

It's Alive!!!!!! Or Is It?

By Joe Day

When you take on the process of repotting a bonsai you accept the fact that instead of giving it more health and opportunity to grow you just killed it. Harsh fact but true. You must repot every bonsai at some time. A neat trick you can try is cut off a small twig that you can loose. Tape it to the pot. With a Juniper or Pine it might stay green for weeks. But when it does start to turn brown and your newly repotted bonsai stays green you know you "at that point of time" have not killed your bonsai. If it is still green

it is growing. This works with any bonsai that you can trim a bit of green at repotting time.

A lot of factors go into successful repotting. One that the books often do not talk about is the age of the bonsai and the condition of the roots. When a bonsai is fully developed with a dense root system it slows down root production. Only the tips of the branches need to grow each year so only the tips of the roots need to grow to support this Spring flush of growth. If you repot and remove a layer of roots all over the root ball you have removed all the root surface that functioned to take up

nutrients. If the tree isn't strong, weather is bad, you allow the soil to become dry the tree will struggle to reestablish new feeder roots tips. Young trees, nursery stock are putting on lots of new growth each year so they are conditioned to grow lots of roots. They are young, strong and use to fighting for life. They tolerate your mistakes.

When working with old developed bonsai treat repotting like operating on an old sick person. Research the species. Set up everything you need. Work out of the wind, cold. Work quick but with extreme care. After care is critical. They are treated much like a new born person or animal.



Greater New Orleans Bonsai Society
PO Box 13212
New Orleans, LA 70185

Trees to Avoid in Our Area

- Cedar - most types
- Larch
- Mugho Pine
- Giant Sequoia
- Red Pine
- Mountain Ash
- White Pine
- Spruce
- Scotch Pine
- Western Hemlock

2015 Dues are due!

Please pay at the meeting or mail your check to the PO Box. Your dues help pay for the hall, the newsletter and allow us to bring in guest bonsai artists.

THE BONSAI WIRE

February 2015

The Newsletter of The Greater New Orleans Bonsai Society
MEETINGS & EVENTS

FROM THE President

There are exciting things planned for 2015. For those of you that missed our January meeting - Arthur Joura put

on a fantastic program and was a wealth of information and different ideas. Brussel Martin will be here in March. Guy Guidry will do a demo in May. Ed Trout will be doing the Ficus Nerifolia workshop in June. Lowell Tilley from the Baton Rouge club will be our guest in October and Dorothy Schmitz puts on a program in December. We are even planning a bonsai "competition" this year.

The board does its best to provide quality programs by some excellent bonsai artists. What we ask of you as members is that you support this by paying your yearly dues (\$30 individual/\$35 family) and if you sign up for a workshop - pay for the workshop!

Once you sign up, you are responsible for promptly paying the fee. We have had more than several instances lately of members signing up, not paying and then dropping out too late for us to offer their spot to another member. The board is looking into the ability to take credit cards to make it easier for everyone.

Please join us at the February meeting for an open potting workshop. Bring a tree and take advantage of free club supplied bonsai soil and wire.

Looking forward to seeing you all

Kathy Barbazon,
GNOBS President

Tuesday, February 10, 2015

Program: Open Potting Workshop 7:00pm

Bonus: Raffle

Bring a tree (and pot) to repot. The club will supply free bonsai soil and wire. For newer members inexperienced in potting, this is a good opportunity to have a more experienced member show you what to do. (Please don't bring anything tropical - it's too early for those). Also it would be wise to bring a couple of different size pots. You never know what you're going to find when you pull a tree out of a pot. For our other members this is a good opportunity to take advantage of some free soil and wire, get some work done and enjoy the company of other members

Friday, March 13, 2015

Program: Brussel Martin Shimpaku Juniper demo 7:00pm

Brussel Martin, owner of Brussel's Bonsai will demo a large Shimpaku juniper. Though most of us know Brussel as the owner of Brussel's Bonsai, he is also a talented bonsai artist who began studying bonsai as a teenager. His former teachers include John Naka and Ben Oki. Don't miss this opportunity to watch him at work on what is generally considered one of the best juniper species for bonsai.

Saturday, March 14, 2015

Program: Brussel Martin Shimpaku workshop 9:00am

Brussel Martin, bonsai artist and owner of Brussel's Bonsai, will conduct a workshop on seven gallon Shimpaku junipers. The workshop is currently full and there is a waiting list. **Anyone in the workshop must pay for the workshop by February 13 or your spot will go to one of the people on the waiting list.** Members not in the workshop are welcome to attend free as silent observers. You will have the opportunity to watch Brussel as he gives advice and helps to style ten trees.

Members are always encouraged to bring any tree to meetings that they wish to discuss or about which they need advice.

Meetings take place on the second Tuesday each month at 7:30pm (pre-meeting activities begin at 7:00pm) at the **Marine Corps League Hall**, 2708 Delaware St., Kenner, LA. For more information, articles and everything bonsai, check us out on our website at www.gnobs.org

Thank You to MELE Printing (985) 893-9522 for donating the printing of this newsletter

facebook.com/NewOrleansBonsai

gnobs.org

SPECIES Spotlight

Ligustrum/Privet

By Harry Harrington Visit Harry's website bonsai4me.com



Ligustrum is a genus of about 50 species of deciduous, semi-evergreen, or evergreen shrubs and trees found in woodland and thickets in Europe, north Africa, the Himalayas, Asia and Australia. They bear opposite, variably shaped, often glossy leaves. In summer they carry panicles of small, unpleasantly scented white flowers followed by small round fruit. Many species of Ligustrum are used for hedging and this can provide an excellent source of material for bonsai. Ligustrum make good material for beginners as they are very forgiving and virtually indestructible.

There are many species of Privet that have good potential for bonsai but it is the following three species that are commonly used; (there are also many varieties of the following species available at nurseries and garden centers which carry differing colored leaves; try to avoid using variegated leaves as these rarely look good when styled as bonsai)

LIGISTRUM OVALIFOLIUM /Oval Leaf Privet

L. ovalifolium is a vigorous, upright, evergreen or semi-evergreen shrub with oval, rich green leaves to 6cm long. White flowers are borne in dense panicles to 10cm in mid-Summer followed by spherical, shiny, black fruit. Originally native to Japan, the Oval Leaf Privet can reach heights of 4metres with a 4metre spread.

LIGISTRUM VULGARE /Common Privet

L. vulgare is a deciduous or semi-evergreen shrub with narrowly oval, dark-green leaves to 6cm long. White flowers are produced in panicles to 5cm long in early and mid-Summer followed by spherical black fruit. In its native Europe, north Africa and Asia, the Common Privet is less vigorous than the Oval Leaf

Privet but can still reach heights of 3metres with a 3metre spread.

LIGISTRUM SINENSE

L. sinense is a vigorous, bushy, tree-like, deciduous or semi-evergreen shrub with arching branches and elliptic-oblong pale green leaves to 7cm. White flowers are profusely borne in panicles to 10cm long in mid-Summer and are followed by black spherical fruit. In its native China, Ligustrum sinense reaches



heights of 4metres with a 4metre spread.



Privet Leaves from left to right; L.vulgare, L.ovalifolium, L.japonicum

BONSAI CULTIVATION NOTES

POSITION Full sun or shade, Privets are very tolerant of both full sun in the Summer and quite deep shade. Privet are fully hardy and only require additional frost protection when temperatures drop below -10°C, however during the winter the colder the temperatures Privet are exposed to, the more leaves they drop; this is a natural reaction and causes no permanent damage even when specimens lose all their leaves in severe cold. The following Spring, new growth very quickly replaces any foliage lost during the Winter. Ligustrum are also sold as indoor bonsai and will also tolerate indoor growing conditions as long as humidity levels remain reasonably high with the use of humidity trays. Ligustrum that are left outside during the Winter must have spent the Autumn

outside in order to acclimatise to the cold. Do not place trees that have been grown inside straight outside in the Winter as they will not have hardened off and it is better to leave them inside until Spring.

FEEDING Feed fortnightly during the growing season, indoor species should only be fed monthly during the Winter whilst in active growth.

REPOTTING Annually in Spring as new buds extend; use a basic soil mix.

PRUNING Trim to shape through the growing season, remove overlarge leaves and shoots with overlong internodes. Hard prune during the late Winter or early Spring before new growth starts. Wiring can be carried out anytime, though Spring-Summer is best.

PROPAGATION Sow seed outside in Autumn or Spring. Take semi-ripe cuttings in Summer or hardwood cuttings in Winter. Air-layerings can be taken in late-Spring.

PESTS AND DISEASES Aphids, leaf spot, scale insects, leaf miners, thrips, wilt.

STYLING Informal upright forms with single or multiple trunks in all sizes.

BONSAI Sites, Facebook and Blogs

- sunshinebonsai.com
- bonsaiempire.com
- bonsaisocietyofdallas.com
- artofbonsai.org
- bonsai-nbf.org
- thekennettcollection.com
- bonsaitrees.com
- facebook.com/blueriver.bonsai
- facebook.com/kennett.bonsai
- facebook.com/deadwood.bonsai
- valavanisbonsaiblog.com
- nebaribonsai.wordpress.com
- brendenstudio.wordpress.com
- shohinblog.com
- reelbonsai.wordpress.com
- bjorvalabonsaistudio.com/blog
- [peteteabonsai.wordpress.com](http://peterteabonsai.wordpress.com)
- facebook.com/dorothy.schmitz.1

February Tips

By Donna Banting

We can feel spring just around the corner, and maybe it is. But chances are there is a lot more cold weather ahead. So the cautious bonsai grower will wait it out, and not pull his trees out from under the benches to work on them.

Isn't February the perfect month for repotting, you may ask. It can be. The perfect time to repot should not be determined by the calendar alone, but by how the trees look. If your deciduous bonsai appears as though it is about to bust out with new foliage – you should repot. If cold weather follows, with temperatures in the twenties and thirties, newly potted bonsai will need more protection than just back under the benches.

Newly potted bonsai can be placed in a shed or garage which is unheated but well protected for cold wind. A grow light or fluorescent lamp can be turned on during daylight hours to assist in continuing that bud growth, and warm up the root system. Aborted buds may result in the death of your newly potted bonsai.

Trees which flower before leaf buds open should be repotted after flowering, unless you can forego the blooms this spring. Really, it is better to cut off the flower buds and repot as leaf buds start to swell.

Evergreen bonsai can be repotted later, the plant I have repotted in late January and early February is the camellia – right after it finishes blooming. The camellia puts on a lot of leaf growth when it completes its flowering, or when you remove flower buds and repot. But repotted camellia requires the same extra care and protection as I recommended above for deciduous trees.

Early pruning of your bonsai is discouraged. Pruned deciduous bonsai are especially susceptible to dieback during the coldest months, and dome dieback can continue through the length of the branch. So just sit tight and wait. I think we'll see spring just after Mardi Gras, and then we'll wonder why we were in such a hurry.

IMPORTANT Dates

March 13 - Brussel Martin Demo

March 14 - Brussel Martin Shimpaku workshop

May 12 - Guy Guidry Boxwood on Rock demo

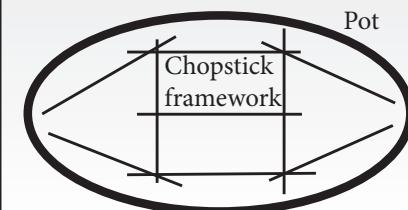
June (Dates to be announced) Ed Trout demo and workshop Nerifiolia 89

August 15 - Annual Auction

Nov 7 - Dorothy Schmitz Demo Nov 8 - Dorothy Schmitz Juniper workshop

Technique to Try

I just bought a bonsai book by Peter Warren and in it he demonstrates how when doing a forest planting, he wires together a flat chopstick framework in the pot and then wires the individual trees to it. I haven't tried it but it seems like a good idea because it would make it easier to arrange and secure the trees.



WORKSHOP News

3 Spots are open for the Ed Trout - Nerifolia 89 workshop with some very impressive material. You can sign up and pay at the meeting.

Garden and bonsai tools are also difficult to clean quickly and efficiently. "Domestic" products such as Coca-Cola can be used to help clean tools. A pair of secateurs left overnight in a jar full of Coca-Cola will be cleaner in the morning, after some wire-brushing. However...standing your tools in a jar full of fizzy-drink for hours isn't particularly efficient...

It was only while I was spraying the alloy wheels on my car that it occurred to me to try using Alloy-Wheel Cleaner. Such cleaning products are sprayed onto alloy car wheels, left for 5mins

I stood my wood-carving bits in a dish of alloy-wheel cleaner. After just 20 minutes, the sap, resin and wood that had collected on the carving bits had come away, dirtying the wheel-cleaner solution. Finally, I stood my spiked carving bits in the cleaner for 20 minutes, rinsed them with a jet of water and they were instantly clean and ready for use.

Such a cheap and easily available product has now got to be a useful addition to the toolkits of all wood-carvers, gardeners and bonsai enthusiasts!