



CORPUS CHRISTI

BONSAI CLUB

EST. 1976

The Corpus Christi Bonsai Club, Inc. was organized in 1976 and is a member of the Lone Star Bonsai Federation, Bonsai Clubs International and The Corpus Christi Area Garden Council Inc. Our club members are passionate about the art of bonsai and we strive to share our knowledge and skills with others. We organize regular meetings, workshops, and exhibitions to foster the love of bonsai in our community.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of each month, January through October, at the South Texas Botanical Gardens. 8545 S. Staples St., Corpus Christi, TX 78413.

2024 Club Officers

President

David Whitaker

1st Vice President

A.J. Guzman

2nd Vice President

Wayne Helgerson

Secretary

Tom Andrews

Treasurer

Betty Whitt

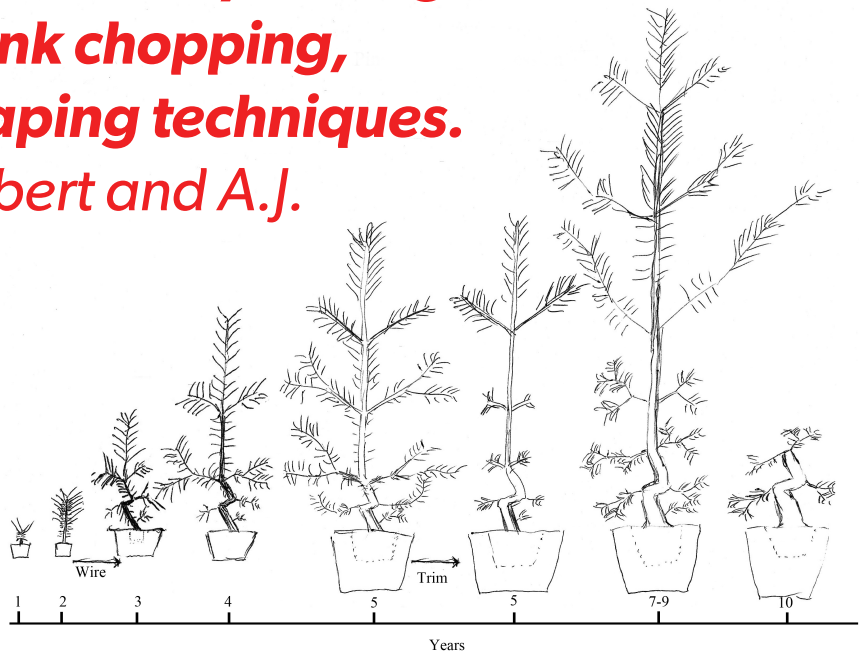
Individual Membership is \$15.00 per year (students \$5.00). Membership for couples is \$20 per year. Dues are pro-rated for persons joining after May. Early payment of dues is appreciated.

SUBMISSIONS

Contact Gilbert Cantu at can2creative@gmail.com or call 361-946-4851 for submissions, articles, comments or suggestions.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND - 6:00 P.M.

Lecture: Defoliating, trunk chopping, shaping techniques.
Gilbert and A.J.





UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH

Saturday, 9th

9am - Sponsored workshop at the Museum of Asian Cultures.

Thursday, 28th

Membership Meeting at STBG 6:00 p.m. Lecture: Soils and Bonsai 101 (David and Gilbert).

APRIL

Saturday, 6th

8am - Big Bloom at South Texas Botanical Gardens

Thursday – Sunday, 25-28th

Lone Star Bonsai Federation Convention Show and Demo in Houston.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

We're starting the year off with a bang and not slowing down! Several members enjoyed the late January dig at Juan's property in Rockport and left with some fine native specimens. Thank you Juan for the great dig! Speaking of digs, I'm cancelling the dig scheduled for March 30 at my place to dig natives. It looks like spring is here since almost everything has started budding out the last few days, putting us past the window of opportunity. We can discuss at the meeting if we want to replace the dig with something else or just remove it from the calendar.

In early February, we set up a bonsai display at the Museum of Asian Cultures to celebrate the Chinese New Year, 2024 year of the Dragon. Many thanks to the members that assisted and/or supplied trees for the display. It was a lot of fun, we enjoyed the various festivities and entertainments that day. The museum mentioned a record turnout for them and we signed up several new members! We'll be there again March 9 (setup 9am) for Japan Day with a small display, lecture/demos and hands-on workshops.

We have a bald cypress L/D-workshop scheduled for Saturday, February 24, at my place in San Patricio. Please, do NOT bring trees. Each participant will be supplied with one nursery stock tree to work with and will learn how to transition the tree from nursery container to a shallow growing container suitable for bonsai training. Trees are available to purchase after the workshop. If you have not been out here yet, text me your name and I'll text back directions.

Last month's meeting, Betty Whitt was awarded a Lifetime Membership for her years of dedication and service to the club. Thank you Betty for everything you do!

This month's meeting, February 22nd at the STBG will feature Gilbert and AJ doing a lecture-demo on defoliating, trunk chopping, and shaping techniques for training your bonsai. Bring your trunk chopped bonsai to show. See y'all there!

CCBC President David Whitaker 361-688-0109

VP'S MESSAGE

Spring is nearly here! This is always a very exciting time of the year for bonsai. Deciduous trees start budding new growth, our evergreens start growing at a faster pace, and repotting season is now! Be sure to get any non tropical trees ready for a pot repotted as soon as you can. Right now is the perfect time, as another week or two might be too late with our weather in South Texas. Don't know how to repot? Ask any of the members and we will point you in the right direction! Be sure to increase your watering levels as the weather warms up, the soil level is always a good indication if your water needs more water or not. Big box stores like Lowes & Home Depot along with your local nurseries are starting to get in their Spring material, so if you're hungry for more, it's a perfect time to go shopping for raw stock!

Few announcements: We had a great event out at the Museum of Asian Cultures to celebrate the Chinese New Year. Year of the Wooden Dragon! We had 10-12 new members sign up! Thank you

David, Wayne, & Juan for helping out on a great event. Thank you David, Wayne and Jorge for also bringing some trees for display. The public loved them! Also, did you know as of last year, 2023, Corpus Christi moved up to Zone 10A in the USDA Plant Hardiness Zone? We've been in 9B for some time. We also share the same Zone 10 in the Heat Zone! **I've also worked on a partnership with Turner's Gardenland on a 10% discount for all members!** Discount cards are being worked on and will be distributed to all current members as soon as they're ready.

Look forward to seeing everyone this Thursday at our club meeting. Gilbert & I will be going over defoliation, trunk chopping, shaping techniques, and branch selection. Feel free to bring any tree's you want to show or need help with!

CCBC President AJ





MARCH MONTHLY TIPS

Winter really didn't arrive until mid-January but, for three days or 20 degree lows and then gone, seems spring is wanting to show up. Most of my native and bonsai deciduous trees have started to bud. And speaking of budding.... have you started repotted your bald cypress, elms, and other deciduous trees? It may be too late if there are signs of new growth. The best time to root prune/repot deciduous trees is right before the buds open, you have to watch them closely and you can see them open within a couple weeks, some can open in just a few days. It's not recommended to root prune any deciduous trees that the buds have already leafed out. If you must repot any with due to problems with a tree that has leafed out, put it in a larger pot with fresh soil, do not prune the roots. These types of trees have very tender roots at this time of year. I've heard that people have root pruned deciduous trees (doing a leaf defoliation at same time) during the growing season... and it is possible to do so and have the tree live, but it's risky. We want the best chance to have the trees survive the shock of root pruning.

"Know your species". You should know the information of each and every type of plant you have! What it needs are as far as water, light (full sun exposure, shaded, morning only) placement through-out the seasons, is it tropical, is it deciduous, its max low and high temp it should be exposed to, when to & not to trim, when to repot, can it be defoliated, does it back bud, are the buds near the trunk or at the end of the branch, fertilizing, trimming, clipping, pinching, wiring... getting the picture?? We can find most of the information we need from our Sister club published SABS' "Bonsai Tree Care" book, this little green book has the low down on over 86 species and covers most of our well known species we use here. Ask me to purchase one. You can start repotting your broad leaf evergreens (holly, boxwood etc). It's too early in the season to root prune/repot your South Texas natives, tropicals and semi (sub)

tropicals. We should wait until the lowest temperature of the day/night stays above 65-70 degrees (which can come pretty soon), for repotting South Texas natives and semi (sub) tropicals (Ficus, figs, Barbados and Surinam cherry Texas ebony and other natives). Tropicals should be repotted in early summer (Neea buxifolia, Gmolina, Escambron, Fukien tea, Bahama Black Olive, Buttonwood, Premna and Wrightia Religiosa, to name a few).

March and April are usually the windiest months of the year. Watch the soils every day so they don't dry out. When you repot, be sure to wire the tree securely in the pot to give it good stability against the winds. Putting rocks on top of the soil for a while can also help brace the tree. With spring coming on, the bugs will be coming out in droves soon. Inspect the bonsai from top to bottom, also inspect the drain holes. Inspect for ANY and all insects and treat accordingly. We all have their own methods of treating for insects. Regular spraying of the foliage when you water can help prevent the little critters from taking up residence on your trees. The spider mites in particular don't care for damp environments and the spray will help knock some bugs off.

We must frequently take a real close look at your trees. Pests can move in overnight! Not only look for the actual pests but also look for signs of activity from unseen pests – such as half-gone leaves, webbing, and frass, fused together or curled up leaves. Don't confuse spider webs with spider mite webbing. Daily vigorous spraying of the foliage when you water the plants prone to spider mites, can greatly deter spider mites from moving in. Numerous insects are nocturnal, doing their damage in the darkness of night and most excellent at hiding during the day. Let me jump up on that beneficial soapbox again – encourage your beneficial predators!! Ladybugs and lacewings, along with their larvae, are voracious predators of scale and aphids. Spiders are great, while

praying mantis are ruthless hunters. If something does get an insect problem that's getting out of hand, spot treat that tree with the appropriate pesticide.

When inspecting for insects on trees, check all around the foliage or leaves. The best way to find the smallest of the attacking insects (Spider mites) is put you tree over a piece of white paper and tap on all the branches, this will knock off some of the little critters onto the paper, if you can mash/smear (ugh) the specks with your finger, then they need to be eradicated.

Having several species (with several of each) I usually see the same insects attack about the same time of year and use an insecticide, mite-icide and fungicide (all in one and can be mixed with fertilizer too) during this time of the growing season, as an infestation is found and treat accordingly. Plant chemicals go off/on the market constantly so, look for these products that are labeled for use on roses, veggies, or fruit & nut trees and are labeled to kill spider mites, these products most likely are safe on our all bonsai. Warning do not use Malathion on buttonwoods and stay away from neem oil.

Also, give natural pest control a try – we've had outbreaks of insects in the past so every spring when our local nursery gets their stock we buy a couple containers of ladybugs. We released them at dusk over a couple of nights and voila! In a few days, very few aphids or scale remained plus the ladybugs happily procreated in our yard and soon we had ladybug larva cleaning up the leftovers. And our other beneficial insects and critters are kept safe from being poisoned. We also set out praying mantis egg sacks that are full with up to 200 babies in it. Now we see several mantis everywhere. When they emerge and they are undetectable until they are almost full size or you just happen to look right at them. So before you blast the pest bug, check for a beneficial bug stalking it first! Happy Gardening!



MEMBERS TREES IN DEVELOPMENT

DAVID WHITAKER'S FICUS IN DEVELOPMENT



GILBERT CANTU'S PORTULACARIA AFRA LESS THAN 2 YEAR DEVELOPMENT



BONSAI HUMOR

