



conejo valley BONSAI society

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A member of the Golden State Bonsai Federation 

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Conejo Valley Bonsai Society Meetings

Westlake Village City Hall
Community Room
31200 Oakcrest Drive
Westlake Village, CA 91361
3rd Thursday of the Month
7:30 PM – 9:00 PM

Visit Our Website
www.cvbs-bonsai.org

Follow Us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/conejovallebonsaisociety

President's Message

Plan for Newsletter 'Exhibit'

By Marj Branson

It's challenging times for bonsai enthusiasts everywhere in California due to the Covid-19 pandemic, widespread wildfires, and record-breaking heat waves. Still, in the interest of the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's future, and looking at the positive side, I am looking ahead to the rest of 2020 and the start of 2021.

October Newsletter Exhibition

Although our traditional October bonsai exhibition at Gardens of the World in Thousand Oaks has been canceled for 2020 (see page 2), we will have a virtual show of member exhibition-ready trees in our October newsletter. With the recent hot weather, many trees have taken a beating, so carefully select one or two trees now and start grooming them as if they will be on display the first weekend of next month.

When your trees are ready, take pictures of them. For this virtual exhibition, please pose each tree, on a bonsai stand if possible, against a plain, light colored background. A companion plant is not needed for this photo. (If you don't have an appropriate stand, just put the bonsai on as attractive a surface as possible.)

Reminders:

- Keep the setting as free of clutter as possible—plain background and table or bench top
- Hold the camera with the lens



Marj Branson

aimed about 1/3 of the way up the trunk—do not shoot down from above

- Try to take the photos in diffused light—avoid shadows as much as possible

Before October 5, email the photos (in JPEG format) to our newsletter editor, David Whiteside at editor@CVBS-

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Bonsai Guidelines

Correcting Two Ficus Trunks

By Ken Fuentes

These two examples are trunks I chose to correct (see photos, page 8). Example one is a Ficus Burtt Davy. They are slow to moderate growers. Some critter chewed on this trunk.

In the last year, this wound has improved by 25%. I will keep the damaged side facing the sun and, in the next year, it will be healed over.

Example two had a bad reverse taper. I was growing this Burt Davy in a container and it was too low in the pot. I put it in a new pot, fertilized it, and cut the top back hard. I placed it where the trunk was getting 100% light.

After a couple of weeks, a couple of branches broke at the soil line. It has been six months, and the reverse taper is almost gone. Once a branch breaks low, have it

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(Click on Email Address)

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CVBS Programs 2020

If you are interested in the CVBS Mentoring Program, please see Marj Branson for more information & applications to participate.

January 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
NOTE: SPECIAL DATE February 27	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
March 19	CANCELED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Jim Barrett / Group Planting
April 16	CANCELED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
May 21	CANCELED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Roy Nagatoshi / TBA
June 18	CANCELED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
July 16	CANCELED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION: Gary Nanson / TBA
August 20	CANCELED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop and Swap Meet—BRING YOUR TREES AND OTHER ITEMS
September 17	CANCELED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by PEER CRITIQUES—BRING YOUR EXHIBITION TREES
October 3 – 4	CANCELED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS 17TH ANNUAL CVBS EXHIBITION Gardens of the World SEE PAGE 1 REGARDING OUR VIRTUAL EXHIBITION
October 15	CANCELED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS 7:30PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
November 19	CANCELED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting with Club Elections followed by DEMONSTRATION: TBA
December 17	7:30 PM HOLIDAY POTLUCK, RAFFLE & AUCTION

Autumnal Equinox Brings Fall Chores

By Jim Barrett

Editor's Note: While the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's monthly meetings are suspended under the shelter-in-place policy due to the coronavirus pandemic, our trees still need attention. We will continue to publish Barrett's Bonsai Tips for the duration.

Fall is approaching and as the temperature and weather become more moderate, several bonsai procedures might be considered.

If you have not already done so, remove unwanted new growth and candles from Japanese black pines. Leave one, two, or three new candles on each branch and twig terminal. How many you leave depends on your design goals for each tree. Next month will be cleanup and detailing time.

Quince and crabapple bonsai can be moved to their winter

show pots later this month and next. This practice is common in Japan and might be something to consider for some of your trees that are growing most of the year in ordinary bonsai containers.

Juniper bonsai, especially foemina junipers, can be pruned drastically and wired for detail now and next month. This procedure can be done now to get the tree ready to show next spring. Try not to prune California and shimpaku junipers drastically because this may produce juvenile growth, which can take a year or more to revert to adult corded growth.



Jim Barrett

Wisteria, ume, crabapple, and quince should have set their buds by now. Do not prune or shape until next month or November after leaves drop. Fertilize these trees with a low nitrogen fertilizer, high in phosphorous and potash, now and again next month.

Try to control heavy top growth in zelkova, elms, and maples. Allowing heavy growth in the upper story of your trees to go unchecked can cause loss of taper and unsightly knobs and scars. 🌲

If you have not already done so, remove unwanted new growth and candles from Japanese black pines.

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CVBS Niche Displays

Virtual Niche Display Program

In normal times, the Niche Program consists of club members setting up mini exhibition displays on a table in our meeting room. But with the Westlake Village City Hall Community Room shuttered for the duration of the coronavirus pandemic, this is not possible.

So we are doing virtual niche displays. We are asking niche display volunteers to set up their displays at home, photograph them, and send the pictures plus some comments (a paragraph or two will do) to our newsletter editor, David Whiteside.

For example, Marj Branson was scheduled to do the niche display at our canceled August meeting, so she provided photos for this, the September issue (see page 6). Future volunteers, please note that we will be asking you to do the same as long as in-person meetings are not possible.

We encourage all members to sign up for the niche display! Please have a look at your 2020 calendar and let us know when you would like to present your display.

—Marj Branson

2020 Niche Displays

Sept.	Ben Conway
Oct.	David Whiteside
Nov.	David Williams
Dec.	Volunteer Needed

CVBS Membership

Interested in CVBS?

CVBS is open to anyone interested in the horticultural art of bonsai. If you are not a member, consider joining now. We meet on the third Thursday of every month (except for this month of September, which has been canceled—see pages 1 and 2) in the Westlake Village City Hall Community Room (31200 Oakcrest Drive, Westlake Village, CA 91361). Meetings start at 7:30 PM, and include occasional demonstrations by bonsai experts, workshops, critiques, member swap meets, and this award-winning newsletter.

It's inexpensive and easy to join. Annual dues are \$25 for one, or \$30 for couples. Simply write a check (made payable to the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society) and mail it to: CVBS Membership, c/o Marj Branson, 1169 Triunfo Canyon Road, Westlake Village, CA 91361.

—Nancy Smeets

Collected California Juniper Taking Shape

Editor's Note: This month's Member Project is by Mike Blumenberg. Please remember that everyone is invited to participate—you don't have to write a *War and Peace* length novel, just a few words to let your friends in the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society know how you and your bonsai are doing during the crisis.

In early March 2019, Ann Lofquist, Nancy Smeets, Mel Carrillo, and Rick Naber went hunting for wild junipers (see CVBS Newsletter, March 2019, pages 6 – 7). I couldn't join them that weekend, but Ann wrangled a little California juniper for me.

The first picture (at right) is from the following July, a few months after Ann dug it up. I didn't do much to it for the first year. I wanted to make sure it survived the harvesting.

About a year after it was harvested, it was growing well, so I took it to monthly workshops with Jim Barrett in February and again in August. The second picture (bottom left) is from February 2020 and the third (bottom right) is from last month.

It is still a work in progress, but I've determined what I want to use as the front and cut away much of the long, leggy growth. I jinned several other branches, including half of the large split branch near the base. I intend to let it grow out for a few months after the latest trimming, then pot it this winter.

—Mike Blumenberg

Mike Blumenberg's California juniper as it appeared in July 2019 (top right). Note the leggy branches.

Here's how Mike's California juniper appeared in February 2020, about a year after it was harvested in March 2019 (bottom left).

Most recently, Mike's California juniper is taking shape after styling (bottom right).



Photos by Mike Blumenberg



Two Techniques for Bonsai Beginners

By Ken Martin

YouTube Video Reviews

I have been aiming my reviews of free online demos to the “how to” for smaller, less expensive trees. It seems to me there is a sharp division between this category and the demos with super refined, super expensive, big trees, and there isn’t much in between.

Both of this month’s reviewed videos are on YouTube.

**Ryan Neil, owner of Bonsai Mirai.
10 minutes
“Bonsai Beginner Series: Cleaning Deciduous Trees”**

Ryan Neil, from the Portland, OR area, takes a beginner through the first steps in cleaning a deciduous tree and compares it to cleaning a conifer. I learned which tools to use and why in cutting branches. Definitely worth watching.



Screen captures by Ken Martin

**Jason Chan, owner of Eastern Leaf Bonsai Nursery.
13 minutes
“How to Create a Bonsai with Movement: Wiring a Bonsai Tree Trunk”**

Eastern Leaf owner Jason Chan, who has been a demonstrator at our meetings, shows us how to do initial trunk wiring on a less than \$10 *Juniperus procumbens* ‘nana’ in this YouTube video he made four years ago. A good way for someone just starting to get a few more trees on their bench without breaking the piggy bank. 🐷



Dwarf Japanese Garden Juniper with Shari

Editor's Note: Marj Branson was scheduled to provide the niche display at CVBS's August 2020 meeting, which was canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. So Marj set up a display at her home and photographed it herself. Here's what Marj said about the tree she picked for this issue's virtual niche display.

My virtual niche display tree is a dwarf Japanese garden juniper (*Juniperus procumbens* 'nana'). I have had the tree for seven years. The tree was one of many donated to the club by a member of the community who was moving away.

It is a very traditional style. The deadwood (in this case, technically called a "shari" by the Japanese) was created many years ago by white ants. Now I bleach the area with lime sulfur and use it as a highlight.

—Marj Branson



Photo by Marj Branson

Mobile-Mode Bonsai Library Continues

Just a reminder that while our club meetings are suspended amid the Covid-19 outbreak, I am providing the CVBS Book Mobile! If you want a good bonsai book or DVD to review while staying home, then give me a call and request a book, pamphlet, periodical, or DVD. We'll arrange for it to be sanitized and delivered (or picked up). For a complete list of our library holdings—books, pamphlets, DVDs, and periodicals—please see page 7 of the April 2020 issue of this newsletter.

—Mike Blumenberg

Book of the Month

Four Seasons of Bonsai by Kyuzo Murata and translated by Kate McCandless (Kodansha International Ltd., 1991).

Our Book of the Month is *Four Seasons of Bonsai* by Kyuzo Murata. The introduction for this book notes that “one of the joys of gardening—any type of gardening—is following each plant through its seasonal transformations.” This is especially true for deciduous bonsai.

Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai's annual Winter Silhouettes show at the Los Angeles Arboretum highlights intricate branch structures while a tree is leafless. Then it's exciting to watch spring growth emerge with bright green leaves which later settle into a mature summer foliage. Then fall brings forth reds and yellows, before returning to the dormant winter state.

This book is organized by season and includes stunning pictures of bonsai in each season. These pictures of a Japanese zelkova (see photos, below left) are a great example of winter, summer, and fall.

This book also includes an amazing variety of accent plants in each season. The photograph of scouring rush is just one example of an unusual accent plant (see photo, below center). Like many of our library books, this one is a pleasure to peruse and an inspiration for your next bonsai. Check it out via our bonsai Book Mobile.

—Mike Blumenberg

Photos by Mike Blumenberg

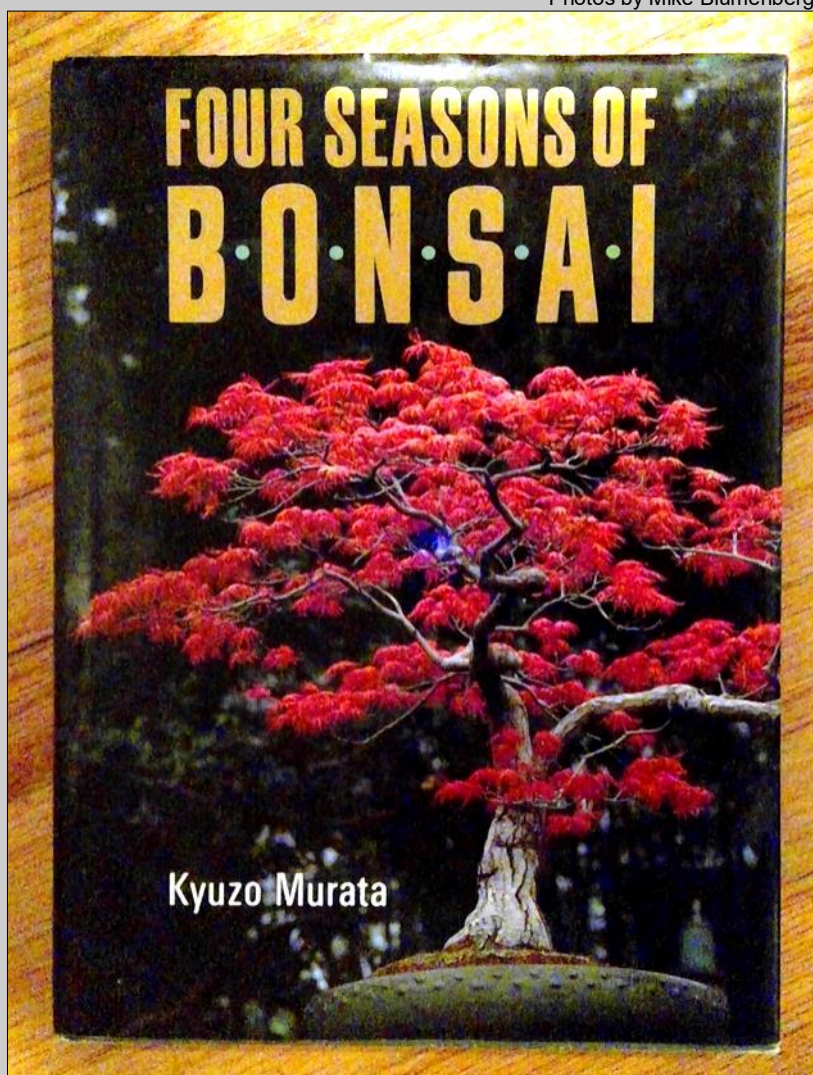
Four Seasons of Bonsai (right) captures the delight of seasonal changes in deciduous trees.



A Japanese zelkova (left) goes through winter (top left), summer (middle left), and fall (bottom left).



This scouring rush (below) is one example of unusual accent plants shown in the book.



2020

ALL KNOWN BONSAI SHOWS, EXHIBITIONS, AND EVENTS IN CALIFORNIA HAVE BEEN CANCELED FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2020. IF YOU WISH TO VISIT A BONSAI GARDEN, CONFIRM STATUS OF THE GARDEN AHEAD OF TIME.

President's Message (Continued from page 1)
bonsai.org.

Send each photo separately as an email attachment with details about the tree in the body of the email. In the body of each email, be sure to include your name as you want it to appear in the newsletter plus the common name for the tree. If you know the scientific name, please include that, too.

Election of Officers

In October, we will set up a nominating committee for the election of 2021 officers. The officers are:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

In November, we will have a virtual election of officers for 2021. If you wish to stand for election, please e-mail me with your selection of office. All current officers step down as soon as the votes are tallied, and the new officers are appointed immediately.

Committee Chairs

While CVBS members elect the four officers, it is the officers who appoint the committee chairs. For 2021, there will be eight standing committees:

- Advisor
- Membership

- Newsletter
- Program
- Publicity
- Refreshments
- Librarian
- Field Trips and Activities

If you wish to help with any of the above committees, please let me know.

Golden Statements

The summer 2020 issue of *Golden Statements*, the Golden State Bonsai Federation's quarterly e-zine, is now available online. Please check the GSBF website (www.gsbfbonsai.org) and click on "Golden Statements" at the top of the homepage for the current edition.

Remember the new addition to our own CVBS newsletter by our club advisor, Ken Fuentes. He will discuss various bonsai topics, bonsai guidelines, and bonsai problems including how to identify them and then how to fix them. (See page 1 and below for this month's report.) If you have a problem tree and would like to discuss it with Ken, email him at advisor@CVBS-bonsai.org.

Between the Covid-19 closures and this recent round of hot weather, it is difficult to get outside. Still, our bonsai require constant care (see Barrett's Bonsai Tips, page 3). So, stay healthy and stay safe! 🌳

Bonsai Guidelines (Continued from page 1)

face the sun and keep reducing any branch other than the low ones if they get too full or long.

Watch the energy flow. If the sacrificial branches don't take off, cut back on the other branches and that will move the energy flow back to your sacrificial branches. Place the trunk facing the light energy. Now it takes time and patience. 🌳

The first example of a corrected trunk (below, left) is a Ficus Burt Davy with damage from some critter that chewed its trunk. Already improved, it will be healed over within another year.

Example two (below, right) is another Ficus Burt Davy, which had a bad reverse taper that can still be seen upon close inspection. In a new pot and placed where the trunk was getting 100% light, a couple of branches soon broke at the soil line. It has been six months, and the reverse taper is almost gone.



Ken Fuentes



Photos by Ken Fuentes

