



The Louisiana Bonsai Society Newsletter

September 2021

August Monthly Meeting



On August 17, 2021, the LBS was fortunate to have Matt Rector, Manager of Clegg's Nursery, give a lecture on growing healthy bonsai. He discussed different types of fertilizer, insecticides, miticides and fungicides.

The elements essential for plant growth are carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, phosphorus, potassium, nitrogen, sulfur, calcium, iron, magnesium, boron, manganese, copper, zinc, molybdenum and chlorine.

Fertilizers that Matt Suggests

Osmocote Plus- Osmocote fertilizer works by releasing fertilizer through the resin coating by the process of osmosis. A good product with slow release and increased micronutrient load, but high priced. Supposed to last 6 months but it releases nutrients more slowly in cold weather, more quickly in hot weather.

Balance-Like Osmocote, but releases in 2 ½-3 months. A much better buy for your money, it is 1/3 the cost.

Miracle-Gro Shake and Feed-Ok but must apply more often. Only lasts about 6 weeks.

Azomite-Contains trace volcanic elements with a large array of mineral and metals. It is a natural product, discovered 68 years ago in Utah, mined from an ancient volcanic eruption into a seabed, and is distinct from any other mineral deposit in the world. It is a powder (ideal for blending in soil) which is used to improve root systems, yields, and overall plant vigor; wake up microbials in the soil and remineralize depleted soils.

Mykos This is not a fertilizer, but a beneficial soil microbe that enhances root structures by forming a symbiotic relationship with a host plant by excreting enzymes which break down soil. Acting as an extension of the roots, Mykos increases the plant's ability to source nutrients and water more efficiently in exchange for carbohydrates.

Insecticides that Matt Suggests

Horticultural Oil- It is not systemic but great for killing insects by coating them and rendering them unable to breathe or reproduce. You must make direct contact with every insect and will need to re-dose to guarantee elimination. Do not use on hot days as the oil will allow the leaves to burn. You can spray in the evening and wash off the leaves in the morning.

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The Louisiana Bonsai Society (LBS) is a non-profit organization of people interested in the art of bonsai.

Hi-Yield Comes as a foliar spray for immediate control or systemic granular for prevention of insect infestation. Contains imidacloprid which is used for a wide variety of insects but is not a miticide. It lasts 2-3 months.

Acephate powder or granular-Acephate is an organophosphate foliar and soil insecticide (lasts about 10–15 days) used primarily for control of aphids, including resistant species such leaf miners, caterpillars, sawflies, thrips, and spider mites.

BioAdvanced 3-N-1 -spray or granular systemic-several different formulations-contains imidacloprid, kills insects, fungi and mites.

Liquid Copper-great broad-spectrum fungicide that controls diseases caused by bacteria and fungi. Must contact every surface to achieve control.

Show and Tell

Lowell T. led the discussion on Show and Tell starting with his root over rock boxwood and the improvements he wants to make to the design.



He also discussed this Fukien Tea. Though he has made several improvements in it in the past, he has been letting it grow to strengthen the tree and thicken the lower limbs.



Robert brought 2 of his new acquisitions from the GNOBS Auction on Saturday. This one is a *Xylosma bahamensis* native to Central and South America, a flowering tropical tree in the willow

family with very tiny chartreuse and yellow leaves. It is very slow growing with good branch structure, likes full sun, moderate water, and fertilizer.



Patty brought in her crape myrtle for assessment by Matt, who diagnosed it with an aphid infestation.



Aphids do damage by feeding on the soft tissues and plant sap producing honeydew and sooty mold. Honeydew is the excrement of sap-sucking insects like aphids. Sooty mold is a fungus that grows on top of honeydew and coats the leaves of your trees to the point where they can no longer absorb sunlight. This interrupts photosynthesis and the tree will not be able to produce the nutrients they need for survival. If your trees and shrubs are turning black you most likely have a sooty mold problem caused by an insect infestation.

Matt suggested she use an insecticide spray, contacting all surfaces, and repeat in a few days. Aphids reproduce quickly and you must kill every one of them on the tree or the problem continues. He also suggested that since we know aphids attack crape myrtles in summer, anticipating the problem and treating with a systemic before you have an infestation is the best way to prevent damage to the tree.

What's Happening to Your Tree?

If you notice your bonsai looking a little off, it's time to investigate! One or more of the common bonsai pests or diseases could be plaguing it. The earlier the detection, the better when dealing with these issues. A good rule of thumb is to isolate your sick bonsai, so pests and diseases don't make their way to your other plants.

Prevention of Diseases

A strong, healthy plant is much less likely to contract viruses or develop fungi and molds, so the best prevention is to give your tree everything it needs to stay in good health and protect itself from bacteria and disease.

You can prevent bonsai tree diseases by:

- keeping your tree clean and free of dust and debris
- keeping soil free of fallen blooms, fruit, or leaves
- providing sufficient lighting, fresh air, and ventilation
- making sure that soil is properly aerated, not too compacted, and replenished when needed
- repotting to prevent your plant from becoming pot bound
- applying fertilizer correctly
- using proper pruning techniques and applying wound paste to encourage healing

Signs of Bonsai Tree Diseases

There are several bonsai tree diseases, viruses, molds, and fungi that can affect your bonsai, and recognizing a few common signs will let you know when your plant may be in trouble. Most diseased trees will show at least one of the following symptoms:

- distorted or discolored leaves and flowers
- loss of leaves out of season
- yellowed, wilted, dried, or falling leaves
- slow growth
- wilted or drooping branches
- dieback – the gradual dying of shoots and leaves beginning at the tips

Common Bonsai Tree Diseases and Pests

Aphids: These tiny insects have pear-shaped bodies and suck sap from your bonsai. You can usually find

aphids crowded together on the underside of the leaves. They secrete sugary "honey dew" droplets that ants and mold love to feed on.

Black spot: This is a fungus that appears on the leaves of your bonsai. What starts out as black spots grows into patches over time.

Leaf Spot: Similar to Black Spot, this fungus is characterized by white, black, brown, or grey spots (depending on the species), on leaves or small twigs and branches. Typically, blemishes will be white at first and then change to a darker color as the disease progresses. Eventually, lesions will develop, and foliage will wither and die. Any affected leaves, fruit, or branches must be removed immediately, the soil cleaned of any debris, and healthy foliage sprayed with a fungicide.

Canker disease or Scab: This can look like pale leaves, slow growth, and swollen bark. Some potential causes are too much nitrogen in the fertilizer or an unhealed wound after pruning.

Caterpillars: While cute, these bugs are very harmful to the bonsai. You can tell your bonsai has a caterpillar if you see leaves have been eaten or there is silk between the branches.

Chlorosis: This is a condition caused by a lack of chlorophyll and results from a damaged or compacted root system as well as nutrient deficiencies such as a lack of iron. Leaves will turn yellow, but the veins will remain green, and the plant will begin to wilt. Adding chelated iron to the water and taking proper care of your tree's roots will help treat chlorosis.

Mealybugs: These small oval-shaped bugs hide in any cool, dark place on your bonsai. Some common hiding spots are the root system or in the nook between a leaf and a branch.

Mildew: This fungus can grow on your bonsai's leaves and branches when it's humid and there's not enough light or air circulation. It's powdery and white and can weaken your bonsai.

Red spider mites: These mites that look like tiny red spiders are usually found on the underside of leaves. They prefer older leaves and spin a fine, silky web on the bottom of the leaf to protect their tiny white eggs.

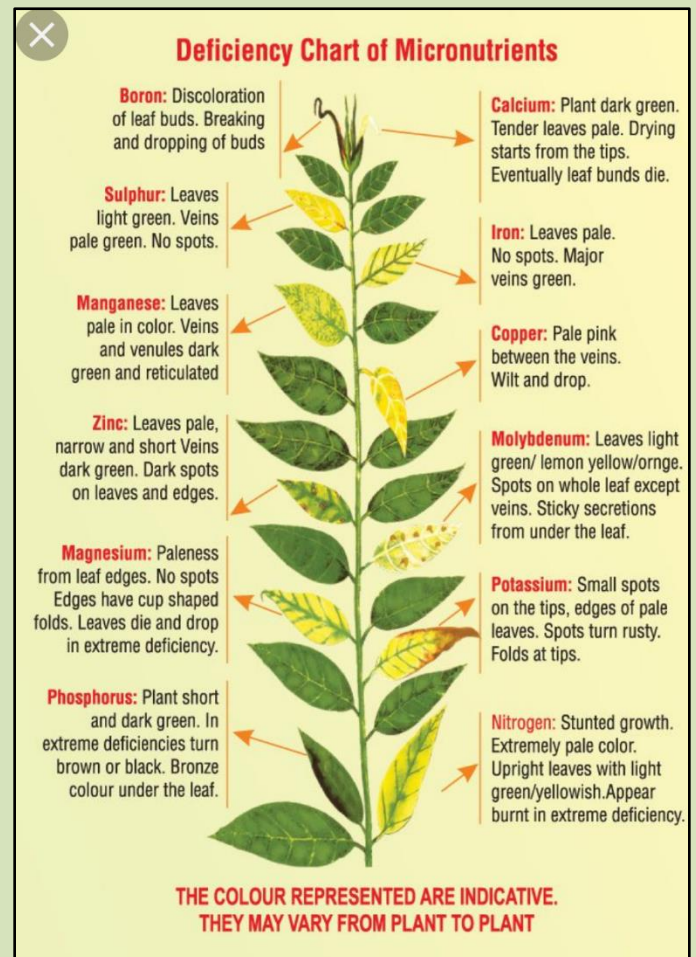
Root rot: Root rot is caused by over-watering and lack of good drainage. If infected, your bonsai's fine white roots will turn brown and soft, its leaves will discolor, branches will weaken, and growth will be stunted.

Are Your Trees Missing Something?

Plants need a mix of micro- and macronutrients to thrive. These nutrients are essential for healthy plant growth.

Micronutrients	Macronutrients
<i>Boron</i>	<i>Nitrogen</i>
<i>Manganese</i>	<i>Phosphorus</i>
<i>Zinc</i>	<i>Potassium</i>
<i>Iron</i>	<i>Magnesium</i>
<i>Copper</i>	<i>Calcium</i>
<i>Molybdenum</i>	<i>Sulfur</i>
<i>Chlorine</i>	

Leaves will alert you to missing nutrients



Rust: Rust is a fungus that produces orange and brown spots on the underside of leaves. It looks like rusted metal and causes your bonsai to lose leaves.

Scales: These oval-shaped brown insects may look like bumps on the bark at first glance. They also love to congregate on the underside of leaves and where the leaf meets the bark.

Slugs or snails: These creatures can be harmful to your bonsai because they spread fungus, mold, and disease. They like warm and damp weather best and leave behind slime trails on leaves and branches that are easy to spot.

Vine weevils: When adult vine weevils eat the leaves of a bonsai, you'll see "notches" around the edges of leaves or holes in the center. These bugs are small, only about 10mm, and are black with yellow or white spots on their back. Their babies can be found burrowed in the soil, eating the roots of the plant.

Treatment of Bonsai Tree Diseases

Once you discover the presence of disease, the priority is to make sure that you prevent it from spreading to the rest of the tree or to other plants in your collection. It is important to examine your bonsai regularly for signs of illness or infection. This will allow you to catch any problems early and take all the steps necessary for a quick recovery. If left unattended, some bonsai diseases can cause severe damage, or even death.

If your plant becomes infected, you should:

- Immediately remove your tree to a secluded location away from other plants to prevent cross-contamination or the spread of disease, infections, or pests.
- Remove all affected leaves or infected growth and burn.
- Spray healthy foliage with a recommended fungicide.
- Check for possible causes of disease such as root rot, poor ventilation, or over-moist soil.
- Sterilize all tools used in pruning the affected tree.
- Place the treated tree in a well-ventilated area with proper lighting to prevent reinfection.
- Apply the correct pesticide for the type of pest identified.

Bonsai Tree Styles Around the World

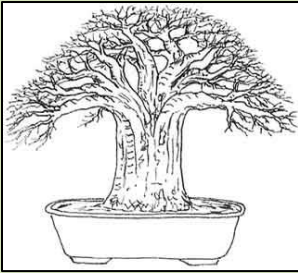
Marla T.

I saw a beautiful tree on-line done in an African Pierneef Style. Since I had not ever heard that term, it led me to investigate further. I found this great book on Amazon ('Practical Guide to Bonsai Styles of the World'), written by Charles Ceronio, which explains this and other many other styles.

African Bonsai Styles

South Africa is the only country in the world that has its own Bonsai styles and is recognized by the Japanese Bonsai Masters.

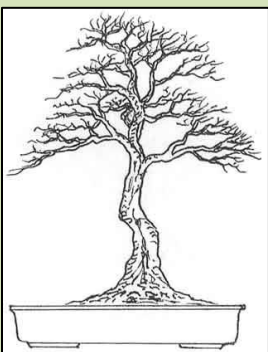
Baobab Style



The Baobab is a native tree which grows in the drier tropical parts of Africa. This enormous, sometimes strangely shaped tree fascinates all who see it. Botanists depict the baobab as a monarch, a monster of

a prehistoric world, a vegetable elephant or a carrot growing upside-down. Some African tribes call it the tree that has been planted upside down by the gods. This tree is not known for its height, which ranges between fourteen and twenty meters, but for its enormous girth. Livingstone apparently once camped under a baobab with a circumference of twenty-six meters.

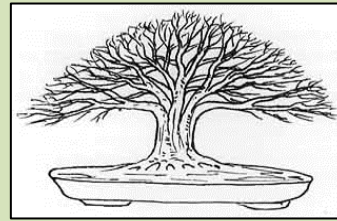
Bushveld Style



The bushveld (Afrikaans for land covered by trees) is a broad area found in the warmer subtropical parts of Southern Africa. The trees growing in this area have specific natural growth characteristics and, as in most African tree species, the branch structure is very

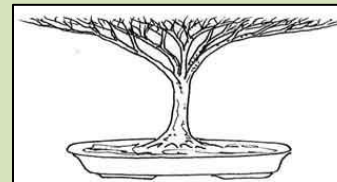
informal and zigzagged. The dry conditions hamper the development of these trees, resulting in their unique forms. The main objective of the style is to achieve a natural appearance and radiate an air of strength and endurance.

Wild Fig Style



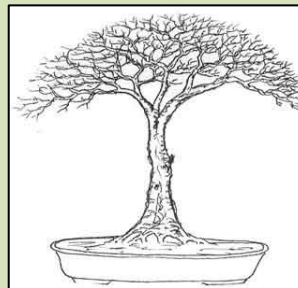
The wild fig style can be regarded as one of the variations of the broom style. The dominant feature of the style is a full umbrella silhouette with an extremely wide branch span. The widespread growth of these trees is characteristic of most of the Ficus species growing in the tropical parts of the world.

Flat Top Style



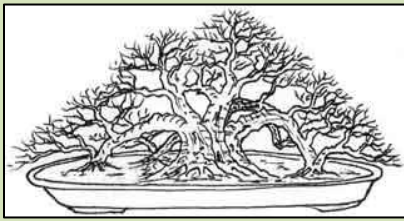
The flat top style has its origin in two Acacia species found only in Africa, namely Acacia sieberana and Acacia abyssinica. These magnificent trees are found in the warmer parts of Africa and have a particular branch formation that inspired Charles to create a new African bonsai style. The A. sieberana is a huge deciduous tree with widespread branches which form a flattened circle similar to the spokes of a wheel when viewed from above. The A. abyssinica, found in Ethiopia has a more slender trunk and appears more delicate than that of the sieberana. The interesting trademark of these two trees is that the top growth is short, hence the unique flat top.

Pierneef Style



The Pierneef or open-umbrella shape is exclusive to Africa. The African continent has the largest variety of flora in the world, but the Acacia dominates the African scene. These superb trees with their semi-circle crowns, like open umbrellas, inspired Charles to develop a new African bonsai style. The umbrella-shaped form was spontaneously named after the well-known South African artist, Jacob Hendrik Pierneef, who depicted many of these tree forms in his paintings.

Wonderboom Style



The elbow or Wonderboom style originated with an extraordinarily large and famous wild fig growing on the northern foothills of the Magaliesberg mountains, a range that extends into the suburbs of the city of Pretoria. It is commonly known as the Wonderboom, meaning tree of wonder, or rather, unique tree. Over the centuries, the long spreading branches started to grow downwards and came to rest on the ground like an old man resting his elbows. The huge branches then took root and sent up new trees. Several of these branches in turn gave rise to a third circle of trees. Today the Wonderboom has a height of approximately twenty-five meters and a spread of about fifty-five meters. One thousand one hundred people can sit in the shade of this unique tree.

Surprise Crape Myrtle Bloom

Marla T.

I had a surprise with a new crape myrtle variety that I ordered from The Crape Myrtle Company, called Velma's Royal Delight. I ordered this certain one because I wanted a purple color and because my grandmother's name was Velma. I trimmed it back and stuck a cutting into a planter of Miracle-Gro, left it on the shaded patio for 2 weeks, then put it out with my other bonsai. For saving it, I was rewarded with this lovely big bloom on the cutting. What a beauty!



Kathy P.'s Watering System



When you're too lazy to haul water to the bonsai, just position sprinkler and turn on just enough to make it rotate. All set for this mini dry spell.

Fall Color



Jim S. sent this photo of his beautiful Chinese elm putting on its fall color. (Note that heavily laden persimmon in the background)

Floating Mountain



This bonsai piece seems to be inspired by the movie Avatar, the floating Hallelujah Mountains of Pandora. The welded chain is quite an interesting concept.

Mike Lane Workshop

Don't forget to let Lowell know if you want to register for the BYOT Workshop Sept. 29 from 5-9 pm at the BR Garden Center. The last day to register and pay the \$45 fee will be the day of the monthly meeting Sept. 21. There will be no cost to members to attend as a silent observer.

From the President

Hope everyone is recovering from the storm. We plan to have a workshop to work on club trees and anyone's tree they want to bring to Forest Park Sept. 25th at 9:30am (the Saturday after our regular meeting). At the board meeting, we decided to keep the meeting on the third Tuesday each month, but we will try to plan more activities for people who can't make the regular meeting.

Just For Laughs

If you loved Legos as a kid and can't keep a bonsai tree alive, this product was made just for you! All the fun and excitement of watching your creation come to life, making a bonsai pot and stand, styling your tree, and adding beautiful pink cherry blossoms!



This rewarding bonsai project, made for adults, includes 878 pieces, creating a beautiful display piece measuring over 7 in. (18 cm) high. Available on Amazon for \$49.99. Order yours today!

Coming Events

September 21, 2021- Monthly Meeting 7 pm. Be sure you have registered and paid for the Mike Lane Workshop. Send payment check and registration to the PO Box 41661, BR, LA 70835 or pay at the meeting. Sept 21 is the last day to register and pay.

September 25, 2021, 9:30am Workshop to work on club trees for the Fall Show Sale at Forest Community Park.

September 29, 2021- 5-9 pm Artist **Mike Lane**, sponsored by Lone Star Bonsai Federation, -Bring your own tree workshop, Baton Rouge Garden Center.

October 23, 2021- Louisiana Day of Bonsai hosted by GNOBS.

November 13, 14, 2021-10 am-4 pm, LBS Fall Show, Baton Rouge Garden Center

January 21, 22, 23, 2022-Mid-Winter Workshop w/ David DeGroot. Register early.

February 2022-Proposing a workshop either the 10th or 13th, depending on availability of guest artist Jennifer Price while she is in the area.

