



# GREAT SWAMP BONSAI SOCIETY

## April - May 2009 Newsletter

Next regular Meeting on Tuesday, May 12, 2009

有名 泥地 盆栽 社会 **Frelinghuysen Arboretum, E. Hanover Ave, Morristown, NJ**

**Featuring: Air Layering with Fred Aufschläger**

### March, April Highlights:

Please excuse your editor for not producing an April newsletter. I once again experienced a major computer malfunction which resulted in having to re-install XP, which inevitably caused a loss of data as well as totally trashing my address book. I'm indebted to Mark and John who kindly forwarded the e-mails I sent to them, enabling a rebuild of the distribution list. I seem to have had a run of bad karma, feng-shui, wabi-sabi or something... In any event, I'm back to near normal... Many thanks, too, to Diego for providing the pictures of the March Meeting. The pictures from April's workshop and meeting are courtesy of Mark Schmuck.

March's meeting saw the selection process for trees to represent Great Swamp at MABS. In addition to that, we had another great presentation by John Michalski regarding the collection of wild honeysuckle, amur maple and wild apple. Always a good topic. This year, John did some extensive editing that greatly improved the presentation. Watch out Spielberg...

Here are a few shots from the March Meeting:



Our MABS Trees



April workshop and meeting highlights featuring David Easterbrook, Montreal Botanic Gardens. The workshop was hosted by Fred at his home in Bernardsville. Many thanks to Fred and Doris for their hospitality...



## Presidential Corner & Upcoming Event Calendar:

Hello again everyone,



**John Michalski**

Hope you made it to this year's MABS Spring Festival, April 17-19, and if you missed it, do plan on making it next year – it was really very well put-together. Congratulations to the MABS Board for doing a nice job. GSBS was represented by Steve Stelz' Japanese Black Pine on a rock slab, Fred Aufschläger's Korean Hornbeam, and Dan Boehmke's Shimpaku Juniper. Well done all.

Our April meeting featured guest artist David Easterbrook following his presentation at MABS. David is a great bonsai artist and a gifted educator, and it was a pleasure to have him back so soon after his last visit to GSBS only a few months ago. About 20 members attended the lecture, including a few new faces—as usual, we are getting one or two new people at each meeting, so keep getting the word out that we are alive and well, and always looking to expand our horizons.

On Sunday, April 26th about 10 of us visited David and Diane Hall at Allshapes Bonsai Nursery ([www.allshapesbonsai.com](http://www.allshapesbonsai.com)) and Chase and Solita Rosade at the Rosade Bonsai Studio ([www.rosadebonsai.com](http://www.rosadebonsai.com)) It was a beautiful, if hot, day for an outing, and we enjoyed each other's company while picking the brains of the nursery folk, and buying some nice stuff to take with us! Thanks again to Greentree for acting as the point person for this event.

On Sunday, **May 3rd**, several of us took part in the second annual Morris County Park Commission Honeysuckle Dig (MCPCHD), at the Kay Environmental Center in Chester, NJ. Our group included Kerry Heck, John Michalski, Mark Schmuck, David Seaton, and newcomer David McIlvaney, who found us through Allshapes Bonsai Nursery and got his hands dirty on his first outing! Welcome David, and we hope to see you again soon. Leading the way were Morris County Superintendent of Natural Resources Management Kelli O'Connor and maintenance foreman Denman, both of whom we'd met this time last year. Over three hours we cleared out a 50-foot length of farm roadside, and kept about a dozen medium-to-large-sized Bush Honeysuckles, some for the club and some for the diggers. Did we get rained on? Yes. But we had a good time and got some nice trees out of it, and we hope you'll join us for Round Three in 2010!

Our next meeting on **Tuesday, May 12th** will feature club member Fred Aufschläger demonstrating the art of Air-Layering to produce new plants from old (or getting roots closer to the interesting part of your favorite tree). Please bring your own plant material for Fred to demonstrate or teach you with, and go home with a plant set up for new root growth.

We will also spend a little time discussing how best to refine and display your bonsai for our upcoming Bonsai Open House. See below.

Please note that we have several bags of bonsai soil mix and akadama available at good prices (I believe the soil is \$22.00 a bag and the akadama is \$30.00 a bag), and Fred will bring them to the May meeting.

Our next **BIG EVENT** is our Annual Bonsai Open House, to be held in the upstairs hall of the Haggerty Education Center (the same building we have our meetings in) on Saturday June 6th, between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm. **ALL CLUB MEMBERS** are encouraged to bring one or a few trees to display to the public. Please bring your tree(s) to the May meeting if you would like assistance or advice about how best to display or refine them. Club members should arrive by 9:00 am on the show day, to help set up. The Open House takes the place of our regular monthly meeting for June.

Hope to see you all at the stuff!

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## Additional Notes on our June Open House:

**BRING TREES:** Please plan on displaying your trees at this year's Open House! Paid members can essentially display any number of trees, though most people find that two or three good ones is about all they can transport and display nicely. We will have time during our May meeting to discuss display techniques, and we'll have a couple of sample displays set up for you to examine while you're there.

**BACKDROPS:** Each year we face the problem of how to create the cleanest backdrop for our bonsai displays in the upstairs auditorium. (If you're new to us, the upstairs hall has large windows which results in a rather uneven distribution of "blank wall space" for our purposes.) This year, I've hit upon a solution to this problem, which is the use of foam-filled, trifold poster board which you can buy in office supply and craft stores. They're 36" tall and 48" across, so it would be suitable for most small and medium trees. They cost from \$8-16, are lightweight and fold up somewhat, so one for each of your displays and you can stow them away in a closet the rest of the year.

**PUBLICITY:** Please remember to spread the word any way you can about the event. Our show gets better every year, but we have a perennial problem attracting the public – some years we get lots of people, and some years very few. We'll be taking advantage of free announcements on NJN, WMTR, WOR's Garden Hotline, etc. I've also had a banner made to place outside the Arboretum for the two weeks prior to the event. But please keep your antennae up for other opportunities to spread the word.

## May Plant Care Tips:

Pines are beginning to show their candles. Spruce and Larch buds are opening up and deciduous material comes into full leaf. Repotting chores should be over by the 10th. The exception would be Chinese Junipers which can be repotted through early summer. Only repot other species if they show signs of distress, such as root rot.

Established trees can be fed at regular intervals. A granular organic-based fertilizer such as blood meal, Bonemeal, or fish/seaweed products should be given once per month. Late developing varieties can be given more Nitrogen now, while others require a balanced diet.

Don't feed anything that has not "leafed out", but spray mist daily. Watering becomes a primary concern as trees develop. Trees should be watered at least once/day and possibly twice as required. Hot dry spells will dictate a more rigorous regime. Early evening or early morning seem best, unless, of course it has been raining heavily..

Evergreen cuttings can be taken, but seeds sown now have a minimum chance of survival. Air-layering of deciduous material can be started and continued through July. Air-layering of conifers may continue. Pinch back long shoots of deciduous using thumb and fore-finger. Late spring frost can damage tender new leaves on deciduous, especially Red maples. If frost is predicted, place your susceptible material in a protected place, such as a greenhouse or in an un-headed garage or shed for protection.

Trees in training can be pruned now but deciduous display material should already be completed. It's too soon to prune pine and spruce, However, dead branches should be removed. Pinch expanding pine candles as they grow. Start with the small ones and finish with the larger a week later. Spruce and Juniper may be ready for their first pinchings. Trim back new growth on deciduous to 2 or 3 buds, and rub off any buds growing where they shouldn't be.

Insects are getting active so inspect regularly and treat at the first sign of attack. Do not use systemic insecticides or fungicides on Chinese Elm. Place sun-sensitive species in light shade. Weeding now will save lots of time later. Be especially diligent about liverwort and pearlwort. Their long roots can clog drainage holes.

Conifers can be wired now but take care not to damage new growth. Deciduous branches can be lightly wired if branches need "teasing" into place. If large branches were not already wired, it's ok to do them now, but watch carefully so as not to damage any new foliage.

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

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## MABS, 2009

The festival this year was very well organized and I believe better than last year. The presenters were outstanding and the demonstration material was the best we've seen in years. Space in the newsletter prevents me from showing pictures of all of the trees that were on display by the member clubs, but within a few days, you will be able to see the complete run-down on our web site <http://www.arboretumfriends.org/gsbonsai>.

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## Another Upcoming Event

MAY 30, 2009

PRIVATE BONSAI AUCTION  
642 Peekskill Hollow Rd., Putnam Valley, NY 10579  
In collaboration with Yama Ki Bonsai Society

Over 50 trees, hardy & tropical, conifers & deciduous. Most trees are large (20 + years old), in bonsai pots, & require further development. Also many, many pots, tools, stands, shohin display stands, some still in their original boxes. Go to Yama Ki's website after May 1<sup>st</sup> for additional information & pictures. [www.yamakibonsai.org](http://www.yamakibonsai.org)

## Contact Information:

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And let's not forget our own website:

<http://www.arboretumfriends.org/gsbonsai>

All newsletters and calendar events are posted for your review.

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