



May 2008 Newsletter

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Refreshments

*Keep a green
tree in your
heart and
perhaps a
singing bird will
come.*

*-Chinese
Proverb*

“A Pinch of this....”

...bring May....

Term of the month: NEBARI

Commonly known in horticultural terms, as buttressing, Nebari is simply the spreading of roots above the growing roots just beneath the bonsai base. It is this characteristic actually, which makes bonsai well anchored and grounded. This is also, what allows the trees to grow with a matured appearance.

Of course, it was bound to happen. I goofed. Unfortunately, I had misinformation about the type of elm we would be working on in April. The trees from April were *Ulmus carpinifolia*, not *parvifolia* as was stated in the April 2008 newsletter. Either way the trees were all excellent material for bonsai, and Kelley Adkins was greatly informative with his knowledge and experience with these trees.

But enough about the past. It only serves if we learn from it. We are in a peak and busy season for bonsai here in zone 5. Accordingly, we have much to watch out for and do. To this end, we have a guest this month who is a long-time and experienced bonsai practitioner. Personally, I am faced with the task of actually deciding what information will not fit in the newsletter this month. Believe me, which I prefer, and I am thankful for all those who have submitted articles and I promise that we will get them in, in future months.



Rich Uhrick

This month's program



On May 18, 2008 we will be honored by the presence of yet another regional practitioner in the person of Tom McCormack. Tom McCormack has been a member of the Greater Cincinnati Bonsai Club for twenty years. He has served two terms of office on the American Bonsai Society Board of Directors. Tom is a teacher, and has an excellent style of teaching bonsai. He regularly makes presentations at the Cincinnati club meetings. He was even a guest presenter at one of our club meetings a few years ago. A few years ago, our club took a field trip to the Krohn Conservatory followed by a tour of Mike Schied's bonsai collection and Tom's collection. I still admire the pictures I took of Tom's trees; they are superb.

We asked Tom to do a presentation and workshop on azalea; however, we were unable to find affordable stock in sufficient numbers to do a workshop, so we advertised, bring your own azalea. Tom says he is versatile, so if you do not have an azalea that needs work, bring a tree that you would show, if you could just get some help with it's styling. So do not miss this opportunity, bring in a tree.

President's Message- Mark Passerello



Please take advantage of our guest, Tom McCormack, and his experience and knowledge. Bring a tree to work on, perhaps one that you are getting ready for our One-Day Show in June. On the other hand, maybe it will be ready for the big exhibition and show in October. Either way this is a good opportunity to get advice from a long-time practitioner and teacher.

Tree of the Month

Azalea 2008—*Rhododendron indicum*



Azaleas have the unfortunate reputation of being difficult. They are not. They are just different. If you have grown them in your flower beds, you are probably

familiar with some of their likes and dislikes, such as protection from the winter wind and light shade.

My first attempt at keeping an azalea, as a bonsai was a variety sold for Valentine's Day; it had pink and white-striped flowers and large leaves for an

azalea. I kept it indoors in the winter since it was a non-hardy variety. It lived for 4 years before I over-watered it to death. Since then, I have focused on using nursery stock with much better success.

The natural growth pattern of azalea is that of a shrub. This means they want to be a multi-stemmed bush, with weak apical growth, so their lower branches grow vigorously compared to their apex. Growth starts about mid March but we usually do not notice until mid April when it is warm enough to explore outside. Normally, they flower late May to early June. In Japan Satsuki azalea means "Fifth Month" because they flower in May, the fifth month. Their flower buds begin to develop in August of the prior year to blooming. Leaves grown in the summer turn color and drop in the fall, leaving a cluster of leaves around the flower buds. Because azaleas are shrubs, they will resist developing a trunk. Interestingly, this trait causes them to easily back-bud. Shoots will actually need constant thinning.

The Japanese swear by the use of Kanuma - Akadama "soil" to grow azaleas. So far, I have not tried it. I use our soil mix with an extra dose of Zack's favorite organic additive, used coffee grounds. Since azalea does best with a pH of 5.0 - 5.4, the acidity must help. In addition, while the soil must drain well, some moisture must remain, again the coffee compost helps. Peat moss is too wet. The roots of azalea will form a dense mat. If you do not repot them every 2 - 3 years the root mass will become like a brick. Whatever you do, do not leave nursery stock in field soil or straight peat moss. Repotting can occur from mid March until new spring growth gets active. If you are like me and want to enjoy the flowers, wait until they finish blooming to prune.

Fortunately, most insects do not attack azalea. Planted in a flowerbed they are vulnerable to black vine weevil. However, this is not a problem in a pot. Aphids will also attack new growth, so look closely to see if they are present. Fungus and mildew can be a problem. You can control these with Orthene or Mifenoxan. Neem oil may also be used but not when plant growth is active.

If you are looking for nursery stock, try "Herbert", "Hino Crimson" or "Coral Bell". Look for small leaves and a good trunk line. Wait until early March to do major root work and repotting the first time, though some references claim you can repot as late as June. When you select the branch structure, you plan to keep, leave a stub. Taking a large branch can kill a section of the bark down the trunk. Similarly cutting major roots can lead to specific branches dying.

Following repotting or significant branch styling, flower bud removal will help the plant's health and will result in vigorous back budding. It is best to do this right before the buds become active. Remove them at their base. The energy traveling up from the roots will divert to dormant buds all along the branches. If you missed an early repotting, it is possible to do this just as the flush of new leaves begins to appear but avoid a major root or branch removal.

I originally wrote this article two years ago. Since then I have added seven more azaleas to my collection. I grew up in Lake County, Ohio and there are still many ornamental plant nurseries along Lake Erie. I still remember seeing fields of small azaleas and rhododendrons. Anyway, the article here is the new and improved article.

Do not fertilize your azaleas while they are flowering. Also, meticulously remove all the dead blossoms. If you do not, the plant will send energy to develop a rose-hip-like seed structure. This will weaken the plant itself. Once you fertilize, growth will be rapid. Allow the stems to put out 6 - 8 leaves (more on weak parts, such as the apex), and then pinch back to two leaves. Remove small extra branches after flowering or in late May if you de-flower the plant. During the summer, you will need to continue the pinching regimen until late July. Stop then to avoid pinching off next year's blossoms. Continue to fertilize unless temperatures are hitting the 90's. Full sun is ok. However, in high temperatures and mid-afternoon be sure to watch for leaf burn. I keep my azaleas in light shade.

In the fall it is ok to remove the inner leaves, they will fall off by winter anyway. This exposes branches to light and air and encourages dormant buds to develop. This improves ramification. After flowering, the azalea will send out five branches from virtually every branch kip. You will need to keep only two of them. Usually one of these new branches will be growing straight up. Except for the apex, remove these. Of the remaining four branches, remove the strongest, normally the longest. For the third branch to remove, I usually take out the one growing in a direction that I do not need.

Azaleas also have the reputation of having brittle wood, resistant to bending. Everyone has a story about snapping a branch while trying to bend it. Interestingly it is best to wire in late winter or early summer after flowering. If you remove a branch, apply cut paste to reduce die back. New wood will bend its wood that is older than two years that may snap. A clean cut with a very sharp tool is essential. There are many photographs of beautiful azalea bonsai to use as your model. Usually, they are in an informal upright "pine" style. (I do have a Hino Crimson raft planting.) Azaleas are also common in Saikei; I have even seen them used to simulate the mountain laurel under story beneath the mountain pine trees. I have even seen a mini rhododendron ("Blue Gem") in a literati style. Right now, I have a semi-cascade and a new whip that I am trying to cascade.

I know this sounds complicated, but the results are well worth the effort. No bonsai collection is complete without an azalea, or four or five.



Ken Schultz

Our trip to Japan, 2008



Linda and I were fortunate enough to have friends who invited us to visit them in Utsunomiya Japan, about 80 miles north of Tokyo. We arrived April 9. North of Tokyo at that time of year the cherry trees were still blooming. Japan is a very mountainous country and depending what the elevation is, you need a jacket and there may still be snow on the higher elevations. Most deciduous trees had not leafed out. Later we traveled by bullet train to Kyoto and later to Osaka. Each city we visited was a little further south and a bit warmer. The Azaleas were starting to

pop in Osaka and the tulips and rhododendron were blooming in Kyoto.

The bonsai highlight of our trip was an English speaking tour of seven bonsai nurseries on April 11. Yoshihiro Nakamizu started our tour at Kamura's. Ryan Neill, the American from Colorado who has been apprenticing for Kamura for three years gave us the tour of Kamura's garden. Each nursery we went to where we were special guests gave us a cup of green tea and rice crackers. Omiya has an area founded in the 1930's where many bonsai artists located. This was our next destination. Entitled "Bonsai Village" we were able to walk between nurseries. Unfortunately, many did not allow photographs. Our last stop was Kobayashi's. I did not think it was possible to top Kamura's; but Kobayashi's collection is more traditional, and he has an extensive Tokonoma display area for the trees he had shown in Kokufu-ten, the big bonsai show held in Japan in February each year. Omiya has a street fair and show the first weekend in May.

One other stop we made was at Mansei-EN, a nursery that specialized in Shohin sized bonsai. At least I felt that I could afford one of their trees. We did go to see the bonsai collections at both the Kyoto Conservatory the Osaka Conservatory. There were eight vendors selling plant materials at the main entrance to the park. I saw many very affordable items I wish that I could have brought back. But that is another story. We did take about 800 pictures.



Ken Schultz

Insect of the month - European pine sawfly larvae (*Neodiprion sertifer*)

The European pine sawfly larva is a 1/2 to 1 inch long worm that appears during the month of April, around the same time that Bradford pears bloom. They seem to prefer Mugho, Scots, Red, and Black pines. However, they tend to avoid Ponderosa, Pitch, Austrian, and White pines. In summer, the adult fly lays eggs inside needles near the branch tips. When the eggs hatch, the worm-like larvae feed on the old needles, and can easily defoliate a tree in a single day. Since they only feed on old growth, the current year's candles are unaffected, and so the tree will likely survive, but will only have foliage at the branch tips. I have found that spraying the larvae with undiluted rubbing alcohol will kill them instantly, without affecting the tree's health (the alcohol evaporates very quickly) the downside to this method is that several applications are required, as larvae emerge several times over a period of days. I have also had success with applying a product containing merit (e.g. grub-ex) in mid-August. While this product is labeled for soil-borne insects, I have found that it dramatically reduces the population the following spring. Also, the use of imidacloprin (e.g. Bayer advanced tree & shrub), applied, as a soil drench in the fall may also be effective, though I have not tried this method yet.

Additional sources:

Jane C. Martin / Columbus Dispatch

Craig Harmer / www.gardensolutions.com

OSU Fact sheet <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/2000/2555.html>



Ken Schoenfeld



What you missed if you were not at April's meeting

Kelley Adkins gave a very informative presentation on both his history in bonsai and with these elms, and the provenance of these particular trees themselves.

But the best part was working with him on these trees. He made it around to all participants 2-3 times. We started with his instructions to start slow and be sure that we had uncovered all of the large roots at the base before we began any branch removal or root pruning. If we had pots sufficiently large enough, he was happy to advise us on getting trees potted. However, he definitely stressed that we should over-pot the trees for this year so that



we can stabilize them in their new states of training. Since there was not a bad tree in all of the ones that he brought, I believe we all got our money's worth both in raw material and in a guest who was very open and personable as well as extremely knowledgeable and experienced. If you missed last month, it was your loss and our clubs gain.



Note the cuttings and root cuttings that many, like Jack Smith, took with them to add to their collection in the future.



One Day Bonsai Show

June 21, 2008


**At the Franklin Park Conservatory
1777 East Broad Street**

10 AM until 5 PM

**Sales area vendors:
Ken's World of Bonsai
The Nursery at Onion Creek
ARTISTTREES**

Enjoy the display of the finest bonsai trees from the Columbus Bonsai Society.

If you enjoy this, then plan to join us at the:



**Ohio Bonsai Exhibition, October 25 & 26, 2008
With displays, vendors, and workshops**

Check our website: www.Columbusbonsai.org

From the Circulation Desk of the C.B.S. Library


1. I have the new C.B.S. membership cards for 2008; so please see me if you don't have your card yet.
2. If you have any bonsai (or related subjects) books, magazines, videos or CD's that you would like to donate to the C.B.S. library, please let me know. All such donations should be tax deductible, since we are a 501c-3 non-profit organization.
3. Please return any overdue library books, magazines, videos and CD's to the Librarian at our monthly club meeting so other club members may have access to them.

Thank you.

Please contact John Young if you have any questions or comments about any of this. You may either send E-Mail him at jyoungjfy@sbcglobal.net or give him a call at **(614) 267-4168**.

As a reminder, if you checked out any books, magazines or videos from the C.B.S. library last year please return them as soon as possible. They are now **OVERDUE!**

Thank you in advance for your cooperation, and yes the library will be open this month.

 John Young, Librarian

Just so, we have an idea of who is bringing a tree to the June show please fill out the following and bring it to the May meeting. Thanks



<i>JUNE 2008 ONE-DAY SHOW REGISTRATION</i>	
Name	
Phone	
Common Name	
Scientific Name	
Yrs in training	

Bonsai Here and Beyond the Outerbelt

Unless otherwise noted, The Columbus Bonsai Society meets the third Sunday of every month at 1:45 pm at the Franklin Park Conservatory. Board Meetings are the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm in the Franklin Park Conservatory. The meetings are open to members.

May 18, 2008	BYO Azaleas (and others)—Tom McCormack, Greater Cincinnati Bonsai Society	
June 21, 2008	ONE DAY BONSAI SHOW AT FRANKLIN PARK CONSERVATORY	
June 14-15, 2008	Dawes Arboretum Annual Bonsai Show www.dawesarb.org	
June 12-18, 2008	MABA Conference, Indianapolis, IN www.MABA2008.org	
June 19-22, 2008	American Bonsai Society Learning Seminar 2008—San Antonio, TX http://absbonsai.org/seminars/ABS2008/main2008.html	
June 28-29, 2008	Wildwood Gardens' annual BBQ www.wildwoodgardens.com/wildwood/	
July 20, 2008	Martha Meehan's Miniatures www.meehansminiatures.com	
August 17, 2008	Bring Your Own Tropicals workshop	
Sept. 14, 2008	Picnic and workshop	
Oct. 11-12, 2008	National Bonsai Exhibition, Rochester, NY www.internationalbonsai.com/nbe08	
Oct. 11-12, 2008	Carolina Bonsai Expo, Asheville, NC www.ncarboretum.org	
Oct. 25-6, 2008	Ohio Bonsai Exposition at Franklin Park Conservatory—	New Date
Nov. 16, 2008	TBA	
Dec., 2008	Holiday Dinner	
June, 2011	<u>ABS/BCI LEARNING SEMINAR IN LOUISVILLE, KY</u>	



Columbus Bonsai Society Membership Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (____) _____ -- _____ Date: ____/____/____

Email: _____

Membership: Individual (\$15.00) ____ Family (\$22.50) ____

Check # _____

P. O. Box 1981

Columbus, Ohio

May your phone number be included in our members list? Y N

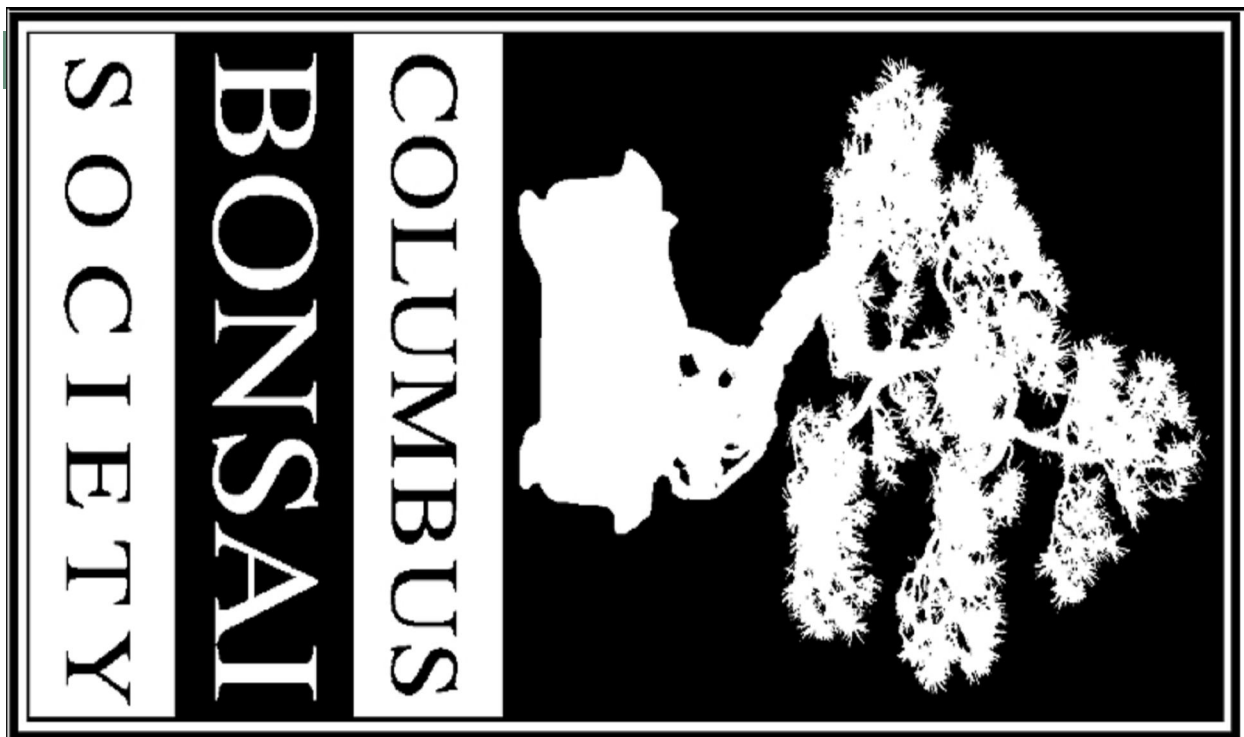
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Would you like to get your newsletter by email? Y N

(email saves the club about \$.74 to \$.90 an issue in printing and mailing.)

IF family membership, please list other members: _____

Renewal memberships may be paid for more than 1 year at a time



Columbus Bonsai Society
PO Box 1981
Columbus, OH 43216-1981

Questions to:
Columbusbonsai@hotmail.com
[HTTP://Columbusbonsai.org](http://Columbusbonsai.org)

Regular Club meetings on
3rd Sunday of the month
Meetings Start at 1:45 pm
All are welcome to attend

CBS meets at:
Franklin Park Conservatory
1777 East Broad St
Columbus, Ohio 43203

CBS Board meets
1st Tuesday of the month
at 7:00 pm at FPC