

March  
2009



SPRINGFIELD BONSAI SOCIETY

# Palmatum Press

## Future Tense March Meeting

**Monday March 9<sup>th</sup>** will be our bonsai repotting workshop. Meeting starts at 7 pm in the exhibit hall of Washington Park Botanical Garden.

Even if your trees are in hibernation in your garage or cold frame you are welcome to come and observe members who bring in trees for repotting. If you do not have a tree to repot I will try to bring in some small Shimpaku Junipers for you to try repotting on your own. Please refer the February '09 SBS newsletter for tips on repotting.

You might have read the article in SJ-R titled "**Bonsai Basics**". This article had a couple of neat techniques that can be used to style bonsai out of nursery stock. I will bring in the article in case you have not seen it.

The **2009 SBS membership** dues are now due. Annual membership is \$20 for individual and \$30 for family. Membership supports the club activities and gets you discounted rates on workshop fees and access to club supplies (potting soil, wire etc) during meetings.

**April 4** workshop with Erik Wigert. Currently we have about 10 people signed up for the workshop. There are still 5 spots open. *Gary said you can sign up till the March 9th meeting.* After that any open spots will be opened to the St. Louis club. The cost of the workshop is \$75 for current SBS members and \$100 for non-members and includes the Bougainvillea trees. I am



attaching a picture of the workshop trees. They have some pretty good sized trunks on them. Gary visited Erik's nursery in Florida earlier this year. Gary said "These are the trees that Erik set aside for us. They are potted and ready to be styled. Styling is the tricky part since they want to be a vine by nature an they bloom on new growth."

**April 24 - 26** Shohin convention and workshops in St. Louis. There are about 25 workshops at various price levels and tree styles. This is a great way to acquire some good bonsai and learn the craft from well known bonsai artists. One day registration is \$65 Friday or Saturday (both days \$140). In case you are wondering, "Shohin" typically means bonsai about 8 to 10" tall.

### **Shohin St Louis 2009 April 24-26**

#### *Little Trees – Big Event*

Gateway Center, One Gateway Drive, Collinsville, IL 62234

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**May 9<sup>th</sup>** and **16<sup>th</sup>** will be our **Bonsai Basics workshop** offered through LLCC's Community Education workshops. Attendees will get to style (and keep) two trees under guidance from SBS members. Please contact Gary if you would like to help out. The Saturday 9 am to noon time should be convenient for all and we expect a full capacity (15) workshop.

**Cass Bonsai in Edwardsville** will have various spring time bonsai activities. **March 7<sup>th</sup>** will be their Open House and Beginner workshop from 9am till 2pm. **March 21 and 28** are the "Spring repotting and Open Shop" dates. Please call 618-656-9087 and talk to Milt if you have any questions.

Recently, Gary went to a presentation by **Guy Sternberg** about his **Starhill Arboretum**. Gary said, "I have not been there but he had some great photos and is cultivating a number of unique trees. I think this would be of interest to members (and families). You can check out his web-site at <http://www.starhillforest.com/index.htm>. Guy does conduct tours... I would think that spring (May or early June) would be nice with flowering trees or mid-October for fall color."

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## Past Tense – February meeting

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The February meeting was a dessert social and discussion on bonsai. We had a good variety of treats and some coffee to start us off. It was good to see old friends!

Dr. Folsie brought in a couple of trees – his Quince grove was flowering. As you know Quince is one of the first shrubs to flower and sometimes has blooms while there is snow on the ground. I found an article on Quince for Bonsai on Brent Walston's website and thought it would be an interesting read.

Forsythia is another early flowering shrub that can be styled into a bonsai.

We reviewed the 2008 Fall show with video created by Dick Hendee. Gary Trammell had downloaded some videos on bonsai styling from the internet. We viewed those as well. Many interesting techniques can be learned from these videos. I am including the links he shared below.

- ⇒ Bonsai Training Videos (Dallas Bonsai)  
<http://www.bonsaichannel.com/home.html>
- ⇒ Mike Hansen (Midwest Bonsai) Basic Techniques for Beginners  
[http://www.expertvillage.com/video-series/71\\_bonsai.htm](http://www.expertvillage.com/video-series/71_bonsai.htm)
- ⇒ World of Bonsai Series (Knowledge of Bonsai Forum)  
<http://www.knowledgeofbonsai.org/forum/viewforum.php?f=100>
- ⇒ YouTube – search for bonsai workshop demos, Masahiko Kimura, Walter Pall, etc



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Most of the videos are streaming (like YouTube). If you wish to save the videos for later reference, you will need an image / video capture software like SnagIt.



Dr. Folsie brought in a Pine for some interactive styling. This was very nice of him as we got to style a classic tree! We viewed the tree from different angles and suggested which branches we liked or how to tilt the tree to expose the best trunk line. I took some pictures of the styling with my camera phone, so the pictures are not all that great. The end result was more of *bunjin* or *literati* style pine.



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## Flowering Quince for Bonsai

by Brent Walston of Evergreen Gardenworks – suppliers of pre-bonsai plants.

<http://www.evergreengardenworks.com/> or email Brent at [bonsai@pacific.net](mailto:bonsai@pacific.net) for information

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### Introduction

Flowering Quince, *Chaenomeles* spp, has been used by the Chinese for thousands of years to celebrate the New Year. The brilliant flowers on the leafless stems are a wonderful harbinger of Spring. This tough and versatile plant also makes excellent bonsai. Bred in the East for many centuries, there are some remarkable cultivars that are relatively unknown to the West. Among these are cultivars that are short in stature and some that are even quite prostrate, and others that are deep clear reds, pure white, clear pink, or contorted in growth habit.

### Getting a Decent Sized Trunk

All of the cultivars sucker to some degree, a process that dissipates their energy into many small stems, making it difficult to get a good trunk. When growing them out for bonsai be sure to remove all the suckers as soon as they appear. There seems to be little advantage to putting them into the ground to fatten the trunks, they seem to grow just as quickly in five gallon cans. However plan to spend five years to grow even a 3/4 inch trunk. This is what makes thick trunked quinces so rare and so valuable. They are remarkably adapted to root pruning and usually suffer little from even a drastic pruning as long as an equal amount of top growth is removed either be-

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fore or at the same time. This phenomenon makes them ideal to collect and there is always someone who wants one removed from his or her yard.

### **Fruit and Flowers**

Another remarkable quality of Quince is its ability to repeat bloom after heavy pruning. Of course in a bonsai situation they are always being pruned so that they flower on and off all summer and especially in the fall. Most cultivars will also set fruit which is yet another pleasing quality for bonsai. The fruits range in size from about one inch for 'Orange Delight' to about the size of a medium apple for 'Toyo Nishiki' a popular cultivar that has pink, white and sometimes red blossoms on the same plant. I have even seen individual petals perfectly divided, one half pink and one half white. All of the fruits are edible and wonderfully fragrant, although they must be very ripe to release their perfume. This usually occurs in late Fall after a few frosts have softened them.

### **Proper Names**

The species names of Chaenomeles is a taxonomist's nightmare. Usually they are referred to as japonica although I see speciosa used often for the larger varieties. A similar situation exists for crabapples where the parent species are so cross bred that they are named simply Malus followed by the cultivar name. I have adopted this same procedure and will leave the fight to the taxonomists. Although I must add that C. contorta does seem to be a distinct species, or at least subspecies since the contorted characteristics are preserved in the seedlings.

### **Propagation**

Quince are easily propagated by cuttings and by division of the suckers or root division. They are best grown in full sun, except that some of the cultivars do burn in afternoon sun in the hottest and driest areas. They are not particularly heavy feeders and it is probably best to limit the amount of nitrogen to get the best flowers. The flowers form on wood that is a year or two old so do not remove all of the previous years growth when pruning. They occasionally will throw flowers from quite old stems especially after heavy pruning. Also the wood that forms first in the Spring will mature by late fall and may throw a few flowers then.

### **Cultivars**

I grow twenty some cultivars and it is not possible to describe them all here, but I will point out some of ones that are particularly suitable for use in bonsai. The contorted forms are always favorites. There is a white flowered one that has pale pink buds that open to pure white, and like all the contorted ones the stems are fantastically contorted, often doubling back on themselves. The Red Contorted has solid red buds that open to a deep pink. It is less aggressive than the white and will probably be ultimately smaller, perhaps four feet if planted in the open. This year I plant to introduce a contorted seedling selection that is a beautiful clear salmon pink.

One of the best forms for bonsai is 'Hime' a small red form with solid red flowers and showy yellow stamens. The flowers and fruit are smaller than other Quince making it a good choice. The growth is not aggressive and it gets quite twiggy at an early age. Another small flowered form is 'Kan Toyo'. The flowers are a nice pink and only about 1/2 inch across. A very rare and highly prized cultivar is 'Kurokoji' that has very beautiful dark red velvety flowers. This is the darkest red form I have ever seen. However, the growth is weak and upright, but the sheer beauty of the flowers make it good candidate. The most beautiful white form is undoubtedly 'Jet Trail', an almost prostrate and slightly contorted form. The flowers are a brilliant pure white without a trace

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of pink, and it is very floriferous and a repeat bloomer.

'Falconet Charlotte' has beautiful double pink flowers on a plant that is not too large and can be controlled. Also double flowered is 'Iwai Nishiki' a dark solid red with large fully double camellia shaped flowers that also tend to form in clusters sometimes 6 inches across. It is low growing and almost prostrate. Spitfire is another red that is quite small in stature and develops nice twiggy branches with little effort.

### And finally

Quinces are quite easy and very rewarding. People are delighted to come into our nursery and see a nice little Shohin bonsai with a single 3 inch yellow fruit hanging from it and sometimes flowers too at the same time!

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Pictures of flowering bonsai from the internet...

Quince



Forsythia



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## March Bonsai Care Tips

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Disclaimer: This is a general guide. Times can vary as much as a month depending on the weather trends. Some species of trees do not follow the general category guidelines of deciduous, evergreen or tropicals. Know your trees!

- Repot deciduous trees in early part of month or at first signs of root and bud growth. Repot junipers and spruces toward end of month. Continue protecting newly repotted trees from hard frosts.
  - Prune deciduous trees as buds begin to swell. Thin out fine growth.
  - Place covered trees outdoors as buds begin to burst.
  - Do not feed newly repotted trees until buds are open.
  - Check junipers and spruces for signs of spider mites and aphids.
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SPRINGFIELD BONSAI SOCIETY

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## Upcoming Events

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**March 9 – Repotting workshop – bring your trees to repot.** If your bonsai are showing signs of budding this is a great time to repot your trees.

**April 4 – Bougainvillea Workshop with Erik Wigert** from Florida. Come down to Cass Bonsai for a free Demonstration. Workshop cost \$75 for current SBS members, \$100 non-members.

**April 24-26 – Shohin Bonsai Convention in St.Louis** Bonsai demonstrations, workshops and vendors from all over the country. Visit [www.stlbonsai.org](http://www.stlbonsai.org) or call 314-952-1317

**May 9th and 16th – Bonsai Basics – To register,**

call LLCC Community Learning 217-786-2292  
Bonsai, literally “potted plant,” is the art of styling miniature trees in a container. This workshop introduces you to the basic styles and principles of bonsai. You will get hands-on experience styling and potting two trees (a tropical and an evergreen) for you to keep and enjoy. *A \$40 supply fee is payable to the instructor the first day of class.*

**Instructor:** Gary Trammell and SBS members  
**Course Code:** CEW 106-X40 (summer session)  
**Dates:** Saturdays, 5/9/09 – 5/16/09, 10 a.m.– noon  
**Number of Sessions:** 2 **Registration Fee:** \$15  
**Limit:** 15 **Location:** Washington Park Botanical Gardens, 1740 W. Fayette, Springfield

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## Administrivia

Your 2009 Officers are:

President – Gary Trammell 217-741-4849 (M)  
Vice President – Scott Day 217-585-8473 (R)  
Treasurer – Tom Applebee  
Secretary – Manish Sumant 217-652-9619 (M)  
& newsletter editor

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

Email [msumant1@netscape.net](mailto:msumant1@netscape.net) to sign up or visit  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BonsaiSBS/>