

Volume 210

March 2020

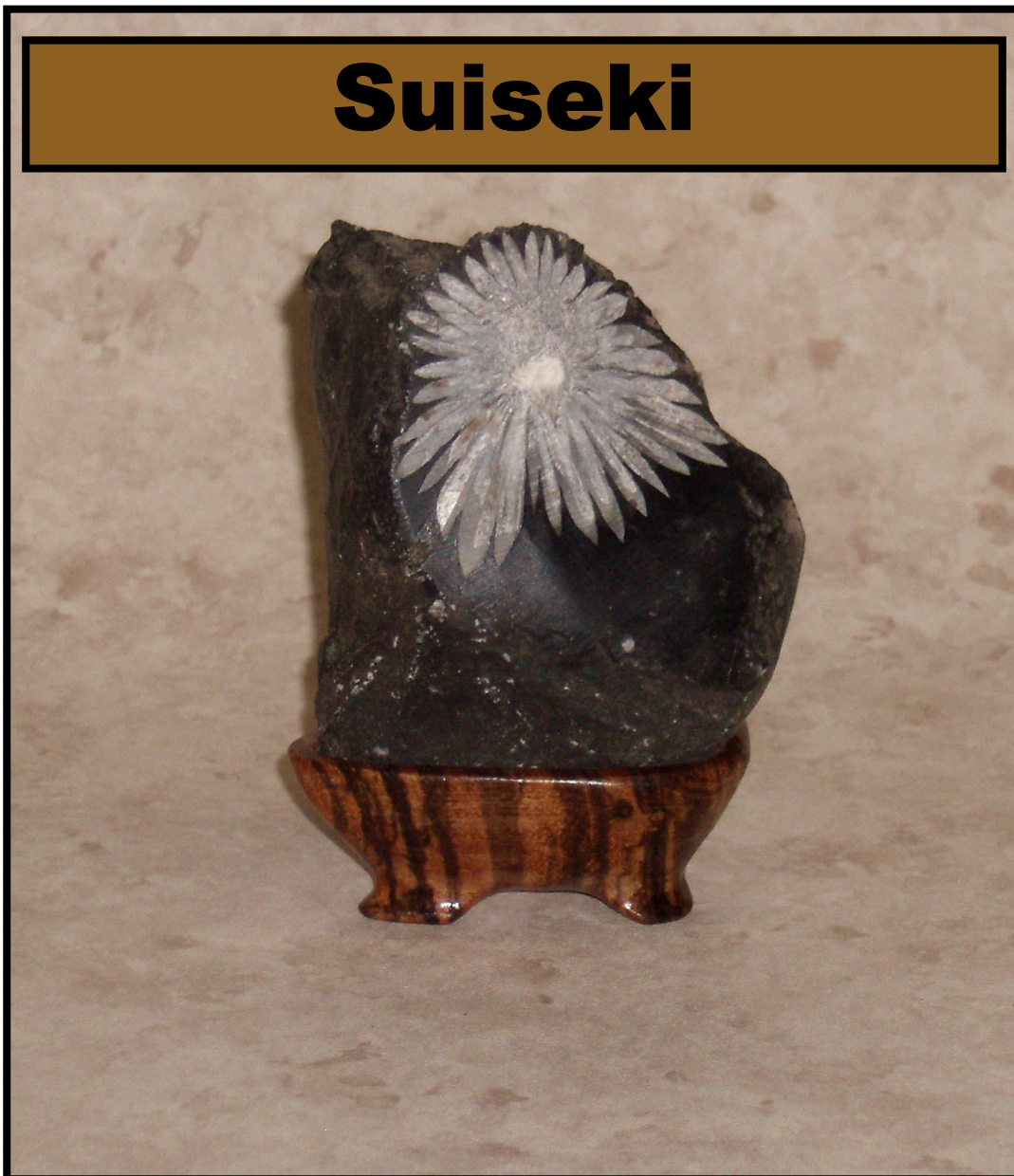


INDIANAPOLIS BONSAI CLUB

The Bonsai Creation

IBC

Suiseki



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From the President

A simple definition of **Suiseki** is a stone shaped by the acts of nature, i.e. wind, storms, sand, water, volcanic activity, etc. These forces create unique shapes with beauty and strong feelings of power, all in just a few inches. Suseki is the topic of the March meeting and will be presented by IBC members Bill Vincent and Scott Yelich. Sounds exciting.

In researching for this month's message I found an article written by Steve Moore, a friend and member of the Fort Wayne Bonsai Club, back in 2012 and with significant changes in the IBC membership since 2012, I thought it worthy of republishing. It is especially interesting to those of us who have bonsai that are native to high elevations, i.e. Spruces, Pines and other conifers.

Of Elevation and Bonsai.

By elevation, I mean altitude, elevation above sea level. At first there would seem to be little connection between altitude above sea level and bonsai care; but in fact there is something to keep in mind.

Because air is a mixture of gases, its density decreases as one goes higher into the atmosphere. Anyone who has traveled into the mountains has experienced the effect: the higher you go, the thinner the air becomes and less oxygen is available in each successive lungful! As most of us know, the thinning of the atmosphere has another effect. Air acts as a screen, limiting the intensity of sunlight that reaches the surface. The higher the altitude, the less air there is between the sun and the surface, and greater is the intensity of the sunlight that gets thru.

I first saw this at first hand while growing up. Quito, Ecuador, where I went to school, sits 9300 above sea level. *At that altitude, almost one quarter of the earth's atmosphere is below you.* Not only is it difficult to walk briskly and converse at the same time, the sunlight is so intense that we "gringos" could sunburn painfully in as little as 15 minutes if we exposed skin that was normally under clothing. We learned to use sunscreen or pay the price.

There's another aspect to this atmosphere screening. As you may know, longer wavelengths of light --red, infrared, and longer—are less effectively screened out by the atmosphere. We see the results in a sunset. When the sun's angle is low, its light has to travel thru a little more air to reach us. Blue-end light is blocked more completely, leaving a greater proportion of red to get thru—and we see a red (or near red) sunset.

At high altitude, the same principle is at work, but in reverse. As atmospheric density drops, the amount of red-end light that is blocked drops; *but the amount of blue-end light that is blocked drops even faster.* The result is that a greater proportion of the light that is received is blue, violet, ultraviolet and shorter. (Another reason we would crisp so easily in Quito if we forgot the Coppertone).

What does this have to do with bonsai?

In plants, light at the red-end of the visible spectrum promotes stem lengthening, while light at the blue-end promotes compactness, smaller foliage and shorter internodes.

Bonsaiists who live at higher elevations and grow bonsai whose native range is significantly lower must remember that those trees are receiving sunlight a little more intense than that for which their

ing their bonsai carries a bit more energy per photon. As a result of both of these facts, sunburn is more likely. Low altitude trees will need a bit more sun protection than they need in their home ranges.

But here in Indiana we have the reverse situation. We're less than 1000 feet above sea level and many of us grow trees whose native ranges are significantly higher. My yamadori Ponderosa Pine is a case in point. It was collected at 5800 feet above sea level and now lives at all of 826 feet. (Add about 13 feet when I take it up to the deck). *The sunlight that now reaches it is about 85% as intense as what it received in its natural habitat.* The sunlight is also slightly redder; the color difference is too small to be detected by the human eye, but it may have a miniscule effect on the trees growth.

What does this mean? It means that, if I want that tree to thrive, I have to make sure it gets just as much sunlight as I can possibly give it! I've got it in the sunniest spot available and am considering putting a reflective covering on the wall behind it. *I also have to be ready to do more to encourage and maintain compactness in this pine as it is getting less blue-end light.*

Atmospheric density, of course, also affects the availability of oxygen, carbon dioxide and other gases plants need. But that is another topic.

Pauls' post note: For reference my bonsai are displayed at elevation 720, or 106 feet further from the sun than Steves. The sun is 92.96 million miles away so I am not sure how important that additional 106 miles are but I will acknowledge there is no atmosphere in 99.99999999999999% of those miles.

Paul Weishaar



Indianapolis Bonsai Club

February 5th 2020

Meeting Minutes

Alyssa Batula

Date & Time: February 5th, 7pm

Location: Garfield Park Conservatory Meeting Room

Presiding: Club President Paul Weishaar

Attendance: 29

Membership: 101

Checking/Savings Balance:

Checking: \$640.05

Savings: \$10,000.94

Dues for the 2020 year are now being accepted, and a new directory and brochure are available.

Channel 13 News did an interview about the club, so be on the lookout for that segment.

The February meeting featured a grafting demonstration by Mark Fields. A new apex was added using an approach graft, and additional foliage was added using wedge grafts.

Support our Corporate Sponsors

Bonsai by Fields (Mark Fields)

Circle City Bonsai (Bob Hoy)

Eagle Creek Bonsai (Scott Yelich)



Mark Fields of Bonsai by Fields demonstrates proper techniques for Grafting a bonsai at the February IBC Meeting.

What's Special About a Rock?

Have any of you taken a child out for a walk in the woods? I've taken my daughter out on nature hikes since before she could walk. Later on this year, I'll be taking her on her third hike to the bottom of the Grand Canyon. It's a lot of fun taking a kid on a hike. It's interesting to see how they respond to nature. Kids enjoy picking up leaves, sticks and rocks. They love splashing in streams and puddles. Kids like touching nature. If you're like me, you've still got that kid inside of you!

I still like touching nature. I still enjoy picking up rocks. My enjoyment of suiseki is very much like my enjoyment of bonsai. Working on trees can sometimes be both relaxing and challenging. Sometimes it's a lot of work. Do you every ask yourself *why* you do bonsai as a hobby? I think it has something to do with that childlike love of nature and the fact that we like picking stuff up. With bonsai, you can take a very old, mature tree and hold it in your hands. Unlike a cut flower, which will wilt and die, that bonsai (if cared for properly) will eventually go to your kids or grandkids. That's a pretty cool thought. Rocks are like that too, and you don't have to worry about them dying.

Suiseki is the Japanese art of stone appreciation. Many of us were into suiseki before we even knew what it was. I have a rock that I picked up when my parents took me on my first trip to Colorado. I have a rock that I picked up during a Boy Scout hiking trip. Heck, I have rocks from most places I've been. I appreciate these rocks because they remind me of places I have been. Suiseki is pretty much like that.

We appreciate stones that speak to us. Some stones remind us of where we've been or what we've seen. This might mean that they actually came from a certain place. Stones are also appreciated by how they look. Some stones may have interesting colors or shapes that remind us of people or animals. They may also remind us of things like waterfalls, mountains, plateaus or riverbanks. When we find a stone we appreciate, we often put it in a special place. In the case of suiseki, we display stones in suibans or on daizas. A suiban is a shallow tray filled with fine sand. A daiza is a wooden stand created specifically for a stone. Suiseki can be displayed many ways. They can be shown in groups or they can stand alone. Sometimes, they are used as accents in bonsai displays. When in a formal bonsai display, suiseki often help convey a feeling. An example would be using a distant mountain suiseki as an accent to some sort of bonsai tree which would grow naturally in the mountains.

Although I'm sure that I can go a lot longer talking about suiseki, mountain stones, daisas and such, I am going to keep this article short and save it for the upcoming meeting. Bill Vincent and I will be doing a presentation on suiseki and making daisas in March. IBC member Bill Vincent relocated from California to Indiana about a year ago. Bill does bonsai, but he also participated in a Suiseki club in California. Like me, Bill makes diasas, but his way of making them differs from mine. I look forward to hearing Bill's insights on suiseki. Perhaps we can even arrange a local rock hunt sometime in the spring. I'll be bringing some of my stones, including some great local finds.

Scott Velich

IBC Vice President



Grafting Japanese Black Pine

By Mark Fields

Grafting is used as a method to add back branches to an existing leggy branch using a branch cut from somewhere else on that tree in order to have the identical characteristics of that tree. It can also be used to grow a different variety of the same genus on an existing root stock.

A few of the terms you should know are as follows:

Root stock – The living healthy root of a tree that you are going to graft onto.

Scion – The part of a branch that you cut from either the same tree or species or a different species that you wish to grow on that rootstock.

Cambium – The living growing layer between the bark and the heart wood of the tree that produces either the xylem, which moved water and nutrients up through the vascular system of the tree, or the phloem, the layer of cells just below the surface of the heartwood that carries water and nutrients down to the root system.

There are several types of grafting methods that I use. When grafting pines, I usually use the veneer graft method in the mid to late winter. I have had good success grafting them during the months of February through the end of March. After care is crucial in order to have success. The only time that I have had failures is when I did not adequately practice that after care. After the desired grafting method has been completed, it is crucial that the tree is kept from freezing. It is also important to keep the graft from full sunlight. I have found that aluminum foil works perfect for keeping sun off the scion foliage and union. The foil should be loosely wrapped around the scion and union to allow air circulation and to keep it from cooking the scion.

First step is to have access to some pre-potted Japanese black pine seedlings. Move it from the cold outdoors to an area that stays 45°F or above. That will wake up the root stock and it will start the flow of sap up the xylem.

Next step is to find the variety of tree that you would like to graft a scion onto the aforementioned root stock. This can be done several weeks prior to grafting season. If you know that you aren't going to use the scion stock immediately, just wrap them in wet paper towel and place them in the refrigerator until you are ready for them. The varieties that I usually graft to black pine root stock are varieties of Japanese white pine. The reason for this is because a Japanese white pine on its own roots don't like wet feet. Their natural habitat is high in the mountains of Japan where it is very rocky and dry. If you try to grow them in soil that is kept too wet, the roots will rot and the tree will struggle and eventually die. Most of the spectacular white pines you see in exhibitions around the world are grafted onto black pine root stock. Below is a photo of my award winning Japanese white pine. It was grafted, in Japan, more than 50 years ago.



Here are the steps that I use when grafting a pine variety to Japanese black pine root stock:

Step 1:

Acquire a 2 - year old, or older, Japanese black pine for root stock.

Step 2:

Find the desired variety you would like to use for the scion. Make sure that the part below the foliage is long enough to cut the wedge to slide into the cut on the root stock.



Step 3:

Using a flat block of wood, carefully cut both sides of the scion's base to a perfect shallow wedge. Make sure both sides are about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch to 1 inch.



Step 4:

Find a good, smooth area on the trunk of the root stock where you want to graft the scion. Using a clean, sharp grafting knife, carefully slice, almost flat on the trunk, a very shallow cut just below the bark, at least as long as the cuts you made on the scion.



Note: When you graft a white pine onto a black pine, always graft high, 2 to 6 inches above the base of the tree. This will result in the black pine trunk developing the very desirable flakey, corky bark that they are known for. It will take a decade or more for mature bark to develop on a white pine. Another reason for grafting white pine onto black pine.

Step 5:

Using Parafilm, an elastic paraffin tape, wrap around the foliage, starting well below the foliage on the branch. Wrap the Parafilm, carefully stretching it over itself, until well past the end of the foliage. Break or cut the tape and twist the end to seal it.



Step 6:

Place the cut wedge of the scion into the flap on the trunk of the rootstock. Then, using more Parafilm, firmly wrap it around the trunk below the bottom of the flap to past the parafilm at the base of the foliage. Make sure that the wedge is inside the flap. The cambiums must matche in order to be successful. It may move when you start wrapping it.



Step 7:

Make sure all of the Parafilm is secure. Place in a shady spot. You'll know if the graft is successful in a few months when the candles begin to push through the tip of the Parafilm. When that happens, open up the tip and let the candles push. It can be moved into about a half day, morning sun, at that point. When they extend and start to harden off, the Parafilm can be removed from the remainder of the foliage. You may also cut the black pine trunk off about an inch above the graft union. Leave the graft union covered by Parafilm until the following spring.

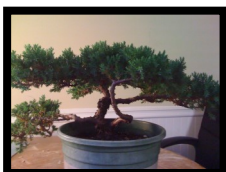
Below is a photo of a 'Miyajima' Japanese white pine that I grafted (8 year ago) in 2012. It is developing into a really nice little shohin bonsai. With a little luck, you can have the same result. Good luck!



**Brussels Bonsai
Preview Sale
March 7, 2020
Olive Branch, Mississippi**

2020 USA Bonsai Events

- February 15-16** Knoxville Bonsai Society Annual Show. Knoxville Botanical Garden/Arboretum. Knoxville, TN.
- March 7** Brussels Spring Sale. Brussels Bonsai Nursery. Olive Branch, MS.
- March 14-22** Indiana Flower and Patio Show IBC Bonsai Sale. Indiana State Fairgrounds. Indianapolis, IN.
- March 20-22** Atlanta Bonsai Society Spring Show. Atlanta Botanical Garden. Atlanta, GA.
- March 28** IBC Bonsai Class 101. Garfield Park Conservatory. Indianapolis, IN.
- April 11-12** Northern Virginia Bonsai Society Show. Merrifield Garden Center, Fairfax, VA.
- April 17-19** Mid Atlantic Spring Festival. Holiday Inn I-81 Exit 80. Granville, PA.
- May 1-3** Potomac Bonsai Association Festival. U.S. National Arboretum. Washington, DC.
- May 9** WORLD BONSAI DAY
- May 9** Nature's Way Nursery's 47th Anniversary Festival. Nature's Way Nursery. Harrisburg, PA.
- May 9-10** Michigan All State Show. Meijer Gardens. Grand Rapids, MI.
- May 9-10** Mid-Appalachian Bonsai Kai Annual Show. Kingsport Civic Auditorium. Kingsport, TN.
- May 14-17** Bonsai Vision 2020, Drury Plaza Hotel. San Antonio, TX
- May 22-24** Brussel's Rendezvous. Brussel's Nursery. Olive Branch, MS.
- May 22-24** 47th Annual Bonsai Societies of Florida Convention. Location to be announced.
- June 6** Wellfield Botanic Gardens Bonsai Show. Wellfield Botanic Gardens. Elkhart, IN.
- June 6-7** Garfield Park Bonsai Exhibit. Garfield Park Conservatory. Indianapolis, IN.
- June 6-7** Satsuki Workshops. Matthaei Botanical Gardens. Ann Arbor, MI.
- June 13-14** 25th Annual Carolina Bonsai Expo. North Carolina Arboretum. Asheville, NC.
- June 25-28** MABA Bonsai Convention. Milwaukee, WI
- July 11-12** Triangle Bonsai Society Annual Show. Duke Gardens. Durham, NC.
- July 18-19** Nashville Annual Bonsai Show. Cheekwood Gardens Nashville, TN.
- August 7-16** Indiana State Fair Exhibit. Agriculture/Horticulture Building. Indianapolis, IN
- August 14-16** Chicago Bonsai Show. Chicago Botanical Gardens. Glencoe, IL.
- September 12** Penrod Arts Fair Bonsai Sale. Newfields (Indianapolis Museum of Art) Indianapolis, IN
- September 12-13** U.S. National Bonsai Exhibit. East Rochester, NY.
- September 12-13** Bonsai Society of Greater Cincinnati Fall Annual Show. Krohn Conservatory. Cincinnati, OH.
- September 12-13** NVBS Fall Show. Meadowlark Botanical Gardens. Vienna, VA.
- September 20** Hidden Lake Gardens Art of Bonsai Exhibit. Hidden Lake Gardens, MI.
- October 8-11** ABS – BCI – NBF – PBA Convention 2020. U.S. National Arboretum. Washington, DC.



Date 2020 Meetings	Program
January	No Meeting
February 5	Grafting Demo
March 4	Suiseki Presentation
April 1	How to Display Your Bonsai
May 6	Bald Cypress Workshop
June 3	IBC Members Sale/Root Over Rock Workshop
July 1	Tropical Workshop
August 5	Bring Your Own Tree Bonsai Critique
September 2	Annual Members Only Auction
October 7	Evergreen Workshop
November 4	Pinch Pot Workshop
December 2	Christmas GALA

IBC Board of Directors

2019-2020 Officers

Paul Weishaar – President
Scott Yelich – Vice President
Bob Hoy – Treasurer
Alyssa Batula – Secretary
Carl Wooldridge - Past President

For the most up to date calendar, visit our website:
www.indybonsai.org

Club Information

Visitors are always WELCOME!!!

Where: Garfield Park Conservatory
2450 Shelby Street
Indianapolis, Indiana

When: First Wednesday of each
month

Time: 7:00 pm

Club Dues: Dues are \$25 per calendar
year. Cost includes (up to)
two members of the same
household.

Club Officers+ 2019-2020

President	Paul Weishaar
Vice President	Scott Yelich
Secretary	Alyssa Batula
Treasurer	Robert Hoy
Past President	Carl Wooldridge
Membership	Steven Dick
Web Master	Scott Yelich
Volunteers	Steven Dick
Historian	Ron Fraley
Librarian	Paul Weishaar
MABA/BCI	Paul Weishaar
ABS	Mark Fields
Garfield Curator	Paul Weishaar+
Publications/Photos	Bob Hoy

**Checkout the IBC website:
www.indybonsai.org**