

March 2011 Newsletter

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“A Pinch of this....”

...It's all you can

Term of the month: CHICKEN GRIT

Chicken Grit—Crushed Granite used in Bonsai soil and to aid chickens in their digestion of food.

Ken's Sunday Smorgasbord

Once again Ken Huth will be bringing lots of trees for purchase and to work on. As the name implies it will be a veritable smorgasbord of trees. So, be sure to bring pots and soil (or purchase from the club and Mike Thornhill). You should also check out Ken's Tree of the Month: Buttonwood, the article on watering your bonsai, the upcoming events descriptions and the photos from last month's meeting. Hopefully, as always we have a little something for everyone, both experienced and beginners. Although as the saying goes, “After the ten thousandth triumph, yet a beginner.”

Bonsai=Perseverance



Rich Uhrick

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**Join us at the Smorgasbord on
Sunday March 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— Ken's Sunday Smorgasbord

Workshop cost is \$5 plus the cost of the tree or trees you select from Ken. Bring your tools. The club will have a limited selection of wire but you may wish to bring your own. It being March you could plan to re-pot your tree as well as style it. The selection of trees that Ken is bringing and approximate cost was in the February newsletter. This event is always popular with the members. Don't be surprised if you can't pick just one! Mike Thornhill will be vending 3 gallon bags of soil at \$15. **At Franklin Park**



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

UPCOMING PROGRAMS:

MARCH: KEN'S SUNDAY SMORGASBORD

Workshop with Ken Huth

APRIL: SHOP UNTIL YOU DROP or HOW TO SHOP FOR BONSAI AT A NURSERY

Board members will assist in shopping for nursery stock at Oakland Nursery.

MAY: GUEST ARTIST DOUG HAWLEY on Black Pine care.

JUNE: FICUS WITH BONSAIHUNK JERRY MEISLIK

JULY: FLOWERING TROPICALS

AUGUST: ANNUAL SHOW

AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR ^{New} PRESIDENT....



Random Thotz - now from the President

Okay, weather alert - the temperature in my greenhouse got up to 91 degrees today. the power of the sun is not to be underestimated with any hope of survival. I got the windows open and no sign of damage yet. I am looking forward to Menards opening at the old Northland site on Morse and Karl Rd. They have an item there called Insuladd that mixes into paint as a insulating layer. I'm thinking it would work in clear coat. I'm going to try it anyway. I doubt it will help in summer but may keep things above freezing in winter. In bright sun about the only thing that works is ventilation. More on that later.

Who else has Ume blossoms setting? Sandy Schoenfeld said the one in their greenhouse is blooming. Since we had several last year at the Ken Huth workshop I was wondering? Mine is setting buds but no flowers yet. it was outside under a bench so it is behind Ken and Sandy's. Doc had a bunch of new growth last year but hasn't seen any flower buds yet.

With the weather I am really starting to get antsy about pulling out early trees and working on them. I can probably do it if I get them into the greenhouse after the work. Or I could practice my carving with the angle grinder Michelle got me for Christmas. Hmmm - decisions, decisions.

I suppose it would be a good time for mixing of soil for those of us who roll our own mix. I got my 60 gallons of HydRocks™ from Jeff Carr. It was waiting for me in blue drum halves and we transferred it to 30 gallon garbage cans I bought for the purpose. No dust in the transfer. It is all nicely sorted at 1/4 to just under 1/2 inch in size so there is no waste to fines. I think it is going to work great in my mix. Now I just have to sift out the other components that I use to mix in.

Isn't Spring Great? Prune, Pinch, Wire, and Bend.

See you on the 20th.

Zack

Mea Culpa

The chart in the previous issue was mistakenly accredited to John Naka. It was actually from Paul Lesniewicz, Bonsai the Complete Guide to Art and Technique 1980. pgs 180&181

KEN'S TREE OF THE MONTH: Buttonwood, *Conocarpus erectus*

One of the top ten indoor bonsai, according to a search that I ran is buttonwood. I've seen them in a small

number of books, magazine articles, in public collections and even at our own club shows. But despite all this exposure and my weakness for trying about any tree that comes along, I haven't tried keeping a Buttonwood bonsai. Why not, I asked myself? Is it because I try to limit the number of tropicals I bring inside in the Fall OR the rumor that they are hard to maintain? So, I promised Rich that I would write about them to learn more.

Mary Madison from Florida is the noted Buttonwood Queen and she is known for collecting them from swampy areas in southern Florida where they grow naturally (Zones 10-11). Buttonwood are known for their tolerance to salty water. In the ground buttonwood can grow to 50' tall with a 20' spread. When used as landscape material they are typically treated like a shrub and used for hedging material. Plants purchased at a nursery therefore may be very straight and not as interesting as a collected plant. When ground raised their alternate leaves will be 2"-4" long. These leaves are typically shiny and smooth except for Silver Buttonwood which have silky hair on their leaves giving them the silver look. Interestingly, buttonwood – wood does not have growth rings. Reportedly their wood was once used as charcoal that was used to smoke fish and meat. The grayish bark is thick and the whitish flowers are described as "uninteresting" though they are produced in clumps. The flowers may produce brownish round fruit.

Because they are tropical and this is the time of year that we'd have them indoors I will present some info that is suggested for their indoor phase. Buttonwood leaves will begin to discolor at temperatures below 50-55 degrees and they may drop at temps below 40, or may up and die, plan to bring them inside. If you use

windows give them a southeast or southwest exposure. Two care tips I consistently found are 1) never let them dry out and 2) they will benefit from misting.

The natural growth of Buttonwood is a rounded head, so your bonsai style should have the same. While you may attempt to grow Buttonwood from seed, they may be struck from cuttings or you may purchase one that has been legally collected. If you visit southern Florida, unless you own the land, don't dig one up, and

then if you are in a protected area it may still not be legal. But you might find some at a nursery or from a reputable bonsai nursery. Regardless of your source patience will be needed to develop a "specimen quality" Buttonwood. You will need patience to develop a tapered trunk. It will likely take several growing seasons. The direction of growth can be controlled with bud selection, which is alternate. It says there will be about 1/8th inch die back when you prune and that's using cut paste, so leave a little stump.

Most "specimen" quality Buttonwood bonsai have deadwood on them. First work on your tree's shape, then worry about driftwood. A tip I found said to dampen the wood before applying lime sulfur for a more even appearance.

Because a collected specimen may be leggy a special program is recommended to encourage back budding. Because they like high humidity, one source suggests misting them for 25 minutes per day. Further noted is that watering twice per day might be needed in the summer. Spray the bark with liquid fertilizer. I found two fertilizing programs, both are fairly complicated. The first recommends half strength fertilizer every two weeks, 20-20-20, Sea Crop seaweed and Superthrive (1/4 tsp/gallon). Mid-fall and through winter switch to 2-36-10, micronutrients (you can get an additive at the hydroponics store "Indoor Gardens" on Indianola, just south of Morse.) and use slow



release (poo balls) 14-3-3 or 0-10-10) 6 briquettes for a 9" diameter pot.

To open the plant structure so that light can hit the old wood to encourage buds to break, break the old leaves in half when they are about 1/2" long. This breaking will also reduce the leaf size so that the plant's leaves will be 1 1/2 inches by 1/4". Cut new growth back to 2 leaves, or to the bud that will grow in the desired direction during this training period.

Repotting also has some interesting precautions, maybe all our plants would benefit. The first tip is NO copper wire on the roots. Second is that the roots should not be wired to hold the tree into the pot; rather run the wire up onto the trunk or branches more like planting a tree in your yard. Soak the tree a day in advance of repotting. During repotting use a mist with Superthrive and liquid seaweed and keep the roots from drying out. Using this method it says that you can safely remove up to 1/2 the root ball from a healthy plant. Cut out heavy roots and make 3 wedges in dense root balls to open them up. Use chop sticks to get new soil into the root mass. The soil recommended is 3 parts loam and one part crushed Coquina shells or for us, chicken grit. Immediately following repotting, you must soak the plant for one hour or up to several days, depending on the severity of the root pruning. It is also recommended to mist the plant 1 to 3 times daily for the next 2-3 weeks. During the recovery period keep the plant in filtered sun until new leaves emerge. It can handle full sun once the new leaves are 1" to 1 1/2", normally 4 to 6 weeks. Once this point is reached use fish emulsion for 2-3 weeks, afterwards you can resume using 20-20-20. I almost forgot, wait until warm weather to attempt repotting as with any tropical. (May-August in Tampa – but given the recovery period, I'd guess the end of July here. Doug Hawley repots mid June when the night time temperature reaches 70. He used Akadama mixed with a tropical bonsai mix.)

If you are able to collect a specimen it says this must be done when it's hot. The plants grow near the interface between fresh and salt water. Frequently the roots grow into limestone and need to be cut to collect. A collected specimen therefore may need to be held in water to allow

new roots to develop which they readily do. Not the most pleasant environment for people. Somewhere I read that some occasionally add Epsom salts if the leaves begin to yellow, I'm guessing that is related to the location they prefer in the wild. Doug Hawley provides a teaspoon of ag-lime on the soil surface twice a year to maintain the alkalinity they need.

They only mention protecting your Buttonwood from beetles by using Sevin and scale by using alcohol swabs. It warns NOT to use oil sprays or Malathion. It also says you can clean moss or algae off the back by using a 2 tsp./gallon solution containing "Basic H". I've never looked for it, so I don't know how easy it is to find. Despite all the painful detail, Indoor Bonsai rates Buttonwood as a Code 1 for winter care, 55-75 degrees and good light, overall "moderately difficult" by giving it high light, high humidity and high temperature. Buttonwoods do poorly below 45 degrees so plan to bring them in when it begins to cool. In fact, a few articles recommended using a propagation mat for under root warmth. The Brooklyn Botanical Society is the source that warns that they cannot be collected from public land. The leaf breaking and fertilization information were from an article prepared by Maggie Beyer, Bonsai Societies of Florida.



Ken Schultz

Soil Available for Purchase

If you need soil to repot your trees at the "Smorgasbord", Mike Thornhill has some of his mix available for purchase at the meeting.

The bags are three gallons in size and cost \$15. He plans on bringing 15 bags.

The Importance of Watering Bonsai Trees

Watering a bonsai is a primordial aspect in the growing of a bonsai plant. Watering doesn't mean that you just put in water to the bonsai plant in a scheduled basis. However the appropriate way of watering a bonsai plant will depend on mainly on the needs of the specific species of bonsai plant you've got. You will discover numerous of varieties of bonsai tree seeds and also you have to take into consideration what sort of bonsai you have.

The Essence of Watering a Bonsai

Water is a fundamental need to bonsai gardening simply because like every other normal plant and also trees, bonsai requires water to execute essential life processes. Water is recommended for the bonsai plant for its photosynthetic process. Hydrogen is derived from water using energy from the sunlight. It makes use of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere for the creation of sugar, which functions as a source of energy for the bonsai plant to live and grow. O₂ is released to the atmosphere as being a waste product of photosynthesis. Water is taken in through the fine roots of the bonsai plant. As water is assimilated, nutrients within the soil are carried by the water and also deliver it on the various parts of the plant. It can also help in elimination of excess salt in the plant.

Conditions Influencing Bonsai Watering

Take into account the makeup of the soil you are utilizing. It is very significant to work with good soil for a specific bonsai tree species. The soil could be a factor that can affect water storage to a pot, therefore it'll likewise affect the water availability for the plant. You must be sure that the soil structure is simply enough to retain water, and also it has good water drainage to prevent lack and also too much supply of water. Organic as well as inorganic particles that are very small, peat moss, vermiculite, as well as clay have the capacity to keep hold of water. Inorganic as well as some organic large particles including lava rock, perlite, turface, as well as coarse sand are a few of soil components that have the capacity to increase water drainage and reduce water retention.

You need to know the type of your bonsai plant species as well as take into account the size of your bonsai plant. The water needs of the bonsai plant depend on their type because some may require

regular watering and also other types might require longer durations of watering. It is healthy for the bonsai plant to experience some time of drying out of the soil simply because this can allow the roots to take in fresh air. Plant size also needs to be considered simply because as bonsai plants grow their water demand as well rises. So, it's very necessary to possess adequate information about your bonsai plant to prevent plant withering because of extreme drying or even root rot resulting from greater than the mandatory supply of water.

Whenever employing fertilizers, it is valuable to look into the soil often to develop normal growth as well as development of your bonsai plant. Fertilizer improves the demand of water supply as they hasten the growth of the bonsai plant. Plant foods could also increase the decomposition of soil, which will accelerate the drying time and causes delay of bonsai growth. It is strongly recommended to utilize fertilizers that are made from high quality organic materials and stable inorganic supplies.

Being exposed to surroundings with higher temperature as well as to direct sunlight hastens water loss and also transpiration of water from plants. You have to check out the soil where your bonsai tree is planted to observe its hydration status. It is good to expose your bonsai tree on the morning light yet you ought to place it under a shaded spot during the mid-day. Direct exposure to early morning light with mild temperature accelerates growth of the bonsai plant without promoting water evaporation and also transpiration.

It's also wise to think about the dimensions of your pot as well as the quantity of soil. A large pot with massive amount of soil boosts water demand mainly because there's more space for the water to accumulate. Thus, frequent check of the soil is essential in order to avoid drying up of soil.

Preston Blackmore is an organic gardening and farming enthusiast. If you would like to know any more information about Bonsai watering please go to <http://www.beginnerbonsaiguide.com/bonsai-watering/>. If you are as enthusiastic as Liam, consider signing up to his FREE Organic Gardening Farming Magazine - <http://www.organicgardeningfarming.com/ogfm/>.

About Us: <http://www.beginnerbonsaiguide.com/>



Upcoming Events:

March 20, 2011 - Ken Huth's Smorgasbord of Trees Workshop: Workshop cost is \$5 plus the cost of the tree or trees you select from Ken. Bring your tools. The club will have a limited selection of wire but you may wish to bring your own. It being March you could plan to re-pot your tree as well as style it. The selection of trees that Ken is bringing and approximate cost was in the February newsletter. This event is always popular with the members. Don't be surprised if you can't pick just one! Mike Thornhill will be vending 3 gallon bags of soil at \$15. **At Franklin Park**

April 17, 2011 – Shop Until You Drop or How to Shop for Bonsai at a Nursery: Club Board members will help you to select pre-bonsai at Oakland Nursery during the first part of this meeting. After selections are made guidance on initial styling will be available. The theme in general is flowering deciduous bonsai or azaleas. Repotting is again an option, so bring suitable pots and your tools and wire. **At Oakland Nursery**

May 15, 2011 – Black Pines, special guest - Doug Hawley: Doug a well known Greater Cincinnati Bonsai Society member, has been a contributor to ABS and is known for his knowledge of a wide variety of species used for bonsai, especially Black Pine. Doug will provide a presentation on Black Pine care and candle management. Then we will offer an opportunity to have one of your pines critiqued by Doug for \$10. Limit 10 – one tree please. If there is time you may come around for a second critique but we want to make sure everyone who is interested gets at least one chance. Being May you may want to bring your tools and wire to implement the changes suggested. (A signup sheet and fees will be taken at our next two meetings.) (It's not too late to order a pine from Ken Huth)



Photo from Facebook

June 19, 2011 – Ficus by Guest Artist Jerry Meislik: Jerry Meislik author of Ficus the Exotic Bonsai will be our guest. He will give a presentation and then do a demonstration on a Club Ficus. After a break we will offer an opportunity to have one of your Ficus critiqued by Jerry for \$10. Limit 10 – one tree please. If there is time you may come around for a second critique but we want to make sure everyone who is interested gets at least one chance. You may want to bring your tools and wire to implement the changes suggested. (A signup sheet and fees will be taken at our next three meetings.) (or a Ficus)



Photo from Facebook

July 17, 2011 – Flowering Tropicals: Serrissa, Natal plum, Callandra, Hibiscus to name a few. Board members will share their experience on how they care for these specimens. Bring your favorite tree in to share with other members.

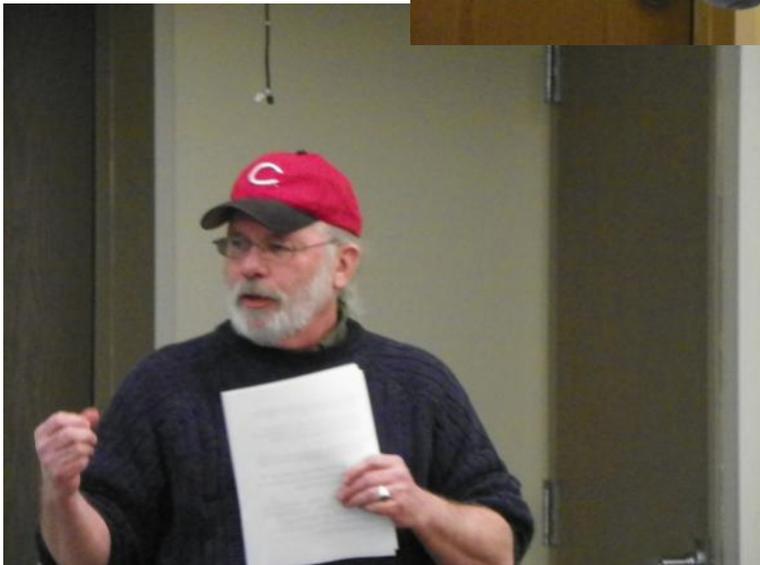
August 20 & 21 – The Annual Show at Mannerchor: We know it's a new date, but it will be the last for Mannerchor and we had such a wonderful show there last year we wanted to do it again before the Mannerchor becomes school property. So gussy up your trees and help make this a great show! Vendors, ArtisTrees, Ken's World of Bonsai, Onion Creek Bonsai and Staselwood will join us. A schedule of demos will be developed.

Andy Smith: Due to concern that July isn't ideal weather to work on pines we've asked Andy to schedule us for April 2012. Details will be available in the future.

If you blinked you may have missed something in February.



Maxwell House...Good even after the last drop....





**So many
presenters,
so little
time.**

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 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

*Please return your
overdue books*



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

20 MAR 2011	KEN'S SUNDAY SMORGASBORD—FPC
17 APR 2011	SHOP UNTIL YOU DROP or HOW TO BUY AT NURSERIES—OAKLAND
15 MAY 2011	GUEST ARTIST—DOUG HAWLEY ON BLACK PINE CANDELING—FPC
19 JUN 2011	FICUS WITH JERRY MEISLIK
16-19 JUN 2011	ABS/BCI "Bonsai in the Bluegrass" —LOUISVILLE, KY
17 JUL 2011	FLOWERING TROPICALS—OAKLAND
21 AUG 2011	ANNUAL SHOW —MAENNERCHOR
17-18 SEP 2011	TBD
16 OCT 2011	BUD PRUNING, NEEDLING, AND WIRING PINES—FPC
20 NOV 2011	DORMANCY AND STANDS: SELECTION OR CREATION—OAKLAND
11 DEC 2011	HOLIDAY DINNER—TBD
2012	MABA—CINCINNATI

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

Care Notes from the Columbus Bonsai Society Website

March - Early Spring - 50/31

- ◆ Repot deciduous trees if their buds are starting to swell. If you wait until the leaves have emerged, you will need to take more care to keep the tree out of direct sunlight and wind.
- ◆ Be sure to check wire from last year. The spring's growth will cause tight wire to cut into the tree. Remove any that is tight. This should be done year round as well. If the branch did not hold its shape, reapply wire.
- ◆ You can wire branches on all trees, but be careful of buds and swelling branches caused by growth.
- ◆ Grafting is possible on most trees now through spring.
- ◆ You may bring hardy trees out of winter protection now, as most can handle temperature above 20°F.
- ◆ This is an ideal time to take hardwood cuttings from deciduous trees.

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 Board meets
1st Tuesday of the month
at 6:30 pm

Ken's Sunday Smorgasbord—FPC

