

# Iowa Bonsai Association Newsletter

[www.iabonsai.org](http://www.iabonsai.org)

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



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## IBA March Activities

### **IBA Meetings at The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. 909 Robert D. Ray Drive**

*Topics: Open Study Group from 9:00am - 1:00 pm,  
Bring a tree to work on whatever you want.*

Presentations start at approximately 10:30am. You may choose to continue with your Open Study Group tree. Open Study Group is a chance (with ample time) to bring your trees to work on, and/or watch others work on their trees so you can learn by observing and exchanging ideas with other members.

In the interest of inspiring the public with our art form, various members will be displaying in a basically formal manner a show quality tree (stand, accent plant, etc.). If you would like to display, please contact Dave Lowman (515-769-2446)

March 16: PLEASE NOTE: 8:00 am Board Meeting, all members welcome

## EIBA March Activities

### **March 14, 6:30 pm. Board Meeting at Panera Restaurant on Edgewood Road**

*Topics: Discuss presentation at Wickiup Learning Center to the Regional Garden Clubs of Eastern Iowa, possible bonsai class at Pierson's Flower Shop, prep for club mtg on handling bare root seedlings.*

### **March 21, 7:00 pm. EIBA Club Meeting at Pierson Flower Shop on Ellis Blvd.**

*Topics: Pay dues, hsoil handout, program on managing bare root seedlings and pruning first and second year seedlings.*

## Inside This Issue

IBA Activites	1
EIBA Activites	1
93rd Kokufu Exhibition	1-2
2019 6th Japan Suiseki Exhibition	3-5
Timely Tips	5

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## 93rd Kokufu Exhibition

*Wm. Valvanis*

The Kokufu show is the classic bonsai show in



Japan. It is held each year in February. This year it was held at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum. Here are several photos pulled from Bill Valvanis's blog. Bill visits Japan several times a year

*A dwarf Stewartia.  
I have a few of  
these grown*

*from seedlings. Will I ever create a trunk and nebari like this one?*

and has done so for decades. Visiting the Kokufu Exhibition should be on every serious bonsai lover's bucket list. Enjoy the photos. Check out trunks, taper, nebari, pots, furniture, display, branching, overall shape or style. So much to learn from Bill's photos. If you want to see more beautiful trees check out Bill's blog at [International Bonsai](#).



*A dwarf Stewartia. I have a few of these grown from seedlings. Will I ever create a trunk and nebari like this one?*



*Sargent Juniper. Great deadwood, but maybe too complex for the eye*



**2019 6th Japan Suiseki Exhibition**  
*Wm. Valvanis (abridged by editor)*



The 6th Japan Suiseki Exhibition is being held at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum in Ueno Park, Tokyo, on February 14-17, 2019. This is the same venue as the Kokufu Bonsai Exhibition, but in a

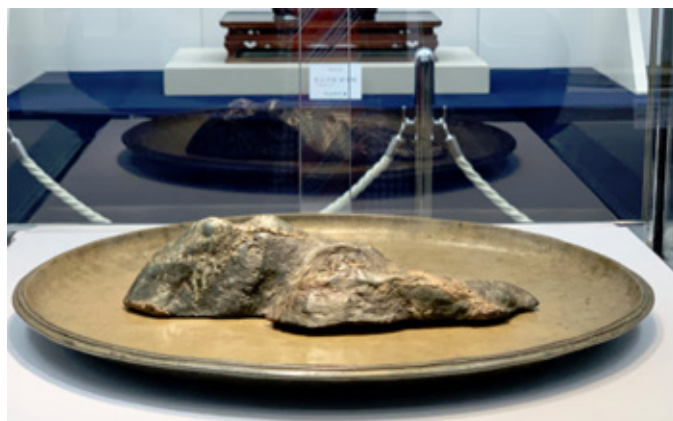


different gallery on the 2nd floor. It was Norio Kobayashi's (no relation to Kunio Kobayashi,) dream to elevate the art of bonsai

by having an exhibition in an art museum. He succeeded, and in 1934, with the assistance of Count Matsudaira, a now annual exhibition of miniature trees can be enjoyed. Norio Kobayashi was a pioneer in bonsai promotion and published the monthly *Bonsai* magazine for 518 issues. This year marks the 93rd edition of the Kokufu Bonsai Exhibition. For a couple of decades, the exhibition was held twice a year, but changed to an annual event in 1960.

I found it interesting that in 1934 museum officials did not originally want to display bonsai because they were “dirty” with soil and “smelly” from organic fertilizers. That was the main reason soil needed to be 100% covered in green moss. The bonsai exhibition is now held on the bottom levels of the current art museum with ceramic floor tiles. The suiseki exhibition is held in a 2nd floor gallery which is carpet covered. No water is allowed in

this exhibition which is the reason why water is not included in the water basin displays of suiseki, the traditional and formal way of appreciating suiseki. Also, that's why there are no accessory plantings displayed with the stone



The crown jewel of the exhibition was a rare appearance of the famous bonseki (original term for suiseki) “Sue no Matsuyama” a temple treasure of the Nishi Hoganji in Kyoto. The stone has an approximate 500 year history of being appreciated in China and Japan. The stone, of course is millions of years old, however age is determined in the suiseki world by the number of years the stone has been appreciated and valued as a suiseki. This stone has a long and most interesting history and is considered among the two most famous and valuable suiseki in Japan. It has not been often displayed and at one time visitor were waiting in line to see this national treasure.

Wil Lautenschlager, an American working in a Tokyo art gallery, who is also the youngest and only foreign Director of the Nippon Suiseki Association was one of the translators for the exhibition album, in full color and English. Contact me as I have a few extra copies for sale. He told me that in order to display this treasured bonseki a certified museum curator (Wil) needed to travel to pick up and travel with the stone to Tokyo. First the stone was photographed to show any damage before transporting. Then it was wrapped with a couple of layers of special paper before placing in its silk bag. The stone is kept in a lacquered storage box, also photographed to indicate any scratches or damage before moving. It was then double boxed and transported to Tokyo with a bonded carrier, accompanied with Wil. By the way, the same procedure was used for the round bronze plate the bonseki is displayed on. The same procedure will be necessary next week to return the national treasure to its temple home in Kyoto. That's a huge amount of work to move a rock the size of a hot pocket which is displayed on a dinner size plate. But the art of suiseki,

and bonsai are a treasured and valued art forms. Usually, visitors do not realize the work necessary to display special suiseki and bonsai in exhibition. A lot of work and negotiations are behind the scene.



Suiseki displayed by Ron Maggio



Special bonseki exhibit by the Hosokawa Bonseki School

The Nippon Suiseki Association is fortunate to have both Kunio Kobayshi and Seiji Morimae who

both have fine taste and the drive to promote and elevate both the arts of suiseki and bonsai. They have dedicated their lives to these arts and endlessly work year around and all day long for their passion.

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## Timely Tips

*John Deny*

There is a lot of snow cover out there. However, temperatures, both day and night time look to be on the rise. This means good bye to the snow over the next couple of weeks. And it will mean deciduous trees kept in a garage environment will begin to have warmer soil and the buds may begin to push. The root tips will have white active tips and repotting may be in order soon.

This is also the time of year, especially for deciduous trees, that buds swell and the tree wants to leaf out. The trouble is, night time temps will sometimes be below freezing for some time yet. And the risk of frost will exist for quite a few more weeks. So, what to do?

If your trees are in a garage or space where the temps will rise, then do what you can to keep the temps as cool as long as possible to delay buds leafing out. Hopefully, you have a thermometer in your storage space. When the temps rise inside and the outside temp is cooler, open your garage door or a window if you have one. Let the cooler air in, then close things up.

Eventually you have to take your trees outside when the leaves come out. If you don't, the internodes will extend too long. Bonsai trees look best with short, tight internodes. So, the "dance" begins. Take the trees outside for sun, but if the night temps indicate frost, you should bring those trees inside for the night, then back outside.

For those of you who over winter your trees in outside sheds or buried in mulch or the ground, you needn't worry for a while longer. Your trees will maintain cool soil for much longer and your roots tips will not be active and your buds will not swell for some time yet. Rest easy.