



# SNIPS 'N CLIPS

A Publication of The San Antonio Bonsai Society, Inc.

<http://sanantoniobonsai.org>

MAY 2015

VOLUME 40 NUMBER 5

## BONSAI CALENDAR

All meetings are held on the second Thursday, 7 pm, at Lions Field Adult Community Center, Broadway at Mulberry St., SA, TX. 78209

**RICHARD HAYES BONSAI STUDY GROUP:** FOURTH WEDNESDAY, Workshop in Bonsai, everyone is welcome, 7 pm at Lions Field. GREAT TIME FOR MEMBERS TO BRING IN A TREE TO WORK ON —

**May 16<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> Austin Bonsai Society Annual Show at Zilker Botanical Gardens in Austin.**

**June 13th - Club Meeting at Thousand Oaks Rainbow Gardens; 10 am**

**June 20<sup>th</sup> – Exhibit and L/D at The Garden Center, 10 am**

**June 27th - Progressive Bonsai Tour and Food at Paul T 's, Oscar G 's, and Ryan 's.**



Y E A R O F  
T H E R A M

## President's Message

By Ryan O

[bonsaiode@gmail.com](mailto:bonsaiode@gmail.com)

Technically, SABS' anniversary is in August however, I would like to mention and highlight a few active members that have watch SABS grow and change over the years. With only three years under my belt as a member, I still have witnessed positive changes, met wonderful people, and have learned a lot about bonsai. The Club's first meeting occurred in 1973 (yep, 42 years ago) (that's even older than me!!!!). Unfortunately, we don't have any of the founding members with us today, but what we do have are a few members with astonishing commitments to the club spanning a combined total of over 200 years and eight instances of performing as the Club's president. I can't imagine the changes these individuals have witnessed during their presence with SABS.

To the best of my calculations of reviewing past SABS' annual booklets, members that have been with the club for 30+ years include (in alphabetical order), Larry A , Peg H , Marty K , Jack R , and Paul T . Again, to the best of my judgment, we also have one member that has been with SABS for 25+ years and that is Chris L and Chuck and Pat W . Two other members who have been long standing in the club, but can not attend on a regular basis are Bill G and Gary M .

I would personally like to thank these individuals for their long-term commitment, dedication/passion, donations of time and probably money, friendship, and most of all their sharing of techniques and knowledge of bonsai. As mentioned in last month's article, members such as those listed above are truly what makes a club endure the test of time and prosper.

Continued on page 2

Continued from page one.....

*(If there are any active members that I failed to include in the above mentioned names, my sincere apologies. I did the best I could with the limited resources I have to arrive at my conclusion above. Please let me know so I forgot anyone so I can correct my fault.)*

A new idea we are showcasing, in May, is the addition of a small 5 to 10 minute lecture of certain topics following our discussion on our mini bonsai show. For May, John R has graciously volunteer to provide us with a few tips of proper watering for various species of bonsai, watering techniques when using various forms of pots. If you have any ideas or questions answered at the beginning of our monthly meetings, feel free to let me know.

With the help from Virgie V , I have made a contact with The Garden Center off of Bandera Road. The Garden Center is very eager to have SABS provide a mini exhibit and L/D has they have received questions about bonsai from their customers. I have set up a L/D and show for June 20<sup>th</sup> from 10 am-4 pm. If any members are interested in joining me as a guest, exhibiting a tree, or want to co-lecture, please let me know. I can use the help. The Garden Club is also offering discounts the day of and suggested we could hold a monthly meeting there too.

### **RYAN**

***Please help with the website. I found out the more times people look for [san-antoniobonsai.org](http://san-antoniobonsai.org) the more it helps Google, Bing, Yahoo, etc. start seeing our website. If each of you could periodically do a search for it that would greatly help.***

## **PROGRAM CORNER**

**David W**

[redhawkbonsai@yahoo.com](mailto:redhawkbonsai@yahoo.com)

This month I will be demonstrating how to style a cascading bonsai and talk about the different reasons there are cascading trees in nature. I will also talk about the care and needs of tree that I will be demonstrating.

As I briefly mentioned about, at March's meeting "**know your species**". You should know the information of each and every type of plant you have! What it needs as far as water, light (full sun exposure, shaded, morning only) placement through-out the seasons, is it tropical, is it deciduous, its max low and high temp it should exposed to, when to & not to trim, when to repot, can it be defoliated, does it back bud, are the buds near the trunk or at the end of the branch, fertilizing, trimming, clipping, pinching, wiring... getting the picture?? We can find most of the information we need from our very own published SABS' "**Bonsai Tree Care**" book, this little green book has the low down on over 86 species and covers most of our well known species we use here! You can purchase this awesome bonsai book from our club; also, we still have bags of lava rock available for mixing your own special bonsai soil. See Ryan to purchase both.

### **CURRENT MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR THE SAN ANTONIO BONSAI SOCIETY**

\$30 individual  
\$50 family  
\$25 senior  
\$40 senior family

# MAY MONTHLY TIPS

David W  
[redhawkbonsai@yahoo.com](mailto:redhawkbonsai@yahoo.com)

A few people have asked me about the soil that I use. I have been using pretty much the same mix for several years. Several times in the 80's I would help Leonard at the Bonsai Farm during winter mix up soils and mediums that were delivered via Dump trucks. For my efforts I would be paid in dirt - enough soil to line the bed my little pickup. He never would break down the recipe for me, although I'd pretty much figured it out. When he closed the Farm for good after Jerry passed away, he and I broke the recipe down as close as we could and here it is. This recipe makes a large quantity soil and I usually make 3 to 4 times this mix.

## Bonsai Soil

### \*Screen soil mixture BEFORE potting\*

SCREENING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO TO ALL SOILS!

You want to screen out the fine, super fine and dust from your bonsai soil.

1. 3-bags (20 lb.) The best potting soil you can find.
2. 2-(5 gallon) buckets of coarse blastin sand &/or 1/8" to 1/4" Haydite, expanded shale or lava rock.
3. 1-bag (20 lb.) of peat moss. (I sometime leave this out)
4. 1/2-(5 gallon) buckets of Perlite. (I sometimes leave this out too)
5. 3-(5 gallon) buckets of pine bark soil conditioner.
6. I've been experimenting with Akadama lately, adding about 10 to 20% in the mix.

Well you can sure tell that the growing season is here, I've had to do a lot of pruning and pinching, it is challenge to keep up with it. Everything is awake and growing, growing, growing!

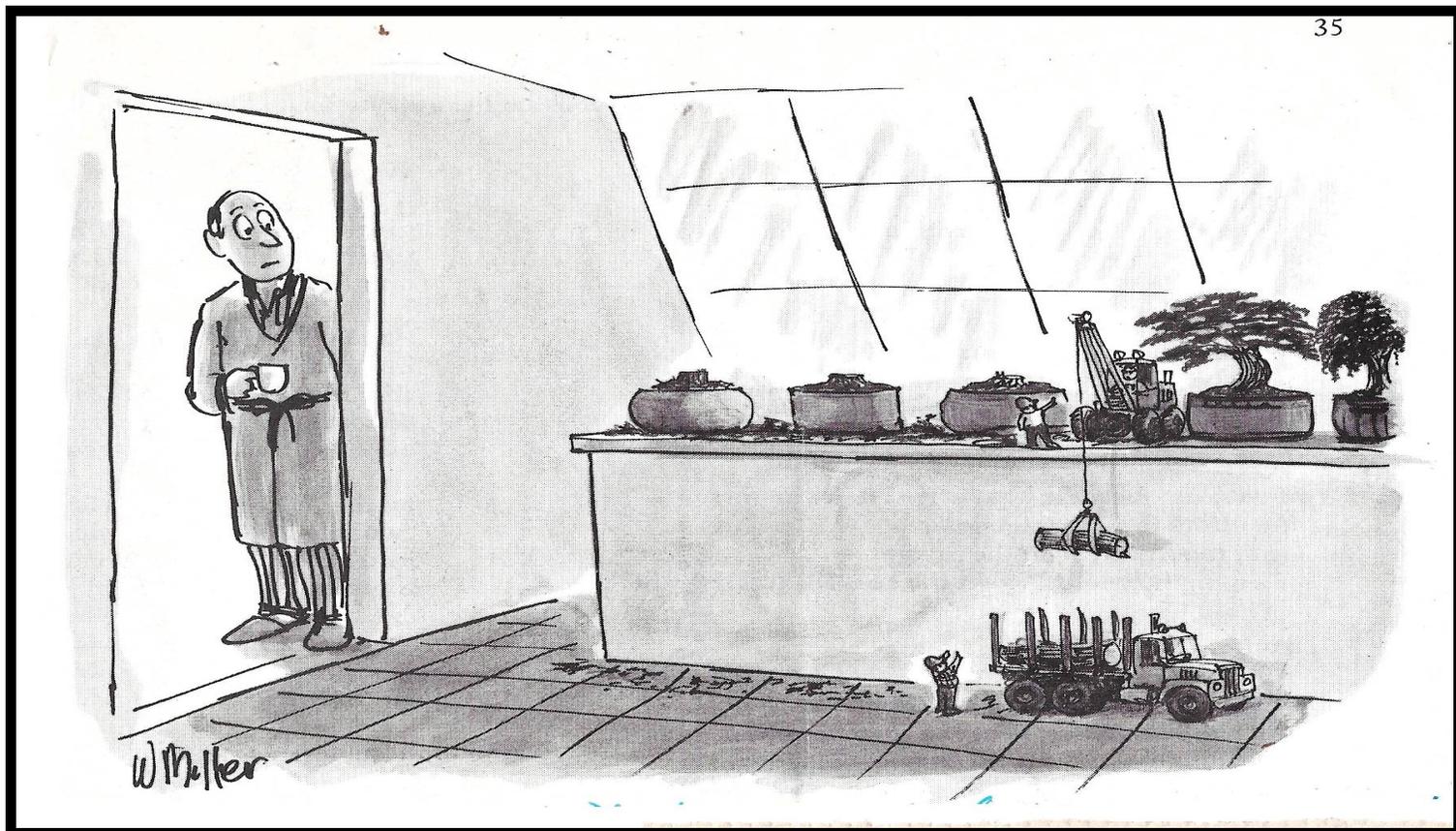
Keep on potting **semi-tropicals** like Ficus and figs (when temps stay above 65) but we still need to wait few more weeks before repot Texas Ebony and other South Texas natives. A good rule to remember is when you know that the **lowest** temperature of the day/night stays above 70 degrees then it's a good time to root prune and repot our Southern Natives like Ebony, Colima and Anacua. It's too early in the season to repot your tropicals. Tropicals need to be repotted in mid-summer (Fukien tea, Bahamas Black Olive, Buttonwood, Wrightia and Nea Buxofolia). When repotting, be sure to wire the tree securely in the pot to give it good stability against the winds. Putting rocks on top of the soil for a few days can also help brace the tree.

It's **NOT** recommended to repot any deciduous trees that you need to root prune. If you must repot due to problems with tree, change the pot or repot it in larger container only. **DO NOT** prune the roots. These deciduous trees have very tender roots at this time of year.

Everybody's back yards should growing by now, so do not forget to prune, pinch and also fertilize. When pinching back on most trees (except junipers) you want to pinch back to the second or third node of leaves to reduce leaf size and node length. Elm trees have alternating leaves and should be pinched down to the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> leaf so it will grow back in the direction you'd want the branch to grow. Be sure to alternate the direction you pinch on different branches so all the branches don't end up growing into each other. Maples have opposing leaves and should be pinched to the second node. As the two buds emerge, pinch back the one you don't want or is growing in the wrong direction.

Watch the soils every day so they do not dry out. Inspect the bonsai from top to bottom, also inspect the drain holes. Inspect for ANY and all insects and treat accordingly. If you discover an infestation treat according to the label of the pesticide. Watch your training wires, so they will not cut into the branches.

**This information and re-potting times, are suggested guidelines for the Hill country through South Texas.**



*This photo is the inspiration for starting a new series on defoliation. It's a Ficus and as you can see it's half defoliated. If you live in the tropics you can defoliate a tree like this any time of year. If you want to defoliate a Ficus or other tropical bonsai here in the north country, you need to wait until it's pretty warm (let's say until night temps are over 50F, 10C). If you defoliate too soon, cold nights could hamper recovery. Conversely you don't want to wait too long into the summer as you want full recovery before nights starting getting cold. The photo is originally from Eduardo Mourão Guedes's post in Indonesian Bonsai Society (couldn't find a live link for this). I found it in Tae kukiwon bonsai's facebook photos*

As mentioned above this post marks the beginning of a series on defoliation. We'll start with defoliation for energy balancing. In general, whether discussing defoliation or other techniques, energy balancing is critical for successful bonsai.

Before you get too far into an article like this, the question of when to defoliate is bound to come up. We touch on it briefly under *Timing* below, but there's much more that can be said. In a nutshell, when to defoliate depends upon where you live and the type tree. In warm climates people sometimes defoliate the same tree two or even three times in one growing season. In cold climates once is all we can squeeze out. This is because of the need for ample recovery time before the cold weather sets in.



*Before defoliation. Too much energy is flowing to the upper reaches of the tree. Without redirecting this energy, the top will continue to strengthen, while the lower branch remains relatively weak. This occurs because most trees (including maples), are apically dominant, i.e. most of the energy flows up towards the tree's apex. Because of this disproportionate energy flow, it would be impossible to style most bonsai without some sort of energy balancing.*

*This Japanese maple (Acer palmatum) has been partially defoliated. The first branch is too small relative to the rest of the tree, so the purpose of the defoliation is to speed up the development of the first branch while slowing down the development of the rest of the tree. This works because energy flow decreases in areas that have been defoliated. Conversely, because the energy from the roots has to go somewhere, energy flow increases where leaves are left on. The photos in this post are from Bonsai Today issue 103. The article that the photos are taken from is by Hiroshi Takeyama.*



## **Defoliation Defined**

Defoliation is simply cutting off foliage (leaves). Though the word defoliation is used outside of bonsai to describe conditions caused by chemicals or disease, it is distinctive to bonsai as a styling technique.

## **Three primary reasons to defoliate**

For styling purposes, defoliation is commonly used for three purposes: reducing leaf size, increasing fine branching (ramification) and redirecting energy. This post is primarily concerned with the third purpose; redirecting energy.

## **Defoliating for health**

Defoliation can also be used to remove diseased or insect infested leaves. Or leaves that have been damaged by sun, wind or other factors.

## **When wiring**

It's not unusual to remove some leaves when you wire just to get them out of the way.

## **When pruning**

Sometimes it helps to remove some leaves on a branch before pruning so you can better see exactly where to cut.

## **Timing**

If you plan on doing extensive defoliation, be sure to give the tree plenty of time to recover and develop strong new leaves before cold weather starts to set in.

In warm climates one can defoliate well into the summer be sure to use sharp shears and to cut the petioles (leaf stems) at the half way point.

THIS INFORMATION IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY **STONE LANTERN AND THEIR BLOG , BONSAI BARK.**

## BONSAI CALENDAR 2015

- May Mini-show – Cascades of any species
- May Food and Beverage Host – Tammy B and Larry A
- May 16<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> Austin Bonsai Society Annual Show
- June 13<sup>th</sup> - Club Meeting at Thousand Oaks Rainbow Gardens; 10am
- June 20<sup>th</sup> – Exhibit and L/D at The Garden Center, 10am
- June 27<sup>th</sup> - Progressive Bonsai Tour and Food at Paul T 's, Oscar G 's, and Ryan O 's.



Marianne (Peg) H and Marty K at the **LSBF BONSAI CONVENTION** in Fort Worth in 2010.  
Prune on Peg, Prune on.



**BONSAI  
OF  
THE  
MONTH  
“TEXAS  
PERSIMMON”  
IN THE  
LITERATI  
STYLE**



The informal upright style (Moyogi) is considered the most popular shape in all bonsai, especially suited to our native Ashe Juniper.

Our logo, represented by this informal style stands for the informal nature of the San Antonio Bonsai Society, Inc. This popular, interesting style depicts the objectives of the Society—promoting participation and enjoyment of Bonsai. The emblem was adopted as the official logo in September, 1977.

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### THE SAN ANTONIO BONSAI SOCIETY, INC.

[sanantoniobonsai.org](http://sanantoniobonsai.org)

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