

# SHO FU BONSAI

February 2004 - Volume 6, Issue 2

## February Newsletter

January's meeting, hopefully, got us all interested in going out into the woods and collecting a tree. The weather is perfect for collecting here on the west coast of Florida at this time of year.

What could be better than packing a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, grabbing your shovel, loppers and a few bags and heading out into the countryside looking for "free" trees. Just be sure you have permission to collect in the area you intend to go.

This newsletter will probably reach you after our Jan 17th dig but there will still be plenty of time if you want to find a place by yourself or call a fellow Sho Fu member to go along.

The following advice comes from various individuals that have done quite a bit of collecting:

■ Take along some plastic garbage bags or burlap bags. Try to get as much of the soil as you can, spray or mist the roots as soon as you dig them up and wrap them in the burlap or plastic bag.. Also it's a good idea to mist/spray the leaves at this point.

■ Some collectors prefer to cut back branches as they collect and seal the area with glue or petroleum jelly. Others wait until they soak the entire tree in water (mixed with vitamin B or Superthrive) to let the tree soak up as much water as possible and then cut the branches back. When pruning back the branches, be sure you leave some green on the ends of each branch.

■ Once you get your trees home, soak them for several hours (some soak them for 24) in the vitamin water. At this point you need to trim the roots (cuts facing down) and trim the overly large roots back so that the tree can fit into your container. Plant them in large training pots or in the ground, making sure that you keep the collected trees in a cool, shaded area and don't let the soil dry out for a few weeks until you see new growth.

Happy hunting ---- Julie Trigg

### Main Program February Guest Artist — Mary Madison

**Lect/Demo February 5 6:30 PM  
and Tool Sharpening**

at Waterside Retirement Estates 4540 Bee Ridge Rd  
**Board meeting Feb. 4 - 6:30**

**Workshops Friday & Saturday 9AM-1PM**



Photo by Julie Trigg

*... bring out your dead . . .*

*Jean brought two (dead?) trees to the workshop but they turned out to be alive!*

## Mary Madison, the 'Buttonwood Queen' comes to Sho Fu Bonsai

This month should be an exciting time for us at Sho Fu because we will be hosting a demo and workshops by Mary Madison of Homestead, Florida.

Mary is known as "the Buttonwood Queen" and is considered an expert on collecting and styling native Florida trees, especially Buttonwood and Cypress.

She has been a headliner all over the U.S. and the Caribbean and will be one of the featured masters at the BCI Expo in St. Louis this Summer.

This is a fabulous opportunity for our members to get some hands-on advice from one of the greats.

Mary will do a demo at our meeting on Thursday night, Feb. 5th., starting at 6:30 (free) and the workshops will be on the following Friday & Saturday. If you are interested in a workshop, and there is still room, call Julie 355-9186, or email: julie.trigg@verizon.net

Some lucky ticket holder will go home with a masterpiece because we will raffle off Mary's tree. Tickets will be \$5.each or 3 for \$10.



## Sho Fu Bonsai Society

4014 Bay Shore Road  
Sarasota, Fl. 34234  
Phone: (941) 355-9186

**E-Mail:**  
[info@shofubonsai.com](mailto:info@shofubonsai.com)

### Officers

President: Julie Trigg  
Vice President: Walter Hamm  
Secretary: Thelma Thompson  
Treasurer: Treva Kurtz  
Past President: David Ebinger  
Director: Larry Rogers  
Director: Lois Bennett  
Director: Timmie Stewart  
Membership: TBA  
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Raffle: Carrie Ebinger  
Programs: Walter Hamm  
Webmaster: Steven J. Ackerman  
Publicity: TBA  
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If you'd like to contribute to our newsletter, please contact Julie Trigg at:  
[julie.trigg@verizon.net](mailto:julie.trigg@verizon.net)

Visit Sho Fu on the Web  
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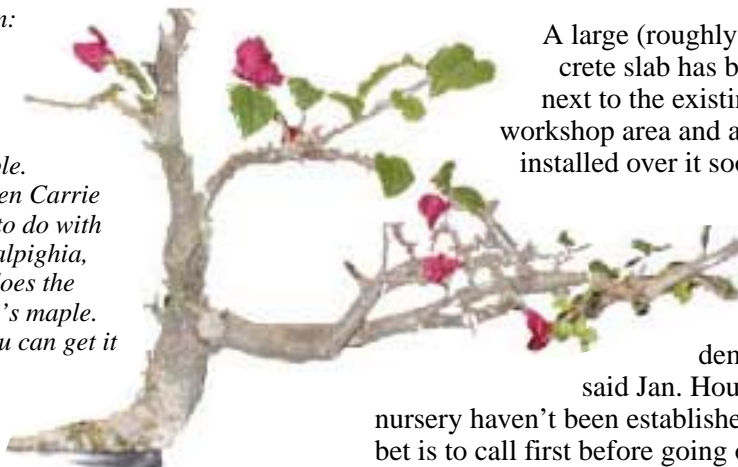
Photos by Julie Trigg

*Top left: Doug counsels Thelma and Jean while Arnold observes.*

*2nd photo down: Timmie gives advice to Carrie on trimming and styling her maple.*

*Bottom left: Then Carrie tells Elly what to do with her weeping malpighia, while Timmie does the work on Carrie's maple. Nice work if you can get it girl!*

*Top right: Barb advises Ray on his "before" bogie and the "after" is shown here. Looks like it will be a nice tree Ray.*



## Workshop at Arnold's Place

**L**ots of Sho Fu members braved the cold Jan. 10 to give advice or accept advice on styling and repotting bonsai. Barb was there to offer Ray help on styling his large bougainvillea.

Dr. Doug and Timmie were on hand to give some great advice to Thelma, Carrie and Elly and Jean on repotting and styling. And, I found out that Carrie doesn't like to trim roots!

Jan and the folks at Tokonoma have done an amazing job getting the nursery up and running again. Plans are to have a large, covered area for stock plants and even some finished Bonsai to sell. For those of you who haven't been to Arnold's place, it has a nice supply of bonsai pots, tools, and will soon offer Bonsai soil.

A large (roughly 30X30) concrete slab has been poured next to the existing bonsai workshop area and a roof will be installed over it soon. "This can be used for workshops and/or visiting masters to do demonstrations,"

said Jan. Hours for the nursery haven't been established, so the best bet is to call first before going out. Their number is 941-753-6611.

A sincere "thank you" goes out to all the folks at Tokonoma.

## Bonsai Calendar for February - Zone 9

### Weather Protection & Location

All tropicals should be protected

### Watering

Trees should be well watered if frost or freezing weather is expected. Check everyday to see if trees need watering, especially if it is windy. Never let the soil get dry or allow to stay soggy. This is basically the same as January but as the buds swell, it is important that the soil not dry out or be too wet. Watch carefully.

### Feeding

As the buds begin to swell, start feeding lightly with a balanced, relatively higher nitrogen fertilizer about every two weeks (1/2 strength 10-10-10). It is a good idea to rotate between organic fertilizer - full strength - and inorganic fertilizer at 1/2 strength. Jim Smith says "I don't fertilize at all from December through January. Then I start with a 20-20-20 in mid-to-late February.

### Styling

Watch for wire damage with the fast growth now. Prune the new growth back to one or two leaves or buds on broad leaf trees.

### Repotting

It is possible until the buds show leaves. Do not transplant if there is any tender growth, even on conifers.

### Pest control

Watch for aphids, boring insects, spider mites, mealy bugs, etc. Use appropriate insecticide and follow label instructions. Sometimes soapy water will do the job (ex. 1 Tablespoon in a gallon of water) every day (except succulents) for 4-5 days, if needed. Be sure the spray covers the top and bottom of the leaves.

### Collecting

Ideal time for everything except tropicals.

### Special Notes

Cuttings may be done as long as the buds do not show any leaves. Drench bald cypress with systemic fungicide as the buds pop to prevent summer browning of leaves.

Compiled by Marian Borchers & Marian Rousseau of the Hukyu Bonsai Society of Tampa

**Pedro Moralis Demo  
at Sho Fu Bonsai  
March 16  
6:30 PM**

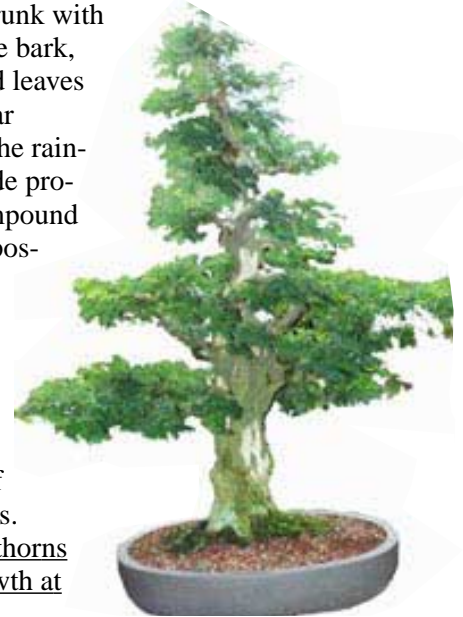
# Tree of the Month

## Brazilian Raintree

The *Pithecellobium tortum* is native to Brazil's sandy environment, of the legume family, a tropical variety usually styled upright, and is suitable for mame and shohin sizes.

A flat, twisting trunk with smooth, light beige bark, delicate compound leaves and zig-zag angular growth identifies the raintree. Each internode produces a single compound leaf with three opposing pairs of leaflets, each leaflet contains 5-7 pairs of folioles. Each leaf is accompanied by a pair of

needle sharp thorns. Removal of these thorns prevents back growth at this area.



*Jim Moody's Raintree*

The tree growing in nature produces seed pods and a white powderpuff-like flower, but growth-restrained trees rarely produce seeds or flowers. The raintree loves full sun, but appreciates some shade during the hottest days, it will tolerate freezing temperatures for a short time. Water well and keep it slightly on the dry side. Fertilize weekly during the growing season and once a month during winter and the overly exuberant growth will be maintained.

Propagation may be achieved with cuttings of young woody growth or by air layering branches. Propagation should be attempted in late spring or early summer. Rain trees produce a good fibrous root system but don't seem to mind being root bound. Repotting should be performed only every 2 or 3 years. Raintrees are pest resistant.

Once the tree is styled it may be further shaped with the clip and grow method. Wiring is not very effective because the trunk and branches quickly become too stiff to bend. Branches should be observed so that they do not become disproportionate in size to the main branch. Hard pruning promotes better twigging and a luxurious dense canopy. The raintree is top dominant but sun should still be allowed to reach the lower branches. Fatten the trunk by allowing the lower branches to grow.

The above information was assembled from Allen Carver, and World Tropical Bonsai Forum 1989 and submitted by Walter Hamm.

# Minutes of Monthly Meeting Sho Fu Bonsai Club

Date: January 8, 2004 # Present: 30 - Call to Order: 7:30 PM by President, Julie Trigg

**Treasurer's Report:** Given by Treva Kurtz Action: Accepted as read.

**Secretary's Report:** Read at the end of the meeting by Carrie Ebinger, Secretary at the time of the last meeting in November. Action: Accepted as read.

**Vice President's Report:** None at this time

**Old Business:** No old business

**New Business:** Tools: Julie requested that the members donate any old tools to the club for the use of students during workshops.

There will be a professional tool sharpener present at the February meeting. The members were reminded to bring any tools needing sharpening. The cost will be approximately \$5.00 per tool.

**Program / Workshops:** There will be a workshop at Tokonoma Nursery this Saturday from 10 - 2. Lois Bennet will deliver the club soil to Timmie Stewart who will bring it to the workshop. Members were given sheets listing suggestions for future programs and asked to check those in which they would be interested. These were turned in during the meeting and sparked several more ideas by the membership.

Mary Madison will be doing a demo at the February meeting and a workshop on the following day. She will be hosted at the Triggs home and Julie will call her to make the final arrangements.

**Newsletter:** Discussion of the cost of printing. Timmie Stewart moved that the club pay to have the newsletter professionally printed this month. Seconded by Lois Bennett. Passed by membership. Deadline for articles is the 15th of the month.

**Dig:** Instructions on what to bring, what to wear, and how to get there were passed out. The ground is apt to be very moist. There are several species of trees available the members will be able to collect. The evenings' program was three short sessions on collecting. Julie Trigg spoke on collecting maples, Lois Bennett on collecting oaks, and Barbara Bauman on collecting buttonwood.

**Raffle:** Following a short break, the raffle (Suthin's tree) was won by Larry Rogers. The raffle raised \$145.

Meeting adjourned at 9 PM Respectfully submitted: Thelma Thompson, Secretary

## In the Heat of the Day

The heat here before we know it, so thought this article from the May/June issue of Bonsai Today on extreme bonsai environments was worth passing along. They were talking about India, where the temperatures in the summer could get up to around 110 degrees Fahrenheit. It doesn't get quite that hot here in Sarasota but I have found that some of my bonsai start to suffer when the Summer temperatures start to climb into the 80's and 90's.

Here are some of their suggestions:

1. Arrange your bonsai under a large shade tree.
2. Use a sun-dried grass (without grass seeds), coconut husk fibers or sphagnum moss pinned into the top of the soil covering your bonsai to help keep the soil cool and moist (but not wet).
3. Grow appropriately sized ground covers on the soil surface.
4. Mist bonsai a couple times a day. Or better yet, if you can afford it, install an automatic misting and/or drip irrigation system.
5. A costly but effective shade cloth — a net sheeting which reduces sunlight by 50 to 75% — to cover your bonsai tables.

The article was called Extreme Bonsai Environments of Nikunj & Jyoti Parekh, India and was published in the May/June 2003, issue (page 36) of Bonsai Today magazine.

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Sarasota, Fl. 34234