



The Tree Shrinker

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A MONTHLY BULLETIN

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East Bay Bonsai Society

Meeting: January 10, 2018 7:30 PM

January Meeting

The January meeting will feature Kathy Shaner demonstrating how to further refine a hornbeam into a fine bonsai from challenging material. A standard fixture of bonsai club meetings is a bonsai artist who attacks a bush, and with much huffing and puffing, turns the bush into a tree with fine bonsai potential. This is only a snapshot into the life of the potential bonsai and totally



misses the element of how a tree changes over time. Sadly, we only rarely get to see the tree again to see how it has developed since we first saw it at the demonstration. On a longer view, trees are living creations and as they grow, opportunities for managing their growth both open and close as branches either grow or don't grow as expected. This means that the

look of the tree can change from what our expectations were when the tree was first styled. Sometimes the change can be dramatic.

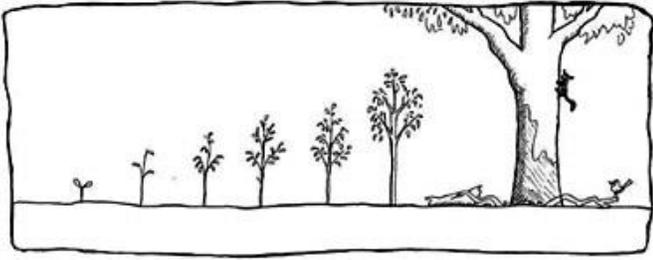
The January meeting will offer a rare glimpse into how a tree can develop over time. The subject of the demonstration is a hornbeam which was initially very challenging material. The tree was the subject of a demonstration three years ago where an overall plan for its development was presented. During the ensuing year the tree had been radically changed, and was returned for a second demonstration to show how the tree responded to styling decisions. This year the tree returns for yet another demonstration, and we are eager to see what changes another year has brought about.



Our demonstrator will be Kathy Shaner. She has served a five-year apprenticeship in Japan, and has been a mover and shaker in the bonsai world ever since her return to the United States. She has a nationwide reputation as a workshop leader and demonstrator, and is also the manager of the collection of trees at the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt.

Thanks in advance to Tom Fedor, Polly Gould and Tony Saraceno for offering to provide refreshments at the meeting.

February meeting



The February meeting will feature our very own Lisa Harper presenting a program devoted to increasing our understanding about how plants grow. This will be an important program because if we have a basic understanding of the biology of plant growth, we can do a better job of growing our bonsai. We all want to grow our bonsai to perfection, and we look forward to Lisa's presentation to show us how to improve our bonsai culture.

Holiday Dinner



Our holiday potluck was right out of the Perils of Pauline. The issue was the availability of the hall. The city employees were on strike and it was only clear that they would be back to work to open the hall at the eleventh hour before the dinner. Thanks to Don Meeker for the heads-up, and the furious last-minute activity by Roger Brady and Lisa Harper who insured that the details of the dinner all got straightened out.

The food brought by the attendees was extraordinary. EBBS is fortunate to have many fine cooks, and they outdid themselves again for this year's repast. We all owe many thanks to all who brought goodies for the potluck. You made the evening a special treat.

The high point of the event was a program engineered by Michael Hylton featuring images from the past years activities. Michael does an outstanding job of weaving the images into a single presentation. He has done this for the past several years, and each time the program has been better than the last one. Michael will have a difficult time topping this year's

presentation. Thanks, Michael for once again making the evening a special event.



One of the important activities of the annual holiday dinner is to announce the officers and board members for the forthcoming year. Our President for the coming year is Roger Brady, and our Vice President is Lisa Harper. Pat Cahill will continue as Treasurer. Bev Martinez will be our Secretary for the forthcoming year. Continuing board members will be Tom Colby, Suzanne Muller, Julie Holcomb and Michael Jensen-Akula. Last, but far from least, Janice Dilbeck and Tom Colby will continue in their roles as the Crusading Editor and Star Reporter of the newsletter.

As a special note, John Nackley has elected to retire from the board. He has served as an officer of EBBS for several years and is always willing to help where ever needed. Thanks, John, for all you have done over the years for EBBS.



Dues

Some of us are now feeling very smug because they have already paid their dues for 2018. The rest of us need to be reminded that the time has come for dues renewal. The yearly dues are



\$30 for single memberships and \$40 for couples. Membership includes a subscription to our always entertaining and informative newsletter, *The Tree Shrinker*, by email. If you would like to have a hard copy sent to you by snail mail, there is an additional charge of \$5 to cover the cost of postage. Our treasurer, Pat Cahill, will be delighted to receive your check for dues at the next regular meeting. Dues can also be mailed to: EBBS Treasurer, 4933 Cochrane, Oakland, CA, 94618-2701.

BIB Show

Bay Island Bonsai (BIB) will hold their annual show at the Garden Center at Lake Merritt on January 27 and 28. The show typically is among the finest exhibits of bonsai in the entire United States, and hence, is very worth your while to attend. The hours are from 10 am to 4 pm each day. There will be an auction starting at 1 pm on Saturday which has featured superior trees in the past. A demonstration is scheduled for Sunday at 1 pm. The show will feature vendor sales as well as member sales. A notable addition this year will be an extensive sale of pots.

BIB is a sensei club, which is distinctly different from EBBS. Sensei is a Japanese term which means honored teacher, and in sensei clubs a single person, the sensei, conducts all the programs and



demonstrations, as well as the workshops for the entire year. Boon Manakitivipart, the BIB sensei, is an outstanding bonsai artist, so the standards of BIB are set very high. Continued exposure to a sensei allows for continuity and allows members to plumb the depths of the sensei's knowledge. EBBS is not a sensei club. Each meeting has a different demonstrator which allows for a wide exposure to a variety of approaches to bonsai. But each meeting allows only a snapshot of the presenter's total knowledge.

In a sensei club, each tree shown in an exhibit has to have the approval of the sensei who sets the minimum standard for the trees in the show and how they are displayed. In the case of BIB, the standard of all of the exhibited trees is very high.

In contrast, EBBS welcomes every member to show a tree, regardless of their experience as bonsai artists and the quality of their bonsai. Exhibits by people who are brand new to bonsai are especially welcomed.

If you visit the BIB show, note particularly that all of the trees are of uniformly high quality, and also note that each tree is in a pot and on a stand that fully compliments the whole composition. The show will be a lesson on what fine bonsai are all about. For more

details about the show and the club consult <https://bayislandbonsai.com>.

Mammoth Auction and Sale



Check your calendar! Be sure that you have marked down the mammoth sale and auction which is a fund raiser for the bonsai garden. It will be on the weekend of February 17 and 18. It is a win-win event. The garden receives money to fund the operation of the garden, and you have the opportunity to acquire some fine trees as well as bonsai accessories such as pots, stands and tools.

There will be something for everybody. The auction usually features a few superb bonsai at very high prices, but also features many affordable trees a little further away from being finished bonsai. There will be a sale which will feature a wide variety of trees, pots and stands, and usually at very favorable prices. There will also be a number of vendors selling a wide variety of merchandise. Last, but not least, there will be a demonstration. With so much to see over the weekend and with so much to buy, you absolutely must put this event on your calendar.

The auction starts on 1:00 Saturday, February 18, with a preview beginning at 12:00. The sales area opens at 10:00 Sunday, February 19, and the vender area opens on Sunday at 9:00. The demonstration is scheduled for 1:00 Sunday. Further information can be found on the bonsai garden web site, www.gsbflakemerritt.org.

Crepe Myrtle

We get awfully enamored with the big three of bonsai trees, namely juniper, maple and pine, and for good reason. Each of these are a source of splendid bonsai and, at least for the juniper, are very easy to grow and maintain as bonsai. We lose track of the fact that many other trees can also make very rewarding bonsai. An outstanding example is the crepe myrtle. It is not seen very often at local shows, and that is a pity.

Crepe myrtles have a lot to offer. They produce an abundant display of flowers from April to September.



The flowers can range from white to pink to purple, depending on the cultivar, and have a crinkly texture, hence the name. The bark is to die for. It is nearly white, and the bark can scale off, producing a mottled visual texture. Further, the trunk is usually furrowed with many soft curves which gives natural movement to the tree. The wood is hard and durable, and can be carved readily into jins and sharis. Crepe myrtles usually produce spectacular fall leaf color as an added benefit.



Let's look a bit closer at crepe myrtles. They are native to Asia and Australia, and are at their best in hot and humid climates. Although they have the reputation of being frost tender, not to fear. They are frequently seen locally as splendid landscape trees, at least west of the hills. During the severely cold weather that occasionally is seen east of the hills, bonsai trees might

enjoy a bit of winter protection. Crepe myrtles may be found in local nurseries, but be aware of the fact that there are many cultivars available and they range from dwarfs to energetic trees that can quickly grow to thirty feet or higher. You would probably be more pleased with the dwarf varieties as bonsai.

Crepe myrtles grow readily from seed or cuttings. The trunks on the seedlings thicken only slowly with time, but the process can be speeded up by heavily pruning them and then allowing the trees to grow freely the following year. The trees bloom on new wood which means that they can be heavily pruned at the end of summer. This is in contrast with trees that bloom on old wood where heavy pruning at the end of summer will remove the flower buds that are needed for bloom the following year.

The biggest problem with crepe myrtles is wiring them without scarring their biggest asset, their bark. If the tree is wired, the wire should not be left on the tree for more than a very few months. Sometimes wire is tightly wrapped with paper, and this helps reduce the possibility of scarring. Guy wires are also another possibility to reduce the chance of scarring.

Placing the trees in full sun will allow the best flowering of the tree. Once the tree has flowered, removal of the old flowers can possibly produce a second crop of flowers later in the year.

So there you have it, a possible new addition for your bonsai collection. You will be delighted with what crepe myrtles have to offer.

Bonsai Calendar

- Sun – Move all trees into full sun.
- Watering – Adjust watering for winter.
- Fertilizing – Use low or zero nitrogen fertilizers.
- Repotting – Generally, not the time for repotting.
- Styling/Pruning – Trimming should be minimal. OK to wire, but be careful of brittle foliage.
- Insect and disease control – Remove dead plant material. Apply dormant spray. Watch for and treat insect infestations.

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

Bonsai Instruction at Merritt College

Instruction is in the form of workshops and presents a splendid opportunity to learn how to develop your trees into first class bonsai. You work on your own tree under the guidance of experienced bonsai artists. The workshops are open to all experience levels and are free. Workshops start at 7:00 pm on the fourth Monday of each month when the college is in session, and are held in the Landscape Horticulture Building at Merritt College which is located in the Oakland hills off Redwood Road. 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 Randall Lee. You can contact Bill at 510-569-8003 or Randall at 510-846-0841 for further 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

February 17 – 18, Oakland, GSBF Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt: The Annual Mammoth Auction and Sale Fund Raiser will be held at the Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave., Lake Merritt. Saturday: Auction preview at Noon with Auction starting at 1 PM. Sunday: Vendor Sales start at 9 AM; Plant Sales start at 10 AM; Demonstrations start at 1 PM. Everyone is encouraged to submit their bonsai and bonsai related items for consideration to be included in the Mammoth Auction at the earliest date possible. The Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt will be open that weekend 10 AM to 4 PM on Saturday, and Noon to 4 PM on Sunday. Please visit the Garden and observe the

many installments under the Garden Revitalization Opportunity (GRO) project. For more information or to sell bonsai, email bonsailakemerritt@gmail.com and visit <http://gsbf-lakemerritt.org>.

February 24 – 25, San Marino, Bonsai-A-Thon XXII at the Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Road. This is the annual fundraiser for the GSBF Collection at The Huntington. Event admission is free with Bonsai-A-Thon "early bird" registration between 7:30 AM - 9 AM. Event hours are 8 AM – 5 PM both days. Pancake breakfast, demonstrations, lunch, bonsai exhibits, large sales area, raffle and auction. For more information visit www.gsbfhuntington.com

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 2018

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

Jan	10	Styling Raft Hornbeam - Part 3 – Kathy Shaner
Jan	28	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Tom Colby
Feb	14	Plant Biology and Development – Lisa Harper
Feb	25	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Bob Gould
Mar	14	Tool Sharpening and Grafting – Gordon Deeg
Mar	25	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – John Nackley
Apr	11	Redwoods – Bob Shimon
Apr	22	Introduction to Bonsai at BLM – Janet Nelson
May	9	Trident Maple – Peter Tea
May	27	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Linda Soliven
June	13	Carving – Tim Kong
June	24	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Tom Colby
July	11	Auction

Special Events
