



Great Swamp Bonsai Society

*Next meeting: **SUNDAY, June 2nd** – 9:00 am to 4:00 pm*

OUR ANNUAL BONSAI OPEN HOUSE !

June 2019 Newsletter

This Month's Meeting: SUNDAY, JUNE 2nd: Our Annual Bonsai Open House!

It's show time, everybody! I hope we can count on everyone to turn up, lend a hand, encourage conversation with our guests, and even bring a tree or two (or more) to display! Last year's Open House was sparsely attended (by the public), but we've been more active with promotion this year, and hopefully our efforts will bear fruit.

It doesn't matter if you're a beginner or a club member who's been working on trees for 30 years—we encourage everyone to bring something to display. We'll even have some tables set aside for "works in progress"—those trees that aren't quite "show ready" but which you'd like to bring for advice, assistance, or just to work on before the general public. People love to ask questions and observe as our club members prune, style, wire, repot, or just consider for design options.

The display opens to the public at 10:00 AM, but we encourage club members to arrive by 9:00 or so, to help set up and also to get yourself a prime location to display your bonsai to best advantage. Please feel free to bring gatefold display boards (such as those sold in office supply stores) to use as neutral backdrops if we need to make use of every available foot of table space.

The hall is directly upstairs of our usual meeting rooms, and has a small kitchen attached to it with a refrigerator, in case you wish to bring lunch and a non-alcoholic beverage. We will have name cards for the trees.

You are welcome to bring as many trees as you wish (including trees you intend to work on during the show), but keep in mind the effort involved in getting them into and out of the building. We usually have more than enough room for everyone.

Some photos from last year's Open House appear on the following pages. Note the variety of ways that different bonsai are displayed—bamboo mats, small tables or stools, slabs of bluestone—all sorts of materials can be employed to help set your bonsai off to best advantage. Check the internet for further inspiration!

Some photos from Last Year's Bonsai Open House



Last Year's Bonsai Open House (cont'd)



Last Year's Bonsai Open House (cont'd)



Last Month's Meeting: Approach Grafts and Phoenix Grafts

Club President John Michalski demonstrated the technique of "Approach Grafting" on one of his "railroad" Eastern Red Cedars. The process, and the initial results, are shown below and on the following pages.

After a brief explanation of what was to be done, John went off to a separate table to perform the work, as club members Fred Aufschläger and Peter Michienzi stepped up to explain the process of "Phoenix Grafting" using pieces of attractive "deadwood" (the curved and twisted trunks of bonsai that previously failed the survival test) and young seedlings of Eastern Red Cedar as potential live material. In the end it was felt that the materials at hand were not well-matched enough to perform the operation successfully, but the process was expounded upon in detail.

As the evening progressed, John returned to the spotlight to demonstrate various steps in the approach graft, concluding with the joining of scion and stock and the binding of the two in the hopes of a successful end product. The resulting graft will be left in place for a minimum of two growing seasons before a decision is made about severing the original life-lines and removing the original apex.



The tree before grafting.

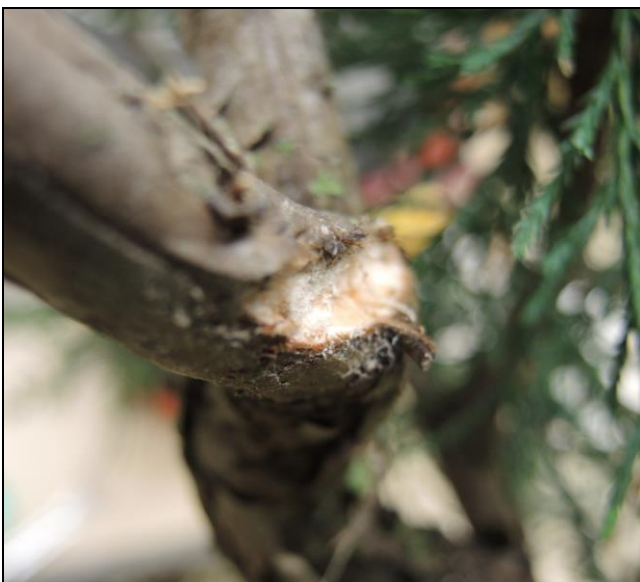


Approach Grafting (continued)



Branches A and B are pencil-straight and too thick to bend. Furthermore, they have not sprouted new buds in the 3 years since the tree was collected in the field.

Branch C is a whip grown from a back-branch over the past 2 seasons. It will be bent to cross the back of branch B at the point indicated by the arrow.



A groove is excavated into Branch B, first by cutting the cambium with a sharp knife, and then furrowed-out using a die-grinder fitted with a custom bit. This groove will receive Branch C once Branch C is bent into position.

Approach Grafting (continued)



Branch C is temporarily bent into the position it will hold when grafted onto Branch B, and a felt-tip pen is used to mark the area that will have its cambium removed. Once this is known, that part of the cambium is removed using a sharp knife, being careful to leave the rest of Branch C intact, including plenty of cambium and bark on the side of Branch C that will not be placed in direct contact with Branch B.



The overlapping area is completely sealed with cut paste and the join held fast with two black electrical ties. (Black plastic is UV resistant—other colors, including white, will become brittle and break over time.)

The two branches are now placed into position, with the exposed cambium and heartwood of Branch C fitted snugly into the channel carved into Branch B, so that active buds from Branch C will sprout and grow to fill the design gaps on the main trunk of Branch B.

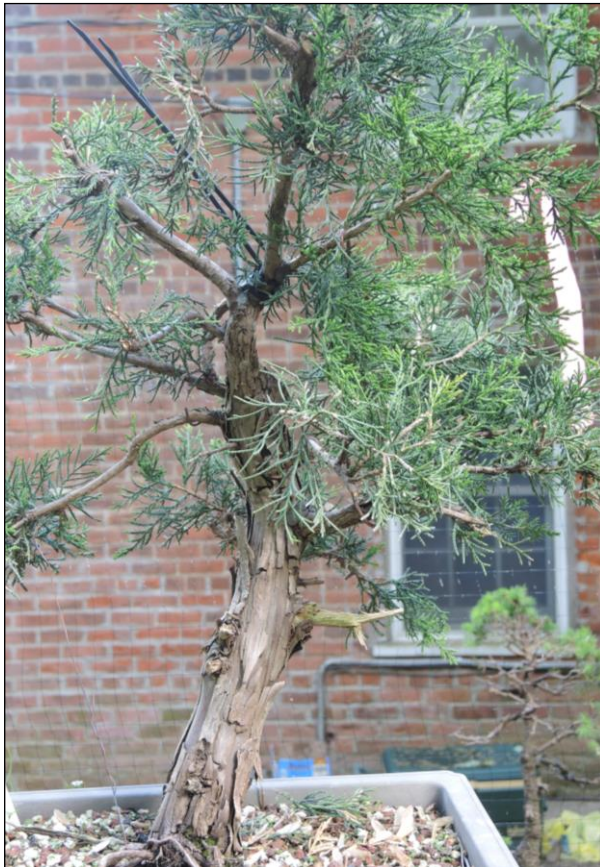
It is essential that live cambium from Branch C be in direct contact with live cambium from Branch B, in order for the graft to “take.”

Approach Grafting (continued)



(left) Another view of the completed graft.

(below) A view from above, showing the rear branch (Branch C) bent to cross the main trunk (Branch B).



(left) The graft is complete. It will be left in place for a minimum of two growing seasons.

May Meeting continued: Phoenix Grafting

Two club members, Bill Muldowney and John (whose surname now escapes me, sorry about that, John!) brought along excellent examples of successfully Phoenix-Grafted Shimpaku junipers (the trick is in making it so that the graft appears to be the original lifeline of the tree). They are pictured below. Thanks again, fellows, and congratulations on fine work!



Excellent examples of the Phoenix Grafting technique applied to Shimpaku junipers. (left) by John and (below) by Bill Muldowney.



Plant Care Tips for June

It's getting late to dig or repot hardy trees, though it can still be done if you know what you're doing or have a smart friend (particularly as we've been experiencing an oddly cool and rainy May). Your feeding, pinching, and pruning schedules should be in full swing by now. Pinch the terminal buds from deciduous trees, leaving only one pair of leaves (for Amur Maples, let the shoots grow until they harden off first, before trimming back to first pair of leaves). Most of your candle-pinching for evergreens will be winding down at this point.

Everyone seems to have their own preferences for fertilizers and feeding schedules, so ask around or find a good book or website. In general we feed the trees "hard" in June and July, applying general or high-nitrogen fertilizer as directed by the manufacturer, mixed in the water, or sprayed on foliage, as you prefer. Some growers use pelleted fertilizer such as Osmocote with good results.

Keep an eye peeled for insect pests and don't overdo it with the chemicals! Always read and follow manufacturers' directions, and be aware that plants in small containers are more easily stressed than plants growing in the ground. If you spray your trees with insecticides or fungicides, it's best to put them into the shade for the rest of the day.

Keep your radar up for incoming heat waves, and move your trees into cooler or shadier situations as needed—some trees can take it, but others cannot. [JM]

Save and Bring In Your Discarded Copper Bonsai Wire

Please remember to save and bring in those wire clippings. **It helps if you cut your wire into short (3-6 inch) lengths, as it packs more easily for transport and sale.** About once a year we bring them to a scrap metal dealer and swap them for cash. It's usually about enough to equal one or two paid memberships, so it really does help keep the GSBS afloat.



Calendar of Events for 2018-2019

June 2nd (first Sunday): Annual GSBS Bonsai Open House. Club members please arrive by 9:00 AM to help set up. Open to the general public from 10:00-4:00.

July 9th (Tuesday); Topic to be determined.

Dues are Always Welcome!

Dues are normally collected at the September meeting. If you have not yet paid up, please bring cash or check to **club treasurer Rick Myers**, or mail it to his address on the last page of this newsletter. Annual membership remains at \$40 for individual, \$50 family membership, and helps support club activities such as hosting touring experts.

Visit our webpage at <http://www.arboretumfriends.org/gsbonsai/>

Novices and non-members always welcome!

Come and plan to get your hands dirty!

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Secretary: Mark Schmuck lofty235@verizon.net

Treasurer: Rick Myers spruce80@verizon.net

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Succasunna N J
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Newsletter: John Michalski huonia@aol.com

Club Information

Location:

The Frelinghuysen Arboretum
353 East Hanover Ave,
Morristown, NJ 07962

Date:

Usually the second Tuesday of each
Month, (check our website for
special dates and locations)

Time: 6:30 – 9:30 pm

Remember to check our website
(<http://www.arboretumfriends.org/gsbonsai/index.htm>)
for special events, dates, updates
and latest information.

Great Swamp Bonsai Society

c/o John Michalski
223 Mount Kemble Ave., Morristown, NJ 07960

Great Swamp Bonsai Society Membership Registration:

Send to:

GSBS c/o Rick Myers

New

Renewal

80 Kenvil Avenue

Succasunna, NJ 07876.

Individual (\$40.00) **Family (\$50.00)**

Name(s): _____ **Email:** _____

Address: _____ **Phone:** (_____) _____

If Family Membership, please list other members:
