



Vancouver Island Bonsai Club

Wednesday November 5, 2003 . . .

The topic for the meeting will be winterizing. There will be a Question and Answer period, where the members will be able to ask all the "winterizing" questions they might have to a panel of "experts".

Our Next Two Meetings:

Wednesday, November 5, 7:30 pm

Wednesday, December 3, 7:30 pm

*Garth Homer Society Auditorium
813 Darwin Avenue, Victoria*

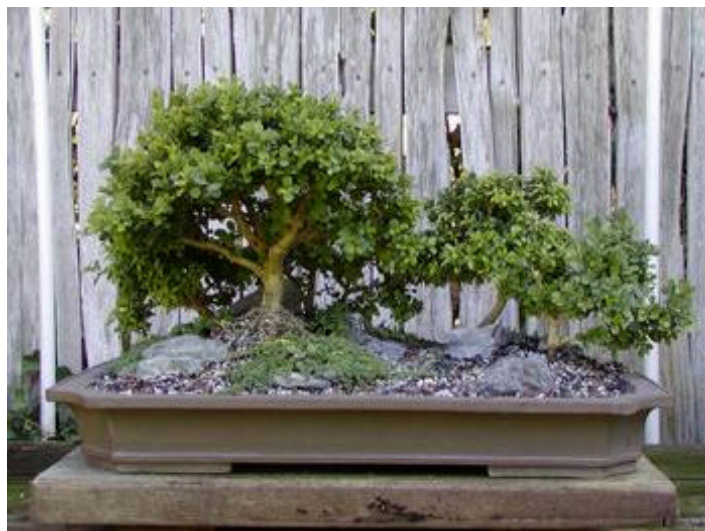
Also, our President will give us an introduction to "Drawing Your Bonsai Tree" Paper will be provided, but feel free to bring your own.

It has been requested by many members to offer Club shirts. Golf Shirts, Aprons and Sweatshirts (green) with the club logo in white, together with prices, will be presented at the meeting for the membership to order.

November Tree Auction...

Kent, our resident auctioneer, will sell to the highest bidder, without any reserve, this magnificent Boxwood forest, created by Qingquan Zhao from China.

Qingquan had a workshop and a demo for our Club early this year. See photo art right.



Report from the October Raffle—

The Shimpaku forest raffle was won by Randy, and the Club collected \$378.00.

Web Site—For those who have access to the internet, please check our new Club web site and tell us what you think. The web address is at the bottom of this page. Many thanks to Randy, who has spent many hours putting it together.

Looking Ahead...

December meeting will be as usual our "social meeting" where members bring some finger food and refreshments and have lots of time to "mingle". As there will be no raffle, this year we are going to have a "Buy & Sell & Swap". More to come on this subject.

The club address is:
The Vancouver Island Bonsai Club
P.O. Box 8674
Victoria, B.C. V8W 3S2
<http://www.victoriabonsai.bc.ca>

Bob Taylor	(President)	Tom Burley	(Treasurer)
Jim Morrison	(Library)		
Luis Martin	(Newsletter)		



General Bonsai Care Through the Seasons by Steven Cook ...

This care plan will be presented monthly in the club newsletter. The following topics will apply throughout the year and will be reintroduced from time to time: Shelter, Air, Water, Nutrients, Light, Temperature, Container condition, Pruning, Wiring and Repotting.

If you are inclined to grow trees from seed, this is the best practical time of the year to collect seeds for your flats or garden beds. For beginners to bonsai, even if you don't plan to start a nursery starting any number of oaks or chestnuts from seed is a valuable exercise. You will learn what is necessary to keep trees alive in a pot. You may very well have lots of loses. However, by this time next year you should be able to determine what you have done right and wrong in the process and so have more information on handling more valuable trees.

Care of conifers is by and large less rigorous than care of deciduous. The damage of freezing and thawing and cold wind in November is negligible for conifers. Care this month is needle pruning and a sprinkling of bone meal if none has been applied yet this fall. Inspect wires for damage to the bark since conifers add caliper during the autumn. Use no nitrogen fertilizer until next spring.

Shelter. Air and Temperature:

Now is the time to finalize decisions about winter storage areas for deciduous. An unheated shed with a north facing window is adequate. Under the display bench with a clear plastic apron as a wind-screen is another. Darkened winter forest floor is the model to imitate. Next month they will require their new home so be ready. For deciduous trees frost is not to be avoided in general. This will help induce dormancy. Once the tree enters the dormant state at the end of this month stable conditions are very important to the health of the tree.

The bane of all deciduous bonsai is cold wind. The process known as freeze-drying occurs when cold wind blows over and dehydrates any otherwise water-baring object. In deciduous trees die back is the result. Many years of work on small branches can be lost in a short time. So, its cold, darkened, stable conditions and sheltering from wind.

Water

The growing medium must be kept moist. Occasional flooding won't cause trouble but don't allow ongoing soggy conditions. Leave pots that are exposed to rain tipped so the water will run out. Where trees are sheltered from rain, water by hand on a weekly basis. I suggest leaving a bamboo skewer plunged into the heart of the root ball. Withdraw the skewer like a dipstick and test by touching the stick to your cheek or chin. The ideal is again the forest floor. Damp is good. Soggy is not. Dry is not. Stay aware of the trees' circumstances during autumn and winter. Artists of all levels of accomplishment have stories of losing trees as a result of lack of attention.

Fertilizing

Fertilizing with 10-60-10 is advisable through the second week of November. Apply 1/2 strength every week. This balance of nitrogen and phosphorus allows the tree to produce phospholipids, which keep the cell walls from rupturing when frozen.

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Container conditions :

Clean off all debris and moss and apply an insecticide and a fungicide. Once again clean off the surface of the growing medium. For trees in small pots the macro environment principles of the forest can't be expected to hold true in the microenvironment of bonsai pots. The pot can and will if allowed to become a virtual petri dish for culturing fungus and insects. So, take the time to clean up for the winter.

Pruning:

As soon as leaves fall from maples you can lop off major branches without massive bleeding associated with maples in the growing season.

In the last days of the month remove all remaining leaves from trees, which normally shed their leaves. There are sometimes stragglers. Here again the idea is to insure dormancy.

Major Bonsai Conventions in 2004...

Do not forget that Victoria is the host for the **PNBCA Convention XV** in September 2004, and our Club is hosting it!

The Bonsai Directory...

The following local business are known to supply bonsai plants and/or other necessary materials. Frequently you will enjoy a discount if you identify yourself as a member of the Vancouver Island Bonsai Club:

Peninsula Flower Nursery, 8512 West Saanich Rd.,
Proprietors: Fred and Jane Starke

A large selection of bonsai, pre-bonsai shrubs, as well as trees and conifers suitable for landscaping and oriental style gardens.

Better Gnomes and Gardens, 3200 Quadra St.,
Proprietor: Laurie McKay

The very best selection of bonsai pots in Victoria. Mostly good quality Chinese pots; some in larger dimensions.

Marigold Nursery Ltd. 7874 Lochside Drive
Large nursery with garden and landscape stock and some "good finds".

Peninsula Landscape Supplies, 2070 Keating Cross Rd. One trip will get you the components to make bonsai soil. From small bag size to truck load: lava rock, coarse sand and bark mulch.



I will
treat your
Real Estate
like I treat
my bonsai,
...
*with care and
attention!*

Kent MacLeod
Newport Realty
385-2033
100% Referral Business



Japanese Fall Bazaar

Our Club has been invited by the Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society to participate in their Japanese Fall Bazaar, Saturday, October 25, 2003, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. It will be held at the Royal Canadian Legion, Esquimalt Branch, 622 Admiral's Road (just off the corner of Esquimalt Road)

There is FREE ADMISSION and the main features presented will be: Uminari Taiko Koto performance; Japanese children's choir; Giant garage sale; Sushi and munju; Bake sale; Japanese crafts; cultural displays and demonstrations, such as Ikebana, sushi making, **bonsai** (that's us); Martial arts demonstration (karate, kendo, iaido (Japanese swordsmanship)); Silent auction; Raffle; Door prizes. Our Club will have a couple of tables with a few trees and probably some hands-on members working on their trees.

Schedule of events

10:00	Doors open		
11:00 - 11:30	Bonsai demo	1:30 - 2:00	Kendo & Iaido
11:30 - 12:00	Taiko	1:00 - 1:15	Children's choir
12:00 - 12:30	Karate	2:00 - 2:20	Ikebana demo
12:30 - 1:00	Koto	2:20 - 2:30	Draws
1:15 - 1:30	Sushi making demo	2:30 - 3:00	Taiko

PLUCKING PINE NEEDLES

This is the right time of year to pluck pine needles. We remove older needles to give the interior and lower branches of the tree more sunlight and air. This keeps the tree healthy and helps to trigger back budding. It can also be used to subdue parts of a tree that are more vigorous than the rest, balancing the appearance of the tree.

The first thing to do is to remove most of the old needles from previous years' growth. These may be turning brown and are usually easy to remove. To remove them, pull gently in the direction of growth, that is towards the tip of the branch. If you want a bud for a branch in a particular spot, it may help to leave that one set of needles intact. If a branch is particularly weak, leave some of the old green needles to provide more nourishment to the branch.

Next we want to consider balancing the growth of the tree. Most trees tend to be apical dominant, meaning that the top branches grow faster and are bushier. More needles lead to the development of larger, longer candles and longer internodes. Fewer needles give smaller candles and shorter internodes. We want to encourage shorter internodes so that branching is increased. This will give us better ramification and an older looking tree.

You may want to leave all the new needle pairs on the shoots of the lower branches or reduce them slightly. Then you will need to thin to reduce the number of needle pairs on the mid-level shoots to less than that number. Further, the number of needle pairs on the upper shoots will need to be reduced to even less than the mid-level shoots. This will help to counteract the natural apical dominance of the tree and make all the branches grow more evenly.

After the needle plucking is done, we will want to consider the styling of the tree. Some pruning may be needed to improve the overall shape of the tree. Then the tree should be carefully wired.
