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MARCH NEWSLETTER 2011

Dear Members,

In all my searches I found that there is not too much written about picture stones. These are the stones with light coloured inclusions seen against a darker matrix and the 'picture' stands out. These images are a realistic snapshot frozen in time and it is not the shape of the stone that we are after but the image of something that we see in nature that is emblazoned on the stone.

There are many categories that these fit into and each one is unique in itself.

Plant-pattern Stones

- Chrysanthemum stones are very highly prized and revered.
- Plum blossom and fruit pattern stones which could include 'pictures' of blossoms, peaches and pomegranates.
- Leaf and grass pattern stones which would include bamboos and pampas grasses.

Celestial-pattern Stones

• These would include 'pictures' of the moon, sun and stars.

Weather-pattern Stones

• Rain, snow and lightning patterns.

Abstract-pattern Stones

• Some of the categories in this section would include tiger stripe pattern, tangled net pattern, pit mark patterns, snake pattern and turtle shell pattern.

Miscellaneous pattern stones that could include pictures of any object, animal or human forms. Patterns that could be of religious deities, of houses, bridges, animals, birds, insects, fish and humans.

In fact anything that we observe in everyday life could be in a sub-category all of its own.

When searching for these stones and when you come across stones with this white or light coloured inclusions, turn the stone around on all sides, upside down and around and you could be surprised at what you will find. This actually happened to one of our members who found this stone and he thought that the stone was unique in that each faceted side had an inclusion on it. What he didn't realize was that when I took a closer look at it I found the most perfect 'bonsai tree' on it to his great surprise. A once in a lifetime find.

So remember when you do find a stone like this it may not be evident immediately but take the time to look deeply into the stone and you may well be pleasantly surprised. I think that these stones are very unique and I can promise that you will never ever find an exact replica of it.

Traditionally these picture stones are displayed on a daiza with the 'picture' in a prominent position to give the viewer a good view and to better understand what the picture depicts.

On the island of Sentosa, just off the coastline of Singapore there is a Rare Stone Museum totally dedicated to picture and viewing stones. There are thousands on display and this island is one of the tourist hotspots when traveling to Singapore.

I was given 3 photos that were taken at this museum and on one of the photos it depicts all animal picture stones and they are of horses, monkeys, birds, snakes and rats - unbelievable as if they were painted on. Another one had pictures of trees and grasses, and the one that actually blew me away was two shelves with stones on one shelf depicting the numbers from 1 to 10 on each stone and this must have taken a lifetime to collect. The other unbelievable feat in collecting was a row of stones that had the alphabet on each of the 26 stones starting with A to Z. Fascinating to think that someone just made it their business and lifelong ambition to collect just one type of stone until it was complete. I will have these photos at the next meeting for those of you who can attend. The photos speak a thousand words and each stone has its own daiza.

Collecting these stones can be very interesting and just think how much fun and enthusiasm could be evoked in your own collection or at a bonsai and suiseki show.

Happy Hunting, Brenda

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

'Look, a cloud, the shape of a rose,'

'Not so – it's either a seal with a ball on its nose or an elephant balanced atop its toes.'

'No, if not some flower it must be a large water tower or perhaps an all-day lollipop.'

> 'You both are wrong – it's a northern loon laughing straight up at a full harvest moon!'

> > - Anon







Three examples of picture Stones – a chrysanthemum stone, a picture of a wood forest and the perfect bonsai tree.

Apologies from George and John this month for their 'Timely Timber & Tool Tips' hopefully they will be back with us again next month. In the meantime there is a short article on what type of sand to use for displaying a stone in a suiban.

The most common colour for sand is a beige or light tan in colour. Never use pure white or tinted black sand and always make sure that it is dust and sparkle free and similar in size.

If you happen to collect sand from a river bed make sure that it is sieved to remove the larger particles and wash it to free the sand of the smaller dust like particles. If you can't access a natural source of sand out in nature a suggestion would be to get in touch with sand-blasting companies and maybe they would have suitable sand for you to use. It may be in large bags and it could be then distributed amongst your suiseki friends from your club for a nominal fee.

The sand is first put into the suiban to within one eighth of an inch from the top and a trowel is used to flatten the sand before the stone is placed on top. A good idea before the stone is placed on the sand is to spray it with a fine spray of water to settle the grains, and then the stone can be placed steadily in the correct position. Remember that the surface has to be completely flat so any disturbances that happen when placing the stone can be fixed up with the trowel. A smooth sand surface will highlight the stone with no attention drawing onto the sand in the suiban.

When displaying stones in a suiban at your local show make sure that the suiban is placed on top of some sort of table or a flat piece of wood (known as a jiita board) and it is then quite acceptable to display a very small soe (accent plant) with it but not to distract from the stone. Figurines are also used to particularly depict a special scene e.g. a very small boat in the suiban where the stone represents the island or shore. The size of the boat must be in proportion to the stone or else it will lose its credibility. Remember not to place a figurine that is of special value to you otherwise you may find it someone's pocket!

SUISEKI CLUB MEETING DATES FOR 2011

16th March

No meeting in April

18th May

15th June

20th July

17th August

No meeting in September

19th October

16th November (Christmas party)

DAIZA WORKSHOPS AT RAY'S NURSERY

12th March 9th April 14th May 11th June

9th July 13th August

8th October

12th November

The above club meetings are held at the Don Moore Community Centre, North Rocks Road, North Rocks and start at 7.30pm sharp.

The daiza woodworking workshops are at Ray Nesci's Bonsai Nursery at 26 Sagars Road, Dural and start at 9.00am and finish – whenever. Bring along your lunch and tea and coffee will be provided.

THIS MONTH'S ROCK FEATURE: Geyserite and Tufa

Geyserite and tufa are the terms used for mineral deposits that have precipitated around the edges of hot springs and geysers. These minerals precipitate out of supersaturated boiling groundwater when it experiences a rapid pressure and temperature drop on reaching the surface. These deposits can build up over time into spectacular volcano-like cones around geysers or form beautiful fluted rims around pools. Geyserite is an opal-like hydrated silica, while tufa is composed or calcium carbonate. The Romans constructed many buildings and bridges from tufa.

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NEXT MEETING

Will be on the 16th March at 7.30pm and please bring along any picture stones to keep in with our theme this month.

See you all then.



An example of an air-dried daiza. A member from our bonsai club found this boulder opal on a recent trip around Australia and it was sentimental to her. I was asked to make a daiza for it and as time was of the essence I decided to make the clay base instead because of its very irregular base on the stone. When dried it was sanded and varnished with a stain and varnish all in one. Hence she was very delighted with the result.