

Iowa Bonsai Association Newsletter

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<https://sites.google.com/site/cedarrapidsbonsai/>

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IBA June Activities

June 15 - IBA Meetings at The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. 909 Robert D. Ray Drive

Topics: Open Study Group - Bring a tree to work on whatever you want. (on the Terrace weather permitting)

*10:30 Presentations: roundtable discussion on fertilizer. Bring recipes, notes, and ideas on your fertilizer practices.
Everybody is welcome.*

EIBA June Activities

June 13, 6:30 pm, Board Meeting at Panera Restaurant on Edgewood Road.

Topics: Prep for Picnic and for NewBo Show.

June 15, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

EIBA Bonsai Show at NewBo

June 22, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.

EIBA Club Picnic and Bring Your Own Tree Workshop held at Guthridge Park, Green Pavillion, in Hiawatha.

Come have a good time with your club mates at the picnic! Also, club sale and Dave Lowman will visit with his bonsai wares. Great opportunity to pick up trees, pots, tools, supplies.

July 11, 6:30 pm, Board Meeting at Panera Restaurant on Edgewood Road.

Topics: TBD

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Bjorn Bjorholm coming to Des Moines Botanical Garden and Iowa State Fair

Bjorn Bjorholm, one of the very top bonsai masters in the US, will be doing 3 demos at the **Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden** on Saturday **August 10th**.

He will also be judging the **Iowa State Fair Bonsai Show** on Sunday **August 11**. There will be a \$100, \$75, and \$50 award in addition to the cash awards given by the ISF so hopefully that will help get more people interested in showing at the ISF

Use this link:

<http://www.iowastatefair.org/upl/downloads/competition/premium-books/floriculture-23.pdf>
to go to FLORICULTURE, (Div 201-208)

DIVISION 205 is BONSAI

Use this link:

<https://iowastatefaireentry.org/login.aspx>
If you have registered before.

Corporate Sponsor DaSu Bonsai Studios



www.bonsaitrees.com/

If you mail in your State Fair registration the rules state that it must have a postmark on the letter no later than July first.

You will get 10 tags for only \$10.00 (you do not have to use them all).

IBA Has Akadama for Sale

The IBA still has Akadama for sale at \$29.50 per bag for members of either the EIBA or IBA. Non-members it's \$32.50.

EIBA Annual Mother's Day Show

Craig Bean

Our annual Mother's Day show at Noelridge Park Greenhouse was very well attended, both by club members and the general public.

We were given a different spot than normal, which was a bit tricky to work with, but we made it work.

We had more members display trees than we normally do, and at last count, over 1800 people through the doors.

Several hundred of those came through our display area to see the trees.

We had many good conversations, went through a good number of club brochures & cards, and over 100 voted for the People's Choice tree!

On that note, our big winner was Bill Englert's Sharps Pygmy Maple

Coming in close behind was Cat Nelson's Banyan Ficus.

Third place went to Noah Butler's Cedar Elm

A total of 10 trees received votes, and I heard from almost all the voters how hard it was to choose, because there were so many beautiful trees.

Cat spent much of the day working on a dwarf jade, which was yet another reason for folks to stop and engage.

There was a good range of trees, by size, style, & species. Each time we have a show, I think we get a little bit better, and I'm excited to have 3 shows at NewBo this summer/fall, plus the Reiman Gardens show this late fall in conjunction with the IBA folks. What a great way to kick off the summer!



A Thief in the Night

Excerpt by Andrew Smith from ABS e-newsletter

"I've never had an issue getting permits over there, and the main restriction, which came into play a

A Thief in the Night - continued

few years after I started, was just not to drive my vehicle off an existing road or trail. And stay out of the WSAs, or Wilderness Study Areas, which are off-limits. Both the trails and the WSAs are clearly marked on maps, so those are pretty easy rules to abide by.

But that all changed this year. I made my request for permits in mid-February, so I'd have them by April. But I never got a response back from my forester. Repeated calls and emails also got no response and I began to wonder if I had already outlasted him, or if he was travelling.

Finally, sometime in March I managed to get him on the phone. He wasn't sure he could get me any more permits, he said. But if I wanted them I should write a proposal describing where and what I planned to do. Then he'd submit it for me and we'd see.

This didn't sound good and I was shocked and kind of depressed by this suddenly bad turn of events. Collecting trees for bonsai has been a pretty major passion and part of my life for a quarter century. I knew it would end for me some day, just like those mountains, but I was not quite ready yet. So I asked what had happened? Why the change?

And he told me. What had happened was that the previous year someone had gotten caught collecting trees in that area with no permit, and also inside a Wilderness Study Area where no collecting is ever allowed. I asked for more details and he told me who it was. And here again, I was surprised and a bit depressed.

The tree thief was actually a very well known bonsai collector located near the west coast. This person obviously knows better and knew exactly where and what he was doing. And for what he sells his trees for he can certainly afford the price of a permit. The forester specifically mentioned that to me. I think he was offended that someone who made so much money off these trees was too sneaky and cheap to pay the small fee required to

collect them legally.

But there's no point in bashing any particular individual. Following rules has not been my great passion either, for most of my life. But I've come to realize that if more than one person is involved then rules are necessary, even if they are only implicit. And since we live on a small planet with seven billion other people, there is always more than one person involved.

I'm writing this so that as a community we can set some strong and realistic expectations for ourselves as to how we will interact with the natural world. After all, if bonsai is a celebration of nature, or a celebration of our collaboration with it, then we need to treat that relationship as something with a level of sacredness to it. We can't trample on it and expect it to last.

How we are seen as a group will matter in the future. Right now there are species of cacti in the American Southwest that are disappearing from the wild because there is a market for them and they grow very slowly in cultivation. So collectors dig them up illegally from public lands and sell them. And they are digging up all of them.

I don't think that could happen with junipers in the mountains because such a small percentage—certainly less than a half a percent—have root systems that can be transplanted. But the situations sound very similar and we don't want to give ourselves someone else's black eye.

The thing is, unless you personally own the land where you plan to collect a tree, you are doing so at someone else's discretion. It doesn't matter if it's your next door neighbor, a local farmer, or a state or federal land management agency; you are on land controlled by someone else and if you wish to return you absolutely need to treat that land with respect and follow the agreed upon rules.

There is no law that says the BLM or Forest Service is required to sell tree collecting permits, just as there is no law that says your next door neighbor must sell you a permit to dig up one

of his landscape shrubs. In the case of federal agencies the law generally allows them to sell permits to collect trees, in certain situations, if they think no harm will result and they have an excess of the species you are hoping to collect. But it is totally discretionary on their part. I have contacted many forest districts that have decided not to sell transplant permits. And it seems there are more every year. The thief, continued.

There is no reason that collecting trees for bonsai, if done with a bit of care and respect, should be harmful to the environment. But it is up to the bonsai community, both collectively and as individuals, to come up with guidelines that will ensure that and then live up to them. This requires a serious consideration of land use ethics, which requires some actual effort on the part of collectors. We should not just be abiding by these guidelines; we should be publicly promoting them. Otherwise we will be lumped in with cactus collectors and a whole host of other groups who have given themselves a very bad name and suffered severe prohibitions because of the greedy and thoughtless actions of a few.

Of course, bonsai do not have to be collected from the wild. Fine bonsai can be grown in nurseries, and many are. But I think collected trees often have a unique, untamed character that can make an interesting bonsai. And it's just fun going out and looking for them and going through the process of transplanting and growing them. I hope it's an option that will always be available for those that want to try it.

My forester and I continued negotiations on whether I, or anyone, might be allowed to collect in his district in the future. Each step had to be committee approved, so it was a slow process and not to my liking. Finally, in mid-May, he got the go ahead to allow me to buy some permits, but now with severe restrictions on the places I could go and what I could or couldn't collect. And now it's very late in the season and I still don't

have any permits. So, juniper collecting might not happen this year. But I want to keep working with him and gradually come to a more reasonable agreement.

I asked my forester for more details on what spurred this sudden change in policy. Did the guy they caught have a whole trailer load of trees, or just a couple? Had he somehow damaged the area? Was there any penalty?

I didn't get a direct answer, but he did write back this: "In reference to....., I am not really in the loop on that situation last year but his actions if they are as I understood are definitely something that reflects poorly on the harvesters of bonsai and was brought to my attention."

Is this really the direction we want to go?"

Color and Unusual Pot Choice *by crataegus (Michael Hagedorn)*

A tree with red berries in a green glazed pot. A conifer with green foliage in an unglazed, reddish brown pot. An orange flowered tree matched with a blue glazed pot.

Common and good options. For pot choices, these opposing colors from the color wheel can work, and work well. But they are also Bonsai 101 choices.

This Japanese Maple 'Beni-Kawa' has a delicate rose color to the branches. It's a subtle wash of color that could easily be upstaged by pot color. And arguably this quiet red color the most important feature of the tree. We want to see it. And we have to be careful not to obliterate it.

The decision was to show off the reddish rose of the branches and trunks, to have that be the focus. Often a key tree color is balanced by the opposing color on the color wheel---in this case,

the pot would have a green glaze.

By NOT going that route we have a quieter tree, with the focus on one simple color. The matte, medium brown clay of the pot recedes leaving the trunk and twig color as highlight.

Pot choice is an opportunity. See it as a chance to support what you most want to show in the tree. If what you wish to show off is color, often the way to do that is to stay close on the color wheel to the color you wish to show off. In this case, red (color to show off) and brown (supporting color).

The bonsai guidelines of balancing a color with its opposite are fine and useful, and often allow for jazzy results. Yet these guidelines may be sidestepped on clear purpose.

Timely Tips

John Deny

Our trees have been growing hard in May and early June. What should we be working on this time of year? Growth management is the answer. We need to manage what has grown thus far. Pines need to be decandled this month. Deciduous growth may require pruning, though some branches might be left to grow hard and thicken up.

Tropical trees are moving into their hard

growing season which is mid-summer. This is the best time of year to repot tropicals. They will recover fairly quickly. If your tropical tree is strong, you may wish to defoliate it. The leaves come back smaller and you may also get improved ramification. Watch for pests and diseases this time of year, too.



Japanese Maple 'Beni-Kawa' with an unusual pot choice, an unglazed brown.

Black and Red pines should be decandled around June 10 in Iowa. This timing gives the second shoots enough time to grow out before the end of the season. Do not fertilize until the new shoots have hardened, usually around mid-August. When candles open, whether in June or later, it helps to spray the new shoots to prevent needle cast.

Watch Junipers for pests (mites) and diseases. Strong water spray on the foliage helps keep pests at bay. Or you can spray. I use Bayer 3 in 1. Spray in the evening when the breeze is lowest. Spray until you just begin to see dripping of the spray off the foliage. Maintain fertilization plan during June.

Deciduous trees have shown a lot of growth. Now is a good time to prune back branches that have extended beyond the profile of the tree's silhouette. Shortening branches and twigs allows taper to occur. Removing extra foliage also allows sunlight into the interior of the tree, sparking back budding. Watch for fungal diseases and spray if you have an issue.

Enjoy working on your trees this time of year. It's fun and it improves the health as well as giving your trees a good clean look.