

Ebony cont. from pg 3

green branches. Large woody pieces are harder to root and may rot before rooting. A rooting hormone may increase the rooting success.

TE seed is contained in a pod containing several large brown beans each covered with a waxy, hard coat. This coat must be softened before the seed can sprout. Seed may be planted into bonsai soil, covered and kept moist. The seed will sprout in several weeks to a month. Faster sprouting can be achieved by pouring boiling water over the seed, allowing it to cool overnight and then planting the seed. Alternatively, a pin can be used to penetrate the thick covering. Seed treated in this way will sprout in a week or less.

Often much of the collected seed will not be viable due to an insect larvae that lives in and eats the seeds.

Conclusion

The Texas Ebony is a great indoor material that should be part of every indoor bonsai collection. Obtain as large a trunk as you desire since trunk growth is very slow.

Visit Jerry Meislik's website www.bonsaihunk.us



Greater New Orleans Bonsai Society

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New Orleans, LA 70185

BONSAI Sites and Blogs

- crataegus.com
- walter-pall-bonsai.blogspot.com
- suisekiart.com
- peterteabonsai.wordpress.com
- saruyama-bonsai.blogspot.com
- bonsology.wordpress.com
- yamadori.co.uk
- mozzytheboy.wordpress.com
- indianabonsai.com
- bonsaistudygroup.com

A sign up sheet will be available at the meeting for the HINOKI CYPRESS workshop in October. Beautiful healthy trees at a reasonable price in a workshop done by Guy Guidry. You must pay when you sign up. GNOBS now takes CREDIT/DEBIT cards. One note: If you pay with a card, we will add a 3% surcharge to cover the cost of the service. (ex. \$3 on a \$100 charge)

The new version of the website (though still under some construction) is up gnobs.org

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

Greater New Orleans Bonsai Society Board

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THE BONSAI Wire

July 2015

The Newsletter of The Greater New Orleans Bonsai Society

FROM THE President

I'm very excited about several things this month. First we have our competition for the **Johnny Martinez Award**. As some of you know, we used to do this in conjunction with the City Park Garden Show. We stopped doing the show due to a shortage of muscled volunteers (there was a lot of heavy lifting involved). We have not done this in a couple of years and it's great to bring it back!

Next big news - **the website is back**. As I write this, I literally just finished building the site a few minutes ago. There are still some pages to do and complete, but all the necessary info is up. There is a complete calendar - but also a listing of the next three events at the bottom of the home page. I have a call out on the home page for pictures of members trees for a gallery. Email me pics of your trees (and also any pics you have from meetings) at kbarbazon@me.com

It goes without saying, that I'm juiced about the **Auction** - our biggest source of club income - and now we can take **Credit/Debit cards** with Square for your convenience. We will need to charge a 3% service fee to cover our costs for the transactions, but that's only \$3 for every \$100 well worth it for the convenience. Hope to see you all at the July meeting.

Kathy Barbazon
GNOBS
President



MEETINGS & Events

Tuesday, July 14, 2015

Program: Member competition Johnny Martinez Award 7:00pm

Program: Suiseki by Jim Osborne

*All members are asked to bring in their best trees (limit 2) for a friendly competition. All members present will get 3 votes for their favorite trees. The 3 trees with the most votes will be displayed at the Auction. Auction attendees will vote for their favorite tree from the 3 for the Johnny Martinez award. We ask that you not bring in a tree from a workshop done in the past year. **If you have not signed up, please let Gerald Nolan know if you are bringing trees.** As the other part of our program, Jim will do a presentation on Suiseki: the collection, preparation and appreciation of stones that suggest a natural scene.*

Saturday, August 15, 2015

Annual GNOBS Auction

Now is the time to go through that overcrowded bench and decide which of your trees should go to the auction for a new home. All donations contribute to the operating budget of the club and we hope to bring you even better programs next year. Besides, you'll need the space for the fabulous new bonsai that you just can't live without and bring home from the auction.

Auction Setup and Donations Accepted – 12 Noon - 4:00pm

Viewing – 4:00pm - 6:00pm Auction – 6:00pm - 9:00pm

The success of the GNOBS Auction can be attributed to the generous donations of its members and local businesses. If you have any bonsai material from pre-bonsai stock to well styled trees or anything bonsai related, contact any of the GNOBS board members to make arrangements for your donation. GNOBS members will be available from 12 noon through the start of the auction to accept donations at the Marine Corp League Hall. Thank you for anything you can donate!

Tuesday, September 8, 2015

Program: Open Workshop 7:00pm

This is your chance to bring in and work on one of your trees and get the help and collaboration of other members. Sometimes a second opinion can help you take your tree from good to great. It's also a good time for newer members to get the help of more experienced members. Club wire will be available for use.

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

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[facebook.com/NewOrleansBonsai](https://www.facebook.com/NewOrleansBonsai)

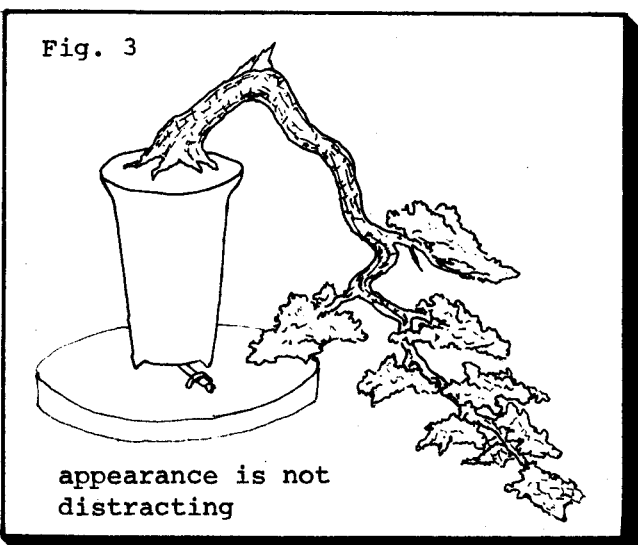
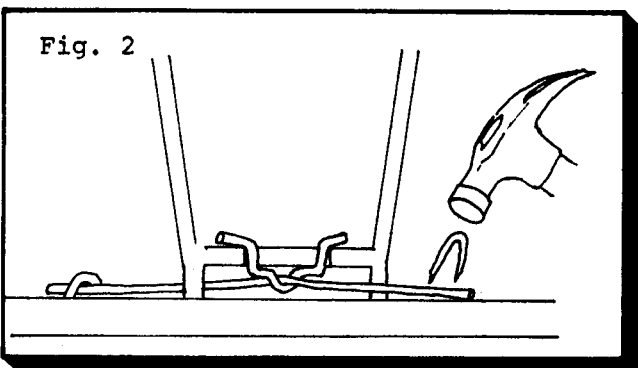
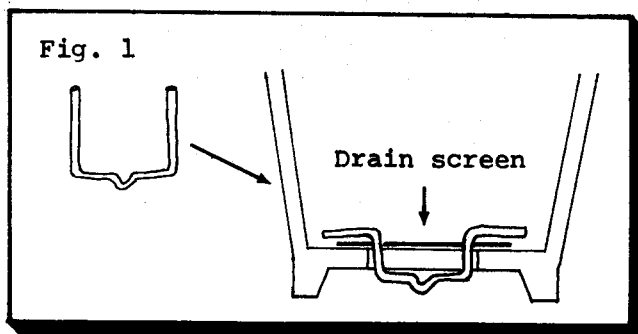
gnobs.org

TIPS & Tricks

Securing Cascade Pots

by Jake Watson

For cascade style or slanting style trees which may have a tendency to topple, here's an effective and unobtrusive way to secure their containers to the bench. Bend a piece of heavy (8 or 10 gauge) copper wire as in Fig. 1, insert it through the drainage hole and screen, and bend as shown. A second length of heavy wire is passed through the loop and secured to the bench with staples or nails, as in Fig. 2. The container and tree will be made perfectly secure without distracting tie-downs.



Cascade Styling Tip

by Dorothy Young

Cascade style bonsai—beautiful, dramatic, and difficult for even experienced bonsai growers to design well, especially the lower terminal. The thing to remember, says Dorothy, is that a cascade follows the same rules of branch placement as any other style; the problem is mainly one of perspective and can be resolved by tilting the tree so the lower terminal points upward. Branches are then chosen as if the tree were an informal upright. After selection, pruning, and primary branch wiring, the tree is returned to its cascade position—its basic form now established and given its finishing touches.



SPECIES Spotlight

Texas Ebony by Jerry Meislik

Editor's Note: Though Jerry refers to Texas Ebony as indoor bonsai (he lives in Montana), Texas Ebony can be grown outdoors in our area for most of the year if protected from freezes

Texas Ebony, TE, is an excellent indoor bonsai material that forms a graceful, airy and attractive tree. It is also extremely tolerant of growing conditions in the home.

Pithecellobium flexicaule is the old scientific name for the Texas Ebony but it has been re-classified as *Ebenopsis ebano* in the Fabaceae or Legume family. Fortunately we can still call it by its common name, Texas Ebony.

Where is it found in nature?

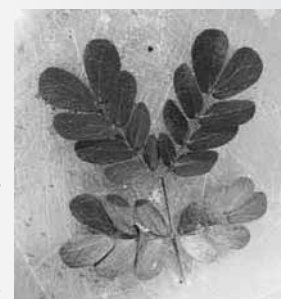
The tree can form a 25-30 foot tall tree with a four feet trunk diameter! The size this tree attains in the ground is in sharp contrast to the small specimens that we find grown for indoor bonsai. In nature it is also forms multi-stemmed shrub-like plants.

The TE is native to Texas and Mexico. It is found in areas that get extremely dry and hot and so it has evolved strategies to deal with these stresses. Its survival strategy is to go dormant and lose all its leaves during dry spells. Still, it is also able to grow in areas with significantly more moisture.

The wood is said to be useful for furniture and the seeds used as a coffee substitute.

Anatomy Leaf

The compound leaves of the TE are composed of many small leaflets. The whole leaf is about two inches long, with the individual leaflets being much smaller. The leaves are not the smallest compound leaf of any indoor bonsai material. The Divi Divi, *Caesalpinia coriaria*, another legume used for bonsai has a finer, smaller compound leaf. Still, the leaves of TE are small enough that even tiny bonsai can be created.



Compound leaf is two inches long.

Flowers

The tree is reluctant to bloom indoors except under very high light situations. The flower is a typical legume flower of white to yellow.

Twigs

Growth on the branches is always zig-zag.

Bark

The bark is grey-brown in color with some fissures and roughness on the older trunk areas.

Roots

The TE often has multiple layers of roots. The best layer of roots can be retained to form a nice radial root pattern and the others removed. Elevated or air roots can be removed if a better lower root line exists.

There has been discussion on the internet bonsai interest groups about a prominent, one sided, or tap root that seems to be present on many TE trees. Carl Rosner handled his tree's tap root by drilling holes around the trunk below the soil level, treating with hormone powder and then wrapping with sphagnum moss. At the next potting new roots had formed and the tap root was shortened below the new root line.

Wood

The wood of the Texas Ebony is quite hard and resistant. It can be used for jin or deadwood designs. If the deadwood is kept dry and lime sulfured it will last for years.

Branches over 1/2 inch thick will not bend. It is easier to wire or bend branches while they are still green.

Growing the tree indoors Soil

The TE may be grown in almost any soil. A mix of screened particles containing 50% inorganic and 50% organics is a good starting mix. If you tend to over-water trees then use a nearly inorganic mix such as red lava, chicken grit, decomposed granite, akadama, or even properly sized gravel. Make sure to screen out all fine particles that fall through a window screen and only use the material that stays on top of the screen.

Water

In nature this plant tolerates soil dryness but it is intolerant of constantly wet feet. Great care must be taken after repotting and root pruning since injured roots can rot if kept constantly wet. If the tree is allowed to go bone dry, it will lose all its leaves and then replace them when conditions improve. Losing leaves stresses the tree, so water the soil as with all bonsai, allow it to get nearly dry before watering it again.

Temperature

In nature TE will tolerate temperatures to the low teens. As a bonsai Texas Ebony tolerates normal room temperatures, but if it is kept in a container do not let it freeze. A mild frost will not damage the tree but it will lose its leaves and go into a period of dormancy. If the tree is kept at normal room temperatures, and watered properly it will not leaf drop and stays evergreen.



Branch showing typical zig-zag growth.

Humidity

In the home TE tolerates humid or dry air.

Light

The Texas Ebony grows best in bright light or even full sun. It can be maintained in low or indirect window light but the growth of the tree under those conditions is extremely slow. Supplementation of window light with a fluorescent bulb placed at 4 inches above the leaves or a spotlight directing light onto the tree will be of great help in getting more growth.

As with many legumes the leaves fold up at night, or with transplanting.

Fertilizer

The tree is happy with any fertilizer. A good plan is to fertilize each week when the tree is in active growth. Use a fertilizer solution at half the recommended strength and fertilize only after watering the tree. As a legume the tree has the ability, assisted by soil bacteria, to extract

nitrogen from the air and use it for growth.

Pests

There are usually no insects that plague Texas Ebony but occasionally trees can be attacked by scale. Dormant or horticultural oil can be used at 1 tablespoon per gallon of water. Make sure to spray all the leaves and branches on both the upper and lower surfaces each week for four weeks. This should eliminate the scale.

Repotting

Indoors, the tree grows quite slowly so repotting will only be needed every two to three years.

Special Bonsai Care

Large reduction cuts made on the branches and trunk will sprout new growth from latent buds. Reductions or "hacking back" a larger tree to a much shorter tree may be a problem in that the new growth may not break back near the cut. TE often sprouts much lower than the reduction cut; so leave a length of trunk 50% longer than you think the eventual trunk might need to be. Over time, reduce the extra length back to the desired lower apex after the tree sprouts back.

Texas Ebony's only drawback is the wicked spines hidden in the foliage. The spines are a major nuisance when bending or wiring branches. Use gloves or better yet cut all the spines off with bonsai cutters or nail clippers.

Under indoor conditions the trunk thickens very slowly, so buy or collect as large a trunk as you desire. Unless you are a teenager you will likely not live long enough to grow a seed to a large bonsai indoors.

Wiring

Due to its zig-zag growth, wiring is not necessary and the tree can be shaped with clip-and-grow techniques. Wire should be applied while the branches are green or just turning woody. Older and heavier branches are quite stiff and difficult to wire.

Styling

The TE can be used for styles that are light, airy and graceful. Styles needing thick, powerful trunks are much harder to accomplish.

Group plantings work very well utilizing the graceful and slender trunks.



TE tree 10 inches tall, trained 3 years.

Propagation

TE is easy to grow from cuttings. Use cuttings of slightly woody, hardened-off