

# Fresno Bonsai Society

## Newsletter

April 2021



### Our Mission

The purpose of the Fresno Bonsai Society is to expand the knowledge and skills of bonsai within its members while offering opportunities for appreciation of this art form to the broader community. We do this through the inspiration of the beauty of the natural world and the rich cultural heritage of bonsai.

### Officers of the FBS

President.....Mike Saul  
 Vice President.....Chris Saldana  
 Secretary .....Marilyn Shelton  
 Treasurer.....Bob Wright  
 Board Member     Suzanne Follett  
                                   John Wright  
 Past President.....Dave Soho  
 Newsletter ...Carol & John Wright



### President's Message

Oh, happy day! There is light at the end of the tunnel. Although appears to be another surge of the virus on the horizon in the wake of the Easter holiday and the Spring Break, we can anticipate a more open summer.

Our pleasant Spring weather will allow us to conduct an open-air meeting later this month. Once again, we will greet our

friends. We will share our experiences with our bonsai. We will become acquainted with new members. This companionship is a real benefit to belonging to the Fresno Bonsai Society.

I was thinking about the surprises that the past year has brought to our club.

We had three video meetings in the past few months. I received consistently favorable comments about our ZOOM meetings from our members. The good reviews were probably more related to the outstanding speakers rather the ZOOM format. That was a learning experience in itself.

We lost 25% of our membership this year versus last. I do not understand why many members disappeared. I was grateful that we only lost that portion.

The good news is that we added several young and very enthusiastic new people. We have more women than ever before and more Hispanic members than ever before.

At our April 10<sup>th</sup> meeting we will again hear from one of our most experienced members, Pat Gallie. He will discuss Satsuki Azaleas bonsai and a topic that has gotten little press in bonsai: *Plant senescence*. Senescence is the process of plant aging. In trees, for example, senescence is the complex process by which deciduous species

### Upcoming Events

April 10th,           FBS meeting, at 9AM, at Tice  
                                   Park, in Fresno ( Southwest corner of Cole  
                                   and Millbrook)  
 May 21—23rd       FBS participation at the Fresno H&G Show  
                                   **May 21, 22, and 23 (set up on the 20th)**

reabsorb chlorophyll and a sequence of other leaf organelles to preserve nitrogen and other nutrients. This will be a fascinating talk.  
I am hopeful that Steve DaSilva will talk to us about Black Pine foliage management, particularly decandling, in our May meeting. We will also focus on the tasks for preparation of our tree for display both the April and May meetings.  
We will also enjoy a focused talk on some aspect of bonsai design every month from Bob Hilvers, the curator of the Clark Bonsai Collection.  
I remain optimistic that we will be able to conduct open-air meetings and take advantage of the remarkable talent and experience in our own community.

Stay Well  
Mike Saul

## FBS March Zoom Meeting Recap

### Single Flush – Partial Defoliation

Leaf cutting

Introduction of light

Balances sugars

No visible response

In alternating leaf pattern plants, leaves cut in half

In opposite leaf pattern plants, 1 leaf of the pair is removed

**Multi Flush Species for Bonsai** (Trident Maples, Amur Maples, Zelkova, Ume, Chinese Quince, Japanese Quince, Chinese Elm, Crepe Myrtle and Ginkgo)

Total (80-90%) leaf removal

Forces a second flush of growth, doubling ramification

Visible response – smaller leaves, shorter nodes

Promotes backbudding

Shoot is trimmed back to desirable length

Leaves cut along the petiole

Very weak interior shoots left untouched

### Wiring

Best time to wire is spring/early summer

Aluminum wire the same size as the twig is preferred

Wire smaller/younger branches on deciduous bonsai – not older branching

Wire must support the opposite side of the bend, or else SNAP!

Remove wire before it shows signs of biting in: 2-6 weeks after application

### Large Cuts/chops

Now is the time to dust off the saw

Consider partial cuts for large limb removal (Ebihara Technique)



Not all cut-past is created equal

Skip bonsai saws, try a silky saw (Amazon)

### Fertilizing

Solids vs. Liquids?

Solids – Easy to read, small amount available every watering

Liquids – Accessibility to roots, more immediate availability

Organic vs. Chemical fertilizers?

Organic – increase microbial activity, nice strength for bonsai

Chemical – immediately available, grows trees hard and fast

Each Bonsai has individual fertilizer needs, the more specific you are the better your practice will be

### Watering

First thing to learn, last thing to master

Under watering can kill a tree fast, but over watering can kill a tree slowly

Don't water on a schedule! Try to avoid automatic systems

Tree work/health changes things!

## March 27th Presentation by Michael Hagedorn

In March the FBS was AGAIN invited to join the American Bonsai Association, Sacramento (ABAS) in their monthly Zoom meeting. The presentation, by Michael Hagedorn, covered points from his book "Bonsai Heresy: 56 Myths Exposed Using Science and Tradition". The following are the bullet points from his Power-Point presentation:

**"EDUCATION CONSISTS MAINLY IN  
WHAT WE HAVE UNLEARNED"**  
Mark Twain

### Fertilizer:

A Nutrient is a Nutrient is a Nutrient. Plants can use organic and chemical equally well.

Cakes, however, are efficient

Organics tend to create shorter internodes and more budding

### Pot size:

Large pots do grow bigger trees... But...  
...If upsized to quickly, they slow a tree down

Why? The pot never dries out: A faster wet/dry cycle allows roots to respire

### Enhancers:

Still no supporting evidence for superthrive or HB101

B-1 is literally snake oil

Many enhancers do no better than normal fertilizers: Studies are most convincing for humic acid, seaweed, and silicon

### Wire:

They are both good

Copper is best for conifers: Strength, Small diameter, Subdued color; Long term

Aluminum is best for deciduous: Soft, Shiny anodized surface not an issue; Short term.

### Watering:

Watering on a schedule is the best way to destroy bonsai

Water only when they dry out

Automatic may be useful midday when at work, Don't rely on it.

### Design:

Using the S-Curve as a front turns everything into a moyogi pine

Seek unusual movement

A challenging exercise: Try wiring a young whip

without using S-Curves

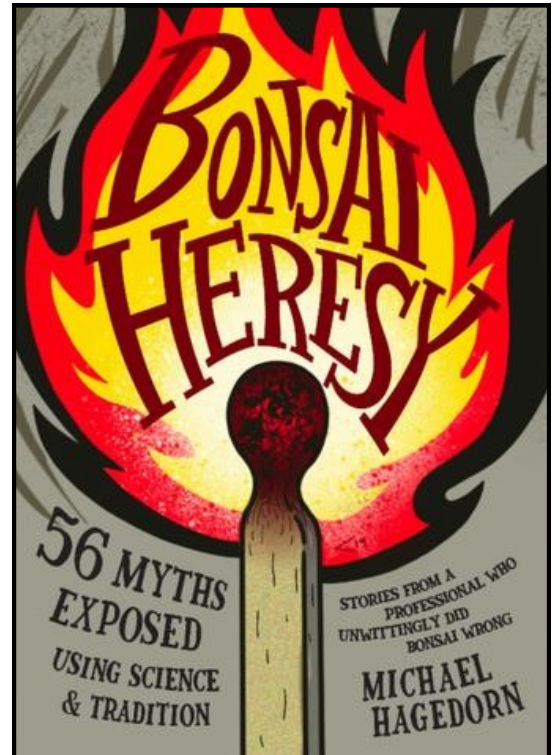
Think of movement as music, we can't just have one tempo

The older the tree is, the less rules can guide us

Some of Japan's most famous trees have very little movement

Link to the talk:

<https://youtu.be/H4nLI1WFBCw>



READ THE BOOK  
FOR MORE INTERESTING INFORMATION.

## JT's Tree Trips April 2021

With the vaccinations progressing and the cases going down I'm hoping that we'll soon be able to get together in person, but probably still wearing masks. I can hardly wait!!

But the saving grace is that we can still work on our trees and they give us some semblance of normalcy in a crazy year.

Spring doesn't wait on vaccines. Its pushing everywhere. I've been transplanting and refreshing the top soil on many of my trees. Also its been a great time to catch the new emerging shoots as they are extending. Every morning and evening, I go around and pinch off the extending shoots on my refined trees. They don't all come out at once from all areas of the tree. I guess I can't use the lame excuse that I don't have the time to do it. About forty-five minutes, morning and afternoon seems about right. Try it. I bet you feel more connected with your trees. At the same time, look for bugs that love the tender new shoots and scale, which are easy to scrape off. I can't play golf so getting out with the trees in the back gets me out of the house and refreshes my spirit.

Deciduous trees are flush with new growth except for beeches. Pine candles are extending and evergreens have light green growth at the tips. I always have some branches that just die but that's par for the course. They are starting to take more water each day as the foliage expands and increases.

With the warmer weather succulent growth accelerates and sucking insects will come out in droves. When it is dry for a day or so we need to be thinking of spraying for insects and diseases. Clearys 3336 or Daconil (fungus) and Merit (insects) are good choices. A couple of applications this month in the late evening or early morning (to avoid burning the foliage) should do the trick. Be prepared to spray for aphids and the like with Malathion® or Diazinon® or even Safer® soap. Ants are a good tip-off for this condition. They harvest the honeydew from these insects. I found that Bayer has a product called 12 Month Tree and Shrub Protect and Feed™ that contains Merit® and will also take out grubs and larva that feed on our roots. See a lot of slime trails around? Slugs and snails are not only chewing the plants but they are laying eggs in the soil. I have used a product called Sluggo® whose active ingredient is iron phosphate and it is the most effective treatment I have ever used. A little more expensive than some others but it really works.

Don't forget the tropical and semi tropical trees that do best when transplanted in the warmer weather of later spring. And, how about repotting some of the broadleaf evergreens. I find that some evergreen oaks and boxwoods do well when transplanted in the early Summer after hardening off the Spring growth. And here you thought you had escaped the transplanting season.



**Special Thanks to John Thompson for use in our FBS Newsletter**