



Fort Worth Bonsai Society August Program

There is no regular meeting in August due to the proximity of our annual Show & Sale.

August Bonsai

By John Miller

Would you like to see an article on styling nursery type material like some that you can actually obtain yourself in a nursery instead of some fantastic collected mountain yamadori. Try locating some articles by Tedy Boy of Indonesia. Three are in Bonsai & Stone Appreciation Magazine: Vol 48 No 1 J-F-M 2009 Vol 48 No 3 J-A-S 2009 and possibly the best is the latest issue Vol 50 No 3 J-A-S 2011. You may be able to see them on the website www.bonsai-bci.com.

Although you have only two main jobs in August [keeping your bonsai alive and keeping them healthy] you have some other things to consider and/or play with.

Azaleas set their buds in July. Other spring flowering plants also set buds in the fall. These should not be pruned after bud set if you desire the blooms next spring. If you are in a developmental stage you can still prune them achieving a faster development at the expense of next year's flowers. Other flowering plants should have the dead

Fort Worth Bonsai Society

Calendar of Events

Aug. 6, Saturday – BSD Meeting

Aug 11, Thursday – No FWBS Meeting

Aug 12, 13, 14 – FWBS Annual Show & Sale

Sept. 3, Saturday – BSD Meeting

Sept. 8, Thursday – FWBS Meeting, Club flea market and swap meet.

Oct. 8, Saturday – LSBF Visiting Artist Erik Wigert at BSD

Oct. 9, Sunday – LSBF Visiting Artist Erik Wigert at FWBS

Nov. 5, Saturday – BSD Meeting

Nov. 10, Thursday – FWBS Meeting, Club artist workshop with Howard & Sylvia Smith

Dec. 3, Saturday – BSD Meeting

Dec. 13, Thursday – FWBS

blooms and seed pods removed. That may encourage more flowering. Some tropicals like the bougainvillea flower after a dry period which is their natural dormancy. Check growth habits for your species.



A beautiful quince in flower.

Repot heat loving tropicals. Feed well a few days before repotting. Also be sure to mist the roots while working on them. After repotting, keep out of the sun and wind until they show signs of recovery.

Good fertilizer techniques will help you maintain healthy bonsai. The best technique is to use organic fertilizer balls on the surface. They will supply a very low dose of nutrients every time you water. Coarse organic powders like Hollytone from Espoma may be worked in the top of the soil would be next best. Time release fertilizers will work but you do not have much control of it, it releases a lot when you first put it on and you cannot tell when it peters out. Water soluble fertilizers are concentrated chemicals that may be too

active for high temp use. They also quickly wash out of the soil as you water and you are doing that more often now. Check to see that your fertilizer supplies the many micronutrients that plants need.

Regardless of where you live in Texas you can expect 90+ temperatures and the direct sun will be merciless. The sun on the pots raises the temperature of the soil high enough to kill the roots. It also speeds up the drying of the soil. Many pathogens (e.g. spider mites) thrive in higher temperatures and the stressed plants cannot cope with added problems.

Two things can be done to cope with the sun. You can supply partial shade and you may provide a cover over the pots. The shade, whether from a natural source (tree cover) or a shade cloth material, should provide greater protection from the afternoon sun. Late afternoon sun can be a problem because the temperature is highest and the soil is usually drier at that time. A loose cover over the pot should not touch the pot. A non-porous cover may create an oven. There should be good air flow around the pot for cooling.

How often you need to water depends on your trees, your location and your soil mix. Some may need 2 or 3 waterings while some next to them get by with one. An automatic drip system could buy you some help but you should hand water at least once a day to be sure that each and every pot gets fully wet.

Ideally watering should be done at 2pm or so. That would lower the soil temp to around 70 and would provide for some evaporative cooling the rest of the afternoon.

During these extremely hot periods take care when using chemicals. This is true whether you are using organic chemicals or the other kind. I do not use my organic spray unless it can have a few hours before the temp reaches 90 degrees. Heat makes chemicals more active and they can damage your plants. Be sure to read the fine print on the label re temperature use. You may need to use them early in the morning or very late evening. Most commercial chemicals are sold in an oil based mixture which can damage some plants like buttonwood at any temperature.

When checking the results on your plants after spraying, remember that the spray usually will not remove the 'evidence' of problems. The webs will still be there after the mites are killed; the shells of the scale will be attached to the leaf or stem. These will have to be removed by hand, by a jet of water, or some other way. A soft toothbrush works well on the scale shells.

Check your trees for moss growing on trunks. Bark seems to hold moisture pretty good and the extra watering may cause moss to grow. Kill it with 90% isopropyl alcohol. Let it die before picking off gently with tweezers. Too much moss on the soil interferes with proper watering.

Also watch for signs of insect problems. The spider mite will always be near. Others to look for are scale of various forms, aphids, and mealy bugs. Preventative medicine is best. By the time you see signs, the damage is already done, especially spider mites. I use the organic foliar feed (1 tablespoon each of fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses and 5% apple cider vinegar per gallon water) to control all these. You can use some of the other organic controls or a chemical according to label directions. Read the label directions carefully. **Do not apply oil based chemicals to buttonwoods or other sensitive species.** A hose end sprayer does not work very well, its droplets are too large and you



have little control over where it goes. Use a pump sprayer with a fine spray and cover both top and bottom of leaves

The humidity in summer varies quite a bit but when it sticks around for a few days look for fungal problems to appear, mildew being the most prevalent. Foliage spraying in the morning will usually not be a problem because it dries pretty quickly. Treat with potassium carbonate which you can find at any nursery with a decent organic section. There are several chemical sprays available too.



An excellent Tamarind forest planting.

Notes from the President

Saturday, August 13 and Sunday, August 14, is our annual formal Bonsai Show. It is time to bring out your best trees and show them off to fellow members and to the public. The Exhibit will be in the Rose Room, across the hall from our regular meeting room.

As an incentive to bring out the best, we will also be holding our 5th annual club competition. Only FWBS members will be allowed to enter and to vote for "Best of Show" by secret ballot. So, even if you do not display a tree, come on out to the Show and cast your vote on any of the 2 days. The winner will receive a free meal at Dos Gringos Restaurant and Club recognition on the traveling "Members Choice" trophy. Past winning trees will

not be allowed to enter the contests, but will deserve a special display spot and recognition in the show.

We will also conduct the "People's Choice" contest as we have done in the past with the winner receiving a free meal at Dos Gringos Restaurant. The non-member visitors to the show will be given a ballot as they enter to vote on their favorite 3 trees of the exhibit. The public always has a great time voting on their favorites.

Please bring bonsai stands, slabs, scrolls, and lots of companion plants for the artistic director to choose from. Your stand may not necessarily go with your tree as the displays are set up, so be sure and place your name on your stand and other items. Small felt pads will be available at show set up time and placed on all pots to protect the valuable stands. Be sure to clean and shine your bonsai pots before the show. Each tree owner will be responsible for watering and maintaining their own trees. We ask that trees be watered before the opening of the show each day. Of course you can ask another member to take care of your tree if you cannot be there. Please try your best to label your tree by name and to give interesting information that the public will enjoy reading. A 3"x3" card will be an appropriate size for our stands.

To set up the overall show the best we can, we would like for everyone to bring in your trees Friday night. It takes some time for the artistic director to decide which trees go where and he needs all the trees and other display items in front of him to make those decisions. Saturday morning only has time for fine tuning and labeling of displays

Be sure and visit the vendors' areas during the show and stock up on your needed bonsai supplies.

Schedule:

6-10 pm, Friday: set up (all members needed!)

8 am-10: Maintenance of trees, Fine tuning of displays. (enter through back door)

10 am-5ish, Saturday: Open to the public.

12-1 pm: Maintenance of trees (enter through back door)

1 pm-4ish, Sunday: Open to the public

4-5 pm, Sunday: Cleanup and removal of trees.(many members needed!)

(Please do not remove your trees before the close of the show!)

We need all members to volunteer some time during the show. While you are there you are sure to learn a little more about the bonsai art! Please contact Mark Bynum at mark.bynum@tx.rr.com



FWBS Club Show & Competition, Volunteer Sign-Up Form:

We need at least two volunteers per time slot: One to work the welcome table out front (that is, greet people and hand out "People's Choice" ballots), and at least one to monitor the room and answer questions. Several members stay the entire show and more than two volunteers are welcome at any time of course. At least this way, we are sure to have the two areas covered and serving our visitors to the best of our ability. Please select a time spot or two and email back to: mark.bynum@tx.rr.com or call on cell phone: 817-437-8936. The completed form will be sent out the week before the show. Thanks for your volunteer time.

Friday:

6-10 pm Everyone needed for set-up

Saturday:

8-10 am Final set-up

10-12 pm Welcome table: _____

Monitor: _____

12-2 pm Welcome table: _____

Monitor: _____

2-5 pm Welcome table: _____

Monitor: _____

Sunday:

1-3 pm Welcome table: _____

Monitor: _____

3-4 pm Welcome table: _____

Monitor: _____

4-5 pm Everyone needed for breakdown