

THE BONSAI Wire

August 2019

The Newsletter of The Greater New Orleans Bonsai Society

FROM THE President



I hope that everyone found the July program educational. We had a number of trees that

were exhibited. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Robert Reed and Jim Osborne for agreeing to provide our members with a critique of each tree. I hope that the ideas they shared from their years of experience were beneficial. I would hope that more and more members will participate in this exhibit each year.

The idea is to bring your best tree and offer it up to the individuals giving the critiques. Their objective is not to judge or evaluate the trees' merits, but simply to provide feedback about design, style, aesthetics, pot selection and overall display. Our goal is to provide a forum for sharing ideas and suggestions on improving the quality of each tree in the hopes that all members present will benefit from the ideas shared. Hopefully, it is a time of inspiration.

So thank you to all those who brought a tree to share. I hope that our experts were able to provide thoughtful ideas that will prove helpful to each of you as you continue to develop your creations in the future.

President cont.
pg 9



MEETINGS & Events

Saturday, August 17, 2019 Annual GNOBS Auction

Get your donations ready! Now is the time to go through that overcrowded bench and decide which of your trees should be donated to the auction for a new home. You'll need the space for the fabulous new bonsai that you just can't live without and bring home from the auction. **The auction is the largest source of income for the club and the reason we can bring in well known bonsai masters for demos and workshops.**

Auction Setup and Donations Accepted – 12 Noon – 4:00pm
Viewing of trees and other auction items – 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!

The club accepts bonsai, pre-bonsai, nursery stock and rooted cuttings (for the bargain table), bonsai pots, books and tools and anything else bonsai related. Huge selection of bonsai, starter material and pots for every budget from the novice to dedicated enthusiast. FREE and open to the public. We hope to see you all at the auction to donate, snap up some great bargains and have a great time!

Tuesday, September 10, 2019

Intermediate Study Group 6:00pm-7:15pm

Program: Joe Day Presentation 7:30pm

Joe Day, a well known and well respected bonsai artist based in Alabama, will do a presentation on maintaining and managing your bonsai collection. Those club members that have known Joe for many years will tell you that he is a wealth of information on all things

Meetings cont. pg 9

Meetings take place 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

facebook.com/NewOrleansBonsai gnobs.org

SPECIES Spotlight

Bald Cypress as Bonsai (Part 6) *(Developing Cypress Bonsai from Nursery Stock: Growth for Refinement Stage)*

by Randy Bennett

The following is the sixth in a series of articles on bald cypress as bonsai

The last two installments of this article dealt with the 'Growth for Size' and the 'Growth for Design' stages of development. Now that we designed the structural pieces of our flat-top cypress, it is time to begin the process of refining the growth. Depending on whether or not you start with a nursery cypress that is already the size you want or spend the additional couple of years growing it to the diameter desired, it will have taken 3 to 5 years to get to this point.

Growth for Refinement Stage

Branch Development and Selection

Once you have grown the structural pieces for your design; the primary branches and perhaps some of the secondary branches, it is time to begin a more methodical approach to shoot selection in building the crown of the tree.

Pruning to Increase Ramification

Once you have developed and positioned the primary and secondary branch structure, during the third year of training, it is time to begin developing the tertiary branch structure and fine twigging. As new shoots sprout from the branch structure in early spring, they are a pale, reddish-pink color, with the very tip



*Vigorous shoot – note the opposing pairs of leaves
Also note tiny the modified 'leaflets' between pairs of leaf*



Weak shoot – note the alternating leaf pattern along the shoot

leaves, as you can see in the photo in the previous column. You will typically see opposing pairs of leaves along shoots that are vigorous. On shoots with less strength, the leaves will tend to form in an alternating pattern along the length of the shoot.

The photo to the right was taken February 15, 2019. Pruning shoots from the previous year took place in late January, before buds began to swell.

All of the branches were wired at that time. This photo depicts several things: First, you will note that some of the branches



Some branches left long to increase in size – note all the dormant buds sprouting

of the shoots being light green. For the purpose of this discussion, I am referring to the color of bald cypress shoots and not pond cypress, which have a slightly different color. These shoots will begin elongating and will form leaves along the shoot as it grows. They will also form tiny, modified leaflets before leaves sprout on new shoots, as well as between

have been left long. This is to encourage more growth to achieve thickening of those particular branches. The purpose is to gain proper proportion. Secondary branches closest to the trunk should be the thickest and decrease in girth as you move farther out on the primary branch. The same holds for tertiary branches in relation to secondary branches. Second, you will note the number of adventitious buds that are popping from last year's growth and on the two year old growth. And, although a little out of focus, you can see dormant buds are even popping on the trunk of the tree.

The photo below shows the same tree a few weeks later, as the first flush of growth has begun to elongate. Do not pinch or prune growth like you see in the photo. Let it grow. Let it elongate. Let multiple sets of leaves form and turn a darker green. This is one indication that the new leaves are actively conducting photosynthesis and have, therefore, hardened-off.



Elongating immature growth – do not pinch during this phase of growth

It is only after the new leaves have hardened-off that the new shoots begin developing the vascular structures that carry starches, created by photosynthesis, back to the tree. Pruning them too soon retards and in some cases, stops the return vascular structures from forming. This results in twig die-back over the winter.

When leaves harden-off and are actively producing starches for the tree, the young shoots will begin to change color from a pale pinkish color to a darker reddish color.

The photograph following was taken on April 15, 2019. The branches that are wired are secondary and tertiary branches that grew in 2018. Back-budding is so incredibly profuse on bald cypress that I do not recommend wiring after buds have begun to swell. You are apt to get buds just where you need them and wiring branches after buds begin to swell

Once this has occurred, the new shoots will begin forming the vascular structures that will, not only carry water and nutrients to the leaves, but also and most importantly, to carry sugars and starches from the leaves back downward toward the roots. Prior to hardening-off, shoots and leaves are only drawing water and nutrients from the tree.



ensures that you will accidentally remove a great number. It is better to wire before movement begins. In this way, you can pick the ones needed and remove the unwanted ones after they have leafed out. You will also be able to adjust some of the pruning back you completed in January, once you see where shoots are going to pop.

You always prune with the plan that two shoots will emerge from one, but that is not always the case. You will notice that only one elongating shoot emerged from the wired branch near the top left corner of the photo above. That shoot was allowed to grow to a length of about 8 inches and had multiple sets of leaves that had fully opened up. Near the end of March, the shoot was cut back to the first pair of alternating leaves. And as you can see, two shoots from the second flush of growth have emerged from the base of those two leaves. The vigorous shoot from the first flush of growth however, is too long and it was hoped that buds would pop further back from the first cut, so that the shoot could be further reduced in length, but such was not the case. We will see what growth occurs in the remainder of the growing season. However, if no more back-budding occurs, early next February, the shoot will be cut back to about 1/2 inch in length, sacrificing the second flush of growth to get better ramification and shorter intermodal spacing between sets of branches.

If you look closely at the photo, the shoot in question has no leaves before the second growth shoots and almost no modified leaf structures along the length of the shoot. However, you can see that there are two to three modified leaf structures (and therefore, adventitious buds) at the very base of the first flush of growth. It is to that point that the shoot will be cut back, if no other shoots form.

You can clearly see that the very tips of the second flush of growth are a pale green which quickly turn to a pale pinkish color. At this point, even though new leaflets have formed, the adventitious buds have not. Pruning back young shoots too

soon does not allow the adventitious buds to form and also results in shoot dieback over the winter. Remember... you must allow enough time for the vascular structures to develop within the shoots.

Most of what you read recommends allowing 6 to 8 pairs of leaves to develop on deciduous material before pruning back to the first set of leaves. However, the number of leaves is not the best guide for when to prune. Simply because 6 to 8 pairs of leaves have developed does not guarantee that the vascular structures have developed in those shoots. Time is the better guarantor.

In bald cypress, you can best gauge whether or not a shoot has developed its vascular structures by the color of the stem. When the color of the shoots from the first flush of growth has darkened from a pale pinkish color to more of a rust color, it is safe to prune back the shoot. One word of caution; the sun



The photo above clearly shows how the shoot color changes when complete vascular structures have developed.

can affect the color of young shoots on bald cypress, so look at the color both on top of and beneath the shoots to gain a clear indication.

July 10, 2019 – In the photo above you can clearly see the color changes that take place over time. This is a shoot that was being allowed to grow long in order to thicken a tertiary branch. The dark brown portion of the shoot at my fingertip is the first flush of growth from this spring. The middle section of the shoot is from the second flush of growth after pruning back the first flush of growth. The middle section was cut back toward the end of May. Notice that pruning back the second flush of growth has prompted the development of new shoots on the first flush of growth. The pale pinkish colored shoot near my wrist is the third flush of growth this season. The color of new shoots on pond cypress is a little different. But you can still plainly see the darkening color changes taking place as the formation of the vascular structures

becomes fully developed.

If you look closely at the photo below, you will see the modified leaf structures which form along the base of the shoots before the actual leaves begin to emerge. These “modified leaves” also form adventitious buds at their base. If you look closely at the second, shorter shoot on the right, you can clearly see new buds beginning to swell at the base of a pair of modified leaves after the first set of new-growth-shoots was cut back.



Bud Pinching and Leaf Reduction

Once you have developed structural branches with secondary and tertiary growth, it will be time to begin developing fine twigging and reducing the size of the leaves on your bald cypress. Reducing the size of leaves is done by pinching new growth. Pinching new growth on bald cypress will accomplish a couple of things: First, you will reduce leaf size. By pinching the tips of new leaves as they are beginning to elongate, you stop their growth. This task must be performed daily. Second, you will encourage back-budding. By pinching back new growth, and thereby eliminating the auxins at the growing tips, dormant buds and weaker growth are stimulated into action, to take over the growth task for that particular shoot or branch.

Auxins are essentially growth hormones that exist in trees. They act like suction-cups, drawing water and nutrients to the areas of concentration. They tend to be concentrated in areas that will help the tree achieve its’ goal of survival; namely the apex (to help the tree grow as tall as it can grow) and the tips of branches (to help growth spread out wide to attain sunlight for photosynthesis). However, auxins exist throughout the tree – just not in as great a concentration as the apex and outermost shoots. And when you eliminate them in one area of the tree, auxins in other areas begin to pick up the slack.



The photo above shows what new leaves should look like when it is time to pinch out the tips. Note that the leaves have begun to unfold but there is still a cluster of leaflets at the tip that have not unfolded. It is this cluster that you should remove.



Simply pinch the bundle of leaflets between your thumb and forefinger and pull.



The job of pinching a large bald cypress can be daunting and one that will take a lot of time. My recommendation is simply to get a sleeping bag and camp out next to it for the weeks that new leaves sprout. But if you take the task seriously, you will quickly begin to ramify branches and get increased twigging. AND you will begin reducing leaf size throughout the tree.

Look at the photo below. The leaf on the left is from a bald cypress that is still in the “Growth for Size Stage.” And if you look at that leaf tip, you can see that it is still elongating and would have grown even longer. The leaf on the right is from a bald cypress that is in the “Growth for Refinement Stage”. Bud-pinching has been carried out for two growing seasons on the bonsai from which it came. And all the leaves on that bonsai are about the same size as the leaf pictured.



In the last three installments of “Bald Cypress as Bonsai” I have tried to provide a sequence for developing a flat-top cypress from raw nursery stock to a “finished” tree. In the next installment (Part 7), we will talk about collecting large, stump-cut bald cypress from the swamp.

Louisiana Day of Bonsai

If you missed the Louisiana Day of Bonsai in Baton Rouge this year, you missed a great time. Brussel Martin was the guest artist and he conducted two lecture/demos, creating a trident maple forest planting and styling a shimpaku juniper. Both were raffled off at the end of the day.

Brussel had a great tip to use when trying to place the trees into groups and get them to stand up while trying to position them. He used loops of wire to create 'halos' around clusters of trees to get them to stay put and not fall over while positioning them.

In addition, there were a number of vendors selling pre-bonsai, finished bonsai, pots, tools, display stands and soil. I was excited to see that Bill Butler of Bill's Bayou Bonsai has started carving stone planting slabs in addition to his bonsai soils! Rick Berrigan of A Little Piece of Heaven Bonsai was there selling all manner of pre-bonsai species and finished bonsai, along with Evan Pardue from Underhill Bonsai and Nursery who had bonsai trees, display stands, tools, etc. Also in attendance was Byron Myrick of Myrick Bonsai Pottery, selling his fabulous handmade bonsai pots.

Lunch was provided. But I must confess, I spent an inordinate amount of time at the desert table.

Charles Canfield presented a lecture/demo on native Louisiana maples that was quite informative. He was followed by Brussel martin who conducted a workshop for some of the attendees.

There was an exhibit of fabulous bonsai created by artists from all over the state of Louisiana. Below are a few examples.



Water Elm



Juniper



Boxwood



Japanese Black Pine



Texas Ebony



Water Jasmine



These are just a few of the fabulous bonsai that were on display.

The Greater new Orleans Bonsai society would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to Lowell Tiley and the Louisiana Bonsai Society of Baton Rouge for hosting the event. I know I speak for everyone at the GNOBS that we all had a great time.

Next year's Louisiana Day of Bonsai will be hosted by the Greater new Orleans Bonsai Society. We look forward to organizing this annual event and are already planning the programs.



The Greater New Orleans Bonsai Society

Annual

Bonsai Auction

(Free and Open to the Public)

August 17, 2019

Viewing of trees prior to auction: 4:00pm – 6:00pm

Auction 6:00pm – 9:00pm



Marine Corps League Hall
2708 Delaware St, Kenner LA 70062
(near Williams Blvd & Veterans Blvd)

- Quality, developed bonsai
- Featured bonsai designed by nationally known bonsai masters (Dave De Groot, Brussel Martin, Pedro Morales)
- Starter material
- Pots and supplies
- Bonsai for every budget from the novice to the dedicated enthusiast
- Bargain table

Light Refreshments

Join us for great bonsai and a great time! gnobs.org [facebook.com/NewOrleansBonsai](https://www.facebook.com/NewOrleansBonsai)

President cont. from pg 1

The three trees that received the most votes in the July program will be displayed at next months' Annual August Auction for all guests and members to vote on. The tree receiving the most votes will receive the "Johnny Martinez Award", awarded each year to a member for excellence in bonsai design.

Study Group

For those of you who may not be aware, the GNOBS provides a Study Group before each meeting, from 6:00 to 7:15. The idea is to provide members with additional educational opportunities on specific species and various topics related to bonsai. The Study Group is hosted by Dawn Koetting and Dennis Burke, two of the clubs' more gifted and knowledgeable members. They share their expertise and talent each month on a wide range of topics.

In May, Dennis talked about satsuki azaleas and demonstrated how to propagate them from cuttings. Dawn brought several Japanese black pines in June and demonstrated how to candle-prune, while discussing how black pine grow and the theories behind the techniques she shared. Dennis filled up the back of his pickup with Chinese elms in July and shared the technique of propagating Chinese elm from root cuttings. In addition, he demonstrated the removal of air layers he had started in April and discussed the various techniques for starting air-layers and ground-layers.

There will be no Study Group in August, due to the Auction, but I encourage you to take part in the Study Group when they resume in September. It is an opportunity to expand your knowledge, get answers to questions and take part in discussions on all things bonsai.

Annual August Auction

The event that everyone looks forward to each year is upon us! The Annual August Auction is the only fund-raising event the GNOBS sponsors each year. The proceeds are used to bring in program presenters and guest bonsai masters from around the country to share new techniques, provide educational programs, artistry and horticultural tips to help our members to be more successful in growing bonsai.

So bring that tree that you have been struggling with, you know... the one you no longer know what to do with. Donate your rooted cuttings, raw stock, collected pieces, pots, tools, supplies, soil, books and magazines you no longer read! Last year we had over 200 items up for bid and many more in the Silent Auction and on the Bargain Tables!

You can begin dropping off your donations at noon on Saturday, August 17th. Viewing of the items will begin at 4:00 and the auction will start at 6:00. Refreshments will be provided. I look forward to seeing you there!

Tips for the Month of August

1. IT'S HOT!!!! So check your trees regularly. Several of mine have been regularly showing signs of stress; wilting leaves on new growth, burning of leaf tips, etc. When you notice things like that, it is time to move the tree to a location with more shade.
2. Hopefully, you can check on your trees twice a day; early in the morning before going to work and late in the evening.

- Give your trees a good soaking early in the morning and mist the foliage about 6:30 or 7:00 in the evening. Don't wait any later. You want to make sure that the leaves have time to dry before sundown. This will ensure that you do not promote any fungus developing by having wet foliage for extended periods. Smaller trees may require watering twice a day.
3. Check for insects that may be damaging foliage and maintain a regular schedule of insecticide application.
4. With the exception of tropicals, you should not be applying fertilizers again until September.
5. Just because most of your trees are going through a period of summer dormancy does not mean that they are not still growing, so continue to check all wire and make sure it is not cutting into your branches.

Randy Bennett
GNOBS President

meetings cont. from pg 1

bonsai. As your collection grows, it can become difficult to keep up. Joe is sure to have many valuable tips and organizational ideas.

Tuesday, October 8, 2019

Intermediate Study Group 6:00pm-7:15pm

Program: "Three Ring Circus" Styling 7:30pm

Three members of the club will simultaneously demo three different trees. **Bonus: The three styled trees will be raffled off at the end of the night!**



Greater New Orleans Bonsai Society
PO Box 381 Kenner, LA 70062

Greater New Orleans Bonsai Society Board

President: Randy Bennett 504-402-3646 (cell) 504-888-7994 (home) ourproperty4u@gmail.com	Newsletter/Website Editor Kathy Barbazon 504-470-8134 (cell) 504-737-6747 (home) kbarbazon@me.com
Vice-President: Dennis Burke 504-224-0038 (cell) dpbonsai@yahoo.com	Masters Program Director: Jim Osborne 504-458-6956 (cell) wevoodoo@cox.net
Treasurer: Dawn Koetting 985-859-3400 (cell) dkoetting@msn.com	Hall Manager Cheryl Mechler 504-452-1222 mechler465@att.net
Recording Secretary Peggy Howard 504-715-7228 peggylh@cox.net	Past President: Peggy Howard