



conejo valley BONSAI society

Volume 20 Number 10 October 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
3rd Thursday of the Month
7:30 PM – 9:00 PM

Visit Our Website
www.cvbs-bonsai.org

President's Message

Change of Plan: New Show Dates

By Damon DuBois

The Conejo Valley Bonsai Society's 20th Annual Exhibition at Gardens of the World will be held on November 10th and 11th of this year. Note that this is a change from the dates announced here last month. As before, these dates are Friday and Saturday—not the weekend.

All members are encouraged to exhibit. There is space for beginners' exhibits, you do not need to be an advanced bonsai artist.

In preparation for the show, we suggest members who are planning to exhibit trees bring them to the club's Thursday, October 19 meeting. At this meeting, we will continue critiquing and preparing trees for our annual exhibition.

We will also be working out details regarding stands, so if you have a tree to exhibit but don't have a stand for it, let us know and we'll see if we can find someone with an extra stand who can loan you one for the show.

In addition, we will collect all of the information on members' exhibit bonsai during this month's meeting, so please be prepared with the following information on the trees you plan to exhibit:

- Tree(s) species, both scientific



Damon DuBois

& common names

- Tree height(s)
- Accent plant(s)

If you already brought a tree or two for critique last month, you don't need to bring it in again unless you want more advice on preparing it for the show.

Remember, this month's meeting will also be a workshop, so bring trees to work on even if you are not planning to exhibit a bonsai!

I would also like to announce that Sue Falkin has graciously stepped up

to take over as Refreshments Chair of CVBS. Thank you, Sue!

See you all at the club meeting on October 19th! 🌲

CVBS Membership

Welcome Wagon

By Nancy Smeets

The Conejo Valley Bonsai Society has experienced an influx of new members over the past several months. We began with welcoming Min Xue in June. Since then, a half dozen more members have joined our community of bonsai lovers.

In July, John Storojev of Westlake Village became a new member. We neglected to officially welcome John in earlier newsletters, so please give him an extra warm welcome now.

Next, Jim and Sue Falkin joined as a couple in August. They live in Thousand Oaks. Sue already has volunteered to chair our Refreshments committee (see President's Message above). They also were not previously officially welcomed to the society, so let's give them a shoutout now—and thank Sue for taking over the Refreshments committee.

Last month ushered in three new members: Art Frank of Thousand Oaks; Becky Hussein of Camarillo; and Rolando Guevara of Oxnard. Welcome to CVBS!

I am delighted to report all these new members. Please help me make them all feel part of our club. 🌲

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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 Damon DuBois for more information & applications to participate.

January 19	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
February 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Trimming junipers led by Marj Branson followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
SATURDAY March 4	1:00 – 4:00 PM: Workshop on Potting Ventura County Nursery, 4595 Balcom Canyon Road, Somis BRING YOUR TREES (CLUB WILL SPONSOR SOIL)
March 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Wiring a tree into the pot led by Ken Martin followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
April 20	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Bugs & Fungi led by Ken Fuentes followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
SATURDAY 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
SATURDAY May 6	1:00 – 4:00 PM: Workshop: Bring Your Own Trees Ventura County Nursery, 4595 Balcom Canyon Road, Somis BRING YOUR TREES
May 18	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting & Presentation: Fertilizers led by Ken Martin followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
June 15	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION —PETER MACASIEB
July 20	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by Workshop and Swap Meet — BRING YOUR TREES AND OTHER ITEMS
August 17	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by DEMONSTRATION —DEBRA MAUZ-MELITZ
September 21	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by PEER CRITIQUES I — BRING YOUR EXHIBITION TREES
October 19	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting followed by PEER CRITIQUES II — BRING YOUR EXHIBITION TREES
NEW DATES November 10–11	NOTE: FRIDAY – SATURDAY 20TH ANNUAL CVBS EXHIBITION GARDENS OF THE WORLD
November 16	7:30 PM: Brief Meeting with Club Elections followed by Workshop— BRING YOUR TREES
December 21	7:30 PM HOLIDAY POTLUCK, RAFFLE & AUCTION

Watering Schedules Require Careful Attention

By Jim Barrett

October is a very good month to clean up Japanese black pines and junipers. If you have a black pine bonsai, finish pruning the unwanted new growth leaving one, two, or three new candles on the tips of each branch or twig that was pruned earlier this summer.

How many candles you leave is determined by your design goals for the tree [and] whether the new growth is on the outer limits of the tree or in the interior. Old needles (discolored) should be removed. New or fresh needles should remain until December or January. Leaving these new healthy needles on through the fall should keep the tree at its best. Cutting long needles shorter will allow sunlight to penetrate into the interior of the tree, and help to build stronger growth on the weak and stunted interior candles and twigs.

Junipers may be cleaned of all dead or discolored foliage. Prune the “hanger downers” and the “pointer uppers” unless you plan to wire them into a more horizontal position.



Jim Barrett

October is also a good time to remove old wire and rewire for detail.

You should be able to prune quince, apple, and ume for shape now and place them into their show pot, if this is a practice you follow. Fertilize azaleas and most flowering and fruiting bonsai with a low nitrogen, high phosphorous fertilizer. A 0-10-10 should work well.

Repotting and potting (from nursery container to bonsai pot) can be safely done at this time for black pine and most junipers. Repotting flowering and fruiting bonsai from bonsai pot to bonsai pot can be done, provided the root ball is not drastically disturbed and the tree is reasonably

healthy.

Pay attention to watering schedules this month and next. Keeping plants too wet may promote root rot, especially if the tree is not actively growing. Watch for fungus, spider mites, and scale.

October is a very good month to clean up Japanese black pines and junipers.

Refreshments

Oct.	Ken Fuentes
Nov.	Arbi Baghdanian
Dec.	HOLIDAY POTLUCK

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.

—Antonio Viscarra

Niche Displays

Oct.	Nancy Smeets
Nov.	Volunteer Needed
Dec.	No Niche Holiday Potluck

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. We meet 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 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 Nancy Smeets, 837 Rim Crest Circle, Westlake Village, CA 91361, or bring it to our next meeting.

—Nancy Smeets

Bonsai Inspirations Found Outside Sedona

By Mike Blumenberg

I recently spent a few days in Sedona, Arizona and enjoyed hiking amongst the red rocks that make Sedona famous. In addition to those rocks, my bonsai aspirations were nourished by studying the Utah junipers and other trees that lined many of the trails.

The Utah juniper (*Juniperus osteosperma*) is a shrub or small tree that is native to the southwest (including Arizona) typically growing in moderate altitudes between 4,300 and 8,500 feet in dry soil. My hikes were at the lower end of this altitude range and the junipers tended to grow in the more exposed (and therefore hotter) sections of the trail.

Young seedlings looked like bushy shrubs while older specimens showed more gnarled features that were evidence of a tough life in a harsh environment. These tortured features were most readily visible in dead sections of living trees or in completely dead trees that continued to stand against the elements. See this page and page 8 for some examples of the bonsai inspirations I spotted near Sedona. 🌲



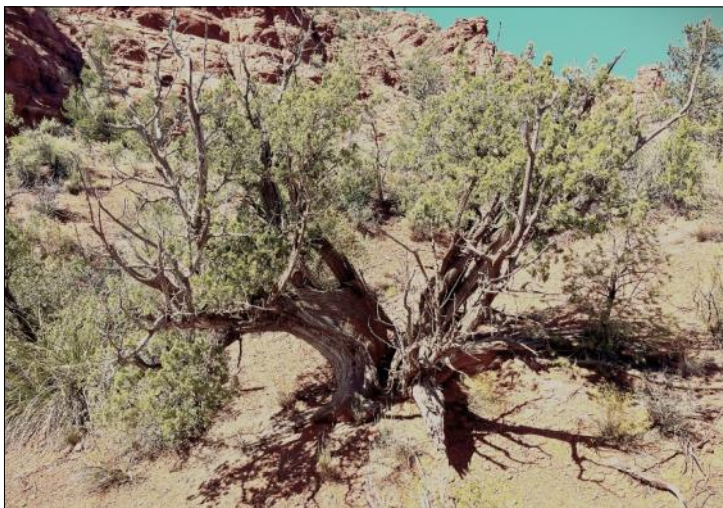
This large and ancient juniper (above) still bore a bit of green at the top and had a gnarled and twisted base (above left) with swirling trunks that would be an impressive bonsai.



This tree (left) died long ago but this made it easier to appreciate it's ancient bones. I like how the branches framed the red rocks in the distance (above).



This old tree (left) had more dead wood than life and a sweeping grain line in the main trunk (right) that would be a central feature as bonsai.



More photographs on page 8

Photos by Mike Blumenberg

Repotting Basics and Giant Forests

By Ken Martin

Online Video Review: Jason Chan shows how to repot a bonsai while Ryan Neil displays forest plantings.

Jason Chan
Eastern Leaf Bonsai
Chino, California
YouTube: [Repotting a Bonsai](#)
19 Minutes

Although Jason recorded this video eight years ago, I think it is still an excellent how-to-repot a bonsai for folks new to the art. I noted he uses a gravel base in the pot to allow the fines to wash out of the akadama/lava rock soil mix. Among other tips he discusses how to size the pot to the tree.

Jason Chan explains the tools needed for repotting (right).

Ryan Neil
Bonsai Mirai
Portland, Oregon
YouTube: [Planning a Bonsai Forest—Forests of Mirai](#)
59:30 Minutes

When Ryan Neil studied under Masahiko Kimura in Japan, he learned how to build a bonsai forest in the Japanese style. Eleven years ago, he decided to build bonsai forests in America considering American environments. He did this by studying the environments of redwoods, ponderosa pines, Monterey cypress, deciduous beech, and bald cypress. The result has been huge forest plantings that are permanently a part of Bonsai Mirai. Each tree type has been mated into its natural environment. 🌲



Ryan Neil working on a redwood forest (left).



Studying a beech forest (left).



Tools Needed:
Drainage Mesh, Basic Shear
Root Cutter, Root Hook
2mm Wire, Wire Cutter

Also Needed:
- Repotting Stick
- Pliers



Ryan with a bald cypress forest (above).



Dramatic pygmy cypress (right).

All screen captures by Ken Martin

Brush Cherry from New South Wales 'Down Under'

Editor's Note: Damon and Wendy DuBois provided the niche display at CVBS's September 2023 meeting. They showed this upright Brush Cherry. Here's what Damon and Wendy say about their tree.

We bought this tree in August of 2020 and have been working on it for three years. It is a Brush Cherry (*Syzygium paniculatum*), a species of flowering tree in the myrtle family (*Myrtaceae*). It is native to New South Wales, Australia. This is a very hardy, fast-growing tree that back buds almost continually, making it an excellent candidate for bonsai.

The original styling was done with guidance from Club Advisor Ken Fuentes and the tree has been on a really good path since then. Future plans for it include more ramification, healing the existing scars, and possibly some work to improve the nebari.

Damon and Wendy DuBois displayed this handsome upright Brush Cherry (below) at last month's meeting.



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.

—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 I’m going to review another chapter of *The Complete Book of Bonsai* by Harry Tomlinson. I introduced this book in June and reviewed Chapter Six: Compendium of Trees and Shrubs for Bonsai. In July, I reviewed Chapter Four: Routine Maintenance. This month, I’ll review Chapter Five: Propagation Techniques.

Tomlinson starts this chapter by noting that “propagating your own original stock for bonsai provides you with a wide choice of material and the most complete method of acquiring suitable specimens for bonsai training.” He reviews four basic propagation methods: sowing seeds, taking cuttings, air layering, and grafting.

Sowing seeds is obviously a long-term approach and is typically used to cultivate lots of material that in the future may yield a few specimens that can be used for bonsai.

Cuttings provide a faster method to generate bonsai stock and have the advantage of using biproducts of routine maintenance that otherwise may be destroyed. The author explains that cuttings are classified as either hardwood or softwood. Hardwood cuttings are taken in the fall or winter after the year’s growth has hardened while softwood cuttings are taken in the spring when the tree is actively growing. Both provide opportunities to propagate new stock. Multiple cuttings can be planted in a single tray, and the author recommends a growing medium comprised of one part peat moss and one part perlite. As the cuttings grow, they can be moved from the initial tray into individual pots or the ground until they mature sufficiently for bonsai styling.

Air Layering is a common method to create bonsai stock from existing plants (bonsai or trees in the area). The chapter includes the three illustrations reprinted here to explain the air layering method. First, remove the bark from a ring of the branch or trunk that will become the base of the new bonsai. Second, secure a pot or other container to the branch surrounding the area where the bark was removed. Third, fill that pot with soil. Over the next several months, the bark above the cut area will grow roots. It can be cut from the original tree when there are sufficient roots to support the new tree.

Grafting is commonly used in commercial horticulture to join a desired treetop to a hardy root base. The same technique can be used for bonsai. Grafting is the most complex method of propagation and requires careful preparation of both the base and scion (the part that is being added). The book also includes several illustrations of proper grafting techniques.

You can check out this book from the CVBS Library and study Tomlinson’s recommendations in more detail.

—Mike Blumenberg



Harry Tomlinson’s *The Complete Book of Bonsai* (right).

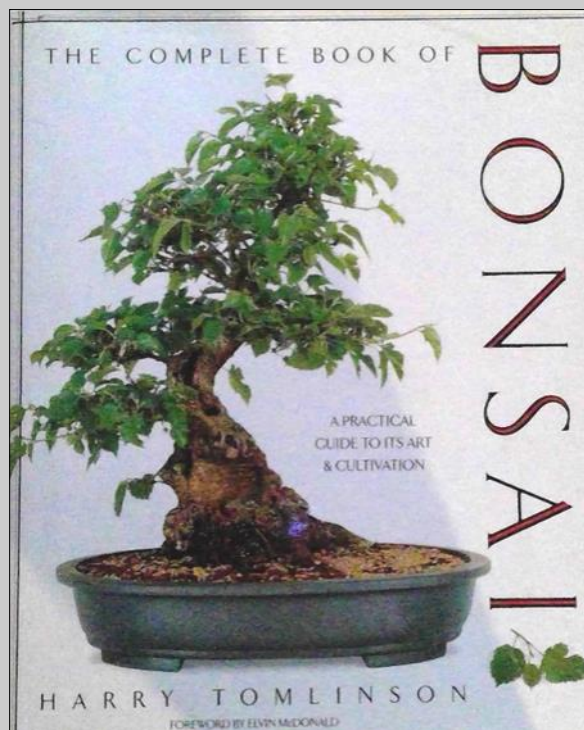
A branch with the bark stripped off in a ring (top left). New roots will grow out of the top edge of bark.



A plastic pot is cut and fitted around the branch (middle left). This pot will be filled with soil for the new roots to grow into.



The completed air layering setup (bottom left). Once adequate new roots have grown, the pot will be removed and the branch cut off just below the roots. The new tree will then be potted on its own.



Photos by Mike Blumenberg

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

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.

2023

October

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.

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. Or contact Michael Hylton mhylton@rocketmail.com.

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. Please visit www.gsbfbonsai.org.

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.

November

November 4, 10:00 AM – November 5, 4:00 PM, San Marino, California

California Bonsai Society—66th Annual Exhibit Brody Botanical - Huntington Library, 1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino, CA 91108, Huntington Library, Art Galleries and Botanic Gardens. Open both days from 10 AM to 4 PM, Demonstration at 1PM daily Please refer to the Huntington website (www.huntington.org) for Information on the need for reservations.

November 10 – 11, Thousand Oaks, California

Conejo Valley Bonsai Society 20th Annual Exhibition, Gardens of the World, 2001 Thousand Oaks Boulevard Thousand Oaks, CA 91362. Hours: 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM both Friday and Saturday. Demonstration: 1:00 PM Saturday. For more information, please contact Damon DuBois at president@cvbs-bonsai.org.

Sedona (continued from page 4)



This juniper's twisted upper trunk (left) would be a good bonsai feature.

This is not a juniper but one of the many deciduous trees that grow in the canyons (right). I don't know the species but like the twin trunks growing out of the rock and the bright green canopy against a beautiful blue sky.

