

# February 2011 Newsletter

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“A Pinch of this....”

...I can hardly wait to play ....

**Term of the month: SLAB**

**Slab**—a broad, flat, somewhat thick piece of stone, wood, or other solid material.

**Playing in the Sandbox**

Well as usual while we may have a main theme for the month of Playing in the Sandbox, this will include more than just discussions of Soil. We will also, look more at the Slab Project and Forest style design. We also plan to discuss how to select other pots for various styles and species. So, grab your bucket and pail and come on down to the Conservatory and join us for what looks to be another fun filled Sunday afternoon.

Bonsai=Perseverance



Rich Uhrick

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**Join us in the Sandbox on February  
20th at Franklin Park Conservatory**



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Columbus Bonsai is a proud member of the American Bonsai Society and Bonsai Clubs International.

## This Month's Program— PLAYING IN THE SANDBOX

We will be discussing Soil, Slabs, Pot Selection, and Forest Planting design. We will also, have more information on the March meeting. So, please plan to be there.

The plan at this point is to deliver a “kit” to the folks who ordered a slab, which would include the slab and feet, as well as a container of the paint to seal it. But we will see how it goes.



### UPCOMING PROGRAMS:

#### **MARCH: KEN'S SUNDAY SMORGASBORD**

Workshop with Ken Huth

#### **APRIL: WHACKING YOUR FICUS/ BEATING YOUR BENJAMINA**

Cutting your ficus down to size.

**MAY:** Mini-show and Doug Hawley on Black Pine care.

**JUNE:** TBD



The Columbus Bonsai Society receives meeting space and other support and assistance from Franklin Park Conservatory and Oakland Nurseries

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Rich Uhrick, Editor  
 ruhrick@otterbein.edu

## AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR <sup>New</sup> PRESIDENT....



### The return of Random Thotz - now from the President

**F**irst, an update on the HydRocks™ soil component [See page 8]I mentioned at the January meeting. We can get it for \$15 for 5 gallons if the cost is the same as last year from the supplier. I am getting 60 gallons for me and I had interest from a couple of members at the meeting so I can probably get that much more easily. Jeff Carr will be picking it up and I will get it from him. He recommends 25 gallons as the most you can move easily. That is about half of a blue plastic drum

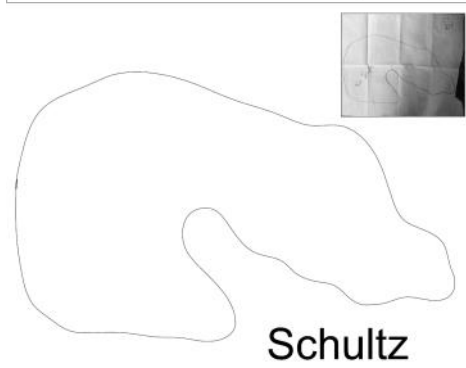
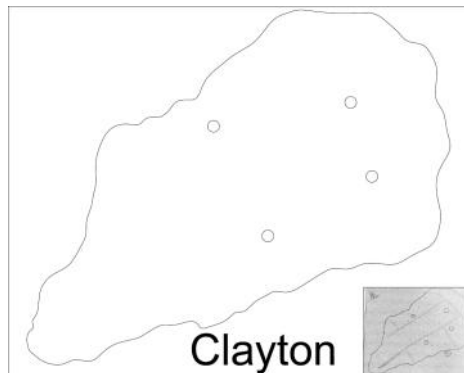
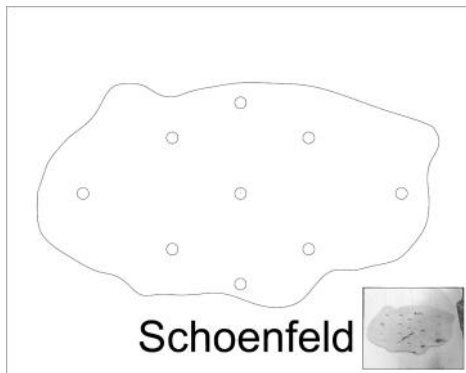
which is what he uses to store it in. He recommends drilling holes and screening them like a large pot to keep it from filling up with water.

This weather has been interesting for the greenhouse. I turned the heater back on Tuesday night as they predicted a very low temperature. It has been holding between 45° and 25° degrees the last week with no heat. I had one day that it got up to 50°. Definitely do not have it ready for tropicals yet but it seems to be doing all right for the zone 6-7 “half hardy” stuff. I still do not have the second plastic layer in place yet and I did not tape the windows this year as I WAS going to have the inside lined with plastic. I suppose I have a few weeks left to do that for a data point.

We are exploring where and when we will hold the Slab Workshop. We do not have a separate venue secured. I suppose we could hold it on my deck, it is big enough. Everyone could see how my collection fared over the winter and see this greenhouse I keep blathering about. (Spoiler alert - My yard is a work in progress.) We will probably have muck for the rim, but soil will probably be BYO-- and for something that flat--medium to fine grained is desirable. I will have small groups of volunteer maples available for this but you are free to obtain other small trees for your forest. I would suggest contacting Ken Huth for stock if you want something more traditional.

See you on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

*Zack*



#### WHICH SLAB STYLE DID YOU CHOOSE?

1. Zack Clayton-CLAYTON
2. Pootsie-Unknown
3. Timothy Kuhlman-his own
4. Ken & Sandy Schoenfeld-SCHOENFELD
5. Mike Thornhill-CLAYTON
6. Ken Schultz-SCHULTZ
7. Jack Smith-SCHULTZ
8. Mark Passerello-CLAYTON

## KEN'S TREE OF THE MONTH: Japanese Red Cedar, *Cryptomeria japonica*

**PLEASE JOIN ME IN OFFERING KEN OUR CONDOLENCES ON THE RECENT PASSING OF HIS MOTHER. —EDITOR**

Interestingly, not cedars at all, *Cryptomeria* are a part of the *Taxus* family. Found in China, Japan and Korea, it is hardy to Zone 6, which may explain how a February thaw followed by really cold March weather killed the four I had in 2001. The two winters before were mild, and 2001 was cold with fluctuating temperatures. In a forest setting *Cryptomeria* are very large, long lived trees. I first saw Japanese Cedar in the National Arboretum. I thought these were large until Linda and I visited Japan. Near the temple in Nikko, *Cryptomeria* grow along the Emperor's Road to the temple. Reportedly 600 years old they have trunks over 6' in diameter and are over 150' tall. While not record breaking according to my reading, their size is impressive.

A formal upright style is the most common use of *Cryptomeria* in bonsai. Because their normal growth is tall and narrow, I have frequently seen them used in forest plantings. These trees are strong growers and may use a lot of water in the summer. Therefore, though they like a good deal of sunlight, you may find it necessary to shade your Japanese cedar in the heat of summer. They may also benefit from misting their foliage, which also discourages spider mites. Do not let them dry out or you may experience needle drop. It does have small brown cones about the size of hemlock cones.

Based on my experience, protect them from thaws in the winter and from freeze drying winds. When I saw a *Cryptomeria* forest planting at Kamura's in April the foliage was bronze in color. When I asked Ryan Neil if they were OK; he said, "Sure, that's their winter color and they would be greening up soon. Recently, I saw a number of young *Cryptomeria* at Wildwood Garden and they were green; I assume because they were in a 48°F greenhouse. Healthy in-season foliage is a bright green - blue color.



During the growing season, you will find it necessary to pinch new growth frequently to keep the plant from taking on the appearance of an unkempt Alberta spruce, though the needles are shorter and spiny. Always pinch rather than cut, to prevent brown needle ends. Leave about ½" of new growth when pinching and strong back budding will occur. The 3/8" needles grow in spirals along the shoots. Growth is dense and initial styling usually ends up with numerous skin pricks from reaching in to clean up the branch structure. Open up the plant's structure enough to make sure light gets to the inner branches. Feed them every two weeks with a balanced fertilizer during the growing season. Use low nitrogen from August till fall to strengthen their root system. Pruning is best done in spring, however be careful as it is reported that the bark separates easily from the heartwood. The bark is an attractive reddish

brown.

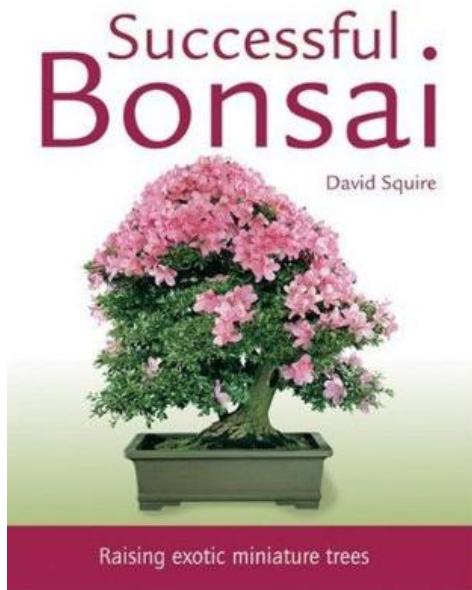
Wiring may occur from late spring until July. Allow enough time for the branches to heal before winter. Be careful when bending a branch as they may split from the trunk if you bend them too quickly or too far. You may want to use raffia or pet wrap [See June 2010]. To achieve the look of great age, you need to work the lower branches into a drooping position as with pines and junipers.

While there is only *Cryptomeria japonica*, there are dwarf cultivars (*Yatsubusa*) available for bonsai, however, they are much slower growing. Repotting may be as long as every 5 years using a "basic soil mix." Propagation may be from cuttings in the same manner as juniper. Protect your newly repotted plants from moving until the roots reestablish themselves.



Ken Schultz

## KEN'S BOOK OF THE MONTH: SUCCESSFUL BONSAI: Raising Exotic Miniature Trees By David Squire



**T**his book has a 2006 copyright from the United Kingdom. A quick Google search on the author's name revealed several gardening books to his credit but only two on bonsai. The cover of this book has an attractive azalea in partial pink flower, it is 158 pages. The text is organized into four sections; 1) Buying and propagating Indoor Bonsai, 2) Choosing and training Indoor Bonsai, 3) Looking after your bonsai, and 4) A to Z of bonsai.

Section 4 (pages 90-158) features 56 different trees with short write ups that provide some tidbits on one on Position and temperature gives the ideal temperature ranges. For example, the one on Lantana says that the winter temperature range is 45° increasing to 50° in the early spring, placing it in a warm wind sheltered place outdoors in the summer. The outdoor plant mantra was to place then under a slatted cover to protect them from cold winds and frost. One of the trees described is Singapore Holly; its winter temperature is listed as 68°. (This explains what happened when I left one out on the bench until temperatures were 40°.) Olives list temperatures as 46° – 64° with no high temperatures at night.

Chapter 1 starts with “What to look for when buying an indoor bonsai.” Followed by a section on raising plants from seed, he lists 17 possible species, though I have never seen most of them offered for sale. Next is indoor bonsai from cuttings. Squire mentions the use of misting, root hormone powders and cold frames. The next section is “Converting a young houseplant to a bonsai.” He shows Boxwood,

Ficus and Crassula sarcocaulis [A succulent from South Africa] in various stages using photos.

Chapter 2 starts with bonsai styles, pruning and wiring. He shows styles and wiring with drawings.

Chapter 3 is “Looking after your bonsai.” This chapter shows tools and pots and shows how to pot, repot, water and feed your bonsai. [This takes 5 pages with photos.] He emphasizes the prevention of roots from drying while repotting. He covers using a jack to bend a trunk as well as tying it down to lower branches. He says to use a non-ferrous nail as an anchor to hold a tree in its pot when the pot has a single hole. He presents pot selection related to the tree's style on page 60 as well as pot color, as it relates to flower color.

As soil formulas continue to be controversial, Squire lists three mixtures. **He** says that European's base their mixtures on partially sterilized loam, sharp sand and sphagnum moss. The mixtures vary depending on the trees needs. When repotting, Squire recommends that a new pot be soaked for a day or two to ensure that it will not absorb moisture from the potting mix. I had not previously thought of this as an issue. **He** also recommends watering thoroughly the day before you repot because it will take several weeks for the roots to recover. [This is often a recommendation]

Squire states that watering to keep indoor bonsai healthy is the most difficult to master. Pay attention to whether the tree is growing or semi-dormant or dormant. Plants are vulnerable to excessive watering (I have killed several with misguided kindness). He recommends letting your tap water warm overnight before using it. After watering, fertilizing, light, temperature and humidity are briefly covered. Humidity trays and grouping plants to increase humidity were encouraged.

While natural light is necessary, direct light may damage leaves. He mentions light colored walls help reflect light. Artificial light should be 1' – 2' above the plants. He said you can use two Grow Lux bulbs or one daylight bulb and one cool white bulb to provide fourteen hours of light per day.

Overall, I consider this book a very good beginner's book with decent photographs.



Ken Schultz

## POT SELECTION AND TREE PLACEMENT ACCORDING TO TWO MASTERS: JOHN NAKA AND MASAKUNI KAWASUMI

### EXCERPT FROM "BONSAI WITH AMERICAN TREES" BY KAWASUMI, 1975

"Of the unglazed variety, there are seven distinct types depending on the color. The pots can be brown, brick red, greenish, yellow, purple, black, or sandy-colored. In the making of all these pots sand is first mixed with the clay.

The glazed variety of pots can also be divided into four categories. There is a blue or red glaze with tiny white dots on it, a bright blue glaze, a cela-don glaze, and an ash-blue glaze modeled on Chinese pots.

#### *Earthenware Pots*

These pots have very rough surfaces and are today used for bonsai. They come either glazed or unglazed but only the bigger pots are made in earthenware.

#### *Selecting your Pot*

Bonsai pots should be selected with care according to the species and shape of the trees planted in them. Special attention should be paid to the shape, color, and size of the pot.

#### SHAPE

The shape of the pot is of fundamental importance in the art of bonsai, and different species should be planted in different pots. For pines and other coniferous trees with straight trunks, a square or oblong pot that is not too deep is best. For most deciduous trees, use a shallow, rectangular or oblong pot. The patterned bonsai and the slanting style of bonsai are also best suited to these oblong, medium-deep pots.

Trees planted in a group are suited to rectangular or oblong, shallow pots that give a feeling of breadth. In a mixed species group planting use a medium-deep pot instead of a shallow pot.

In the cascading style of bonsai, a deep, round or square pot is best, while for a half-cascading bonsai, a deep, square pot is most appropriate.

#### COLOR

The color of the pot is as important as its shape if you want your bonsai to look its best. Here are a few general principles to follow when choosing the color of the pot.

Pines and other coniferous trees are best suited to quiet colors, e.g. brown, purple or brick red. Most deciduous species should be planted in glazed celadon green pots or glazed blue pots speckled with white dots.

With flowering and fruit trees, choose a pot with a contrasting color that emphasizes the color of the flower or fruit, so do not put a tree with red flowers

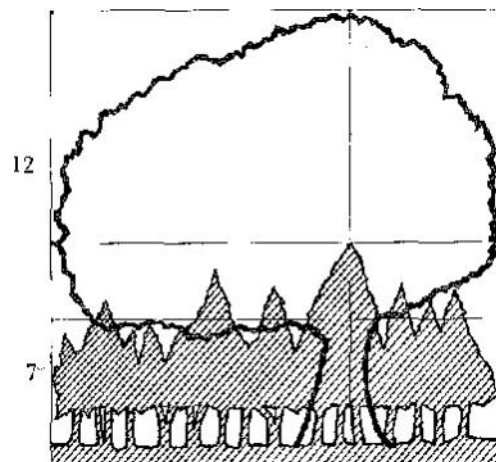
in a red pot, or a tree with white flowers in a white pot.

#### SIZE

After you have selected the shape and color of the pot the next point to consider is the size. With the exception of the patterned trees and the group plantings, there is a simple rule of thumb that is easy to remember. The width of the pot should be two-thirds the height of the tree or the spread of its lowest branches (depending on which is used as the method of selection). For instance, if the tree is 15 inches tall, the pot should be 10 inches wide; and if the spread of the longest branches measures 18 inches, the pot should be 12 inches wide....

#### *Planting Position in the Pot*

Finding the best position for the bonsai will show the tree to its greatest effect. *Never* plant the bonsai squarely in the middle of the pot. The best position is obtained by bearing in mind a certain ratio between the pot and the tree, such as 1:1.5 or 1:2 or 2:3 or 3:5 or 5:7. The most famous bonsai always keep the "magic" proportion of 7:12 or 38:62 [metric]—applied to the ratio between the height of the tree and the spread of its branches, between the height of the tree and the position of its branches, and between the size of its trunk and the tapering of its branches."



*John Naka's Chart  
Continued on page 7*

**TABLE OF BONSAI DISHES AND APPROPRIATE TREE STYLES**

Dish shapes	Position of tree in dish										
rectangular dishes											
oval dishes											
square dishes											
round dishes											
tall square dishes											
tall round dishes											
lotus-style dish											
hexagonal or octagonal dishes											
flat slab with or without pedestal											
round flat dish											

S = shallow      D = deep

Z O - H O M Γ M S - H O P O - H M P - C O S - A X A Z Z I O C

## LOOKING AHEAD TO MARCH AND KEN'S SUNDAY SMORGASBORD

Following the success of last March, Ken plans to bring at least two of the species of trees he had last year. PLUS he will bring Black Pine, Scott's Pine Black Hills Spruce (\$20-\$25), and some Tropicals. Ken tells us that prices will begin at \$25 and go up to about \$85. That is unless you reserve something with him directly. To help with travel fees, wire etc. there is a \$15 fee to be paid to the club, however, you must pay Ken Huth directly for the trees. Wire will be provided, but, you must buy or bring your own pots and soil. Special orders must be placed with Ken Huth by March 18th. Please do not ask him for photos of trees to choose from, he does after all have a regular job as well. He may also, be bringing trees where he simply needs help in preparing them, so if you just want to work on trees, but are not interested in buying that may be an avenue for you. And let's face it we all

### HydRocks™

HydRocks™ is produced by fully calcining clay at temperatures in excess of 2000 degrees Fahrenheit. This inert, ceramic material is available in a variety of particle sizes - Fine, Medium and Coarse.

#### **LIGHT WEIGHT**

The bulk density of HydRocks™ is much lower than that of soil, sand and many types of soil amendments - a definite advantage during transportation, handling and installation. Yet it is strong and durable - providing long-term aeration in potting mixes and rooting media.

#### **NEUTRAL pH**

HydRocks™ will not release carbonates or other chemicals that affect the pH of potting mixes. It is chemically stable, but can be treated with chemical supplements to meet the pH requirements of a particular application.

#### **CHEMICALLY INERT**

Because HydRocks™ has been fully calcined at temperatures in excess of + 2000 degrees Fahrenheit, it is a ceramic material. It will not compress, decompose, or react with agricultural or horticultural chemicals. HydRocks™ has a low cation exchange capacity.

#### **NO SHRINKAGE**

need help sometimes and Ken is a vital resource for our society. Here is a list of the other species that **MAY** be available and rough pricing:

Juniper Procumbens \$12-\$15

Cork Bark Chinese Elm \$25 and up

Seiju Elm \$25 and up

Crab Apples

Trident Maples

Japanese Green Leaf Maple

Tamarack—American Larch

Prunus mume—Japanese Flowering Apricots \$18

Morris Midget

Boxwood \$12-

\$15

Kingsville

Boxwood \$18

Zelkova Serrata

Satsuki Azalea

\$25 and up



HydRocks is completely inorganic, and will not decompose like organic materials such as peat, sawdust, composts and bark. HydRocks™ maintains its porosity, providing superior aeration for optimum plant growth and healthy root structure. Added to soil mixtures at a rate of 10% to 20% by volume, HydRocks™ prevents soil compaction and promotes root growth.

#### **COLOR**

Because of its natural color, HydRocks™ blends well with other soil materials. It also makes excellent mulch particularly in high traffic areas.

#### **SOIL INCORPORATION**

HydRocks™ is an ideal amendment for raised beds used for the production of roses and other ornamental plants. When incorporated at a rate of 15 to 25% by volume, it improves drainage and aeration, promoting plant growth. HydRocks™ is also an ideal medium for hydroponic production systems.

#### **MOISTURE RETENTION**

HydRocks™ allows free drainage, but also absorbs up to 30% of its weight in water and water born nutrients. Water and nutrients are slowly and steadily released as the soil dries. HydRocks™ particles will not float up or sink out of a blended medium.

## STASELWOOD BONSAI STUDIOS INVENTORY REDUCTION SALE

Hello All Bonsai Contacts,

I wanted to take a minute to let you all know I am going to reduce my collection down only the trees I want to keep and develop. This opens up well over a hundred Bonsai and pre-bonsai to buy at very competitive prices. This will be going on from NOW till the shelves are bare-er...

I have attached a few pictures of the outdoor area. I have some indoor (tropical and Semi-tropical) stuff as well. If your interested email me and I will get some pictures of them as well.

If you have any questions about what is on the benches please don't hesitate to call or email me. Also add the address [jcarr@adrcivil.com](mailto:jcarr@adrcivil.com) to my contact since the Staselwood address will be closing down in another month or so.

Thanks and Have a Great Spring!

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact me.

Thanks,  
Staselwood Bonsai Studio

Jeff Carr,  
Owner  
[jcarr@staselwoodbonsai.com](mailto:jcarr@staselwoodbonsai.com)  
Cell: (740) 403-0215



**Are you interested in Bonsai?**

**2011 CLASSES FORMING NOW!**

Simply go to:

<http://www.staselwoodbonsai.com>

For more information.

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

In an effort to make the C.B.S. library more available to all of our members (since the library cabinet is being stored at Oakland Nursery and since we aren't meeting there every month), I will do my best to fill any requests that you may have to borrow any of the items that we currently have in our collection. I have a complete list of all of the books, magazines and videos that we have in our library; so, no later than the Friday before our monthly meeting, either send me an e-mail at [jyoungjfy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jyoungjfy@sbcglobal.net) or give me a call at 614-267-4168 and let me know what items you would like to borrow from our library.

I will let you know if we have that particular item in our library or, if it has already been checked out by another one of our members, when it should be available for you to borrow. However, if you are interested in a particular article or topic in one of our bonsai magazines, I will need to know the specific issue you

would like to borrow, since I don't have a master index for all of the magazines that we have. And to be as fair as possible to all of our members, you may check out only two books, magazines, CD's or videos at one time for a two month period.

Please let me know if you have any questions or suggestions about these new procedures. After all, it is your library, too!

**John Young, Librarian**  
 (614) 267-4168  
[jyoungjfy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jyoungjfy@sbcglobal.net)



P. O. Box 1981

Columbus, Ohio

43216-1981

### Columbus Bonsai Society Membership Registration

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ -- \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership: Individual \$25.00 \_\_\_ Family \$35.00 \_\_\_

Check # \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

(email saves the club about \$3.00 - \$4.00 an issue in printing and mailing.)

IF family membership, please list other members: \_\_\_\_\_

*Renewal Memberships may be paid for more than one year at a time.*

### **Bonsai Here and Beyond the Outer belt**

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 6:30 pm. The board meetings are open to members.

#### **2011**

<b>20 FEB 2011</b>	<b>PLAYING IN THE SANDBOX—FPC</b>
<b>20 MAR 2011</b>	<b>KEN'S SUNDAY SMORGASBORD—FPC</b>
<b>17 APR 2011</b>	<b>WHACKING YOUR FICUS / BEATING YOUR BENJAMINA—OAKLAND</b>
<b>14 MAY 2011</b>	<b>SPRING MINI-SHOW—TBD</b>
<b>15 MAY 2011</b>	<b>GUEST ARTIST—DOUG HAWLEY ON BLACK PINE CANDELING—FPC</b>
<b>19 JUN 2011</b>	<b>GUEST ARTIST TBD—TBD</b>
<b>16-19 JUN 2011</b>	<b>ABS/BCI "Bonsai in the Bluegrass" —LOUISVILLE, KY</b>
<b>17 JUL 2011</b>	<b>FLOWERING TROPICALS—OAKLAND</b>
<b>21 AUG 2011</b>	<b>FICUS, FICUS, FICUS—OAKLAND</b>
<b>17-18 SEP 2011</b>	<b>ANNUAL SHOW —MAENNERCHOR</b>
<b>16 OCT 2011</b>	<b>BUD PRUNING, NEEDLING, AND WIRING PINES—FPC</b>
<b>20 NOV 2011</b>	<b>DORMANCY AND STANDS: SELECTION OR CREATION—OAKLAND</b>
<b>11 DEC 2011</b>	<b>HOLIDAY DINNER—TBD</b>
<b>2012</b>	<b>MABA—CINCINNATI</b>

**FPC= FRANKLIN PARK CONSERVATORY  
OAKLAND= OAKLAND NURSERY, COLUMBUS**

#### **Care Notes from the Columbus Bonsai Society Website**

February - Late Winter - 39/22

- Wire conifers now through early summer.
- This is the best month for repotting conifers.
- Use a dormant pest spray to keep pests away in early spring.
- All tips from January apply in February.

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

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

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

CBS Board meets  
1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month  
at 6:30 pm

***PLAYING IN THE  
SANDBOX—FPC***

