

Columbus Bonsai Society Newsletter - July 2003

Well, the show is past, the trees are all safely home and we are looking for things to do. Well, okay we are looking for something else to do besides water and fertilize. Speaking of water, I hope no one lost any trees in the high winds the first week in July. I had limbs down in the front and a couple of stray branches in the back, but no major damage to my collection. Just don't forget to water in this time coming up because after a week of rain its easy to forget and miss a day.

There were a lot of nice compliments on the show and our vendors were complimentary to the club as a whole. They were very impressed that we helped them set up, watched their booth areas for them during the demos and to give them a lunch break, and that everyone seemed willing to pitch in and do what ever needed to be done. Way to go people! Its that kind of participation that makes it fun to be in a club and fun to be an officer in the organization. Knowing that you can trust the members to fill in as needed makes it easier for everyone involved, and it also give you a sense of pride and ownership in what we are doing.

One of the things we were trying out this year that went very well was having the show chair be a 3 year board member. All of the other members had an assignment as head of a particular show committee and they in turn had other club members help them to do the work. This way everyone could work on some aspect of the show they liked, and other people picked other less favorite jobs. It worked very well and would not have been possible without the excellent show book that Linda Riley turned over to the Board as her last act as the 2002 show chair. Her hard work on that document was well done and much appreciated by the show committee chairs this year.

Psst! Wanna buy a shirt? Ben William has done it again. the same person who produced the name tags for us also has embroidery machinery that produces the club logo in color on shirts. This is not a printed decal that will come off in the wash, but really nice detailed color needle art work.

Denim (short or long sleeve) - \$21 Cotton Tees - \$15 Polo/golf - \$27 Add \$1 for XXL

Welcome to new members Steve and Gladys Kirk, Scott Hepner, Larzell Cowan, and Catherine Lewis. Also welcome back Bob Pusecker. Its always good to see old friends again.

Do you like parties? Do you like to host your friends and show off your collection? We are looking for a host for the Picnic this year, if you would like to volunteer for this contact Linda Schultz and let her know you want to do this. Its a great time for all and you are guaranteed a well behaved crowd because, after all, we are all club members and can have a good time without upsetting the neighbors. If you consider that the two most important things for a party are having a place to sit and a place to put your food, this is a chance to only worry about one of them. Since we all tend to be in the back yard and no one has enough chairs, we have been trained over the years to bring our own furniture.

Mid-America Bonsai Association Convention - 2003

The 2003 MABA Convention was a premier event. The Bonsai Society of Greater Cincinnati hosted this event over the 4th of July weekend. About twelve of our Club's members attended. I was impressed by the line up of known bonsai artists who conducted workshops at this event. This afforded those who attended an opportunity to hone their skills through workshop participation; these were conducted by Mary Madison, Colin Lewis, Bonsai-Boone, Dave Kreutz, Salvatore Lipator (I hope I haven't forgotten anyone). Ken and Sandy Schoenfeld showed two of their trees; Ken's Bald Cypress drew comments from the name artists; who offered critiques of the Exhibit area. I found Boone's comments about the Show's arrangement most interesting.

And Vendors! There were pots, trees tools, bonsai stands, Suiseki and more. I'm certain that all our members brought something home with them. Saturday evening there was a silent auction, and a raffle and the demo trees were sold at a good old fashioned auction conducted by Art Skolnik. John Hill acquired a wonderful Japanese black pine.

One of the things I enjoyed the most was meeting bonsai enthusiasts from other states; New York, Michigan, Kentucky, Iowa, Wisconsin and North Carolina. - Ken S

Coming Attractions

July and August Meetings will be Hands – On

July 20, 2003 – Art Patznic, Dawes Arboretum's Bonsai Collection Curator will conduct a hand-on workshop. If you have been to a February Workday out at Dawes to help Dawes and the Pun Ching Bonsai Club prepare trees for their June Show Sale you'll know why we're very pleased that Art has agreed to lead this workshop. Members should plan to bring a tree that they want to style. This can be anything from newly purchased landscape material to a tree that needs to be tweaked to look better for next year's show. For those of you that are thinking that you don't have any trees and are unsure what to buy, the Club was lucky enough to acquire 4 Shimpaku and 4 Ficus narifolia, that will be offered for \$15/ tree. Board members will be assisting Art to make sure everyone gets individual attention with their trees. Bring your tools and wire, and plan to enjoy a few hours of styling.

August 17 – Jose' Cueto, will be conducting a "Clump Style" Workshop. Jose has conducted this workshop in Michigan, Akron and Pittsburgh, and we're lucky that he's a Club member and will be conducting this workshop for us! "Clump styling is where several mediocre trees are used to create a single tree of better size and branch arrangement. This advanced technique can be used on several types of tree material, but because it's August, we will be using a small leafed variety of Ficus. Being tropical we will be able to repot this material now. Also ficus is fast growing so this will show us quicker results of using this technique. (And the material will be relatively inexpensive. (Cost should be \$10 or less – depending on what type of pots we can secure.) Because the tree stock will be limited a sign up sheet will be circulated. So plan to sign up to ensure your spot. (Or if you have several ficus – bring three! I read in the Martin Treasure Book, Bonsai Life Histories, that he used this technique to develop a large trunked Trident Maple in a root over rock style by "Clumping" seven trees together. However being a seasonal grower the example in his book has taken five years for the trunks to fuse together.

Book of the month

bonsai life histories, By Martin Treasure

Given the number of bonsai books that I have collected over the years, I was surprised at how much “new” information this book provided. As you might suspect, some of the more prolific authors tend to repeat portions of their text. While there’s nothing wrong with that, I find myself skimming the text rather than trying to memorize tidbits of information. *bonsai life histories* (yes the title on the cover uses all small case) was published in 2002 by Firefly Books Ltd and has a suggested retail of \$22.95 (I found it at a discount book store that gave 10% off). The book is 144 pages long, soft covered and is 9.5” by 8.75”, so if you’re looking for it you’ll have some idea. Almost every page has at least one color photo on it.

Martin Treasure is a British artist who has been practicing bonsai for only 15 years. What excites me about this book are the fifty detailed case studies with color photographs showing where he started and where the tree’s development is at the time the book went to press. Life histories cover pages 46-128. The introductory chapters are; “getting started, and care and training. Getting started covers; bonsai sources, what makes good bonsai, what to avoid, and bonsai styles. Care and training covers; watering, feeding, site selection, pruning trimming, wiring, choosing pots, root pruning and repotting.

The chapter on life histories is delightful. Martin Treasure talks about finding the stock at a nursery or digging it up and rescuing some hedges from a road widening, and then he tells what he did to get it going as a bonsai, from its first styling to re-styling. In one he now has the original back as the front. It is through these case histories that you learn along with the author about techniques such as air layering, grove plantings, literati and clump styling. With some species where he purchases or rescued several plants of the same species you get to see how the same material can end up being used differently. He tells how he grew a Japanese maple in a pot for four years, and then placed it in the ground for two years before finally moving it to a bonsai pot.

In the book’s final chapter, Martin Treasure presents display. He breaks this into, displaying bonsai in your home, displaying bonsai at exhibitions, accent plantings, and displaying bonsai in your garden. Boy, I loved the koi pond he built. Through out the book there are shaded boxes that contain different tips. One was that using water that a willow was rooted in will result in easier rooting of other specimen cuttings.

If you are curious now, then here are some case histories that use plant material I saw in our show. Hedge maple, boxwood, false cypress, hinoki cypress, ginkgo, juniper, scotch pine, and wisteria. And Doc, he has a case history using a weeping willow too!

Tree of the Month

Serrisa Foetida

It seemed appropriate to select a tropical for the July tree of the month. At our show, I noticed a number of people picking up serrisa and exclaiming, "Oh look, this one has tiny flowers!" Soon after the plant was purchased to go home.

There are a number of varieties of serrisa, some with single flowers, some with doubles; some have white flowers and some lavender. Some varieties have very small dark green foliage, like Kyoto, and others even have variegated leaves. Up to 4,500 varieties are reported, with 5 making up most of the bonsai hobby. Regardless they are all varieties of *Serrisa Foetida*, a name derived from the foul smell they emit when they are pruned, especially the roots. After junipers they are probably the most widely purchased bonsai by beginners in America. Gustafson lists Serrisa as #6 in the top ten indoor plants for beginners. It is commonly sold as "Tree of a Thousand Stars" or when the flower is a double, "Snow Rose".

Serrisa are declared to be fussy by many and easy by a few. Many people panic when their newly bought Serrisa drops its leaves and flowers, it may not be dead, but it ends up in the trash. Remember many plants drop their leaves when their environment changes. My Bougainvillea's drop their leaves when I bring them outside, and again when I move them inside. DON'T PANIC, and don't respond by over watering.

Watering is the key to keeping a serrisa alive. Too much or too little will result in another round of dropped leaves, eventually leading to the plant's death. Sure ways to kill a serrisa are by continuously over watering, or by allowing the plant to dry all the way out. Misting, recommended daily can be problematic, as water on the flowers will cause them to brown. A humidity tray when the plant is inside is a must. If you use a soil mixture that holds a lot of moisture there is a risk of root rot.

I have seen Serrisa growing outdoors as a shrub in southern Florida. The plant is reported to native to sub-tropical areas of India, China and Japan. However, the literature reports that they will survive temperatures as low as 20. In another place it reported that they are hardy to zone 9. I always take mine indoors for the winter when there is a treat of frost. Indoors, I place the pot on a humidity tray under fluorescent lights. Remember they like light, fourteen hours a day indoors is not too much. The more light the shorter the internodes between leaves. However, one author said to place them where they should be placed in partial shade outdoors, and protected from the wind.

Fertilize every ten days to two weeks with a balanced fertilizer like 20-20-20, or more often with a 10-10-10. In winter cut back to once a month. Since it likes acid soil, treat it to miracid every three or four months. With heavy feeding they may need to be trimmed weekly in the summer. One reference said to prune after flowering. Most report flowering is two or three times a year. (I find that they always seem to have at least 3 or 4 flowers at all times.)

Since they may be growing rapidly, wiring or wrapping whips around a stick like they do in Taiwan is needed to train and shape them. When branch tips are cut the branch tends to sprout in pairs. Do not be afraid to trim even though you may be cutting off a few flowers, if you don't the plan will get leggy. Styles include exposed root and twisted trunks in the classic Chinese styles. I have also seen them trained to look like small apple trees. They are suitable for all styles except

formal upright and broom. Since most serrisa are offered as a rooted cutting, unless you buy one of the Chinese styled plants, the trunks are usually thin. Trimmed off branches root easily to start new plants. As a result, it is possible to grow very nice mame' styled serrisa. The books suggest repotting annually, every two years with more mature plants. The pots are frequently glazed because they are a flowering plant. Pests do not seem to be a problem. In my collection, scale, white fly, and mealy bug prefer other plants. Maybe it tastes like it smells? - Ken S

Bonsai Here and Beyond the Outerbelt

Unless otherwise noted *, The Columbus Bonsai Society meets the third Sunday of every month at 2:00 pm. at the Franklin Park Conservatory. Board meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 in the Franklin Park Conservatory library. The meetings are open to members.

July 20- Art Patznik - BYOT

August 15-17 - Chicago Botanical Garden---- MIDWEST BONSAI SHOW & SALE.

August 17 - New Club Trees - Clump styling, lead by Jose

August 23-24 - Ann Arbor Bonsai Society Show, Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48105; 10:00 AM-4: 30 PM

September 21- Picnic

September 26-28 - Affair of the Hort at Inniswood Gardens, 10-6 PM Saturday and 11-5 on Sunday.

There will be sign ups for Volunteers in July and August

October 19 - Fall Show - Bring in your trees in their fall colors.

November 16 -4 stations - Pots/Trees/Tool sharpening/Winterization

December - Holiday dinner

February 28 - Dawes Work Day, 9:00 at Dawes Arboretum

April 18 - Getting a tree show ready, what the professionals do - Also help and advice on trees you are considering for the June show.

June 19 and 20 - The Columbus Bonsai Society Annual Show. Yes its on Fathers day again.

President - Ken Schultz

1st Vice President - Dan Binder

2nd Vice President - John Hill

Secretary - Mark Passerello

Treasurer - Dick Guervitz

1 year Board - Jesse Welton

2 year Board - Linda Fields

3 year Board - Ben William

Librarian - Merida Weinstein

Newsletter Editor - Zack Clayton

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