



The Tree Shrinker

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A MONTHLY BULLETIN

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East Bay Bonsai Society Meeting: May 8, 2019 7:30 PM

May Program

"How should I display my tree?" is always a question Bonsai artists ask. If you find yourself asking "what should my stand look like" or "what type of accent plant should I use?" Then you will not want to miss the May meeting. Kora Dalager, the well known bonsai travel guide, will be here to guide us through these questions and more.



Kora has been a bonsai artist for over 30 years. In that time she has been in display workshops with artists such as Kunio Kobayashi in Japan and Mitsuya in Rochester, New York. She has also studied with many artists worldwide including with Harry Hirao and Ernie Kuo. She is currently a member of the Bay Area Bonsai Association (BABA) and a lifetime member of the San Diego Bonsai Club where she has held the offices of Club Treasurer, Vice President and President. In addition she has chaired the GSBF convention twice. She has been an active travel agent specializing in bonsai tours in Japan for over 20 years.

As Kora will be speaking on Bonsai display she has requested that club members bring in trees, stands, companion plants, etc. for discussion during the presentation.

Thank you in advance to: Michael Jensen-Akula, Tom Colby and Addison Galambos for providing refreshments for the evening.

June Program

The June program will feature our very own Polly Gould and John Doig. Polly will be presenting on suiseki, or viewing stones, while John will be instructing us on shohin, the little trees that are less than 8 inches tall. This program should serve to get us up to speed on stones and trees for the soon to come suiseki/shohin show at the end of June.

April Program

By: Brian Brandley

Our April meeting featured Randall Lee, EBBS member and Certified Aesthetic Pruner. Randall began his bonsai journey in 1984 and has trained with Dennis Makishima, Kathy Shaner and Mas Imazumi. He is a regular presence at EBBS and has done many demos for us in the past.



Randall brought in several Hinoki Cypress (*Chamaecyparis obtusa*) to show, and a large, tall tree for an initial styling demonstration. These cypress trees are native to Japan. There are many, many named cultivars, each with their own particular character. Randall's demo tree was a *C. obtusa* 'wells special', one of his favorite varieties. Many named cultivars are grafted onto *Thuja* root stock so look for individuals without a bulge at the graft. Randall finds starting material at the East Bay Nursery in Berkeley and at Pond and Garden in Cotati.

Hinoki are slow growing trees, with smooth, fan-like foliage. They have deep green foliage during the summer, but can bronze during the winter. Don't worry, the green will return. The foliage can be quite dense, which presents a challenge. These trees don't bud back well on mature wood so interior foliage is easy to lose due to shading. An important part of early work on such a tree is to thin out the foliage pads and allow light to penetrate the interior and support foliage close to the trunk. Foliage should be cut at branch points to thin out the mass. Randall does not recommend the old technique of pinching the growing tips. Hinoki can be sensitive to root work, particularly after initial removal of a large tap root. Root pruning should be done gradually over several seasons. Hinoki prefer full sun in cooler climates, but benefit from shade when grown in hotter microclimates of our area. Do not let the pots get very hot or roots will die. Randall uses a soil mix of 50% acadama, 25% lava, 25% pumice and repots every two to three years. He has a heavy feeding protocol, incorporating liquid fertilizer once a month from March to November, and time-released fertilizers throughout the growing season. Hinoki are easily propagated by cuttings.



For styling, Randall advises taking what the tree provides. This time he brought an upright tree with a gentle sweep to the trunk and a significant base. Randall chose a front with the widest base that still shows some movement in the trunk. He also wanted to minimize a large, somewhat unsightly surface root. The major debate with the audience was how tall to leave it? Spectators were evenly split, so Randall chose to cut the trunk shorter than some others might have, with the

goal of improving the taper at the top. Randall recommended leaving more small branches near the trunk than really necessary to provide choices later as it grows out. Randall prefers saving jin and shari for more muscular, powerful trees, and so did not incorporate them into this more graceful, upright example.



After Randall finished the initial wiring the tree was raffled. Congratulations to the winner Rick Medress.

Emergency contacts

It may seem kind of strange to ask for emergency contact numbers for a bonsai club, but if something happened to you at a meeting, a show or a field trip event, would the club be able to contact your family or emergency person? For many of us, our spouses or significant others do not attend all of the bonsai club functions and they often have different phone numbers than we do. So we are collecting emergency contact numbers (on an optional basis) from club members. To get yours recorded just send an email to EBBS_Distribution@Yahoo.com. Include your name, your emergency contact name and phone number. The information will be included in the EBBS Board roster which includes your address but is not published to the general club members.

Show Review – The BABA Show

By: Tom Colby

Bay Area Bonsai Associates (BABA) held their annual show on March 23 and 24. BABA is currently a small club with eighteen members, all of whom are members of other local bonsai clubs. EBBS is well represented in BABA. Today we are flooded with information from both folks who have studied in Japan and the internet. It is hard to realize that, not that many years ago this information was not readily available. BABA was formed many years ago by people who wanted to fill the information void and wanted to share what they knew about both the technical side of growing bonsai as well as how to display the trees. BABA has retained the willingness to share information amongst its members. The attendees of the show were greeted by a tree that was spectacularly displayed in the show lobby on a

platform suspended by thin cords. The background was a sheet of white material which focused attention on the trunk structure of the tree. Also written biographies of three of the club members were displayed in the lobby. This was a new feature of shows and added interest to the show.



The show itself occupied all of the regular meeting room and the shelf on the hallway. Clearly there were a lot of fine trees to be seen. An extended display of shohin bonsai took up two sides of the room which was a wonderful prelude to the shohin/suiseki show scheduled for June. Shohin are the queens of bonsai because they are harder to grow and shape than larger trees. The small pots can quickly dry out resulting in loss of the tree. Further, the leaves and branches must all be in proper scale for the tree. There were some mome trees in the show. These are little trees under three inches high. If shohin are the queens of bonsai, then mome are the goddesses of bonsai because of the extreme challenge of growing them. There were three massive trees that were at least three feet high and with trunks at least ten inches in diameter which were spectacular.



While the smallest and largest trees provided the wow and dazzle of the show, the heart and soul of the show was the medium sized trees. One of the basic questions of bonsai development that everyone is faced with is what should my tree look like? The show provided many examples of beautifully grown and

styled trees that were eloquent answers to the question. These trees were a learning experience for all. Those of you that visited the show saw one of the best shows in the area and those of you that did not attend the show missed one of the real treats that bonsai can offer.

Did you know?

By: Suzanne Muller

On February 13, 1963, there was a request to all members, proposing a contest, to select a name for the newsletter. Prizes offered. On April 10, 1963, a winning name was selected...*The Tree Shrinker*. The winner...Jack Dutro. Here are some of the other suggestions: Bon Sigher's Digest, Bonsai Tsu Shin (Bonsai News in Japanese), Bon Vista Bulletin, Bonsai Beacon, Shibo (very distinguished high style Japanese) and Pot Shots just to name a few.. The reward was a green handled trowel.

Propagation by Cuttings

By: Brian Brandley

Cuttings are probably the most common way to propagate many of the species we use for bonsai. Cuttings have the advantage of producing a new tree that is genetically identical to the parent plant – not true when starting from seeds. Cuttings also provide a jump start in size over seedlings since they are often successful up to pencil-sized diameters. While air layering (discussed in the March 2019 newsletter) has these advantages and more, cuttings are faster, cheaper, and easily done when performing routine pruning. This is a great way to generate material for grafting or trunk fusions since the bark and foliage will be identical to the stock tree. Not every cutting is going to root. A success rate of 50% is usually considered very good, so you have to begin with lots more cuttings than you want. Use of rooting hormone and a heating mat (70 F) can increase success rates. When you get too many, bring your excess successes in for the club raffle!



The best reference for details on species specific propagation methods, including cuttings, is *The Reference Manual of Woody Plant Propagation*, 2nd Edition, by Dirr and Heuser. Below is a list of species I've had success with myself, or seen others succeed with. I'm sure others could be added to the list. The great part is that cuttings are so easy and cheap it can't hurt to try.

Azalea	Zelkovia	Bald Cypress
Ficus	Hinoki Cypress	Boxwood
Privet	Pyracantha	Silverberry
Elm	Eunymous	Olive
Quince	Japanese Maple	Trident Maple
Juniper		

cuttings or hardwood cuttings. Semi-hardwood cuttings are made from the current season's growth, usually in summer or early fall, and include mature leaves. Avoid flower buds or remove them. The stock plant should be healthy and fully hydrated. Terminal stems are best, but a long stem can be divided into multiple cuttings 4 to 6 inches each. Remove the leaves from the lower half of the cutting. If the remaining leaves are large, cut them in half to reduce moisture loss. Bury the leafless stem in moist rooting medium consisting of clean (sterile if possible) small grained material like coarse sand, Perlite, or pumice fines. It needs to combine reasonable aeration with good moisture retention. Make sure buds point up, and space the cuttings far enough apart for all the leaves to receive light. Cover with clear plastic and place in indirect light or bright shade. Keep moist by frequent misting. Rooting times will vary but is signaled by strong, new growth.

Hardwood cuttings are taken from dormant trees in late fall through early spring. These are kept moist and refrigerated over the winter or in milder climates like ours, planted out and set aside to wait for spring. They are done in a fashion similar to semi-hardwood cuttings, but without leaves, of course. Each cutting should have at least two nodes, and the bottom cut should be made just below a node.



Failures are typically of two types. Obviously, the cuttings can fail to form roots. Humidity levels may be too low, or transpiration rates too high. Some species are less able to form root tissue from stems or need

stronger rooting hormone to get the job done. Refer to Dirr and Heuser for info on optimal hormone strength for specific trees. Or, you can get roots and initial growth that rapidly collapses due to fungal infection called damping off. This can be avoided by using clean rooting substrate and reducing environmental humidity once the cuttings have rooted. Remove the plastic cover and only water when necessary.

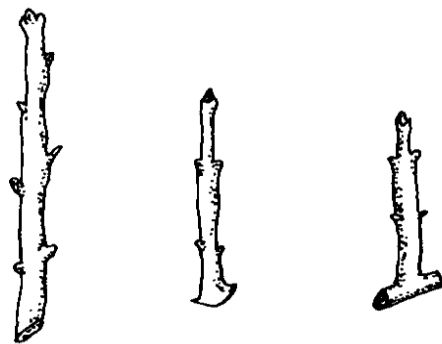
A third type of cutting is even easier, when it works. Root cuttings can be saved from repotting and used to propagate many trees. As long as you have viable, fine roots and orient the cutting with the top of the root up, you will regularly be rewarded with new top growth.

You can take advantage of the sinuous nature of the roots to convert them to very interesting trunks. Trees that have been reported to easily start from root cuttings are:

Acacia	Pyracantha
Flowering quince	Zelkova
Acer campestre (field maple)	Hackberry
Bougainvilleae	Hawthorn
Liquidamber (sweetgum)	Crabapple
Crape myrtle	Persimmon
Eleagnus (silverberry)	Pomegranite
Elms – all species	Privet
Ficus salicaria (willow-leaf ficus)	
Prunus – most species	
Ficus natalensis	

So don't throw away those pruning left over's from your favorite trees. Try some cuttings and see how you do. Happy propagating!

Fig 1 Types of Hardwood Cuttings



The three types of hardwood cuttings are straight, mallet, and heel (Fig). A straight cutting is the most commonly used stem cutting. Mallet and heel cuttings are used for plants that might otherwise be more difficult to root. For the heel cutting, a small section of older wood is included at the base of the cutting. For the mallet cutting, an entire section of older stem wood is included.

Show and Tell



Janet Nelson-Trumm - Crabapple



Rick Trumm – Asian pear



Julie Holcomb – Asian Pear



Mike Cullen - Wisteria



Bob Gould - Lilac



Stephen Lysaght – Cherry

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. 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.

Bonsai Calendar

- Watering – Water regularly to keep root ball moist, not wet, and never dry.
- Fertilizing – Start regular feeding of deciduous trees after first flush of growth is completed. Continue regular feeding of conifers.
- Repotting – Not recommended at this time.
- Styling/Pruning – Rotate trees. Watch for wire cutting during this period of fast growth. Start defoliation. Shorten branches on fruiting trees. Pinch junipers, spruces and cedars.
- Air Layering – Deciduous trees may be air layered if new growth has hardened.
- 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.

Upcoming EBBS Events

May 3 10am – 1pm Cleaning pre-bonsai maples at BGLM

The BGLM has procured many maple pre-bonsai's in 1 gallon pots from a nursery going out of business. These trees need to be weeded and have soil added to be brought back to better health. Any member who helps out will be rewarded with a maple to take home.

Contact: Lisa Harper email: lisaharper@me.com or phone (510) 220-3339.

May 17, 18 or 19 9am – 4pm Lotus Bonsai Nursery 13th Annual Spring Sale

This is a not-to-be-missed sale. There is a 20% discount on all bonsais and bonsai stock. We are forming a car pool of club members that wish to attend. Date will be determined by attending members.

Contact: Lisa Harper email: lisaharper@me.com or phone: (510) 220-3339.

June 15, 2019 9am – 1pm Shohin Black Pine Workshop at BGLM with Bill Castellon

\$90.00 cost includes a black pine tree and workshop with Bill. Workshop will take place at the Bonsai garden workshop at Lake Merritt. We can gather together for lunch afterwards if there is interest. Maximum 8 people, there are 3 slots left.

Contact: Lisa Harper email: lisaharper@me.com or phone: (510) 220-3339.

November 9, 2019 Sueiseki collecting Black Butte Lake

This is an all day collecting trip with the SF Club. Black Butte Lake is just west of Orland. Contact Lisa Harper for details if interested. Email: lisaharper@me.com or phone: (510) 220-3339.

Events by Others

May 4 - 5, 2019 Sacramento, California

Sacramento Bonsai Club: Annual Spring Show at the Buddhist Church of Sacramento, 2401 Riverside Rd. Show hours are 10 AM – 4 PM, with a Sam Adina demonstration at 1:30 PM, both days.

May 18-19, 2019 Santa Barbara, California

Bonsai Club of Santa Barbara: Annual Bonsai Exhibition and plant sale in Fellowship Hall at Trinity Lutheran Church, 909 N. La Cumbre (Corner of Foothill Rd.). Show hours are 11 AM - 4 PM Saturday and Noon - 4 PM

May 18 – 19, 2019 Sacramento, California

Satsuki Aikokai Association of Sacramento: 41st Annual showing of beautiful blooming Satsuki azalea bonsai at Shepard Art and Garden Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd. Show hours are Saturday 10 AM - 5 PM and Sunday 10 AM - 4 PM with demonstrations at 1:30 PM both days

May 18 - 19, 2019 Palo Alto, California

Akebono Bonsai Club and Kashu Suiskei Kai: Annual Show held at the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple, 2751 Louis Road. Show hours are Noon - 5 PM with a demonstration on each day at 2 PM.

May 18 – 19, 2019 Oakland, California

Bay Area Satsuki Aikokai: 24th Annual Satsuki Bonsai Spring Show "Flowers Abound" at the Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave., Lake Merritt. Show hours are Saturday 10 AM - 5 PM and Sunday 10 AM - 4 PM.

May 19, 2019 Van Nuys, California

Sansui Kai: Annual Bonsai Show at the beautiful Japanese Garden, 6100 Woodley Ave. Show hours are 10 AM - 4 PM with a demonstration at 1 PM.

June 1- 2, 2019 San Mateo, California

Sei Boku Bonsai Kai: 36th Annual Show at the San Mateo Garden Center, 605 Parkside Way (next to Beresford Park). Show hours are 10 AM - 4 PM both

days with demonstration from 1 – 3 PM. Demo tree will be raffled. Large club member plant sale, vendors, door prizes and our always popular raffles. Admission is free. Dr. Bonsai will be available to offer styling and care tips. For more information contact Marsha Mekisich at eclectic.gardener@yahoo.com.

June 1, 2019 Las Vegas, Nevada

Las Vegas Bonsai Society: Annual bonsai show, "Bonsai in the Desert" at the West Charleston Library, 6301 West Charleston Boulevard. Show hours are 10 AM – 4 PM. Headliner is Todd Schlafer of First Branch Bonsai. He will be conducting a lecture at 11 AM followed by a demonstration at 1 PM. For more information please contact Ira Sisson (206) 852-6510 or irasisson@hotmail.com

June 2, 2019 Las Vegas, Nevada

Las Vegas Bonsai Society: On Sunday, June 2, 2019 Todd Schlafer of First Branch Bonsai will be holding workshops by pre-registration only. For more information please contact Ira Sisson (206) 852-6510 or irasisson@hotmail.com

June 29 - 30, 2019 Oakland, California

San Francisco Suiseki Kai, California Suiseki Society, Bay Area Shohin Society, and California Shohin Society: Inaugural Bay Area Suiseki and Shohin Show at the Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave. Show hours are 11 AM to 5 PM Saturday and 11 AM to 4 PM Sunday. Suiseki Presentation on Sunday at 1 PM. Large vendor area. Members of all Bay Area Bonsai and Suiseki Clubs are invited to exhibit. Clubs can purchase vendor tables for club sales. If you would like to exhibit be a vendor, please contact Lisa Harper at lisaharper@me.com, or call (510) 220-3339.

Newsletter Editor: Beverly Martinez

Newsletter Reporters: Brian Brandley, Tom Colby, Suzanne Muller

Newsletter Photographer: Suzanne Muller

East Bay Bonsai Society—Schedule for 2019

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

May	8	Kora Dalager – Bonsai display
May	26	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Janet Nelson
Jun	12	Polly Gould – Suiseki and John Doig - Shohin
Jun	23	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Brian Brandley
Jul	10	Annual Auction
Jul	28	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Tom Colby
Aug	10	Annual picnic – hosted by Michael Jensen-Akula
Aug	25	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Michael Jensen-Akula
Aug	26	Workshop at Merritt College
Sept	11	Lucy Judd – Accent plants
Sept	22	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – John Nackley & Bob Gould
Sept	23	Workshop at Merritt College

Special events

Jun 29/30 Suiseki and Shohin Show Lakeside Garden Center
