

Bay Area Satsuki Aikokai

This Month's Meeting:

Thursday October 20, 7:30 - 9:30,
Lake Merritt Garden Center, Oakland



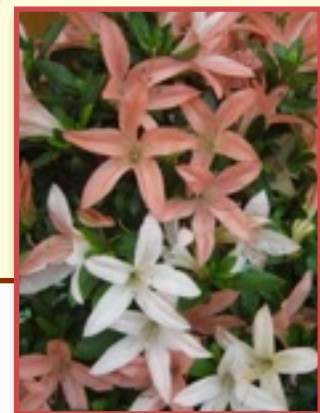
Darren Wong's Wakaebisu at the Spring show. GH photo

October Meeting

**IT'S A WEEK EARLY
THIS MONTH!**

So as not to overlap with the GSBF Convention in Sacramento on the 4th Thursday, our monthly meeting has been moved to the third Thursday. The focus will be on pest control, fertilizing and winter care for our satsuki azaleas.

Anyone who missed last month's meeting on mesuki and fall leaf removal is encouraged to bring their trees to work on during the meeting. As always, members are welcome to bring in trees for advice and help with problems. We look forward to seeing you all.



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello BASA Members, Please note that the meeting in October is a week earlier than usual so as not to conflict with the GSBF Bonsai Convention the last week of the month. I'll be there and I hope to see many of you there as well.

This month's meeting is all about pest control, fertilizing and leaf removal for our bonsai. If you are having trouble with any of your trees, or have questions please bring them to the meeting so we can share the learning experience. Experts will be on hand to sort out the answers and the great thing about this club is that we all learn from each other.

We will have a BASA board meeting starting at 6:00 before the October meeting. All members are invited to sit in and share their opinions AND if you would like to join the Board we would love to have you.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER CONTINUED . . .

A big thank you to Darren and daughter Briana for a terrific program in September on post-Summer care of our satsuki azaleas. Very informative and fun. And speaking of Darren . . . our Treasurer advises that we are now collecting dues for the coming year. Individual dues are \$25, and for a family it is \$35. A form and address for Darren are at the end of the newsletter. Please get your payment to us as soon as possible. Thanks everyone. Hope to see you at the meeting. Mike



RECAP: SEPTEMBER MEETING PROGRAM

At our September meeting we were treated to perhaps a bonsai first, a father/daughter presentation with Briana and Darren Wong. The topic was summer care of Satsuki azalea bonsai and Darren brought two trees on which to demonstrate techniques.

Darren began by discussing how the foliage can become very dense with summer growth, requiring deep pruning to prevent difficulty with branch structure and avoid die back of the inner branches. He emphasized that we need to do sufficient leaf pruning to allow light to reach the inside of the branches, which will facilitate back-budding.

Briana illustrated the techniques Darren described on a small bonsai Bob Gould brought to the meeting. She started at the top of the foliage mass and worked to the bottom. She carefully removed large leaves by hand, pulling upwards, so as not to tear the thin bark. After what seemed like a few short minutes, Briana showed off the leaf pruned apex of Bob's bonsai. We could see a significant difference in the pruned section. The leaves were no longer clumped together and light could clearly reach

the inner branches. Darren suggested that two or three leaves should be left on the branch tips, and that the two leaves should be those that lie flat as opposed to one on top of the other, or vertical. He also suggested that this is the time of year to switch fertilizer to 5-5-5.

Azaleas are basally dominant. The lower branches are stronger and more vigorous than those higher up. This requires that the branches on the bottom be pruned and leaves pruned slightly more aggressively than those on the apex.

While Darren answered questions and offered further advise on Satsuki azalea bonsai, Briana worked on completing Bob's bonsai. When she was finished, the number of leaves on the table and floor dramatically showed how much leaf pruning took place. Bob's bonsai now showed more branch structure and light penetrating the inner spaces. Lucky Bob, he was left with the job of light wiring at this point. - George Haas



Darren among the azaleas. CMR photo

Mesuki (late November–March)

Mesuki (derived from *me* = bud and *suki* = thinning) is the Japanese technique of removing excess shoots, buds, and leaves during late fall and winter. As the name implies, one of its objectives is to reduce the number of flowers, so blooms will not overlap next spring. However, this term is extended in use to include removal of leaves that otherwise will naturally fall during winter and refinement of the tree during its dormant period by removal of unwanted shoots.

This technique should be applied November through March to each of your trees. Do not begin *mesuki* until leaves show pronounced fall coloration. If possible, fall pruning and wiring should be completed before the arrival of cold weather, usually about the second week in December. However, *mesuki* can be completed at any time in late winter or early spring before buds break.

- Remove all older leaves by stripping (pulling toward the branch tip) on vigorous trees or by cutting the leaf petiole (stalk) with scissors on weak trees; purpose is to open tree to light and expose the dormant bud in the axil of each petiole; exposed axial buds may elongate into short shoots next spring, thereby increasing ramification; your end result should show exposed branching with tufts of a few leaves at terminals of all branches.
- Leave only one terminal bud (vegetative or floral) at end of each branch or branchlet; remove excess buds that:
 - Point in undesired directions; favor flower buds pointing upward, remove those pointing downward
 - Are larger or smaller than average flower buds (try to leave buds of the same size)
 - Are too close together (within an inch or two, depending on flower size)
 - Would interfere with another flower during blooming
- On trees having well-formed pads, wire and bend twigs to place separated flower buds in a horizontal row, or more than one row if the pad has vertical dimension

Calendar

Upcoming Club Events:

November 17 - Potluck holiday dinner - Slideshow of our Spring Exhibition - Don't miss it!

December - No meeting

- Along each primary branch shorten too long secondary branches so their terminal buds provide an outline that approximates the shape of an azalea leaf; minimize fan-shaped secondary branching
- Remove those very short (less than one inch) summer shoots (and shoots in axils of branches); they will not become strong branchlets. If small weak branches are left on tree, then you will end up with a small weak tree.
- Remove all down-hanging summer shoots; if you need one of those shoots for a thread graft, then wire it into position for the graft you will make early next April
- Remove strong uprising summer shoots arising from top of branch (unless you need it for a thread graft next April)

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Ant's eye view of the Azalea show. CMR photo

Anyone inspired to bring refreshments for our meeting is encouraged to do so. Treats are always well appreciated.

FALL SATSUKI CARE

October

- Rotate plants twice a month
- Leaves produced last summer begin to show fall color; note stripes and sectors of darker pigments that parallel coloration of flowers on each branch or branchlet
- Fertilize using low nitrogen fertilizer
- Watering: a necessary chore during the Bay Area's "summer"
- Adjust automatic, programmed watering system for fall to ensure that trees are not over- or under-watered
- Spray with Malathion to control chewing and sucking insects and leaf curlers
- Do not prune or wire

November

- Review exposure of trees as shadows lengthen northward; move trees into full sun
- Leaves produced during spring and early summer begin to show fall color
- Rotate all trees at least once a month
- First week, give last fertilizer of year
- Adjust automatic watering systems for winter
- Use Diazinon or Malathion for aphids, Sevin for ants, Ortho's Funginex for powdery mildew
- Do not apply lime-sulfur spray
- Mark for later removal or reduction any branches showing undesired dark pigments; remove any wire cutting into bark and all wire if branches

have settled into desired positions

- Late in month begin *mesuki* to reduce summer's growth, thin buds, and wire and bend trunks and branches; let plants dry out to facilitate bending
- Accent plants: divide and repot clumps of bamboos, grasses, sedges, herbaceous perennials, etc.; dry bulbs of bulbous plants preparatory to replanting in February

(condensed from EBBS's revised *San Francisco Bay Area Bonsai Calendar*)

Officers for 2016

President - Mike Mello - bonsai1947@att.net
 Vice President - vacant
 Secretary - vacant
 Treasurer - Darren Wong - 707.746.6260
 Past President - Chris Ross - cmrbonsai@yahoo.com
 Show Chairman - Ron Reid
 Newsletter - Candace Key - mckassoc@yahoo.com
 Directors:
 Lucky Fung - luckyfung88@yahoo.com
 Dennis Hawkins - idhawk@comcast.net
 George Haas - gwhaas@comcast.net

October 8 – 9, 2016 Oakland, California

East Bay Bonsai Society: Annual show held at the Lakeside Garden Center at 666 Bellevue Ave. Show hours are 10 AM to 5 PM Saturday and 11 AM to 4 PM Sunday with demonstration and raffle from 1 to 3:30 PM on Sunday. Free admission and show will feature over 50 trees of various varieties and ages. For more information contact us at ebbs@eastbaybonsai.org

October 15 – 16, 2016 Union City, California

Yamato Bonsai Kai: 45th Annual Bonsai Exhibition and Demonstration will be held at the Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church, 32975 Alvarado-Niles Road. Hours: Noon - 6 PM Saturday & 10 AM - 5 PM Sunday. Demonstration each day at 1:30 PM featuring Johnny Uchida, with Mike Baker and Tony Hayworth. Don't miss this special event. Benefit raffle drawing each day after the demo; raffle includes the demo tree. Large vendor and plant sale area; free admission and parking. Doctor Bonsai support will be available. For more information call Tony Hayworth at 510-289-5731 or bonsaicho@comcast.net or visit our club website www.yamatobonsai.org.

October 27-30, 2016 Sacramento, CA

Golden State Bonsai Federation Convention 39 "A Bonsai Convergence: **Gather At The Rivers**" Convention. Headliners: Ryan Neil and Bjorn Bjornholm. More Workshops and Seminars from: Kathy Shaner, David Nguy, Peter Tea, and others. Where: The Double Tree By Hilton 2001 Point West Way, Sacramento, CA 95815. Hotel phone: 916-924-4900 (*ask for the "GSBF Group Rate"*) For more information, contact: Scott Chadd, GSBF President at: 530-622-9681 or scottchadd@lotusbonsai.com. On-line registration opens on July 1, 2016 Click here: <http://www.gsbfcconvention.org>.

December 3, 2016 Fresno, CA

Fresno Bonsai Society: 9th Annual Bonsai Yard Sale held at 736 West Browning Ave. from 8 AM till 3 PM. Bonsai, pre-bonsai, accent plants, new and used pots, stands, books, suiseki, and supplies. Everyone is welcome to buy, sell, or swap all things bonsai. For more information about the event visit us on our Facebook page or www.fresnobonsaisociety.com.

BASA

578 Woodbine Drive

San Rafael, CA 94903

Bay Area Satsuki Aikokai

Membership Application

The club meets the 4th Thursday of each month*
at the Garden Center at Lake Merritt 7:30-9:30
for programs and workshops

* Excepting May, July, August and December

Make your check in the amount of \$25/year for an individual or \$35 for a household to BASA.

Mail with this form to:

Darren Wong, Treasurer, 2254 Tennessee Street, Vallejo, CA 94591

Please note: The roster to be mailed with the April newsletter will include names and telephone numbers, but NOT addresses. Your address will be in a separate roster given ONLY to officers and the publisher of the newsletter:

Name (s): _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone number:

Any suggestions you have for programs and activities for the club would be much appreciated: