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JOURNAL



November 2015

www.torontobonsai.org

Schedule of events

Meetings are held at the **TBG** ([Toronto Botanical Garden](#)), located at 777 Lawrence Avenue East (at Leslie St.), Toronto, in the studio rooms upstairs. The first meeting is free for non-members.

Bonsai 101: 7:00

Bonsai 101 is held in Studio #2 upstairs at the TBG. Beginners should read '[INTRODUCTION TO BONSAI](#)' (click on link), posted on the [TBS web site](#) prior to attending class.

Nov. 9: critiquing bonsai.

Dec. 14: class cancelled for holiday party.

General meetings: 7:45

Nov 9: small group critique of members' trees. Bring in your most challenging trees for advice on development, design ideas, and for developing an eye for bonsai.

Dec 14 : Christmas-themed party, complete with cookies.

Jan 11 : t.b.a.

Feb 8: silent auction

Mar 14: t.b.a.

Outside our club:

On the cover: Joe Manzo's semi-cascade mugo pine bonsai (*Pinus mugo*) – the winner of the Derrick Morton Excellence in Bonsai competition at our recent fall show.

President's message: fall show and bonsai critique

by Carlos Bras

Last month we held our annual Toronto Bonsai Society fall show and sale, and once again it was a huge success. We had a very busy sales area and the show was well attended, with many visitors commenting on the beauty of the bonsai on display. We had close to 70 trees at the show, which was a great level participation by club members willing to exhibit their art pieces.

We also re-established our show social, where members can have leisurely look at the show while enjoying a beverage and some snacks. We had a special presentation made in memory of Derrick Morton, our past-president and long-time member, who died suddenly this past spring. It was an honour to present Joe Manzo with the first ever Derrick "Dick" Morton Award of Excellence in Bonsai for his wonderful cascade mugo pine. Reiner Goebel, also our past-president, and long time treasurer, now our show chair, headed a small prize selection committee. After a long deliberation, they selected Joe's tree as the winner. Later on, we held a bonsai critique during the social on Saturday night, lead by John Biel. Members listened intently to John's advice on future improvement of their trees.

We need to continue to strive for excellence in growing and displaying bonsai at the TBS; getting feedback from other members is the best and easiest way to do it. During the bonsai design phase, the bonsai artist should not simply say "I liked it that way" as the sole rationale for creating bonsai, when questioned by their peers for aesthetic decisions.

Like all art forms, bonsai has criteria and standards that all trees are held up to, and these standards also aid the viewer in better appreciating the bonsai presented to them in exhibition.

What makes good or bad bonsai design? To the bonsai novice, any bonsai will be simply appear to be a tree in a pot; to the more experienced enthusiast, a good bonsai will be a realistic representation of a natural tree, and have certain features that makes it superior to trees in pots. In order to improve the trees that they select and develop, the beginner has to understand these guidelines in the same way that one has to learn what makes a Leonardo da Vinci better than a child's first scrawl.

This issue cuts to the heart of the club, and bonsai activities generally: we are organized to improve the quality of our viewing as well as the quality of our bonsai.

The TBS fall show

Photos by Mike Pochwot

This fall show was as good, and maybe a bit better than the previous, with more effective displays, some brave new entries.

Here's a sample of the trees that were brought in:







Congratulations to Joe Manzo for winning the Derrick Morton Excellence in Bonsai award, and thanks to all the volunteers, and everyone who made this event possible.

Extra thanks to Mike Pochwot for taking such good quality photos - they have all been loaded onto our [TBS website](#), and a video of the fall show can also be found on [YouTube](#).

John Biel's bonsai critique

by Robert DeFreitas

Most people providing bonsai critique at shows focus on the positive aspects only and fail to point out the faults for fear of offending the owner. Good feedback includes both positive and negative aspects with a cumulative overall assessment. This would allow the owner to make future improvements and have a much better product. H John Biel was like a breath of fresh air. He was very honest, open and fair with his comments and took it a step further to suggest what might be done to realize an improvement and/or correct an obvious fault. He took his time with each tree giving positive and negative feedback with his overall cumulative assessment.

If you are going to critique, and you are considered to have the credentials to do so, then do it right so that everyone benefits, and don't worry about what others might think or say. My hat is off to John for having the courage and conviction to do so.

I firmly believe this was truly beneficial to the owners of the bonsai, as well as all club members at the show. He never lost the crowd that followed him throughout his critique and there were lots of clarifying questions and comments from the members that John responded to very professionally.

Thanks John.

Selling plants and supplies at the TBS fall show & sale

by Dierk Neugebauer

Although there seemed to be fewer items in this year's bonsai sales area, there were many good deals to be found.

Particularly spectacular were the large trees from Rod Cordeiro's collection, which he was thinning out in order to keep the remainder more manageable. Some of these came from workshops held at the club in years past, and showed good styling and maintenance.

The usual quantity of planters, bonsai soils, fertilizers, tools and stands provided the opportunity for purchasers to add to their hardware collections, and to improve the future styling and display of their trees.

The commercial vendor, [Bonsai Guy](#), Chris Hendry, had a large selection of resources and trees available for all to purchase, and also acquired quite a number of items from club members. It remains to be seen how many of these and their offspring will make it to future sales at our show.

All in all, the sale was a success, and I look forward to our spring event.

Mike Roussel does us proud at the JCGC

Mike Roussel did the bonsai demo at the **JCGC's** (Japanese Canadian Garden Club) Fall Flower & Bonsai show, on Sunday, October 25 at the JCCC (Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre).

The show went well, with standing room only. The JCGC made \$150.00 on the raffle of the demo tree: a yew, styled into a slanting style using copper wire, pictured on right.

Despite having to rush the demo, to finish it in an hour, it turned out well. The audience was fun and very engaged.

Mike also gave the speech for our club during the opening ceremony, with a quick, unscripted address. Several of our members already belong to this, our parent, club, but they are looking for more to sign up.



Mike with raffle winner

Tree clinic: needle cast

by Greg Quinn

Needle cast is a term that describes fungal diseases that cause coniferous trees to shed their needles. Identifying the disease is not difficult: the symptoms include light green to yellow spots, which eventually turn red or brown. Growth of the fungal pathogen from the spots on the needle will cause the death of the entire needle. Tiny black fruiting bodies (spore producing structures) form on the surface of the needles before or after the infected needles are shed.

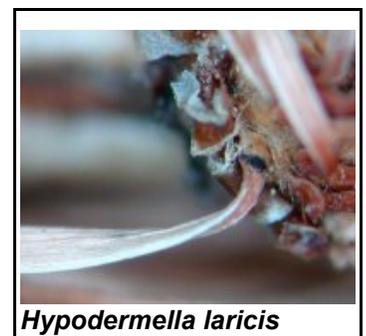
Larch

There are several different types of fungi that cause larch needle cast. Initially, you will see yellow spots appear during wet spring weather, on the needle tips. Later on in June, they will begin working down the needles, turning red, and finally turning brown and falling off. The remaining needles, which may also be infected, may stay on until fall, also turning brown eventually. The normal fall colour for larch needles is yellow.

Meria laricis is a disease affecting larch in our area, causing needles to fall off, weakening growth, and in some cases, plant death. The disease suddenly reappears in spring, using the fallen needles to re-inoculate the plant in spring time, reinfesting the new needles. It often works in conjunction with needle blight on larch, ***Hypodermella laricis***, which is a perennial organism.



Meria laricis



Hypodermella laricis

Pine

Lophodermium seditiosum is a fungal pathogen which causes needle cast on pines. In the spring, yellowing and then browning of needles infected the previous year will appear. In mid-to-late summer, minute, black, football-shaped fruiting bodies form on the recently killed needles; these fruiting bodies release spores after they are moistened. The spores are either shot out of the fruiting bodies and up into the air where they are carried by the wind, or splashed onto the current year's needles. Growth loss and disfigurement of the tree result.



As with the larches, needle cast often works in conjunction with a couple of needle blights: *Diplodia* tip blight, and *Dothistroma* needle blight.

Spruce

Rhizosphaera kalkhoffii is a fungal pathogen that causes needle cast on spruce, overwintering in infected needles on the tree and in the litter on the ground. In spring, and other times of the year, the fungus produces fruiting bodies on needles, called *pycnidia*. Fungal spores are released from the *pycnidia* and dispersed by splashing and dripping water from spring to autumn. The spores infect current season needles, or stressed needles of any age. Infection usually begins in spring and symptoms arise in late summer. Infected first year needles have yellow mottling and then brown during late winter and early spring and are cast during summer and autumn, 12-15 months after the initial infection.



While experts often say that the causes of needle cast are cultural (i.e., that the growing conditions are causing the infestation), there are specific steps that one can take to reduce the impact of these ever-present organisms: removing the infected needles and leaf litter in fall; changing the growing medium regularly; and treating with Bordeaux mixture or other fungicide in spring time, before bud-break, and as the needles emerge. It is important to remember that spraying won't eliminate infection, but is intended to limit the spread of new infections.

Announcements

Membership

If you still have not renewed your membership, please do so as soon as possible. If you do not renew your membership. For those of you who have already renewed, thank you.

Workshops

Register for our club workshops. We hold workshops during Monday night meetings and at backyard Saturdays during summer. Contact any member of our club executive to indicate your interest, or check in at the **members' desk** before the meeting.

Bonsai tools?

You need bonsai tools - our club sells tools. Contact Gim Retsinas for special items or a full set. He is putting together a new order with J-bonsai (<http://www.j-bonsai.com/>).

Forms

The membership form, introduction to bonsai, bonsai record form, and the sales sheet form, are located under 'Documents' (at the top right of the screen) on the **TBS website**: <http://torontobonsai.org/documents/>

TBS on Facebook

Did you know that the TBS is on [Facebook](#)? (Click on this link, and like us today.)

Library

Please bring all your library returns to Nathalie, our club librarian, before the meeting and during the coffee break, s.v.p.

December publishing deadline

The publishing deadline for the **December Journal** is November 30. Please forward all photos, articles, notifications and materials before then.

Regular TBS meetings

Meetings take place on the second Monday of every month, except July and August, at the TBG (Toronto Botanical Gardens), located at 777 Lawrence Avenue East, at Leslie Street, in the studio rooms upstairs at 7:45 pm. The general meetings frequently include demonstrations of bonsai techniques, critiques of bonsai trees, and workshops, in which each participant styles a tree with the help of an experienced member. These meetings are preceded at 7:00 p.m. by the the Bonsai 101 beginner sessions.

A small fee is charged for workshops; a tree, wire and an instructor are provided. To participate in workshops it is necessary to register in advance of the meeting so that materials can be provided.

Members are encouraged to bring in bonsai to show and work on during the meetings. Wire is provided at no charge. Non-members may attend a meeting at no charge to see if the club is of interest to them.

Library hours and policy

The library is open to members at the beginning of our regular meetings. Members may borrow books free of charge for one month. Late returns cost \$2 per month with a minimum charge of \$2. Please return all materials during the next meeting, and **especially** before the summer break.

Membership desk

The membership desk will be open at all meetings. The opening time may be extended for the first fall meeting to assist with renewals. You may also register for workshops there.

Tools & supplies

Tools and supplies are sold by the club at most meetings. It is a good idea to contact the 'Tools & Supplies' executive member in advance of the meeting for specific tools and supplies.

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- please talk to Carlos Bras

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Visit the Toronto Bonsai Society's web site, at:

www.torontobonsai.org

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