



GREAT SWAMP BONSAI SOCIETY

February, 2008 Newsletter

Next Meeting: 7:00 pm on Tuesday, March 11, 2008

Featuring: Repotting Forest Plantings
Choosing the trees for MABS.

February Meeting Highlights:

As you all know, due to our wonderful weather, there was no February meeting. That accounts for the lack of pictures from February and the usual meeting summary. Therefore, in addition to that which was planned for March, we have what was to be in February added to our March agenda. I hope you all can attend the meeting on the 11th.

March Meeting:

Let's have a good turnout this month. The meeting should be very interesting and informative. Sign up forms for 2007 MidAtlantic Spring Festival will be available.

March's meeting will now feature repotting of forest plantings. Many of us have either not attempted this or may possibly just haven't a clue as to how to proceed. This meeting should give us all some background in forest planting from the standpoint of repotting and of starting one from scratch. We will also be selecting 3 trees to represent GSBS at MABS in April.

News, some distressing and some exciting.

National Bonsai Collection in Financial Peril

From Dave Bogan (NBF Director) we have received the following:

Many of you have probably already heard of the budget cuts in D.C. which will deeply affect the National Arboretum and the National Bonsai collection housed at the Arboretum. I have attached a couple of sites and notes from other concerned members concerning the recent budget cuts. Please pass this on to your membership and if room is available, mention it in your next newsletter.

If you have any additional contacts in the Bonsai community, please pass it on. We need to all get behind this effort. Show your true Bonsai enthusiasm and become a supporter. Of course, support to and through the NBF will help the arboretum and of course the Bonsai collection. A meager \$35.00 donation to the NBF will gladly be appreciated and benefit all of us.

Just to let everyone know that there is a short news video about the Arboretum/Museum budget crisis on the NBF website. You can link to it from the home page or here: http://www.bonsai-nbf.org/site/whats_new.html

Please take a few minutes to watch this important report: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxMHF0jJ3i4>

PLEASE WRITE YOUR REPRESENTATIVES, and:

The Honorable Hebert H. Kohl, Chairman
Senate: Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture
119 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chair
House: Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture
2362A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The administration Budget for FY2009 proposes this funding cut for the arboretum ...it will cripple the whole arboretum and the National Bonsai Federation at it. Ask them to eliminate the downsizing of the budget of the gardens unit.

Presidential Corner:

Hello everyone, Spring is just around the corner (isn't it?)



As I hope you all learned in advance, we had to cancel our February meeting due to impending inclement weather. It was a good call, because a nasty, wet, icy, sloppy storm did indeed set in as the afternoon progressed.

Our March meeting will feature the repotting of Fred's two forest plantings, and newcomers are encouraged to get their hands dirty and learn how it's done. If you have trees to repot, bring them along and we'll help you out. (Indoor, or tropical bonsai should probably wait until warmer weather for repotting, however.)

We will also select the 3 trees to represent our club at the Mid-Atlantic Bonsai Symposium to be held in Upstate NY this April. Bring your tree or a good photo of it, if you wish to have it considered for this honor.

Additional News:

Morris County Park Commission Says "Yes" to Non-native Tree Collecting

I have spoken on several occasions about some of the wonderful non-native species found in North Jersey, that make excellent bonsai, including bush honeysuckle, Amur maple, and wild apple. For about a year I have been in discussion with our local park system about creating a permitting system to sanction wild collection of these species.

The MCPC has made their decision, and we have lift-off! The GSBS has been given the go-ahead to participate in a trial program with MCPC. Here are the details from the Superintendent of Natural Resources Management, Kelli O'Connor:

As we discussed, the collection of plants would have to be done during organized outings to designated areas on specific days. Prior to the collection day, I or another staff person would mark all of the invasive plants in an area that should be removed. The GSBS could then remove all of these invasive plants and be free to take home whatever they would like.

The next step in the process will be for Ms. O'Connor to scout out potential sites for this activity, and then I will meet with her at those locations to select the site(s) that would be most attractive for our purposes. Then we would establish specific collecting dates for THIS SPRING. So, get thinking about making space for a few goodies!

To summarize, it appears that the arrangement will be to set specific dates on which we can gather, to essentially rip out plants tagged by the Park Commission, and take home whatever of these we want. With a dozen volunteers, at the right time of the season, believe me we can rip out quite a lot of trees in a day, and it's very fast work on trees that you know you don't want, so we can really help the Park Commission out, while getting a few great plants apiece in the deal.

I think it's a great leap forward for anyone who wishes to collect wild plants in New Jersey, where practically every acre is either privately owned or part of the park system. I hope you are as enthusiastic as I am, and will do what you can to come out and join us once the dates are established.

Upcoming Events:

March 11th: a. Selecting the 3 trees to represent GSBS at the MABS symposium; please begin preparing your best material to be submitted before our membership. b. Repotting forest plantings. This can be complicated work, and Fred will bring in two of his own bonsai forests, which will require volunteers who want hands-on training in the process of removing, root-pruning, and repotting before our live audience.

April 8th: Guest lecturer Mr. Min Hsuan Lo. This internationally-renown Taiwanese bonsai artist will be presenting a lecture-demonstration later that week at the Mid-Atlantic Bonsai Symposium in upstate New York. Topic for our meeting to be determined; Mr. Lo is well-known for his work with junipers, but this may be a good opportunity to have a critiquing session with your trees

May 15th (Thursday): Guest lecturer Jim Barrett. Perhaps best known for his pottery, Jim is also an outstanding bonsai artist in his own right. Topic to be determined.

First Saturday in June: Annual GSBS Club Open House. This takes place in the big hall upstairs of our regular meeting room, and is open to the public from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm; club members begin setting up at 9:00 am. We will present our annual display of club members' trees, as well as lecture-demonstrations, raffling demo trees, and engaging our visitors with conversation and answering their bonsai questions

July is Club Picnic Time!

Lately this has been hosted at the Michalski home, but let me know if you would like to take a turn. Either way, look for further info as the time approaches.

New Book:

Marty Schmalenberg's North American Bonsai Book has reached press and is spectacular. The cost is \$50 for ABS members, and \$55 to non-ABS members, and is certainly worth the price; proceeds go to the ABS. Several GSBS members have trees in the book. You can contact Marty directly at sputnik1950@hotmail.com.

Other Club Business:

Membership: Pay up if you need to. And, if you've been away for a while, come on back, we miss you! Please keep sending your input for meetings, field trips, and workshop topics.

Park System Collecting Permits (for non-native, invasive species): This is in the works, but nothing is certain as yet. Details to be announced as things develop, but they are developing!

Club Trips:

Brooklyn Botanic Gardens 27th of April, Sunday. Parking and admission is FREE. The curator of BBG's bonsai collection will provide a full back-stage tour of their collection, and we suggest a donation of \$10.00 per person, which will go toward the purchase of a larger-size pot in the club's name to the garden. Please contact GSBS club member Greentree at jslgreen@optonline.net so she can coordinate the details.

MAINE Collecting Trip the last week of June 2008. John M will lead a 4-5 day camping trip to northern Maine and teach you how to locate and collect exquisite, weather-pounded larch and spruce for bonsai. A great opportunity to get to know each other and have tons of laughs, along with a great way to obtain some wonderful trees! Donation of \$100.00 per collector, all proceeds to GSBS; non-collectors (friends and family who attend) are not expected to pay. Attendees handle all their own expenses. Please contact John at huonia@aol.com if interested. We currently have about 4 paying participants, so **the trip is definitely on.**

Bonsai Nurseries – Ringos and New Hope. As Spring approaches we would like to arrange a day trip to Allshapes Bonsai Nursery in Ringos NJ and Rosade Bonsai Studio in New Hope PA, with lunch in New Hope. We would probably select a sunny Sunday in April. Contact John at huonia@aol.com as the season approaches.

Miscellaneous:

Beginner's Workshops are offered FREE OF CHARGE to interested club members. Attendees pay only the cost of materials if applicable. Contact John at huonia@aol.net to make arrangements.

GSBS Club T-shirts are still on the agenda. Please contact John at huonia@aol.com (if you haven't already) and we will get around to this once we have determined the level of interest.



This is a Masakuni seventeen (17) piece premium stainless steel tool set.

Retail value is well over \$1500



Ticket prices

Single ticket.....	\$ 5.00
Five tickets.....	\$ 20.00
Thirty Tickets.....	\$100.00

Drawing to be held April 12, 2008 at the MidAtlantic Spring Festival.
Winner need not be present.

March Plant Care Tips:

Is this a repeat of last year? See-saw temperatures and lots of moisture seems to be the more recent norm. Not too much snow, but I think we can all live with that. (appologies to our skiers) Hope you've got your trees well protected...

Ok, let's see now... March is the time to get serious about re-potting. Any healthy deciduous material should be attended to at the beginning of the month. If there is no sign of bud or root movement, you can hold off for a bit. Keep deciduous trees away from harsh winds and hard frosts to protect them from damage. Of course, if you have a greenhouse, poly-house, or really good cold-frame, any such damage would be minimized. Deciduous trees can be kept in "in the dark", since they have no need for light until bud-break. Once this happens, you must put them outside. Junipers and spruces can begin to be repotted at the end of the month.

With any luck at all, our trees are beginning to show signs of life now. Branch or root pruning done at this time will heal over quite quickly. Keep a record of which trees are repotted to help keep track of when they will need repotting again. As a general rule, repot trees under 5 years old annually, depending on their condition. Trees between 5 and 20 years should be repotted every other year. Trees in the over 20 year category generally require repotting every third year. And, for those that are lucky enough to own trees that are over 100 years old, repotting can be planned for every 4 or 5 years. Pruning of deciduous trees should wait until budding activity has begun. (You're making sure that the branches are alive)

By the end of the month you should be able to remove protected, cold-hardy trees from shelter and leave them exposed to the elements. Evergreens can be fertilized with mild liquids at 2-week intervals. Spray with Benomyl for fungus control and with Malathion to kill those overwintering insects such as greenfly, blackfly, scale and mealybugs. Choose mid-morning of a fine, warm day for spraying so that the fungicide or insecticide has chance to dry.

Wiring and shaping of trees can be carried out this month as well. However, don't wire re-potted material for at least 3 or 4 weeks to avoid strain on the new emerging roots.

The end of this month and into next month are great times for collecting material from the wild. They have the best chance of survival, providing you get a decent sized root ball with plenty of fibrous roots.

Tips taken from *Growing & Displaying Bonsai* by Colin Lewis and Neil Sutherland

and from *Bonsai, the Art of Growing and Keeping Miniature Trees* by Peter Chan

A Note about Dues and Membership:

Your dues help your club to function during the year and pay for special events and guest lecturers. The club can not continue to exist without your attendance and financial as well as moral support. We ask that you come prepared to "ante up" at the September meeting, or as soon thereafter as you can. Our annual dues continue to be a very reasonable \$30.00 for individual membership and \$40.00 for family.

Please do your part to help the Great Swamp Bonsai Society continue to be successful. We also encourage you to tell a friend about the club and suggest that he or she attend our meetings to see what we're all about.

Its' up to you...

Contact Information:

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