



The Tree Shrinker

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A MONTHLY BULLETIN

<http://www.eastbaybonsai.org>

IT'S SHOWTIME!



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East Bay Bonsai Society
October 14 7:00 PM On-Line

Hello Wonderful EBBS Members!

This is certainly a difficult year of change and "new normal". I really miss interacting and learning together with all of you at our monthly meetings and other events. Who would have thought in March that we would not be able to have our October show in person? Our annual show is one of my favorite events of the year. We get to work together to turn an empty community building into an EBBS bonsai wonderland. We can sell our extra trees and supplies at our community sale and buy from our few regular vendors.

This year, it will be different, starting with the fact that it will be all online. We will have a Special Presentation from Tony Tickle of the United Kingdom who will talk to us about differences in bonsai from different regions of the globe, and show us world class examples of bonsai from around the world. Please feel free to invite friends and family to this open event, even if they are not bonsai experts. I think this presentation will be of general interest to anyone interested in bonsai.

In addition to this special presentation, we also really hope to have a photo slide show and special edition of the Tree Shrinker showcasing pictures of YOUR bonsai! I really encourage everyone in the club to send photos of your best, or most interesting, or weirdest trees to Bev Martinez at EBBS_Distribution@Yahoo.com. We have all levels of bonsai artists in our club, and we always include and encourage all members to display trees at our shows. I will even send in some photos of accent plants!

At the time of this writing - only a few members have sent in photos, and that is a little sad. For me, it feels difficult these days to stay focused on the positive. I hope we can use our "show" as a way to stay just a little more connected and upbeat in these strange times! I miss you all!
Lisa, president EBBS

Come one, come all! To see the fabulous Tony Tickle take us around the world on a spectacular bonsai tour!

Tony Tickle began working with bonsai in 1983 when a neighbor with a small collection gave Tony an oak tree sapling. Like most of us, Tony had to find out how to take care of the tree and joined a bonsai club. And like all of us, Tony was hooked.

Since that time, Tony has had enumerable achievements. He is a current member of the Association of British Bonsai Artists and worked as a Director of Bonsai Clubs International from 2003 – 2005. In addition, he writes a regular column for "Bonsai Focus", a widespread circulation magazine as well as periodic specialty magazines.



As a Royal Horticultural Society Judge, Tony has judged competitions in the United Kingdom, China and Australia.

Tony is the organizer of the UK National Bonsai Show and was the event planner of the biggest bonsai event in the UK since 1991, Bonsai Europa. He has also demonstrated throughout the UK, Europe and far reaching countries including Australia, South Africa, China, Brazil, India and the U.S.A.



Mugo Pine on stand

Tony's achievements include nomination for a Noelanders award in 2009, Worlds Conference and many European events. He won his first Ginkgo award in 1997 and was UK winner and runner up in the European New Talent Competition in 1995. Tony won "Best Deciduous Bonsai" at the prestigious Noelanders in Belgium in 2017, and in 2018 he won the Bonsai Clubs International excellence award (only one of three presented that year) for his cascade Mugo Pine on a rock.

Tony seeks to promote Bonsai as an art form in its own right, hosting exhibitions in museums and art galleries along with unusual locations that capture public imagination. He presents bonsai in a creative and dynamic way courting controversy and praise in equal measure.

Tony's presentation will begin promptly at 7:00 PM PDT on Wednesday October 14th in place of our normal meeting. We will be broadcasting from our normal Meetup link and Facebook. So, tell your friends, you won't want to miss this presentation!

September Meeting

By: Tom Fedor

Gordon Deeg is very well-known to you NorCal bonsai enthusiasts, and he can be found, in person, almost any time, at our own Lake Merritt Bonsai Garden. Being anywhere in person is so fraught these days, however, that we hitched a techno-ride on Cap'n Addison's Bonsai

Shuttle to Gordon's own little pod theater for a play in two acts.

First Act: Fertilizing, and the One Easy Lesson

Gordon uses the Miracle-Gro LiquaFeed Universal Feeder. It uses one fertilizer, GrowMore 20-20-20 www.growmore.com/products/type/fertilizers.html it's inexpensive, and you won't believe how easy this is to use. It goes on everything the same way; one end of the LiquaFeed attaches to the hose faucet and the other to the garden hose. With a switch to turn it on or off, you can fertilize with it permanently in place. Gordon fertilizes once a week from March to late August or until it gets HOT where you are, then after it's no longer HOT up until December First. Ho, ho, ho, it's that easy.



Second Act: Camellia, Darling, Don't Blow Out my Pot.

Turns out, Camellia, you are agronomically important! You can make tea from your leaves and oil from your seeds. You like good drainage (don't we all?) as well as an acidic soil with humus (perhaps an acquired taste). And, oh Camellia, your heartwood is so dense, one of the most dense in all the world. It's your density. That and your strong roots. High fire pots only, for you. (Curtain falls as two Camellias explode their pots. Gordon says he can actually get them to do this.) Get yours at Nuccio's Nursery in Altadena, California. <https://www.nucciosnurseries.com/> and practice at home.



The moral of this sad melodrama? Re-pot every two years (2/3 akadama, 1/3 lava), or at least cut the tie-down wires to let her roots grow up through that giant

hole in the top of the pot. And one more thing, gentle patron: We'll wait until after blooming in spring to re-pot her or anything else, and we'll do our shaping and pruning then also. We don't want to cut her branches any later than that, or else no blooms next year. You have been warned.

Other Camellia fun facts:

- Camellias originated in China
- The Stewartia Camellia has red bark
- The Sasanqua Camellia is called the Yuletide Camellia due to its red flower with yellow center
- They are not related to Azaleas
- Trees can grow up to 65 feet
- Seeds take 8 years before flowering
- Plant in morning sun with afternoon shade
- There are 1,850 camellias at the Sacramento state capitol

Fertilizing with Mike and Gordon

By: Lisa Harper

We got great watering and fertilizing advice from both Mike Pistello at our August 12 meeting and Gordon Deeg at our September 9th meeting. Here are some of the similarities and differences they mentioned.

Both Mike and Gordon use liquid fertilizer regularly March through November. Gordon takes off a month in the summer when the temperatures are very hot. They both use a mechanism to deliver diluted liquid fertilizer as they water.

Mike uses a Dosatron D14MZ2 with bypass (<https://www.dosatronusa.com/d14mz2>) for daily watering using a product that lowers his water's pH to something closer to neutral, and uses Dyna-Gro (Amazon) for weekly fertilizing.



Gordon uses a Miracle-Gro 3004201 LiquaFeed device that he attaches to his hose (Amazon), and fertilizes weekly. Gordon is currently using Grow More 20-20-20, which is a powder. He makes a concentrated stock solution using 10 oz dry weight fertilizer, in 1 gallon of

water. Fill up a LiquaFeed bottle (they can be reused) with this solution, attach the bottle to the Miracle-Gro 3004201 LiquaFeed device, then attach the device to your hose to further dilute the fertilizer to the

correct concentration of 1:4000. You can keep this stock solution for several weeks. Gordon fertilizes ALL of his trees, big and small, deciduous and conifer, the same. He argues that there are no differences between organic and non-organic fertilizer. While Mike only fertilizes the soil, Gordon sprays both the soil and the foliage.



Both Mike and Gordon love the fact that the devices they have for fertilizing with their regular watering have made it much easier to follow through with regular fertilizing. And that's the important bottom line!

Hornbeams as bonsai

By: Tom Colby

The genus *Carpinus*, better known as hornbeam, consists of about 40 species scattered around the world in the northern hemispheres. The genus contributes more than its fair share of excellent bonsai candidates. The United States features *C. caroliniana* which is native to the eastern part of the country and collected plants can be found in bonsai collections there. Europe has both *C. orientalis*, growing in Italy, and *C. betulus* growing from Europe to as far east as Iran. Asia outdoes itself with two species from Korea, *C. coreana* and one with the somewhat indigestible name of *C. turkzaninowii*. Both are sold in the bonsai world as Korean hornbeams. Japan's offerings are *C. japonica*, *C. laxiflora* and *C. tschonoskii* and are sold collectively as Japanese hornbeams.

To further gum up the taxonomic issue, Japanese hornbeams are sold sometimes as Korean hornbeams. The minor differences between these species are the life blood of the botanical world, but as bonsai material they all pretty much look and grow alike. What is of significance is that if your "Korean hornbeam" is a little different from a "Korean hornbeam" that you see in a bonsai show, it probably means that you are looking at two different species of *Carpinus*.

All of the species of Hornbeams grown as bonsai are splendid trees. They happily grow in bonsai pots for many years and can patiently endure a bit of neglect. As a group the trees all have small leaves that have a rather crinkled texture, as well as smooth and fluted gray bark. When the leaves have fallen in winter, the fine branch

structure and the gray bark provides wonderful winter silhouettes. As an added benefit, the leaves turn a beautiful color in the fall which is usually a bright yellow, but in some trees, that color can be red or a yellow-bronze. The fall color presents a pleasing contrast to the gray trunk. Hornbeams are relatively slow growing trees and so you can take a more relaxed approach to them as bonsai in contrast to lushly growing trees such as redwoods, for example which require a lot of constant attention. A disadvantage of slow growth is that it takes a lot of time to develop a significantly thick trunk.



A common name for the European species is Ironwood because the wood from hornbeams is very hard and heavy. The wood has been used (and still is) for bodies of woodworking tools such as planes. As a result, it is not surprising that bending of major branches of hornbeam bonsai trees is a job for the Pacific Coast Crane, Dredge and Pile Driving Company and their heavy equipment. Major branches can, in fact, be bent but the process is slow and difficult. On the other hand, young branches are quite pliable and can be easily bent. The moral of this story is that you need to carefully place young branches because once they are mature bending them is a hassle.

The trees grow by sending out long thin shoots which require several years to enlarge into significant branches. These new branches can be easily wired into place or, if desired, can be cut off just above the last two leaves above the branch they are emerging from. This approach to styling the tree makes the clip-and-grow technique a valuable tool in achieving your design for the tree. Hornbeams make splendid candidates for group plantings because of fine branch structure and the beautiful gray bark. Unfortunately, group plantings of hornbeams are very rarely seen at local bonsai shows. Hornbeams are understory trees in nature which means that they grow below the forest canopy. As a result, they get along just fine in bright shade although they grow more vigorously in full sun. The leaves can be scorched by very hot sun or windy days. It appears that they would enjoy a little protection from the sun and wind in the

hottest days of summer east of the hills in the bay area but they should be fine west of the hills.



Hornbeams are wonderful trees for bonsai on many levels. They are easy to grow and style and they are attractive all year long. They are great trees for beginners. Unfortunately, they are underappreciated by the bonsai community. If you see them offered for sale at a bonsai nursery or at a show, do strongly considering adding one to your collection. You will be handsomely rewarded.

Bonsai Calendar

- Sun – 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.

Articles or Services for sale or give-away

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 EBBS_Distribution@yahoo.com.

Events by Others

The Santa Cruz Bonsai Kai will be hosting an outdoor bonsai fundraising sale at the Aptos Grange on Sunday October 18, 10am - 3pm. A minimum of 50% of the proceeds will be donated to fire related charities (Sempervirens fund and Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County).

This is a great opportunity to give back to the community and fuel your bonsai passion at the same time.

Newsletter Editor: Beverly Martinez

Contributors: Tom Fedor, Tom Colby and Lisa Harper

Newsletter Photographers: various members

Purchasing is open to the public - members and vendors can sell bonsai and related items. There will be an assortment of bonsai and related items available for purchase. Including pre-bonsai, pots, stands, wire and more.

For everyone's safety, this will be an outdoor event. Masks will be required and we will be asking people to maintain 6ft social distancing.

October 18, 10am - 3pm
Aptos Grange Hall
2444 Mar Vista Drive, Aptos

We will accept payments in cash, check, Venmo, PayPal and credit card (3% fee for digital payments).

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.gsbflakemerritt.org/

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Program</u>
Oct 14	Tony Tickle – Bonsai Around the World
Nov 2	EBBS Board Meeting
Nov 11	Bill Castellon – Pines
Dec 7	EBBS Board Meeting
Dec 9	Holiday Party