



ORIGIN: TADAMI RIVER, JAPAN - DARRELL WHITLEY

RMBS

November 2021

Volume 53 Issue 11

President's Message

by David McPeters

A collection of things as the year heads to a close.

Preparing for winter

This time of year, the question, particularly from those new to bonsai in the front range, is how and when to move trees into protection for the winter. There are many strategies of how to provide protection, more than I can go into in a newsletter. If you have a specific question about a species or method post it to the web forum [here](#).

I have learned over the years that being prepared is key. Know where you are going to overwinter, know how you are going to provide protection, and do not wait to the last minute.

Tropicals are easy, they must overwinter indoors. Try to avoid this.



Preparation here involves having a suitable place indoors. You should already have moved tropicals indoors.

For natives and other hardy species, the primary purpose of winter protection is to prevent the pots/roots from going through repeated freeze thaw cycles and if necessary to provide protection against winds that can desiccate. For refined trees you also need to consider that snow loads may damage the branching. Common practices by members in the club include placing the trees on the ground and mulching up to the pot rim, building a covered bunker to hold trees, or keeping them in a garage, hoop house, or a cold green house. I do all three. My preparation includes cleaning the garage space (funny how 'stuff' fills a vacuum of space over the summer), cleaning out the bunker, and making space in the garden to place trees on the ground. I use mulch in the bunker and for the trees on the ground. Douglas county has a slash/mulch site where I can pick up free chipped mulch. It is not as pretty or uniform as what I can buy at the big box store, but it works just as well. I already have all the trees I am not planning to work on again this year taken care of. As long as the weather holds my deciduous trees remain out. First, I can still enjoy the fall color and second if the leaves drop outside, I do not have a mess in the bunker or garage when they do. If the temperature plunges before they drop their leaves I will either put them away or go to the fall bonsai shuffle.

This time of year is a good time to pick up nursery material. Nurseries usually have sales in the fall to reduce inventory they must overwinter. Overwintering in nursery pots is like overwintering your bonsai. The root zone and the foliage (if any) need to be protected. I sometimes just sink the pots into a garden bed up to the soil line in the pot. I recently found this article on how to deal with root balls when planting nursery material in the landscape and think it has application to deciduous bonsai, although not in the fall. Check it out [here](#). It is from an online source called The Garden Professors.

The 2022 RMBS board election is approaching. The candidate list was emailed to members as a separate email in early October. Additional nominations will be accepted by email. The vote will be held during the November Tuesday meeting.

The clubhouse is reserved for the holiday party. It is the first Sunday in December. More details will be communicated in November.

[Looking back and forward](#)

Looking back at 2021 and my first-year tenure as president I have to say I enjoyed it. I hope I met your expectations. It gave me the opportunity to meet members I did not know previously. I enjoyed working with the board and other volunteers. What you experienced this past year was a result of their hard work and willingness to jump in to get things done.

Looking forward to 2022 I am optimistic that the year will be a success. My intention is to continue with hybrid monthly meetings allowing all member to participate. Tom Anglewicz is drafting the programs for 2022. If you have ideas for presenters and/or topics, please let him know. We have a diverse membership with a wide range of interest and experience, so he has a difficult job of providing a program schedule that meets the needs of all. Some artists appear willing to travel next year allowing us to have weekend visiting artists workshops and Tuesday meeting demonstrations once again. The Saturday workshops at members' homes were a success this year and we will have them in 2022. In 2022 the annual show will be held on Labor Day. Thanks for all the comments and suggestions on what you would like to see in the 2022 show and ways to improve on the show.

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For the November meeting of RMBS, long time RMBS member and this year's show program, Darrell Whitley, will present a somewhat wide ranging talk that will look at both Suiseki and Bonsai as art forms. Common questions include asking, "How important is naturalness in Suiseki and Bonsai?" In both Suiseki and Bonsai there is an ongoing tension between dramatic expression and the "shibui" of understated beauty, between the natural and the artificial, and between Zen austerity and commercial flash. One can also find "local bonsai" in Japan, which is sometimes much more relaxed and natural than exhibition bonsai.



Bonsai and Suiseki: Two Wheels of the Bicycle by Darrell Whitley

Over the last twenty years, there has been increasing acceptance of suiseki in the bonsai world in the West. There are also now co-mingled or co-located bonsai and suiseki exhibitions in Japan as well. The Japanese/Nippon Suiseki Exhibition is held in parallel with and in the same museum as the great Kokufu Bonsai Exhibition held in February each year in Tokyo. And there is also a general mixture of Bonsai and Suiseki displayed at the Taikan Ten which is held in Kyoto every November, in the same season when the famous maple trees of that city turn blood red.

Suiseki, of course, are viewing stones, or contemplation stones. The most common Suiseki

are stones that represent mountains. There are also "waterfall" stones and figure stones.

At their best Suiseki do what good Bonsai can do. Suiseki can surprise you with their beauty. They can capture the natural world in miniature, not literally, but in an abstract and even symbolic way that nevertheless conjures up the natural world. In this way, Suiseki are again like Bonsai: they suggest the beauty of the natural world in miniature, but they are not a literal representation of the natural world. They can create joy, and a sense of inner peace.



"Suiseki" literally translates as Water (sui or mizu) Stone (seki or ishi). It seems that originally "water stones" were display in trays or pots (the "bon" of bonsai). There are, in fact, multiple theories as to why these stones are called "water stones."

Kunio Kobayashi of Shunkaen Bonsai Gardens in Tokyo is a champion of both bonsai and suiseki, and he has referred to them as two wheels of the bicycle. In Shunkaen Gardens one will see both bonsai and suiseki on display. (Of course, there are still more bonsai than suiseki at Shunkaen Gardens.) But it is also the case that while the average person in Japan is very familiar with Bonsai, the average person usually has never heard of Suiseki. One reason for this might be that different words were used for "contemplation stones" in the past, such as the term "Bonseki" (stone in a pot) and even "Bonsan" (landscape in a pot).

Nevertheless, if one looks at both historic gardens in Japan, this mixture of trees and stones is not new. The wonderful Zen gardens of Kyoto use stones to depict mountains, and islands (which could include Japan) and perhaps continents. But often the scene is more intimate. Three stones and sand and small trees can capture the feel of a quiet place in the forest where a spring of fresh water flows forth and becomes the headwaters of a small stream.

Two cities in Japan are important for their historic preservation of Zen gardens as well as private gardens. One of these cities is of course Kyoto. But the other is Kanazawa on the west coast of Japan. Like Kyoto, Kanazawa was not destroyed during World War II. One of the things that Kanazawa is known for is old Samurai residences that have been preserved. In the best of these Samurai homes, one will find very small but elaborate gardens with small shaped trees, where stones also play a critical role in these small landscape scenes.

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](#)

[S&S Bonsai](#)

[RMBS Facebook Page](#)

[Mike Horine Website](#)

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 472361 Aurora, CO 80047-2361

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.

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1. Click [Send & Request](#) at the top of the page.
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3. Enter the amount, choose the currency, add a note (if needed) and click **Continue**.
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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: Rocky Mountain bonsai society

2021 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

Date and Location	Agenda or Program
<p><u>November Monthly Meeting</u> Tuesday, November 2, 7pm – 9pm Online via Zoom</p>	<p><u>DARRELL WHITLEY</u> SUISEKI AND BONSAI AS ART FORMS</p>
<p><u>Annual Holiday Party</u> Sun, Dec 5th 10am – 2pm Hillcrest Condos 9968 Appletree Place Thornton, CO</p>	



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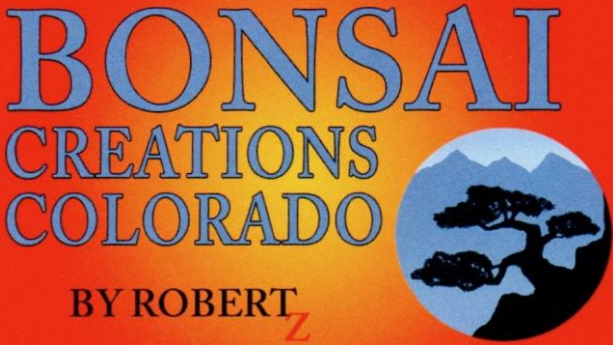
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Do you need a gift for a hard-to-shop for bonsai enthusiast? We offer Individual Bonsai Instruction Sessions and we have **Gift Certificates!!** Use them for *anything* (supplies, classes, etc.) and at *any time*.

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



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