



RMBS

April 2023

Volume 55 Issue 4

Shimpaku Juniper - Rich Katz

Mike Green Photography

President's Message

by Paul Koenning

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Presidents Message

RMBS March 2023 President's Message

Paul Koenning

Greetings from Mexico bonsai fanatics! The weather is warming, and the desire to jump into spring is in full force! Don't be fooled though, as the end of May is our last frost date in the Denver Metro Area. If you have not already begun planning out your spring, now is the time! Thankfully we have a great repotting workshop scheduled on April 15th at the Denver Botanic Gardens Bonsai Pavilion. Tom Anglewicz will be running this workshop, and he has a great depth of experience with winter care, repotting, and how to shift bonsai from their winter conditions into being ready for the summer heat.

Before that happens, we have our monthly meeting coming up, and our own Darrell Whitley will be presenting on shimpaku juniper, and the techniques that have worked for him in our high arid desert. Darrell has had great success producing cuttings of this variety, and

this will prove to be a great presentation for helping demystify this highly sought-after species for bonsai.

While I am taking a bit of time for vacation with my family, my eye for trees never rests. While traveling from Cancun to Playa del Carmen I am loving seeing all of the blooming bougainvillea along the roadside. I am not sure if they are native, but there are also a lot of ficus trees with beautiful aerial roots all over their expanding trunks. I certainly have seen a few stumps; I would love to collect yamadori style and work to find a way to get one home! (It's hard to convince me it's time to take a break;). Instead of trying to find avenues to negotiate the transport and quarantine of a stump from Mexico, I should probably stick to the techniques I already have at hand and work to create more root over rock ficus.

Below are techniques I have used to turn cuttings into showable bonsai in just 8-9 years with narrow leaf ficus. As I am becoming more settled in my home, I plan to regularly strike cuttings and start producing more root over rock ficus. Part of this is of course for my own enjoyment, but I also hope to provide some materials for the society as the years pass.

The strong desire I have to work on ficus with aerial roots, or in the root over rock style really stem back to the origins of how I found bonsai. My first bonsai was a Home Depot rescued ficus that had the rocks glued to the soil and all of the bad practice treatments we work to steer newcomers away from. While I did not know what I had purchased was a bonsai, I soon learned that fact, and was scared to death of attempting to keep a bonsai alive. Despite that fear I dove in head first with a strong desire to have a miniature form of the beautiful banyan/ ficus trees I had seen in Mexico and Hawaii. While it took me several years to land on a workable process that works in less than a decade, I hope what I have learned will help your efforts to bring ficus in the Rocky Mountain region to a whole new heightened level! I hope you all enjoy repotting season as it arrives, and I hope to see you all at our events when you are able to join us.



I have always loved root over rock bonsai, and thoroughly enjoyed researching and developing the process that grew the narrow leaf ficus pictured above. I have broken down some of my process below.

This *Ficus salicaria*, narrow leaf ficus, was started from a cutting from Larry Jackel and grown on in a pond basket for about two years. The pond basket helps provide air pruning of roots to eliminate circling roots within the container, and they are not expensive at all. In this image you can also see the rock before the roots were grown over it.



At this point I pruned and wired the ficus to build the initial structure of the tree, while also working to complement the rock the tree will be grown on.





I repotted the tree every June to prune excessive roots, and further train and hold young roots to the rock. I have already pruned many roots in this photo, and as you can see the rooting is very vigorous.



The pond basket does work very well to eliminate circling roots, but there were still some. I made the decision to use a supper roots container, which is pricy but works incredibly well and comes in many sizes. Because all roots are air pruned as they reach the edge of the container no rooting energy is wasted on circling roots. This builds an incredibly ramified root mass, in this case all around the rock placed in the supper roots container.



The ficus was bare rooted in order to place the roots over the rock in desired locations. I use grafting tape to hold the roots to the rock, and a few steel wires with rubber padding to hold everything in place. Once the repot was done I placed the tree in a humidity tent to allow the roots to recover. This works by drastically reducing transpiration which allows some photosynthesis to happen with little or no water loss.



It is important to allow the foliage and top growth to grow freely, as the foliage and roots like to maintain a balance between each other. Look at all of the root choices to choose from! This makes it easy to continue training the roots on the lower half of the rock!



This ficus is now 9 years old and grown from a 6-inch cutting. I have shown this tree in the recent past and may again this year. Not bad for 9 years of growth from a cutting! I hope that these techniques will help in your efforts and lets brainstorm together if you have additional thoughts or ideas that could prove useful. Thank you for enjoying some tropical inspiration with me and have a great spring!

Meeting Information: Pat Deutschman

April monthly meeting: Tuesday, April 4 7PM
Denver Botanic Gardens, Gates Hall

Presenter: Darrell Whitley- Shimpaku juniper

Gates Hall is in the main building on the ground floor, part of the original structure that is now connected to the Freyer-Newman center. You will enter through the Visitors center at DBG, and exit through Pinyon Gate.

Since this is the first time we are using Gates Hall for live presentations in a while it is unknown if the w-fi connection will be able to support live streaming. We will send a link to You Tube if that is going to be attempted. There are times the link changes just prior to broadcasting, so keep an eye on your emails for updates if needed.

ABS convention

ABS- American Bonsai Society annual convention to be held in Denver at the Denver Botanic Gardens, June 8-11.

We have included information on the learning seminars in past newsletters and emails. This is a wonderful opportunity for RMBS members to attend a national conference and have access to workshops from some of the top bonsai artists in the United States! It is also a wonderful time to participate as a volunteer to support our partnership with ABS as a fund raising opportunity for RMBS.

The weekend schedule is [here](#).

Register [here](#).

[Artist's biographies are here](#).

[Apply to exhibit here](#).

Here is the link to the volunteer descriptions [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wdZMXBM5rcxILCvWXkDDARZF17w3su7Jc36rVbeie_Q/edit?usp=share link](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wdZMXBM5rcxILCvWXkDDARZF17w3su7Jc36rVbeie_Q/edit?usp=share_link)

Here is the link to the form to volunteer <https://forms.gle/Xsjx1uqdCob9wH167>

MEMBERSHIP by Patrick Allen

RMBS continues to grow! As of this newsletter we have 168 members. Several have renewed their membership and the following have joined the Society:

If you meet them at one of our upcoming events, please welcome them and see if they need any help with their Bonsai trees, or share with them how you got started. They will appreciate it!

Jon Lessner

Kirk Van Kull

Juan Casal-Valero

Jeff Wagner

Olivia Stockert

Bruce Kaiser

Keith Ybanez

RMBS HERITAGE PAGE



Bob Kataoka

Born in Hiroshima, Japan in 1906, Bob moved to California after arrival in the United States in 1922. He farmed there until the outbreak of World War II, and relocated to Colorado in 1945. A very quiet and modest man, his Denver home reflects his skill as a carpenter and landscape designer, with extensive shoji screens and fine Japanese garden. Bob started Bonsai in 1957 when he joined the Denver Bonsai Club. His specialty is in collecting wild specimens and training these into quite spectacular bonsai; he has one of the finest collections of natives in the Rocky Mountain region. Bob will give a demonstration of his talents on Saturday morning, and will be assisted by Harold Sasaki of the Denver Club.



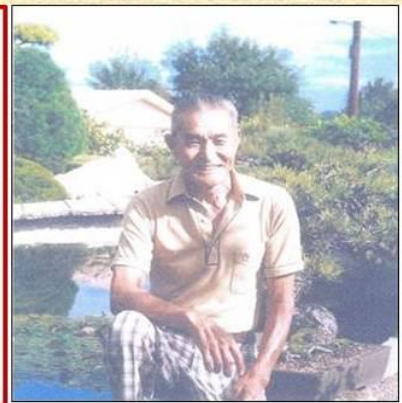
Pinus ponderosa
PONDEROSA PINE

Estimated 200 Years Old

COLLECTED IN THE COLORADO
ROCKY MOUNTAINS

ARTIST: BOB KATAOKA

*Chosen as The Official Logo
of the
Rocky Mountain Bonsai Society
in 1976*



RESOURCES FOR MEMBERS

[Rocky Mountain Bonsai Society | Facebook](#) Post and view photos from RMBS members, post questions, comment

[Rocky Mountain Bonsai Society Forum](#) RMBS website forum has articles of interest

[Rocky Mountain Bonsai Society \(@rocky_mountain_bonsai_society\) • Instagram photos and videos](#) View or post photos

[Rocky Mountain Bonsai Society - YouTube](#) RMBS meetings recorded appear here, other videos of interest including RMBS show

[Rmbonsai.org](#) RMBS website – headers: News & Events, Galleries, Join, Blog, Forum, Education

Other resources

[Colorado Bonsai Ltd.](#)
[First Branch Bonsai](#)
[RMBS Facebook Page](#)

Rocky Mountain Bonsai Society Dues info.

Annual membership renewals were due July 1. Individual membership is \$35 per year, a family membership is \$50 per year. Since we are currently following social distancing measures, please send a check to:

Rocky Mountain Bonsai Society

c/o Membership Renewal **PO BOX 2095 Littleton, CO. 80161** **This is our new mailing address.**

Please be sure to include your phone # & email with your check so we've up to date contact info for you.

To pay electronically you must have your own **PayPal** account or **Venmo** account set up and linked to a credit card or bank account. It's very easy to do on their websites.

With **PayPal**, you can send money or make a payment to anyone with an email address or mobile number.

From your **computer**, Smart Phone or iPad here's how to send money:

Log onto your PayPal account.

1. Click [Send & Request](#) at the top of the page.
2. Enter rockymountainbonsaisociety@gmail.com
3. Enter the amount, choose the currency, add a note (if needed) and click **Continue**.
4. Select "Sending to a friend."
5. Select how you want to pay and click **Next**.
6. Review the information and click **Send Payment Now**.

Venmo is an APP available only for smartphones or iPads. You can set up a Venmo account through the app and pay directly from there.

The name of the account in Venmo to send to is: RockyMountainbonsaisociety

2021 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

Date and Location	Agenda or Program	Workshop
April 2023 Monthly meeting Tuesday, April 4, 7PM Denver Botanic Gardens - Gates Hall	<u>DARRELL WHITLEY</u> SHIMPAKU	
April Workshop Saturday, April 15 10am- 4pm Denver Botanic Gardens-Bonsai Pavillion (weather dependent)		TOM ANGLEWICZ REPOTTING WORKSHOP
May 2023 Monthly meeting Tuesday, May 2 7PM Virtual- on Line/ Gates Hall	<u>BJORN BJORHOLM</u>	
May Workshop Saturday, May Darell Havener host		DARELL HAVENER REVIEWING BONSAI TO CHOOSE FOR SHOW
June 8, 9, 10 2023 ABS Convention Denver Botanic Gardens	ANNUAL AMERICAN BONSAI SOCIETY CONVENTION AND SHOW	
July Workshop Saturday, July 15 Paul Koenning host		PAUL KOENNING FINAL WIRING AND PRUNING
July 2023 Monthly Meeting Tuesday, July 4 Denver Botanic Gardens- Gates Hall	<u>TBD</u>	
August 2023 Monthly Meeting Thursday, August 3 7PM Denver Botanic Gardens- Gates Hall	<u>TODD SCHLAFER</u>	
August Workshop Saturday, August David McPeters host		DAVID MCPETERS POT CLEANING AND USE OF MOSS
September – Annual show Friday Sept 1- Sunday Sept 3 Denver Botanic Gardens	<u>ANNUAL SHOW</u>	
September Workshop Saturday, September 9 Paul Koenning host		PAUL KOENNING WINTER PREP AND PEST INSPECTION
October Monthly Meeting Tuesday, October 3 7PM Denver Botanic Gardens- Auditorium	<u>SERGIO CUAN</u>	



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www.backcountrybonsai

We're located on the west side of the Denver Metro area, near I-70 and Youngfield.

Email us at: co.bonsai.ltd@gmail.com