



SPRINGFIELD BONSAI SOCIETY

Palmatum Press

February 2014

From the Editor's Desk

January 31 begins The Year of the Horse as we celebrate Chinese New Year. This festival celebrates the coming of spring, planting and the arrival of new life. After this harsh winter we are anxiously waiting for our trees to begin to break dormancy so we can start to get them in shape for the spring. This is an exciting year for the Springfield Bonsai Society. We have a very interesting year ahead of us.

In April we will host Owen Reich as our guest artist. This is a great opportunity to learn from a master. Owen studied horticulture at the University of Georgia where he became acquainted with bonsai. He worked for five years as manager of Samara Farms in Nashville. He then traveled to Japan and apprenticed with Keiichi Fujikawa in Osaka. At the same time Bjorn Bjorholm (a previous guest artist in Springfield) was apprenticing with Fujikawa Sensi and they collaborated on a video series "Bonsai Art of Japan" (<http://www.youtube.com/user/bjorvalabonsai>). Mark your calendars for Saturday April 19.

The theme for our programs this year is refinement. We want members to focus on their best trees and bring them to a higher level of refinement. Bring your best tree(s) to several meetings and continue their development throughout the year. Please share information about your tree and its progress with other members.

We have been invited to have a table display at the Logan County Master Gardeners Garden Day on March 15th. I will be out-of-town (Spring Break!) that day. If anyone is interested in showing our display and talking with fellow gardeners please let me know (gtram1@uis.edu).

Future Tense

Saturday February 8 10:00 am - Springfield Bonsai Society Meeting.

The special February meeting will feature a slab pot building workshop at the studio of Dr. Folse. Participants will build a slab pot which may be used for the group planting session at the May meeting. Cost will be \$20 for a slab pot. Making additional pots will cost extra. We will **not** meet at Washington Park Botanical Garden in February.

If you are interesting in participating please RSVP to Roland Folse by Monday Feb. 3. Contact information: rfolse@sbcglobal.net or (217) 529-2940.

Upcoming 2014 SBS Meetings

Regular meetings are held at Washington Park Botanical Garden, 1740 W. Fayette Ave. Springfield. IL. Special meeting locations are indicated below.*

Meeting Dates	Topics/Activities
*Saturday February 8,, 2014 10:00 am	Slab pot building at Roland Folse studio
Monday, March 10 th 7:00 p.m.	Carving Demonstration Bring tools and a tree to work on.
April 14 7:00 p.m.	Initial Styling – puning, repotting
Monday, May 12 th 7:00 p.m.	Group Plantings
Monday, June 9 th 7:00 p.m.	Azalea Care & Development
Monday, July 14 th 7:00 p.m.	Tropicals [Garden Tour to be arranged]
Monday, August 11 th 7:00 p.m.	Display – companion plant, rocks
Monday, September 8 th 7:00 p.m.	TBA
Monday, October 13 th	TBA
November 10 th 7:00 p.m.	Planning Meeting for 2015

Bonsai Events Around the Country 2014

Date	Event
February 1, 15, 22 March 1 & 8	Cass Bonsai Gardens (http://www.cassbonsaigardens.com) Spring Repotting and Open Shop
March 22	Cass Bonsai Gardens (http://www.cassbonsaigardens.com) Basic Bonsai Workshop
March 29 April 5, 12, 19, 26	Cass Bonsai Gardens (http://www.cassbonsaigardens.com) Open Shop
April 10-13	Lone Star Bonsai Federation 32nd Annual Texas State Convention (http://www.houstonbonsai.com/)
April 25-27	31st. Annual Spring Festival MidAtlantic Bonsai Society Ramada Hotel East Hanover, NJ (http://midatlanticbonsai.freesevers.com/fescurr.htm)
May 22-26	Bonsai Societies of Florida 41st Annual Convention (http://bonsai-bsf.com/)
August 13-17	37th Mid-America Bonsai Exhibit Chicago, IL (http://midwestbonsai.org/)
September 13-14	4th US National Bonsai Exhibit Rochester, NY (http://www.internationalbonsai.com/)
October 2-5	Pacific Northwest Bonsai Clubs Associaton 25th Anniversary Celebration Victoria, B.C. (http://victoriabonsai.bc.ca/)
October 30-Nov 2	Bonsai Visions of the West GSBF37 Sacramento, CA (http://gsbfconvention.org/)

Fertilizing Bonsai

Bonsai have special nutritional requirements because they are grown in small containers with a limited root ball and the soil is made to promote drainage and does not hold nutrients well or contain large amounts of organic matter.

As our trees are coming out of dormancy they will need fertilizer. Searching in my library and on the internet, I find a wide range of recommendations for fertilizer. They all agree that proper fertilization requires both macro and micro nutrients. Some people use frequent doses of liquid fertilizer (applied weakly weekly), others use fertilizer cakes or slow-release granules.

I will summarize the basic components of fertilizer and give some recipes for fertilizer cakes if you wish to make your own.

Macronutrients

Nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium are three elements that are required by plants in large amounts. The amounts of these in commercial fertilizers are indicated by the three numbers - the percentages of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K) in that order.

Nitrogen is absorbed as soluble nitrate ions and promotes foliage growth and the healthy, deep green color of leaves.

Phosphorus is required as a component of nucleic acids and energy regulation in plants. It is important in the growth of new plant tissues. Phosphorus promotes root growth and hardiness and the formation of seeds and fruit. Lack of phosphorus causes stunted plants and an abnormal dark green color.

Potassium increases disease resistance, helps regulate metabolism, and water pressure in the plant. It is important for rigidity in the stems and trunk.

Micronutrients

There are about ten elements that plants require in trace amounts. These elements are necessary for healthy plants and include iron, zinc, calcium, and copper.

Fertilizers can be applied in either slow or quick release formulations. Each have advantages and disadvantages.

Quick-Release Fertilizer	Advantages	Disadvantages
	fast acting	more like to burn plants
	low cost	nutrients leach readily
	Nutrients can be applied as needed	need to be dissolved in water
Slow-Release Fertilizer	fewer applications needed	higher cost
	less likely to burn plants	availability of nutrients may be limited compared to plant needs
	release rates are slow and vary with temperature, moisture, soil organisms, etc.	

The following recipes were published by The American Bonsai Society if you wish to make your own fertilizer cakes. In these recipes the parts are by volume (I use an old 1 cup measure). Cottonseed meal is slightly acidic and is good for acid loving plants like azaleas. Bone meal is a source of phosphorus and is alkaline to neutralize acidic soil. Blood meal is a source of nitrogen and trace elements. Fish emulsion is also a good source of nitrogen and trace elements. Sevin is to prevent insects in this nutrient media.

Ingredient	Valavanis	Persiano
Cottonseed meal	3 parts	3 parts
Dolomitic lime (garden lime)	3 parts	2 parts
Blood meal	1 part	1 part
Bone meal	1 part	1 part
Mixing solution of full-strength soluble fertilizer and water	Peters 20-20-20	Schultz 20-30-20
Fish emulsion	as needed	5 oz per 5 lb dry ingredients
Superthrive	some	-----
Sevin	sprinkle	sprinkle

Procedure:

- Mix the first four ingredients
- Add all of the liquids to the dry ingredients except the Sevin until the consistency of cooked oatmeal is reached.
- Wearing a pair of gloves, add the Sevin to the mixture.
- Spread the fertilizer over an aluminum foil-covered wire rack or flat tray, cut the fertilizer into 1.5-inch squares with the moistened length of a paint stirrer, and set the scored rack in the sun to dry.
- Once the cakes have completely dried, snap the squares away and place them in a container for future use. The cakes will keep for many years if they are kept dry.

Bonsai Care Tips

The Columbus Bonsai Society (Ohio) has a [calendar](#) for bonsai care for USDA Hardiness Zones 5 and 6. These are their recommendations.

February - Late Winter - 39/22

- Wire conifers now through early summer.
- This is the best month for repotting conifers.
- Use a dormant pest spray to keep pests away in early spring.
- All tips from January apply in February.

Administrivia

Your 2013 Officers are:

President	– G. Jackson
Vice President	– Ken Schaal
Treasurer	– Tom Applebee
Webmaster	- Manish Sumant
Newsletter editor	– Gary Trammell (217-741-4849) (trammell.gary@uis.edu)

Annual membership is \$20 (family \$30).

To receive our newsletter you may sign up by email (BonsaiSBS@gmail.com) or visit our website at

<http://www.BonsaiSBS.com/>.