event. Janet has coordinated the event several years in the past and each time all has gone smoothly. This year Suzanne was responsible for staffing the auction. It is a big job rounding up volunteers for all the many tasks that need to be accomplished and Suzanne made it look easy. All their hard work resulted in a very smooth operation. Once again, the club thanks both of you for all your hard work in managing the auction.

Thanks are due to the people who logged sales and to the cashiers. Both of these tasks require people who can function well during occasionally hectic times, a skill that not all of us have.

EBBS is grateful to those members who furnished items for sale at the auction and specially to those who donated items to the auction which meant the entire proceeds of the sale went to the club. Your generosity will be repaid by the club being able to fund outstanding speakers in the future.

If you missed out on selling your plants at the auction or if you have items worth less than ten dollars, take heart. EBBS has a sales table at our show in October and all plants, and especially inexpensive plants, are welcome with the usual twenty percent of the selling price going to the club.

REBS Show



The Redwood Empire Bonsai Society will hold their annual show on Saturday, August 25 and Sunday, August 26 at the Santa Rosa Veterans Building. 1351 Maple Ave., Santa Rosa. Hours are 10-5 and 10-4 respectively. The show is one of the largest in the area, if not the country, with about two hundred trees expected to be shown. Many of the trees that will be shown are the products of workshops by Kathy Shaner so they are guaranteed to be of high quality. There will be demonstrations each day by Kathy starting at 1:00 pm. There are other goodies such as a silent auction, raffles of the demonstration trees and a very large vendor area. Bob Shimon, the current club president, is delighted to answer questions about the show and can be contacted at shimon@mcn.org. Santa Rosa is a fair distance from the east bay, but the trip is well worth your while to see one of the biggest and best shows of the area.

Other Shows

As you might expect, the focus of EBBS is pretty much on bonsai with a rare excursion into the world of suiseki, the art of stone appreciation, which is related to bonsai. We sometimes lose track of the fact that there is a whole world of other horticultural societies out there which focus on plants that have nothing to do with bonsai. There are at least three other clubs that meet at the Garden Center, the lily society, the rose society and the iris society. All of these clubs have annual shows that are very much worthwhile for a visit for us as plant enthusiasts. Unfortunately, many of these shows are not as well advertised as possible and as a result, we frequently don't know the necessary details like time and date of the show. As a result, many of the fine plant shows that we would enjoy fly under our radar.

The San Leandro Dahlia Society is an example. EBBS has nothing to do with this society beyond the fact that we are kindred in spirit as plant lovers. Further, their show has absolutely nothing to do with bonsai, but might well interest you as a plant person. Their show



last year was absolutely spectacular with over one thousand flowers on exhibit. The show room was a sea of color that was breathtaking. They are not based at the Garden Center but rather at the San Leandro Public Library where the show is located, and the show is very much worth your while for a trip to the wilds of San Leandro. The show will be held on September 8 and 9 at the San Leandro library. A map is available on their website, www.sanleandrodahliasociety.org.

Money

It takes a surprising amount of money to finance all the various activities of EBBS. The major expenditures each year are room rent and speakers fees, and these are hopefully balanced by major incomes from annual dues and the auction. Of course, these are only the biggies. The most important single function of the board by far is to ensure that the money keeps coming in and that the expenditures are wisely spent for the benefit of the club. At the heart of this activity is our treasurer, Pat Cahill, who keeps careful account of our money. Each year the accounts are audited to confirm that they are accurate and up to date. A committee consisting of Tom Colby and Bev Martinez, who was an accountant in her former life, conducted the audit and are pleased to announce that all is in good order. They did recommend a couple of minor changes in which the books were kept to bring them congruent with standard accounting practice.



Boxwood



Boxwood belongs to a relatively large family of plants and they are spread all over the world. In spite of the large number of boxwood relatives, only three species have made it into the horticultural scene. The English boxwood is a small tree native to Europe but hasn't had much presence in the United States. Two species popular in the nursery trade are natives to Asia, look very much alike and are lumped together as Japanese boxwood. The natural habitats for these horticulturally valuable boxwoods is surprising since many of the boxwood species are tropical plants growing in Central and South America and hence are not usable for us locally as landscape plants.

Japanese boxwood has made a huge impact locally. They are relatively tolerant of abuse, being moderately drought tolerant, grow slowly, have small leaves and happily survive being continually cut back. These properties make them wonderful candidates for landscape hedges and that is why they are so frequently found in the bay area landscape. These properties also endear them to the bonsai community, and you can fairly frequently see them at bonsai shows. As boxwood hedges age, they can become rather lax if not aggressively maintained, and are frequently fated for removal. Also, some hedges are removed because they no longer fit in an updated landscape plan. Many of the former hedge plants end up as bonsai because they can show great age. This should not be a surprise because many of the hedges were, in fact, originally planted many years ago.

The wood in the European boxwood is very hard and dense (the wood is so heavy that it does not float in water) as well as fine grained. These properties also extend to the Japanese boxwood. The wood is ideal for making small items requiring intricate machining such as wooden combs and chess pieces and musical instrument accessories. All of your friends will be absolutely thrilled when you share with them the fact that the first bagpipes produced in Scotland used pipes made from boxwood.

Do you need to know all this? Well, yes you sort of do. The wood on a boxwood tree is so hard that bending a branch over one half inch in diameter (or less) is somewhere between difficult and impossible. Smaller

branches, of course, are easily wired and bent in the direction that you want them to go. Ex-landscape plants usually have thick branches that have taken years to grow. When you are looking at one with an eye to purchasing it for use as a bonsai, look carefully at the trunk and branches. You should always do this when considering any purchase but it is especially important when looking at an ex-landscape boxwood. If the tree has a large branch that doesn't quite fit into your design for a bonsai you really have only three choices, cut it off, carve the dickens out of it or, and least satisfactory, hide it with foliage. Don't even think of repositioning it with wire. It won't happen. In spite of these problems, ex-landscape boxwoods can make really fine bonsai trees if you make a careful selection of the available material. Younger trees available in nurseries in gallon cans are wonderful material for bonsai.



Boxwoods are easy to grow as bonsai. They appreciate a bit of shade rather than full sun. Roots can quickly grow into a dense mass which can restrict drainage, so be on the lookout for when repotting is necessary. Boxwoods can be lush growers and can quickly form dense masses of foliage. Accordingly, pruning fairly constantly is needed to give your tree an open look where you can see the branching rather than just a green blob. When pruning, be sure to cut the branch rather than the leaves since cut leaves can turn brown at the cut edges. Young branches can be wired but, as usual, watch carefully for development of wire scars. It has been reported that fertilizer designed for citrus is especially beneficial, but regular fertilizer that you use for your bonsai also works well.

If you do not have a boxwood tree in your bonsai collection, you are missing out on a very worthwhile tree.

New Members

EBBS welcomes the following new members to our club. Please add their names to your roster and introduce yourselves to them at our next event.

Robin Hampton
415-608-7881
Robin@robinhampton.com

Charlotte Landes
616-510-6604
charlotte.landес@gmail.com

Sam Stewart
925-765-6066
torquill@gmail.com

Yanran Lu
713-319-5480
yanranlue@gmail.com

Bonsai Calendar

- Watering – Water regularly. Don't over-water defoliated trees.
- Fertilizing – Continue regular feeding, but stop fertilizing decandled pines.
- Repotting – Not recommended at this time except for tropical and semi-tropical trees.
- Styling/Pruning – Avoid drastic pruning. Wire uprising branches on quince, ume, oaks, etc. Prune excessive growth on trees.
- Insect and disease control – Maintain defensive treatments for fungus. Watch for and treat insect infestations.

Refer to the EBBS Bonsai Calendar for more details on seasonal care.

Bonsai Instruction at Merritt College

The workshops will be held again at Merritt College because the school is in session for the August meeting. 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. There is a gate across the road leading to the parking lot that will automatically open when you pull up close to it. Leading the workshops are two members of EBBS, Bill Castellon and Randal Lee. You can contact Bill at 510-569-8003 or Randall at 510-864-0841 if you would like more information.

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.

August 25 - 26, Santa Rosa, Redwood Empire Bonsai Society (REBS): 35th Annual show at the Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Building, 1351 Maple Avenue. Show hours are 10 AM to 5 PM on Saturday and 10 AM to 4 PM on Sunday with demonstration by Bonsai Master Artist Kathy Shaner from 1 to 3 PM both days. Demo trees will be raffled. See the largest bonsai exhibition. Large bonsai vendor and member sales. Exciting silent auctions or "buy it now". Free refreshments by the Bonsai café. Free admission and parking. For more information visit our website www.rebsbonsai.org or contact Bob Shimon at (707) 884-4126 or shimon@mcn.org.

Articles or Services for Sale (or give-away)

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. Send your ad to janicedilbeck@comcast.net.

Newsletter Editor: Janice Dilbeck
Newsletter Star Reporter: Tom Colby

East Bay Bonsai Society—Schedule for 2018
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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

Aug 26 Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Tom Colby
Sept 12 tbd
Sept 23 Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Michael Jensen-Akula
Oct 28 Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – John Nackley
Nov 14 Satsuki – Rick Garcia
Nov 25 Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Janet Nelson
Dec 12 Holiday Dinner

Special Events

Aug 11 Potluck
Oct 13-14 Show
