

THE BONSAI Wire

June 2024

The Newsletter of The Greater New Orleans Bonsai Society

FROM THE President

It's almost that time of year again for the Johnny Martinez award competition in July. This friendly competition is designed for members to showcase their talent of bonsai development. Each member is encouraged to bring up to two of their trees that have NOT been styled in a workshop within the last year. We want your tree to show your work, not a professional bonsai artists work. Every year we get an interesting variety of trees. If you think your tree isn't ready, suitable or doubtful of its impact you should bring it anyway. Last year Carl brought his little Premna as a second thought and what do you know his Premna won the Johnny Martinez award! You never know what the public will vote on at the Auction. If you can make it past the critical members voting on it in July your tree may be one of the three contestants! Now is the time to clean up your tree and pot for next month! It will be here soon enough. I look forward to seeing what you all will bring in.

Dennis Burke
GNOBS President



MEETINGS & Events

Meeting Location is:
American Legion Hall 1225 Hickory Ave, Harahan, LA 70123

Friday, June 14, 2024

Program: Japanese Black Pine Decandling demo by Dennis Burke 6:15pm

Program: Pedro Morales demo 7:00pm (Demo will be on a very nice Buttonwood acquired at the Florida Convention)

Pedro Morales is an internationally renowned Bonsai Artist based in Puerto Rico with 35 years experience. Though adept at other species, he specializes in all species of tropical bonsai and conducts tropical bonsai schools around the world

Saturday, June 15, 2024

Program: Pedro Morales workshops

Cost of workshops includes use of club wire. Bring your own tools.

Morning Workshop - Sea Hibiscus: 8am - Noon

The Sea Hibiscus were acquired from Underhill and Evan said they are approximately the same size as the one from the May 3 ring circus demo. (approximately 1" caliper trunk, 12-18" tall) **Cost of workshop (which includes tree) is \$95**

Afternoon Workshop - Bring Your Own Tree: 1pm - 4pm

Bring your own tree. Pedro is well versed in all manner of trees - but his specialty is tropicals and this is a great time to work on them. Cost of workshop is \$55

All members are free to attend the workshops as silent observers!!!

Saturday, June 22, 2024

Advanced Study Group with Dawn Koetting - 9am-5pm at Dawn's House in Thibodaux.

Contact Dawn for info and any available spots. dkoetting@msn.com

Meetings cont. pg 6

SPECIES Spotlight

Water Jasmine - *Wrightia religiosa*

by Jerry Meislik bonsaihunk.us



On a visit to Malaysia in 1989 we observed many and varied tropical materials used for bonsai including ficus, citrus, juniper, and Fukien tea. The Water Jasmine, *Wrightia religiosa*, was the material most often used for bonsai in Malaysia but one with which I had no familiarity. In subsequent travels I have seen

Water Jasmine used as bonsai in Vietnam, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and in other Southeast Asian countries.

The plant is a common hedge material and grows 20 feet tall and up to one and a half feet in diameter. It is widely planted because of its medicinal qualities. *Wrightia* bonsai may be seen from mini-size to giant five footers. The plant has attractive two inch leaves that dwarf well. Additionally, the *Wrightia* is twiggy and exhibits good bonsai character. It has a smooth gray bark with old specimens occasionally displaying a fluted lower trunk. *Wrightias* have prominent almost succulent roots which may be used to great advantage in many exposed root bonsai styles.

Propagation is easy since *Wrightias* sprout readily from seed contained inside a green bean-like pod. It is also easily grown from both branch and root cuttings. Most of the small sized bonsai are derived from root cuttings.

As its common name suggests, *Wrightias* tolerate moisture, and prefer as much direct sun as possible. Despite the name keeping the trees normally moist is better than sopping wet.

Several forms of the *Wrightia* are in cultivation. The typical plant has a cluster of small drooping single white flowers and there is a less common double flowered form. Interestingly, the double flowered plant does not set seed, so it must be propagated from cuttings. There is also a miniature leaf *Wrightia* that is less commonly seen, as well as a medium sized leaf form. Both of the smaller leaf varieties are less vigorous and more difficult to grow.

A small leaved Wrightia variety with a full sized Wrightia leaf at the base of its trunk.



Growing the *Wrightias* in Southeast Asian heat demands that small trees be watered frequently. Often small potted trees are placed into a larger sand filled container to help keep roots cool and moist. Since *Wrightias* grow quickly repotting should be done at least every two years.

I have grown several *Wrightia* trees indoors under lights and have found them to be undemanding to grow. *Wrightias* like temperatures constantly above 65F. Cooler temperatures are not well tolerated. They also like more light than some indoor bosai such as Ficus or Schefflera. More work needs to be done to determine whether *Wrightias* are useful for windowsill growing. *Wrightias* should definitely be used in all tropical and semi-tropical areas.

In the tropics *Wrightias* are defoliated several times a year to produce

smaller leaves and to increase twigging. Several weeks to one month before a show plants are defoliated, forcing the plant to re-leaf and to be in complete flower for the display. Flowers develop after the 3rd new leaf forms. The blooming period then lasts about two weeks. The flowers are white, pendulous, and fill a room with a very lovely fragrance. Long, green bean-like seed pods follow flowering if insects pollinate the flowers.

Seed pods ripen, turn black, and crack open to release the small fuzzy capped seeds. New plants are easily grown from the fresh ripe seed. Flowering starts in two years from seed, and cutting grown material.

Insects do not bother *Wrightias* to any significant extent and insect infestation is cured with the usual treatments. *Wrightias* are not particularly sensitive or damaged by any of the usual insecticide sprays, but Sevin insecticide causes leaf drop.

Wrightia appreciate a regular fertilizer regimen, and are not fussy as to fertilizer type. Of course, as with all potted trees never fertilize a dry plant.

Wrightias tolerate high heat and humidity but low humidity levels are also not a problem. We are not sure how much cold it takes to severely injure them, but I would suggest keeping temperatures above 65 Fahrenheit.

In Southeast Asia bonsai designs can include virtually every type of design but lots of exposed roots, and formal tiered canopies of leaves seem quite popular. Branch arrangements follow classical bonsai design. *Wrightias* are formed into upright, hollow trunk, forest, rock planted and every other conceivable style. The natural growth pattern of *Wrightias* is to produce many basal shoots so sprout, raft, and clump styles are quite logical and easily designed.

In conclusion, *Wrightias* are delightful plants with good bonsai character. Everyone with an interest in tropical plants should give them a try. Jim Smith of Vero Beach has *Wrightia* trees for sale and he may be contacted at james@gate.net.



Wrightia religiosa 21 inches tall.



Louisiana Bonsai Society hosts



Louisiana Day of Bonsai

July 27, 2024. 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Grace Life Fellowship Church
10210 Baringer-Foreman Road
Baton Rouge, LA 70809

Guest artist: Pedro Morales
Tropical demonstration by Pedro
in the morning



Scan for registration information

Workshops in the afternoon.

Pedro Morales: Bring Your Own Tropical
Evan Pardue: material to be provided

This is our state meeting that rotates among clubs. Please mark your calendar and we hope you can attend. More details to follow soon. Questions? Please contact Marla Thompson - marlajthompson450@gmail.com or 225-503-7397

Bring a tree(s) for the exhibit, People's Choice award, Vaughn Banting Award, Vendors, Lunch, Silent Auction
Demonstration tree will be raffled

BONSAI Techniques

Kokufu 101: shohin

by JONAS DUPUICH bonsaitonight.com

Today I'd like to share a single tip for styling shohin bonsai – focus on branch density. As you look at photos of shohin displayed at 2020's Kokufu exhibit, you'll notice that all of the trees are full.

There's a good reason for this. Because the trees are displayed in groups, it makes sense to present trees with similar visual weight to create balanced compositions.

When all of the trees in a shohin display are full, it's easier for us to focus on the character and movement of each tree.

Here, for example, are two shohin black pines with subtle movement.

Black pine that points to the right

Black pine pointing to the left

When each tree points clearly to the left or the right, artists can create engaging displays

that keep the viewer's gaze within the display. Black pines typically sit in the top spot in box displays so their movement is usually subtle (see "Anatomy of a shohin display" at bonsaitonight.com for more about shohin display).



Within the box, the movement can range from a lot to a little. The kinzu below points clearly to the left.

Kinzu

The premna below also points to the left, but the movement is so subtle that the tree could be used on either side of a display.

Premna

We expect more side to side movement from junipers.



Shimpaku

Deciduous shohin typically have less pronounced movement.



Trident maple that points to the right

Trident maple pointing to the left

White pines are most commonly used on top of box stands or on cascade stands to the side of the box. The specimen below sat atop a four-tree box stand.



White pine pointing to the right

The cascade white pine below was positioned on the left side of the display.



Semi-cascade white pine



The Greater New Orleans Bonsai Society

ANNUAL

Bonsai Auction & Plant Sale

(FREE and Open to the Public)

August 10, 2024

Viewing of trees and plant sale begins at 4:00pm
Auction 6:00pm – 9:00pm

VFW Hall
1133 Hickory Ave
Harahan, LA 70123



- Quality, developed bonsai
- Featured bonsai designed by nationally known bonsai masters
- Starter material
- Pots and supplies
- Bonsai for every budget from the novice to the dedicated enthusiast
- Bargain tables

Light Refreshments

Join us for great bonsai and a great time! gnobs.org facebook.com/NewOrleansBonsai

Tuesday, July 9, 2024

Program: Initial Competition for Johnny Martinez

Award 7:00pm

All members (including beginners) are asked to bring in their best trees (limit 2) for a friendly competition. (Note: Only SINGLE trees - NO GROUPS) 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. Our experienced members will provide a constructive critique with suggestions for further development of the trees. (We encourage you to work on your trees now so they will be ready for display in July!)

Saturday, July 27, 2024

Louisiana Day of Bonsai 9:00am - 5:00pm

Grace Life Fellowship Church

10210 Baringer-Foreman Road

Baton Rouge, LA 70809

See the ad in this issue or the page on the GNOBS website for more details. Questions? Please contact Marla Thompson - marlajthompson450@gmail.com or 225-503-7397

Saturday, August 10, 2024

2024 Annual GNOBS Auction & Plant Sale

VFW Hall – 1133 Hickory Ave, Harahan, LA 70123

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. If you are a beginner, make cuttings now for the bargain table or buy an inexpensive garden center plant and gain some practice by styling it for the auction. 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 of trees and plant sale begins at 4:00pm

Auction – 6:00pm – 9:00pm

Monthly study groups

1st Saturday - Randy Bennett

2nd Saturday - Kathy Barbazon

Specialty study groups

As announced - Dawn Koetting, Dennis Burke



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Underhill Bonsai is a full service bonsai nursery focused on horticultural science and the timeless traditions of bonsai. We offer products and services for everybody at every level of interest.

We support you in your bonsai journey.

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