

# Corpus Christi Bonsai Club Newsletter

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. Individual Membership is \$15.00 per year (students \$5. 00). Membership for couples is \$20 per year. Method of Dues Proration for new members is detailed in the Bonsai Club Yearbook. Early payment of dues is appreciated and allows your name to be included in the club yearbook available in January. Meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of each month, January through October, at the Garden Senior Center, 5325 Greely Dr, Corpus Christi TX

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Contact: [djfalcon87@gmail.com](mailto:djfalcon87@gmail.com) to submit articles, photos, comments or suggestions,

## Message from the President

*Versie Marks, President*

In March some of our members came over and helped me repot most of my trees. In May a new batch of weeds came popping up, they are out of control. I pull weeds out of pots as I water, they are still taking over. Last year I had them under control. Is there any truth to the saying that new soil brings new weeds? These are not the same ones I was pulling last year.

Also, everything is getting fed once a week. The trees are loving it and so are the weeds. Now the heat, I had everything where I thought it would show best, now I'm moving half my trees to shaded areas of the yard. The pots are scorching. The only thing in the yard doing a sun dance is the Black Olive, its blooming. Speaking of Black Olives, the program this month is on Black Olives. This will be a great program. The tree is at Yvonne's and the only time they like to be repotted is during the hottest part of the summer---and we are there.

Looking ahead, don't forget we have a pot swap or sale at this meeting. I guess if you have trees you want to sell this is a good time to do that also. We also need to start gathering material for the root over rock workshop, June 29 at W.Hq, at 9am. Also, Cheryl Manning will be here in early September, wow, seems like September should be farther away than just three months. We would like to have both workshops full; maybe we should start looking for material for that also.

## CCBC May 2013's Meeting Minutes

*Penny Taber, Secretary*

The meeting was called to order at 7:00<sup>pm</sup> By Versie Marks

- Versie introduced our guest for the evening, Beverly's sister, Rose.
- Versie thanked Beverly and me for the evening's refreshments.

# Upcoming Events:

**June 12<sup>th</sup>**      **Wednesday Workshop**  
**Garden Senior Center**  
**7p.m.-9p.m.**

**June 27<sup>th</sup>, Thursday**      **Monthly Meeting**  
**Garden Senior Center**  
**7p.m.-9p.m.**

**Program**      **Black Olive**

**Speaker**      **Yvonne Padilla & Rick Smoll**

**Tree Display**      **Black Olive**

Dates to Remember:

Tuesday June 27<sup>th</sup> – Pot Swap

Saturday May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013  
Root over Rock Workshop @  
World Hq's

- Treasurers report was approved as read by Dale Hernandez
- Old business: We look forward to the root over rock workshop Saturday June 29<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00<sup>am</sup> at world headquarters. Al Marks has graciously made boxes for our Root over Rock plantings. The boxes will be free! Thank you All!
- There will be a pot swap at our June 27<sup>th</sup> meeting. Yah!
- New business: A motion to purchase a DVD player and HDMI to VGA adapter with club money was set forth and approved.
- Yvonne received a very nice thank you letter from Joey McCoy for our \$1000.00 donation to the Texas Bonsai Exhibit. Joey is a very nice guy.
- The 2013 State Convention, held in New Braunfels, made a very nice profit. Kudos to the sponsors, Austin and San Antonio Clubs.
- Our 2013 Touring Artist, Cheryl Manning, will be here September 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>. Workshops will be announced.
- Mark Bynum and Yvonne Padilla will conduct an Enhancing Conventions Brainstorming Session at 10:30<sup>am</sup> Saturday June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Location will be Jade Gardens in Wimberley Texas. Anyone with past convention experience is welcome to attend.
- Meeting was adjourned at 7:22pm. After refreshments, the Ficus program was conducted by Linda May and Dale Hernandez. The program tree was won by David Falcon.

# June Bonsai

*By John Miller*

*John Miller, who writes a monthly column for the Bonsai Society of Dallas and Fort Worth Bonsai Society, has agreed to share his column with us. We need to make adjustments for our warmer and damper climate, with earlier springs, longer summers, late fall and erratic winters.*

Join me in congratulating a couple of guys from our area in being elected to the Board of Directors of the National Bonsai Foundation, Howard Smith of Dallas and Alan Walker of Lake Charles Louisiana. Go to [www.bonsai-nbf.org](http://www.bonsai-nbf.org) to read about it and also the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum. And while you are there be sure to click on Peter Tea Bonsai Blog. Mr. Tea will be our Texas touring artist in 2014. On his blog he describes work he was assigned to do as an apprentice in Japan on “Zuiou”, the 1996 Kokufu prize winner, a Japanese Black Pine.

If you think you need to leaf prune, you probably can still do it but need to be careful, it could turn hot in a hurry. I have done it on Shumard Oaks successfully. Again never leaf prune the atropurpeum varieties of Japanese maples, they don’t rebud very well.

When night temperatures stay above 60 degrees you can think about repotting some of the tropicals. I would wait another month thou for the buttonwood.

However, some tropicals can be leaf pruned all summer. The Ficus nerifolia especially benefits by leaf pruning and can be done more than once each summer. That will develop the heavy twiginess you see in the Ficus bonsai from the Far East.

As the summer progresses the growth of the deciduous trees will slow also. But you still need to keep an eye out for errant shoots. Keeping a clipper with you when watering would let you take care of most of them. Just like in the spring a shoot too long will thicken the twig too much. The major pruning chore is now transferred to the tropicals.

Tip pinching on some flowering species like the crape myrtle will result in fewer flowers but if you let it go they get out of shape. I prefer to try to balance the flower/design question by pinching early. This provides more growing tips to divide the energy and the resulting flower is shorter. It’s less showy but more in scale.

Also if you have fruiting bonsai, you should reduce the number of fruit on the tree. The number one goal of the tree is to provide seeds for reproduction and it will starve itself in order to do so. Again, most fruit are too large to look good on a bonsai

You may think the days are relatively cool but the sun can still make the pot pretty hot. Not only does this dry out the soil very fast but the tree roots do not like a hot soil. A temperature I have heard given is that 120 degrees will kill roots on most plants. I cannot give you a precise to-do list since your backyard is different from mine but you should be sure that the sun does not hit the pots directly. Notice especially where the hot afternoon sun, from 2pm to sundown, hits your bonsai area. If you use a cover of any kind be sure that the side of the pot is protected also. A loose weave cover is preferable to solid paper or foil.

Think of walking barefoot down an open sidewalk. Anything solid (such as a pot) will soak up the direct rays and get very hot. It's bad enough when the air temp goes over a hundred without the sun adding to it. You should do something to block the direct rays of the sun and put a bit of air, however thin, between the material and the pot and/or soil. Afternoon shade helps the foliage but the morning sun can heat up the pot too much. A solid cover on the soil is not very desirable as it makes it hard to water. Long fiber moss on the surface will protect the soil and let water thru. Cloth on top of the moss would work and can be extended out to protect the sides of the pot. Aluminum foil has been used and some have built wooden boxes the same size as the pot to set the bonsai in but these are not desirable techniques as they do not leave any air space.

Get to know you trees like your children. Which ones use more water and which ones stay moist between waterings. If some are difficult to keep happy you can try moving those to a cooler location (but be sure they get their sunlight). Another trick is to group these together so that you can hit them with a shot of water twice a day and not have to spent the time going thru all your trees.

Extended damp weather (if we have it) is good for fungal diseases like black leaf spot and mildew. Treat weekly with potassium hydroxide, or sodium hydroxide (baking soda), or a 1% hydrogen peroxide.

Also watch for signs of insect problems. The spider mite will always be near. Others to look for are scale of various forms, aphids, and mealy bugs. I use the organic foliar feed (1 Tablespoon each fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses and cider vinegar per gallon water) to control all these. You can use some of the other organic controls or a chemical according to label directions. Always read the label directions carefully and never apply oil based chemicals to buttonwoods.

If ants, or any other creature, are building nests in the soil, the tunnels and cavities will prevent proper watering and result in loss of roots. After you get rid of the ants be sure to grab your chopsticks and work the soil down and eliminate any holes. You will probably need to add a little more soil on top.

The best way to fertilize bonsai is by using fertilizer cakes. The cakes provide a slow constant feeding each time you water. Cakes made with a cottonseed base will provide as acid ph when they break down which we need in any city water system I know of. Making your own is easy and much cheaper than buying them. I use chemical fertilizers such as Miracid or Peters a couple of times a month also. My main problem with chemicals is not knowing how many bad salts may accumulate in the soil and also in knowing that each time I water I am washing the chemicals out on the ground.

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# **Tropical Bonsai School**

## **By Pedro J. Morales**

### **Year 1**

**June 22<sup>nd</sup> – June 28<sup>th</sup>**  
**9 am – 5 pm**

### **Year 2**

**July 27<sup>th</sup> – August 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**9 am – 5 pm**

**Held at “Timeless Trees” in Rosenberg, TX.**

**Seven days of intensive instruction, lecture, videos, and hands-on work with the world renowned Bonsai artist Pedro Morales. Lunch and supplies included. The best instructional value in the U.S.**

**\$600.00 per class**

Contact Hurley Johnson to sign up, 832-526-5962 or [hurley@all-tex.net](mailto:hurley@all-tex.net)