



GREAT SWAMP BONSAI SOCIETY

December, 2007 Newsletter

Next regular Meeting on December 11, 2007
Frelinghuysen Arboretum, E. Hanover Ave, Morristown, NJ

November Highlights:

The meeting in November featured a video and lecture that focused on collecting from the wild. John Michalski gave a very informative talk about the “other” conifers: Larch, Eastern White Cedar and Spruce. In addition to his video presentation, he brought example trees from those that he had personally collected both in a local area and some which he collected in Maine. He explained how finding trees in a bog requires waterproof boots and relatively little else, save a small spade and perhaps a sharp saw. These trees can generally be “lifted” within a short period once the spreading roots have been pruned back, since few bog-growing trees throw long tap roots.

Many types of trees can be collected and maintained from these wetlands. But don't imagine that you must maintain the wet conditions under which they were growing. On the contrary, while these collected trees can survive in a very wet environment, they live much happier in captivity when properly planted in our standard bonsai mixes. Make sure that you remove all traces of the muck in which they were found, plant them solidly and watch them thrive.

Here we have some trees that showed up at the November Meeting:



Presidential Corner & Upcoming Event Calendar:



John Michalski

Hi everyone,

Sad news follows below, from a fellow club. I hope the message needs no underscoring on my part.

On the brighter side, our Holiday Party is one week away (Tuesday Dec 11th), so let me know what you'd like to bring (snacks, plates, cups, utensils, desserts, soft drinks, cider, etc. etc. etc.) so I can coordinate just a little bit, anyway. We already have volunteers for cheese & crackers, and pies!

The upcoming meeting topics are getting fine-tuned, and I will forward our tentative outline to the Arboretum this week; but be aware that some adjustments may be forthcoming. At the moment, it looks like:

January 8: **large branch cutting** and **large-scale redesign** on apple, pine, etc.

February 12: Fred Aufschlager will bring two **forest plantings** to be repotted by club members (Yes, in February! That's when Fred says he created the forests, and he's sure it'll be all right.).

March 11: Usually, we plan a **repotting workshop**, but this is often difficult due to seasonal conditions (people don't want to repot their precious material if it's still too cold out). We may instead have a **soil-making workshop** or a **literati workshop** if I can procure appropriate materials. A **fertilizer-cake-making workshop** is also a possibility depending on availability of materials.

March is also the meeting where we select the **3 trees** to represent GSBS at the **MABS** show, so get thinking about trees you'd like to submit.

April: (Note a change of day here: **Thursday, April 10th**) we will host **Mr. Min Hsuan Lo** from Taiwan, who will be appearing as a guest demonstrator at MABS the following weekend. One of his specialties is **juniper**, so consider bringing your juniper(s) to this meeting for his examination and suggestions.

May: (Another change to **Thursday, May 15**) Guest lecturer will be Jim Baret. Also planned are discussions for our Annual Open House in June.

June: First Saturday of the month is our **Annual Bonsai Open House**.

The **Maine Collecting Trip** will be held the last week of June, so please contact me if you are interested. We are asking a donation of \$100 per collecting participant, all of which goes to the club, and participants are responsible for their own expenses. John M will be leading the trip, where participants will be taught how to locate the goodies (native larch and spruce) and how to collect them effectively, and of course will be able to bring home several nice trees in the bargain. Right now we have 4 members who have signed on, and we can easily accommodate another 4 if there is interest. Details will be sent to our final list of participants.

We are still working on the idea of an advertised **club auction**, to be held outside of the park facilities, so look over your stocks for high quality material that would attract desirable buyers.

Hope to see you all at the Holiday Party! Please read the following message from an Indiana club.

From: Bogan, Dave [mailto:dbogan@scvl.com]

Sent: Monday, November 26, 2007 12:01 PM

Unfortunately, in November - due to lack of volunteers and low attendance, the *Greater Evansville Bonsai Society of Indiana* was forced to disband. I hope this never happens to you and your clubs. Our club had been around for 20 years and I was luckily to have been a part of it since the beginning. In the last two years, our club membership had declined to around 20 members. As with most clubs, it was a huge challenge to get people to hold office or work at club functions. At our November planning meeting, after much discussion, not a single member volunteered to step forward. I had been president & newsletter editor for god knows how many years and I have finally reached a point I too was tired. So, the club is disbanded.

The good news is we will continue - simply in a different forum. To keep Bonsai alive in Indiana - My fiancée & I have started a Bonsai Study Group at our home in Lynnvile Indiana. I am also very happy to say we already have 10 members. Of course as a part of this study group. I will continue to write a monthly newsletter

December Plant Care Tips:

The leaves of Autumn have now finally fallen and the fine twigs of deciduous specimens are nicely revealed. Conifers will sparkle with frost in the early mornings. You can appreciate the time you spent in the growing season caring for your trees. Your good work is evident.

Hardy species can be dug and potted into large containers or growing beds. Large, fully hardy deciduous bonsai can be repotted now, but only if roots can be protected from hard frost for the entire winter ahead.

Only rough pruning of raw material should be attempted now. Even well sealed wounds may die back around the edges if winter is severe enough. And, as usual, the Farmer's Almanac cannot be totally trusted to be right! Resist the temptation to begin any wiring. It will likely encourage die-back and lead to disappointment.

Water only when necessary, but check your trees regularly. Wind can dry out our plants as much as summer sun. Our trees are susceptible to over-watering, especially during rainy periods.

Be vigilant about removing debris that can harbor pests. Dead annual moss should be cleaned away. Check for scale, galls, etc and treat accordingly. Inspect conifers for signs of spider mite. Spray trees with fungicides and/or insecticides on dry, sunny days. Take hardwood cuttings and plant hard-shelled seeds.

Lacking a greenhouse, a wooden frame covered with clear plastic sheeting is an acceptable substitute. Keep your tender-hardy trees within this coldframe for protection from severe weather conditions.

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

And let's not forget: December 11 is our:



Come one, come all. Bring some goodies and have a ball.

Contact John at 973.829.0094. He will coordinate the festivities and food. Hope to see you all there.

Dues are due once again:

And while we don't like to belabor the point, your club can't continue to function up to par without your support, both by your presence at meetings and by the timely payment of dues. Your club relies on you for your financial support to bring in lecturers and to provide material for workshops, demonstrations, etc. throughout the year.

Our annual dues continue to be \$30.00 for an individual and \$40.00 for a family. Please see Fred at your earliest convenience or send your dues to him at the following address:

Fred Aufschläger
17 Lakeview Drive
Bernardsville, NJ 07924

Thank you for your continued support.

Contact Information:

- President:** John Michalski - Contact John at huonia@aol.com
or by Phone: 973.829.0094
- VP:** Michael Markoff - Contact Mike at MJSmart@aol.com
or by Phone: 973.895.6287
- Treasurer:** Fred Aufschläger - Contact Fred at fdauf@msn.com
or by phone at 908.766.1359
- Secretary:** Ken Olander - Contact Ken at bowhunter444@verizon.net.
or by phone at 732.202.0677
- Newsletter:** Dan Boehmke - Contact Dan at dann@earthling.net
or by phone at 973.627.1318
-

Great Swamp Bonsai Society
c/o John Michalski
223 Mt Kembal Ave.
Morristown, NJ 07962

