



# The Tree Shrinker

Volume XXXIX, No.3

A MONTHLY BULLETIN

<http://www.eastbaybonsai.org>



[facebook.com/eastbaybonsai](https://www.facebook.com/eastbaybonsai)



[twitter.com/EastBayBonsai](https://twitter.com/EastBayBonsai)

## East Bay Bonsai Society Monthly Meeting March 11, 2020

### Last call for Dues

Dues are now due for the year of 2020. If you are new to EBBS and joined after October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 then your dues are good for 2020. If you joined before October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 then another year of dues is owed. There will be a box at the next meeting in March where you can drop off your dues or you can mail a check (sorry no credit cards) to:

EBBS Treasurer  
C/O Pat Cahill  
4933 Cochrane Ave  
Oakland, CA. 94618-2701

Single member \$30. (Includes newsletter by email)  
Family or partner \$40. (Includes newsletter by email)  
Add \$10 if requesting Newsletter through US Postal mail rather than email.

### March meeting

Now that we are well versed in Root over Rock, we will continue the segment with Rock plantings. Randall Lee will be walking us through how to make a rock structure complete with trees.



It is always a delight to have Randall present. Last year he showed us how to create a beautiful Hinoki Cypress bonsai from a 3+ foot nursery tree and the year before he walked us through group slab plantings.

Randall's bonsai experience started in 1984 as a young boy. Since that time he has studied with Dennis Makishima, Kathy Shaner and Mas Imazumi. He is continuing to add to his expertise by currently attending classes with Peter Tea.

Randall belongs to two bonsai clubs; our own East Bay Bonsai Society and the Merritt Bonsai Club where he has reigned in the past as president and holds monthly workshops with Bill Castellon. Randall is also a Certified Aesthetic Pruner and holds the title of Past President of the Aesthetic Pruners Association. He presently gives demos, workshops and consultations both in pruning and bonsai.

Thank you in advance to Tom Colby and Andrea Callegari for supplying goodies for this meeting.

### April meeting

We are pleased to announce that Satsuki Azalea master Darren Wong will be the speaker for the April meeting. Darren has been working with azaleas for many years and continues to travel to Japan for training.



## February meeting

By: Tom Fedor

On this occasion we were treated to a presentation from Eric Schrader, past president of the Bonsai Society of San Francisco (BSSF) about Root over Rock (ROR) style bonsai. As noted in last month's Tree Shrinker, Eric is a grower, writer, photographer, and bonsai artist in San Francisco's Bernal Heights neighborhood.



The first question he posed for his audience was "What is an advantage of styling ROR?" To deafening silence, indicating most of us had never thought of it, he pointed out the obvious: ROR gives your bonsai project an instant massive base which would take years to grow if it were wood, not rock. The answer to his second question, "What is a disadvantage to ROR?" is that if (or when) you lose a root to misadventure; the design of your tree may be seriously compromised. (I guess you pay your money and you take your chances.)



Eric discussed rock selection and his own personal evolution in selecting them, from "any old rock at hand" to something approaching suiseki in concept (except sharp rock edges unsuitable for suiseki may be fine for ROR style bonsai). And it turns out that different species have different proclivities for grabbing rocks with their roots, trident maples and black pines being best at this particular acrobatic feat. Crabapples, while good if you can get them to work, may be more problematic.

Lastly, before our very eyes, he created an infant black pine ROR for some lucky raffle ticket holder. He bare-rooted a year-old seedling and wired it for trunk movement, leaving a long tail for stability. Next, he carefully draped its roots around his chosen rock, securing them with strips of raffia like tying a ribbon to a Christmas gift package. All that remained was to place the rock in a pot of soil, surround it with a plastic sleeve wired into the pot, and fill the sleeve with soil to cover the roots. E voila! It looks easy when you know how. Thanks, Eric!

## Ponderosa Pines (*Pinus ponderosa*)

By: Brian Brandley

Ponderosa pines are the most widely distributed pine in North America and are found exclusively in the more mountainous regions of the west. There are five recognized subspecies, in the central Rockies, southern Rockies, high plains, Sierra's, coastal range of northern California and Oregon. They are one of the most common native pines here in California, usually growing between 3,000 and 7,000 ft elevation.

Ponderosas are prized in bonsai for their rough, flaky bark, contorted trunks, flexible limbs and dramatic deadwood. Collected specimens can be wildly sculpted by their environment, resulting in beautiful twisted trunks, limbs and deadwood. In the mountains they can be found growing in pockets in the rock, stunting their growth. Many small collected specimens can be a hundred years old or more. If you find the right tree it can be easily collected with a great chance at survival, essentially removing it from a natural, rock pot and replanting in one at home. If you choose the wrong tree it might take dynamite to get it out of the rock fissures its locked into. Collected trees should be allowed to recover until they show strong growth again before working them.



The only negative about ponderosa pines is their naturally long needles. They will reduce with proper management, and some have successfully grafted Japanese black pine (JBP) foliage onto ponderosa trunks. Once established ponderosa back bud well with proper technique. They should not be treated like JBP though. Back budding is stimulated by removing terminal buds in the fall. As more branches with terminal foliage are established (a higher density of needles), the needles will gradually get smaller. Like any pine this should only be done on healthy trees. Ponderosa pines take well to pot culture. They prefer things on the drier side so use coarse, free draining substrate. Once established they will want full sun, but when stressed they benefit from partial shade and frequent misting. They are very cold hardy. Subspecies that come from the Rockies may have a more difficult time with our mild winters. We would probably do better with more coastal subspecies.

Unfortunately, it seems to be currently out of print. It can be found on Amazon, but for about 10 times its list price, so check out club libraries and other bonsai friends for potential access to it.

Ponderosa pines are a great Native American species for bonsai that really reflect the western US.

### **Show and Tell**

Once again we had several trees for our Show and Tell section of the monthly meeting. Remember, anyone can bring a tree to show to the audience or to get information on.



Styling ponderosa pines usually features their rugged trunks, bark and deadwood. Don't expect a ponderosa to ever look as well groomed as a JBP, unless of course, you graft JBP foliage on it. The wild nature of collected ponderosa is usually reflected in the styling. Limbs are extremely flexible, allowing severe bends to bring the terminal foliage back closer to the trunk line. It does take a long time for these flexible limbs to set in position (two years or more), so be prepared to repeatedly wire them. The junctions of limbs to trunk are weak and easily torn so caution is called for. They make great medium to large size trees, as well as wonderful literati. Tips on ponderosa pine management and styling can be found on Jonas Dupuich's site (<https://bonsaimirai.com/node/748>). Andy Smith at Golden Arrow Bonsai (<http://www.goldenarrowbonsai.com/>) has info and collected trees for sale. The most complete discussion on collecting, maintaining and styling ponderosa pines is Larry Jackel's book, Ponderosa Pines as Bonsai.



Randall Lee – Root over Rock Juniper



Bob Gould - Flowering Plum

## **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 Randall Lee. You can contact Bill at 510-569-8003 or Randall at 510-864-0841.

## **Events by Others**

### **April 4 – 5, 2020 Sacramento, California**

**Bonsai Sekiyu Kai:** 43rd Annual Show will be held at the Sacramento Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Blvd. Hours are 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM with a demonstration at 2:00 PM, both days by Yuzo Maruyama. Free Admission. Amenities include refreshments, light snacks, door prizes, raffles, and silent auction. Member and vendor sales of plants and bonsai-related items. For more information contact Bonsai Sekiyu Kai at [bonsaisekiyukai@gmail.com](mailto:bonsaisekiyukai@gmail.com).

### **April 11 - 12, 2020 Sacramento, California**

**American Bonsai Association, Sacramento:** Annual Spring Show at the Shepard Garden and Arts Center in McKinley Park, 3330 McKinley Blvd. Show hours are Saturday, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, and Sunday, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, with a demonstration by Dave De Groot at 1:30 PM, both days. Beginner workshop: Sunday morning from 10:00 AM – Noon. Large member sales and vendor areas, free admission and parking. Benefit drawings, both Saturday and Sunday, will include each day's demonstration tree and many bonsai and bonsai related items. For additional information visit our website: <http://www.abasbonsai.org> or contact Renee Seely, 916-929-2106 or email [breadcrumb@comcast.net](mailto:breadcrumb@comcast.net).

### **April 18, 2020 Modesto, California**

**Modesto Bonsai Club:** 38th Annual Spring Show at the Stanislaus County Harvest Hall, 3800 Cornucopia Way. Show hours are Saturday, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, with a demonstration at 1:00 PM by Sam Adina. Exhibits, sales, plants, pots, tools and more, multiple raffles. Free admission and parking. Benefit drawing Saturday, will include demonstration tree and many bonsai and bonsai related items. For additional information visit our Club Facebook Page [Modesto Bonsai Club](#), or contact our Club President Peter Camarena, 209-529-1759 or email [pete.camarena@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pete.camarena@sbcglobal.net).

### **April 18 - 19, 2020 Santa Cruz, California**

**Santa Cruz Bonsai Kai:** 31st Annual Bonsai Show at the Museum of Art & History, 705 Front Street. Show hours are from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM with demonstrations at 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM. Saturday's demonstrators are Enrique Castano at 11:00 AM and Gordon Deeg at 2:00 PM and Sunday's demonstrators are Enrique Castano at 11:00 AM and Scott Chadd at 2:00 PM. Demonstration trees and trees prepared by club members will be part of the raffle after each day's demonstration. In addition, enjoy the Watsonville Taiko Drummers, a hang drum demonstration, and other Japanese cultural events in the recently revitalized Abbott Square next to the Museum. For this weekend only, admission price is \$5.00 for both the Museum and the Bonsai Show (Half off the normal Museum entrance fee). For more information, contact Sarah Tiller at [sarah.tiller@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.tiller@gmail.com) or Robert Potts at [cbobgo@gmail.com](mailto:cbobgo@gmail.com).

### **April 25 - 26, 2020 Palo Alto, California**

**Kusamura Bonsai Club:** 60th Annual Show, Lucie Stern Community Center, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Show hours are Saturday, Noon – 4 PM, Sunday 11 AM – 4 PM. Free admission. Bonsai trees, pots, and other bonsai-related items will be for sale. Bring your tree to our Bonsai Clinic for advice on care and development. Tours of the show will be held starting at 1:30 PM, each day. For more information contact Charlene Fischer at [charlenerae@mac.com](mailto:charlenerae@mac.com) or visit [www.kusamurabonsai.org](http://www.kusamurabonsai.org).

### **April 25 - 26, 2020 San Diego, California**

**San Diego Bonsai Club:** The 55th annual Spring Bonsai Show and Sale of the San Diego Bonsai Club will be held at in Balboa Park's Prado Building. The two-day event is open to the public from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. More than 50 amazing bonsai of various sizes and species will be on display. The wide range of activities will include bonsai demonstrations by expert members on both days, and a table sale featuring hundreds of trees, plants, pots and other bonsai merchandise offered by SDBC members. For more information, go to <http://www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com>.

### **April 26, 2020 Watsonville, California**

**Watsonville Bonsai Club:** 47th Annual Bonsai Exhibit held at the Watsonville Buddhist Temple, 423 Bridge Street. Show hours are 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM, with a demonstration by award winning Bonsai Master Katsumi Kinoshita at 1:30 PM. Over 50 outstanding bonsai, large and small, young and old, will be on display. A raffle of bonsai items, plants and the demo tree will follow. Tea & cookies will be served. Plenty of parking for vehicles of all sizes; even for group outings. A vendor will be available to sate your plant appetite for bonsai or otherwise. For more information contact Michael Anderson at (831)247-9028 or [margiesmemories@aol.com](mailto:margiesmemories@aol.com).

### May 2 - 3, 2020 Chico, California

**The Chico Bonsai Society:** Annual Exhibition at the Chico Area Recreation District (CARD) Center, 545 Valombrosa Avenue. Hours are 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM Saturday and 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM Sunday. Demonstrations by society members both days. Trees, pots, and material will be available for sale. A raffle will be held with drawing on Sunday. The show is open to the public and admission is free. For more information contact Show Chairman Pat Gilmore at [gilappl@gmail.com](mailto:gilappl@gmail.com) or visit our web site <http://www.chicobonsaisociety.org>.

### May 2 - 3, 2020 Sacramento, California

**Sacramento Bonsai Club:** 74th Annual Bonsai and Suiseki Show at the Sacramento Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Blvd. Show hours Saturday 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM and Sunday 12:00 Noon – 4:00 PM. Demonstration both days at 1:30 PM by Sam Adina. Refreshments, benefit drawings and sales of plants and bonsai related items. For more information, contact Lucy Sakaishi-Judd at (916) 300-8103 or email [juddbonsai@att.net](mailto:juddbonsai@att.net).

### May 17, 2020 Van Nuys, California

**Sansui Kai of Southern California:** Annual Bonsai Exhibition to be held on May 17, 2020, at the Japanese Garden. 6100 Woodley Ave. Hours are 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Demonstration at 1:00 PM. Demo tree will be raffled at end of demonstration. Sales table with member and club bonsai material available all day. Annual Bonsai Exhibition and sale at the beautiful Japanese Garden.

Free admission to the bonsai exhibit.

### May 30 - 31, 2020 Santa Barbara, California

**Bonsai Club of Santa Barbara:** Annual Bonsai Exhibition and Plant Sale in the Fellowship Hall at Trinity Lutheran Church, 909 N. La Cumbre Road, Santa Barbara (corner of Foothill Road). Hours are Saturday 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM and Sunday Noon – 4:00 PM. Demonstrations at 1:00 PM: Mel Ikeda on Saturday, Ann Erb on Sunday. Free admission. For more information, contact Joe Olson (805) 964-0869, email [joeyuccaseed@gmail.com](mailto:joeyuccaseed@gmail.com), or visit <http://www.santabarbarabonsai.org/>.

### June 6 - 7, 2020 San Mateo, California

**Sei Boku Bonsai Kai:** 37th Anniversary Bonsai Show located at the San Mateo Garden Center, 605 Parkside Way (at Beresford Park). Hours are 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, both days. Saturday demonstration performed by Gordon Deeg from 1:00 to 3:00 PM. Sunday demonstration performed by Valerie Monroe from 1:00 to 3:00 PM. Demo trees for raffles! Also, there will be door prizes, tree clinic, vendor sales, plant sales. Free Admission. Contact Marsha Mekisich for more information at [Springhill.2@outlook.com](mailto:Springhill.2@outlook.com). Visit our web site at <http://www.seibokubonsai.org/?sec=show>.

Newsletter Editor: Beverly Martinez

Newsletter Contributors: Tom Fedor, Brian Brandley

Newsletter Photographer: Susan Muller

## East Bay Bonsai Society—Schedule for 2020

**Regular Meetings:** Second Wednesday, every month (except July, 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/](http://www.gsbf-lakemerritt.org/)

### Meeting Program

Mar 22	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Janet Nelson
Mar 23	Workshop at Merritt College
Apr 6	EBBS Board Meeting
Apr 8	Darren Wong – Azaleas
Apr 26	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Tom Colby
Apr 27	Workshop at Merritt College
May 4	EBBS Board Meeting
May 13	Janet Nelson - TBD
May 24	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Michael Jensen-Akula
May 25	School holiday – no workshop at Merritt College
June 1	EBBS Board Meeting
June 10	Janet Roth – TBD
June 28	Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – John Nackley/Bob Gould