



# conejo valley BONSAI society

Volume 20 Number 6 June 2023

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  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the Month**  
**7:30 PM – 9:00 PM**

Visit Our Website  
[www.cvbs-bonsai.org](http://www.cvbs-bonsai.org)

## President's Message

# Dear CVBS: Thanks and Farewell

By Marj Branson

Dear Conejo Valley Bonsai Society,

It is with mixed feelings that I announce this is my last letter to you as president of CVBS. I am selling my Conejo Valley house and downsizing to a condo in Wisconsin.

This is a major move for me and a change from sunny Southern California to four seasons with snow in at least one. I am looking forward to moving closer to my family.

I am a founding member of CVBS and very proud of the organization we have created for our community. I have discussed this change with our board of directors, and they are planning the necessary changes. Please help them in any way you can.

I always find members of the bonsai community to be generous in sharing their knowledge and time. I hope you can carry on your support of our horticultural art, the bonsai community, our club, our board, and my replacement.

The June 15, 2023 CVBS club meeting will be my last. I would like to thank everyone who has helped and been a part of our club over the years – I will miss you all.

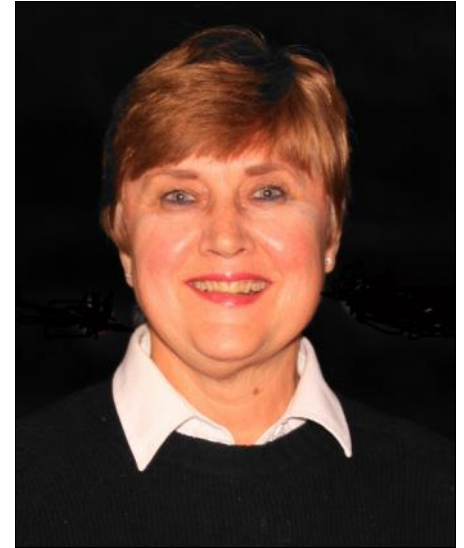
### The Show Goes On

Meanwhile, CVBS activities must continue. There are two demonstrations planned for our club this year—one in June and another in August.

At our June meeting, bonsai expert Peter Macasieb will enlighten us about shohin trees (small bonsai). Many of you no doubt are already familiar with Peter's super-miniaturized bonsai. He teaches and demonstrates throughout the region and is a regular at many shows in Southern California, where he usually has a booth.

I am certain you will enjoy the evening seeing how Peter creates his shohin bonsai. Please make every effort to attend.

Next, CVBS's August meeting will be with Debra Mauz-Melitz. Instead of doing our usual demonstration, the



Marj Branson

evening will be more like a workshop. Debra will teach us how to create Kusamono. "Kusamono" is a Japanese word that literally means "something made of/from grass." The goal is to create a scene that evokes a particular season or a region. In traditional bonsai displays, the multiple grasses can be used as an accent plant. Kusamono is becoming more popular in the west, and some bonsai shows now are including Kusamono sections.

This will be a hands-on event: Debra will bring 10 pots and material for them. So 10 members will create their own Kusamono and take it home with them for a small fee covering the materials.

Remember the Golden State Bonsai Federation (GSBF) Rendezvous coming up October 20 – 22 in Santa Nella, California. For details of this and other upcoming events, see page 7.

At our May meeting, Ken Martin led a brief discussion on fertilizers. Ken's presentation included a handout on fertilizers. At Ken's suggestion, members discussed what fertilizers they use and have had success with.

See you Thursday, June 15th. 🌳

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(Click on Email Address)

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# CVBS Programs 2023

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

January 19	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— <b>BRING YOUR TREES</b>
February 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Trimming junipers led by Marj Branson followed by Workshop— <b>BRING YOUR TREES</b>
<b>SATURDAY</b> March 4	1:00 – 4:00 PM: Workshop on Potting Ventura County Nursery, 4595 Balcom Canyon Road, Somis <b>BRING YOUR TREES (CLUB WILL SPONSOR SOIL)</b>
March 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Wiring a tree into the pot led by Ken Martin followed by Workshop— <b>BRING YOUR TREES</b>
April 20	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Bugs & Fungi led by Ken Fuentes followed by Workshop— <b>BRING YOUR TREES</b>
<b>SATURDAY</b> APRIL 22	10:00 AM – Noon Behind-the-scenes tour of the Huntington's bonsai nursery led by Ted Matson, bonsai curator The Huntington Library, Art Museum & Botanical Gardens San Marino, California
<b>SATURDAY</b> May 6	1:00 – 4:00 PM: Workshop: Bring Your Own Trees Ventura County Nursery, 4595 Balcom Canyon Road, Somis <b>BRING YOUR TREES</b>
May 18	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Fertilizers led by Ken Martin followed by Workshop— <b>BRING YOUR TREES</b>
June 15	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by <b>DEMONSTRATION</b> —PETER MACASIEB
July 20	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop and <b>Swap Meet</b> — <b>BRING YOUR TREES AND OTHER ITEMS</b>
August 17	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by <b>DEMONSTRATION</b> —DEBRA MAUZ-MELITZ
September 21	<b>TENTATIVE</b> 7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by <b>PEER CRITIQUES—BRING YOUR EXHIBITION TREES</b>
October TBA	<b>TENTATIVE</b> <b>20TH ANNUAL CVBS EXHIBITION</b> VENUE TBA
October 19	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— <b>BRING YOUR TREES</b>
November 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting with <b>Club Elections</b> followed by Workshop— <b>BRING YOUR TREES</b>
December 21	7:30 PM <b>HOLIDAY POTLUCK, RAFFLE &amp; AUCTION</b>

# Keep Pruning Fast Growing Deciduous Trees

By Jim Barrett

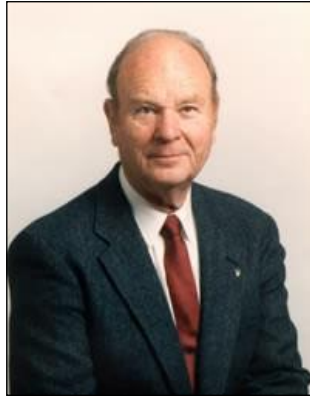
If you have been pruning your deciduous trees properly, you should be seeing more and finer twigs, which, in turn, make for a more mature-looking tree and a great winter silhouette.

Continue to prune fast-growing elm, zelkova, and maple twigs, leaving one or two nodes on each new branch. Usually the distance between nodes is regulated by the amount of nitrogen the plant is able to use. The more available nitrogen, the longer the internodes—this assumes that the plant is healthy and vigorous.

Because not all bonsai grow at the same rate, you must pay attention to the habits of each one. If you have crab apple, ume, or quince, prune all new growth to one or two nodes around the first week in July. Then do not prune again until next fall. Flower buds form during summer and early fall and pruning during this period reduces the number of flowers you may get next spring.

Along with this procedure, feed high-phosphorus and low-nitrogen fertilizers. Satsuki azaleas should not be fed until after blooming. Once the peak blooming period is over, pluck, or better yet, cut all of the flowers off, making sure to remove any seed pods.

If you have black pine bonsai, try to finish your favorite candle pruning procedure by mid-July or earlier. How you need to prune black pine will depend on the health, the age, and



Jim Barrett

your goals for each tree.

Check with your instructor or bring your untrimmed black pine to your club's next meeting for advice.

Aphids are really out in force now. Watch for them especially on apple, quince, and ume. Spray with an appropriate insecticide. You may want to introduce ladybugs purchased at your local nursery. (Let me know how you keep them in your yard.)

Warm days are ahead of us, so pay attention to your watering program and hold back on the high-nitrogen fertilizers.

You should be able to repot ficus, pomegranate, and atlas cedar anytime now. If you need to repot

elm and maple, make sure the new growth has hardened somewhat and try not to remove too many fine roots. You may find trident maples have developed a thick pad of roots on the bottom of the root ball. Add soil as needed and return the tree to its place. Save any major root pruning for next January or February. 🌱

## Refreshments

June	Ken Martin
July	Nancy Smeets
August	Antonio Viscara
Sept.	Rick Boyer

## CVBS Niche Displays

# Niche Display Program

In the Niche Display Program, club members set up a mini exhibition display. Such a display consists of: the tree in a nice bonsai pot; a display stand; and an accent plant.

All these items are important to create the balance for a good display. We aspire to present the best display possible for everyone's pleasure and edification.

However, it is also our desire to give everyone an opportunity to learn by doing. So if any less experienced member feels their trees are not ready for a finished display, it is worthwhile creating a display that is a work-in-progress. It will be up to the club member to determine which category their display falls into, and then the work-in-progress display can become the talking point of work done, work intended, and suggestions from the floor.

We encourage all members to sign up for the niche display! Please have a look at your calendar (see the list of 2023 display volunteers at right) and let us know when you would like to present your display.

—Marj Branson

## Niche Displays

June	Antonio Viscarra
July	Nancy Smeets
August	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Sept.	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Oct.	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>

## CVBS Membership

# Interested in CVBS?

The Conejo Valley Bonsai Society is open to anyone interested in the horticultural art of bonsai. If you are not a member, consider joining now. With Covid-19 restrictions lifted, we have resumed meeting at 7:30 PM on the third Thursday of every month in the Westlake Village City Hall Community Room (31200 Oakcrest Drive, Westlake Village, CA 91361). Membership includes presentations by bonsai experts, workshops, critiques, member swap meets, field trips, a custom-made name badge, 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, or bring it to our next meeting.

—Nancy Smeets



# The Long and Short of Bonsai Videos

By Ken Martin

**Online Video Review:** For this month, I reviewed one long video (90 minutes) and one short (10 minutes). First, Andrew Robson demonstrates seasonal defoliation of a mature trident maple. Second, Bjorn BJORHOLM briefly covers both fertilization and bud pruning on a very mature black pine.

**Andrew Robson**  
**Rakuyō Bonsai**  
**Portland, Oregon**  
**YouTube: Care of Deciduous Trees in the Growing Season**  
**90 Minutes**

In the Golden State Bonsai Federation's third online demonstration in its Golden Zoom Series, Andrew Robson of Rakuyō Bonsai in Portland, Oregon, demonstrates Care of Deciduous Trees in the Growing Season. Andrew discusses defoliation and grafting, as well as other advanced bonsai techniques for deciduous trees. Andrew covers methods for development of structure and ramification.

I had not heard of Andrew Robson until now, but he puts out a lot of good information about trees for both partial and full defoliation, all types of grafting, fertilizers, etc. in this 1 ½ hour live chat just recently put on YouTube. The first picture is a trident maple before full defoliation and the second after. Full defoliation doesn't mean all the leaves, all the time. He explains why he left some in certain branches.



**Andrew Robson (top) with a large, mature trident maple that is ready for defoliation.**

**The same trident maple after thorough defoliation and pruning (bottom).**



**Bjorn BJORHOLM**  
**Eisei-En Bonsai Nursery**  
**Nashville, Tennessee**  
**YouTube: Techniques for Pine Bonsai in Summer | Mekiri, Needle Plucking and Fertilizer**  
**10 Minutes 41 Seconds**

The reason I selected this short video is the demonstration of Bjorn BJORHOLM's fertilization setup for summer, which seemed appropriate since we discussed fertilizer at the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's May 2023 meeting. Bjorn, who is owner of Eisei-En Bonsai Nursery, also demonstrates candle plucking and pruning on a very mature black pine. The Japanese word "mekiri" refers to trimming new buds to balance the strength of bud growth in pine trees. The last couple of minutes is advertising for his bonsai school. 🌲

**Bjorn BJORHOLM with a mature black pine (right). He discusses both fertilization and bud pruning in this short YouTube video.**



All screen captures by Ken Martin

# Two-Trunk Japanese Maple Survives Rat Attack

**Editor's Note:** Mike Blumenberg provided the niche display at CVBS's May 2023 meeting. He showed this twin-trunk Japanese maple. Here's what Mike says about his tree.

I purchased my twin-trunk Japanese maple from Roy Nagatoshi in the spring of 2018. I think that I paid \$75 for it. I kept it in a nursery pot for a year before potting it in the spring of 2019. (See my picture of its initial potting, below.)

I defoliated the tree at least once, in mid-summer of 2019. I should probably do so every summer. I have repotted it every other year since the initial potting.

It looked good until a rat or squirrel ate most of the branches and leaves from the left side of the tree one night. Ouch!! Fortunately it survived even that, and I repotted it again in February of 2023. (See the next picture of the thick and healthy root ball, below.) The spring foliage this year has been beautiful with vibrant green and red edges. I'm hoping that I can keep it green and full of leaves through the upcoming summer.

—Mike Blumenberg

**Mike Blumenberg's two-trunk Japanese maple (below right) had beautiful spring foliage when he displayed it at CVBS's May 2023 meeting.**

**In February this year, it had a very healthy root ball (below left).**

**After its initial potting in 2019 (bottom left).**



Photo by Damon DuBois



# CVBS Bonsai Library at Your Service

Please remember to return any overdue items borrowed from the Conejo Valley Bonsai Society library. But also remember that if you want a good bonsai book or DVD to review, you can see me during a meeting or give me a call and request a book, pamphlet, periodical, or DVD. For a complete list of our library holdings, please see “Library” under the “Resources” tab on the revamped CVBS website [www.cvbs-bonsai.org](http://www.cvbs-bonsai.org).

—Mike Blumenberg

## Book of the Month

*The Complete Book of Bonsai: A Practical Guide to Its Art & Cultivation* by Harry Tomlinson (Abbeville Press, New York, 1991).

This month’s book is *The Complete Book of Bonsai: A Practical Guide to Its Art & Cultivation* by Harry Tomlinson, who was a leading bonsai artist from Europe and the founder of the Greenwood Bonsai Studio in 1978 in the United Kingdom. This book was originally published in the United States in 1991 by Abbeville Press and remains a great all-around reference. I reviewed this book previously but decided to review it again this month because I received a copy of it as a gift.

As I reviewed the contents and flipped through the book, my attention was first drawn to Chapter Six: Compendium of Trees and Shrubs for Bonsai. This section discusses over 60 different varieties of trees and shrubs commonly used for bonsai, many of which we often see in our region. Each species is given a one- or two-page spread that includes a photograph of an exceptional bonsai and explanations of each species’ “natural growing pattern” and “outstanding features, such as attractively textured bark, or particular seasonal effects.”

Cultivation details include short recommendations regarding sun exposure, watering, feeding, repotting, pruning, and propagation. There is also a leaf box to aid identification. See the photo below of the Trident Maple page as an example.

I quickly reviewed this chapter and its cultivation details to ensure I was treating each of my trees properly (and I am—for the most part). You can check out the CVBS Library edition of this book yourself at our next Club meeting.

—Mike Blumenberg

The cover of this issue’s Book of the Month, *The Complete Book of Bonsai* (right).

The trident maple information page from Chapter Six: Compendium of Trees and Shrubs for Bonsai (below).

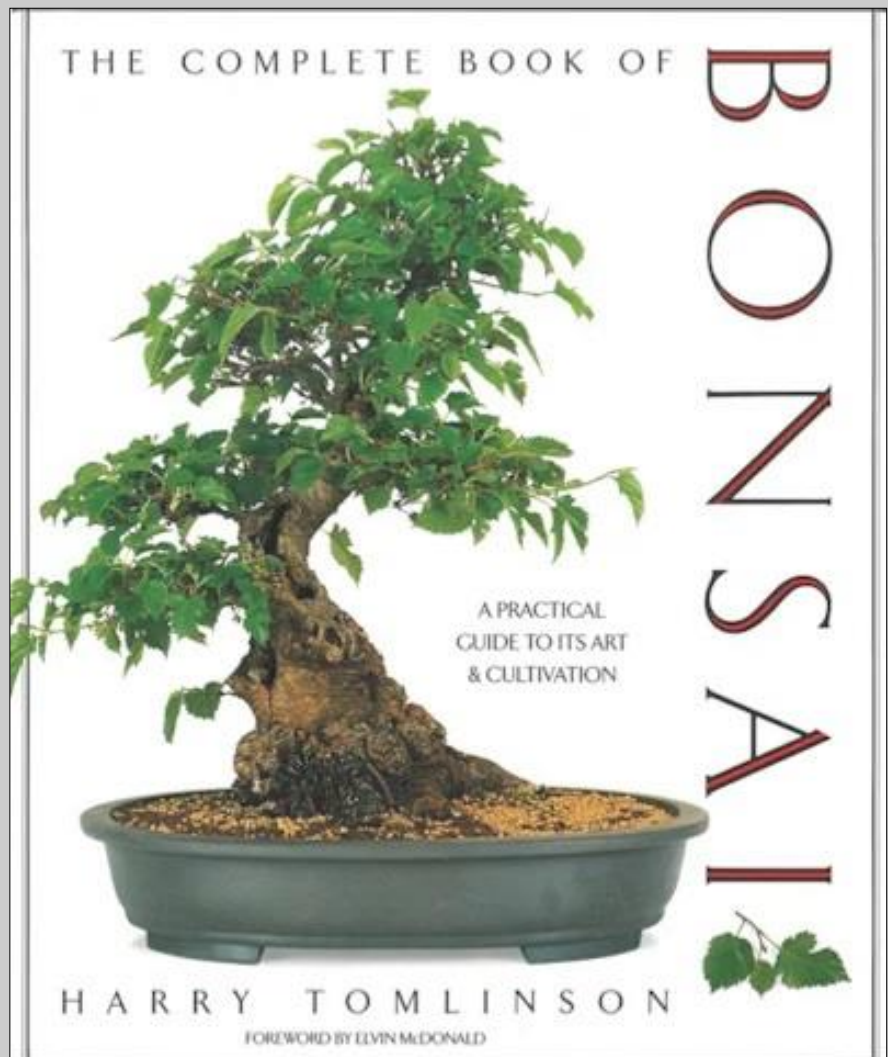


Photo of inside page by Mike Blumenberg; cover screen capture by David Whiteside



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## Coming Events (Click on the Addresses to visit Websites or send Emails)

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**In-person bonsai events have returned (see below). Most gardens also are open—confirm status and Covid protocols of the garden ahead of time. We also list virtual bonsai events.**

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### 2023

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#### June

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##### June 10, 2023 Ventura, California

Ventura Botanical Gardens' 2nd Annual Bonsai Exhibition, Saturday, June 10 at 10:00 AM – 4 PM. Join us for our second annual bonsai demonstration and exhibition. Bonsai will be displayed at the Welcome Center. Two demonstrations at 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM will highlight bonsai's history, care, and maintenance. Plants suitable for pre-bonsai will be available for sale in our Welcome Center gift shop. This event is open to all. Members and children 18 and under are free. Non-members' entrance to the exhibit is included in the \$7 entry fee to the Gardens. Interested in displaying your bonsai? Contact Diana Boydston at [dianaboystun.bcsb@gmail.com](mailto:dianaboystun.bcsb@gmail.com).

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##### June 14, 2023 Oakland, California

The East Bay Bonsai Society will be having an in-person bonsai auction on Wednesday, June 14th at 666 Bellevue Ave., Lakeside Park Garden Center (Lake Merritt) in Oakland, California! The auction will start at 7:30 PM with a preview at 7:00 PM. It will include established and starter bonsai trees, pots, tools, etc. Credit cards, checks, and cash accepted. Free admission. Parking available. Sales tax will be added to purchases. Masks are optional. More? Email: [mhilton@rocketmail.com](mailto:mhilton@rocketmail.com).

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##### June 17 – 18, 2023 Livermore, California

Our 14th annual Valley Bonsai Society Show will include a bonsai demonstration at 1:00 PM on both days. The finished tree will be raffled off at the end of the demonstrations. Bonsai pots, soil, etc. available for purchase. Admission is free. 10:00 AM June 17 – 4:00 PM June 18. At Alden Lane Nursery, 981 Alden Lane, Livermore, CA. [www.aldenlane.com](http://www.aldenlane.com).

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#### August

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##### August 26 – 27, 2023 Rohnert Park, California

Redwood Empire Bonsai Society 37th Annual Bonsai Show at Rohnert Park Community Center, 5401 Snyder Lane, Rohnert Park, California. Saturday from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Sunday from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Featuring the internationally renowned bonsai artist Ryan Neil as guest demonstrator. Ryan workshops both mornings from 9:00 AM – Noon. Enrollment is limited. Ryan's critique of the show trees from 5:30 – 6:30 PM on Saturday. Contact Bob Shimon ([shimon@mcn.org](mailto:shimon@mcn.org)) regarding cost and for enrollment. Demonstrations and raffles at 1:00 PM both days. Visit the REBS website for more information: [www.rebsbonsai.org](http://www.rebsbonsai.org).

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#### September

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##### September 23 – 24, 2023 Penryn, California

The Sierra Bonsai Club will display bonsai and suiseki in the temple as well as outdoors in conjunction with the Placer Buddhist Church Food & Cultural Festival Bazaar all weekend, September 23, 10:00 AM – September 24, 4:00 PM. Dine in the outdoor covered tents with friends/family, visit cultural booths of food and crafts, bingo, entertainment, & children's games. A bonsai demonstration will be inside the temple. The bonsai will be auctioned at the completion of the demonstration. Winner must be in attendance. 3192 Boyington Rd, Penryn, CA. For more information, call (916) 300-8103.

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#### October

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##### October 14 – 15, 2023 Union City, California

Yamato Bonsai Kai Show. Exhibition of bonsai trees, plant sales, and vendors. Free admission and free parking. Demonstrations both days at 1:30 PM, with Jonas Dupuich on Saturday and Yamato Bonsai Kai Club demonstrator Howard Correa on Sunday. October 14, 10:00 AM – October 15, 4:00 PM. 32975 Alvarado-Niles Road, Union City, CA 94587. Demonstration trees will be raffled off as grand prize each day. For more info and updates find us on Facebook by searching "Yamato Bonsai Kai". Phone: (+1) 510-378-9150 or Email: [irishfishboy@yahoo.com](mailto:irishfishboy@yahoo.com).

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##### October 14 – 15, 2023 Oakland, California

East Bay Bonsai Society show features an impressive exhibit of quality bonsai as well as a demonstration by Jason Chan, owner of Eastern Leaf Bonsai Nursery, past board member of GSBF, and author of a bonsai book dedicated to helping beginners and new bonsai enthusiasts. October 14, 10:00 AM – October 15, 4:00 PM. Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave, Oakland, CA 94610. There will also be a raffle, silent auction and a sale of bonsai and related materials. For information, visit website [www.eastbaybonsai.org](http://www.eastbaybonsai.org). Or contact Michael Hylton [mhilton@rocketmail.com](mailto:mhilton@rocketmail.com).

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##### October 20 – 22, 2023, Santa Nella, California

Golden State Bonsai Federation Rendezvous at Santa Nella, 13070 CA-33, Santa Nella, CA 95322. October 20, 10:00 AM PDT – October 22, 4:00 PM PDT. • Bonsai Sales • Auction • Workshops • Lectures • Community. Very little information is available at this time. We will publish more as it's made available. [For more information, see article, page 1.] Please visit [www.gsbfbonsai.org](http://www.gsbfbonsai.org).

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##### October 21 – 22, 2023, Sacramento, California

Capital City Bonsai Show, October 21, 10:00 AM – October 22, 3:00 PM. 3330 McKinley Blvd, Sacramento, CA 95816. This group show features tree and suiseki displays from participating area clubs. This is all the information available at this time. Watch this space for details as they are released. Please visit [www.abasbonsai.org](http://www.abasbonsai.org).