



BADGER BONSAI SOCIETY

Promoting and Enjoying the Ancient Art of Bonsai Since 1972

Badger News | A Publication of the Badger Bonsai Society | March 2019

Next Meeting Date:

Thursday Mar-14-2019 | 6:30 to 8:00pm

Olbrich Botanical Gardens

3330 Atwood Avenue, Madison, WI

AGENDA:

Presentation on Niwaki; Soil (for sale) and Moss

CLUB OFFICERS:

Co-Presidents Bill and Karl

Vice President Mary

Treasurer Gary

Web Master / Newsletter Wayne

Librarian Derek

Refreshments Elaine

President's Message

Mar-14th Program

We have several good discussion topics and an exciting program for this month. I hope you are all able to attend this meeting — *Karl*

- **"Niwaki, Bonsai, and manhole covers"**

- **Soils for Bonsai and use of Moss**

We will have gallon bags of soil for sale.

- **Follow-up on Kintsugi?**

Derek might speak a little on his dive into last month's topic; page 3 has comments & pictures

Niwaki, Bonsai, and Manhole Covers

We are pleased this month to highlight a program by our Co-President, Bill B. Having recently returned from a visit to Japan, Bill has prepared a program that explains the landscape pruning concept of **Niwaki "cloud pruning"**, and its close relationship to bonsai. This will also touch

on some everyday Japanese aesthetics and how they relate to Bonsai and Niwaki. Bill has some instructive images, Japanese snacks, tea, and raffle items.

from Karl: I freely admit I had to go look this word up, because I was not familiar with it.

Niwaki refers to sculpted garden trees and are an essential element in virtually every Japanese garden. Just as bonsai need pruning to maintain their shape, so too do niwaki. If you have ever tried to prune a tree growing in the ground with a conventional step ladder, you know how difficult it can be to get the two front feet and the two back feet to sit evenly on the ground and in a place where you can safely reach the branches needing pruning. The Japanese came up with a three-legged step ladder to make this easier.

easier – yes;

more stable – no.

Let your center-of-mass get outside of the ladder base's triangular shape you are asking for a **"head-plant"** and a rush trip to the emergency room.

image from

www.hasegawaladders.com



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"Sexing" the Ginkgo

It is possible to distinguish between male and female ginkgo trees even at a young age.

In a male ginkgo the bud from which the leaves emerge will have a structure that looks like a very small pine cone.

In a female ginkgo the ovule is on a slender stalk.

See:

http://blog.pennlive.com/gardening/2012/08/ginkgo_gender.html



male (left)

female (below)



Tree quotes

"All plants need water and nutrients to grow. Like any container grown plants, bonsai have to be watered regularly and they also need to be supplied with nutrients during the growing season. One of the commonest causes of death in bonsai is poor watering."

— Peter Chan

Making Bonsai Soil

We will have gallon bags of soil available at the March meeting. Components of this soil mix will be crushed grower size grit, granite (or quartzite), Turf-ace, and cow manure.

If you wish to make your own mix, here are a few places (around Madison) that sell these components:

- For the chicken grit, any feed store will probably carry this, usually in two sizes – starter and grower.
- Farm and Fleet on Stoughton Road has 'Cherry Stone' which has a red/purple color to it \$7.99 for a fifty pound bag.
- For Turf-ace (Turf-ace makes several different products – **you want MVP**). Fifty pounds of Turf-ace typically sells for around \$19. There are two sources in Madison:
 - Reinders Inc., (608) 244-0200, 4217 Nakossa Trail
 - SiteOne Landscape Supply #569; (608) 831-3240, 8520 Fairway Place, Middleton, WI 53562
- Lastly, cow manure can be bought at any garden center for about \$3 or \$4 a bag ... unless you know a cow (**just kidding !!! ... this is not a good idea** because of the plants, seeds, and pathogens that can exist in raw manure unless you go through a heat treatment / sterilization process ... easier to spend the \$4 and let it stink up someone else's oven).

Using Moss With Your Bonsai

Moss on the soil surface of your bonsai really dresses them up. At our show one can always hear members of the public ooh-ing and aah-ing over nice green moss.

We will look at some varieties and strategies for growing moss ...

- **WARNING: DO NOT use 'Irish moss'** which is not a true moss. It will quickly colonize the entire surface and make watering very difficult.

our website: badgerbonsai.net

This is a very good article on Moss Basics, posted to **ofBonsai Magazine** by Will Heath on January 5, 2007.

<http://ofbonsai.org/species-specific/accent-plantings/moss-basics>

Derek's Update: *My Kintsugi Experiment*

After Karl's presentation on Kintsugi at the Feb-2019 BBS meeting, as I was the only one who brought a pot to fix, Karl gave me the epoxy and gold mica to try and use.

The blue pot had already been crudely repaired with some super glue but the cracks were still visible and only partially filled. The brown pot was one I picked for a dollar at goodwill like Karl had suggested, and so I broke it to try the repair.

- The repair is harder then it looks in the video, you have to work fast, since the epoxy sets up in under five minutes.
- Also the brush started to harden, so I used the tip of a shish kabob stick.
- Scrap away any excess before it hardens too.
- I would definitely recommend practicing on a cheap pot first before doing your kintsugi on a pot that you want to look good.

TREE QUOTES

"For in the true nature of things, if we rightly consider, every green tree is far more glorious than if it were made of gold and silver."
— Martin Luther



Other Shows and Conventions:

Annual Spring Festival - 2019

MABS 2019 will be held on April 12-14, 2019. It will take place at the Holiday Inn in Harrisburg Hershey / Grantville, PA 17028 (Exit 80, I-81)

American Bonsai Society
2019 National Convention
Houston-TX
April 11 - 14, 2019

Midwest Bonsai Society
15th Annual May Bonsai Exhibit
May 11 - 12, 2019

ANNUAL PRAIRIE STATE BONSAI SHOW
August 2 - 4, 2019
Hours: Fri, 6pm - 9pm, Sat - Sun, 10am - 4pm,
at the Morton Arboretum

42nd Annual Mid-America Bonsai Exhibition
August 16 - 18, 2019

If you recall, in the Jan-2019 BBS newsletter Co-President Karl mentioned an article in the 4th Quarter issue of Bonsai magazine published by BCI (Bonsai Clubs International), that showcased a cloud-based subscription service to build, maintain and manage MyBonsai Diary. You might find this to be of interest ...

Information can be found at:
<https://mybonsaidiary.com/>

for our website ... Developing Timelines

Something to think about and to discuss at the Mar-2019 meeting: can we develop WI-specific timelines / todo-lists relative to our bonsai.

We might consider categorizing or grouping these on the basis of: Conifers, Deciduous, Flowering, others ...

These could become living documents that we maintain on our website based on membership inputs from your past success or failures.

Tentative 2019 Calendar for

Badger Bonsai Society meeting & events:
(date is 2nd Thursday unless noted differently below)

March meeting – Niwaki; Make bonsai soil; using moss with bonsai

Slab making workshop TBD

April meeting – Grove workshop; using club supplied trees

Spring Collecting Activities:
Tim's woods — TBD
BC Nursery March 23 - 24, April 13 - 14

May meeting – BYO workshop
May TBD – Field trip to Davidsons Japanese Maples in IL

May 18 -19 BBS Annual Show, Olbrich Gardens

June meeting – Veteran Demonstration – Three of our own experts will show their creativity. Field trip to Rotary Garden Janesville and Anderson Garden, Rockford

July (date probably 2nd Saturday)
Picnic with white elephant exchange; bring items for sale / swap / giveaway

Field trip to Mayflower Nursery, Hobart, WI

August meeting – Succulents, guest speaker

September meeting – Bonsai Styles

October meeting – American Bonsai Masters and examples of their work

November meeting – Tropical workshop; BBS elections

December meeting – Suiseki and daiza making

Jan-2020: Annual Club Dinner