

Columbus Bonsai Society Newsletter - November 2002

Call for Refreshments!!!

If you like your cookies muffins or other munchie food, we need you to call Pat Radloff. This is a Plea for someone to call Pat Radloff to sign up to bring the snacks for one of the next three months November, January, and February. Thank you to everyone who stepped up and contributed to October.

Tools and pots will be available at the November meeting. Our shipment from Lotus International features pots 12" to 18" in size. Most are unglazed. New in the tool bin are jin pliers at \$17.50. We also have stocked up on wire of various sizes. After the Art Skolnik Workshop we ran out of root pruners, seems like everyone wanted to try some for extreme bending. Wouldn't you like something for Christmas?

Arthur Skolnik Workshop

Art Skolnik led the Bring Your Own Tree Workshop and it was very hands on. If you were there you know what I mean. We got cutters and wire into the hands of people that have been agonizing over a tree for the last several showings of the tree and some radical styling happened. Art is really great in that he gives the coaching on what needs to be done so the owner knows why this is a good styling suggestion and also so that the club members who were paying attention to that particular conversation learned something of the tree and the styling choice as well. This was a before and after picture event. In fact, if you are getting this by email, there are some pictures attached. When we get the web site finalized there will be some posted on the meetings page also. If you can't wait, I can send you a picture file. Just email the club at columbusbonsai@hotmail.com and I'll get them sent out.

November 17 meeting - We will feature a Q&A session. As a social event, we are asking members to share how they got started as a roundtable discussion -and to bring a tree - alive or dead. We want to focus on first experiences in the hobby, a particular plant that inspires, challenges, or frustrates you, and any experience or event that got you started. Then Dan Binder will discuss tools, their use, care and sharpening. Bring a tool(s) that you want to work on and your sharpening stones, we will have advisors standing by to help you.

December - NO Meeting. We will be gathering to eat at 7:00 on Thursday, December 12 at Barley's on Dublin Road (Rt 33) just west of Grandview Avenue. The easiest directions are probably to follow the signs to the main post office and continue west on Dublin Road instead of going to the post office. Grandview is the next major intersection and Barley's is less than a 1000 feet beyond that. Bring a White Elephant to trade. Please respond to Dan Binder, 614-239-6732 or DannyBinder@hotmail.com to reserve a space.

The Board will be meeting December 3 to plan a calendar for 2003. Ideas or suggestions may be forwarded to a Board member. If you want to see something in particular, let us know what it is. We think we guessed your wishes pretty well this year, but we don't claim to be mind readers.

A word from the President

Indoors-Outdoors, All Around the House

By: Ken Schultz

Well, its that time of year when I struggle to become accustomed to trees that are in the basement, in the living room, on the window ledges, and some that are still outside that need attention. Since I last wrote, I did spray all of my trees to de-bug them. So far the ones inside have not hatched any great numbers of flying pests, though I saw a couple spiders, and I'm sure I could find a pill bug or two.

Each location requires something slightly different in watering. This is due to different light and temperature conditions. During the hottest part of the summer, I find it easiest because they all need a good soaking, but now that is not the case. Each tree needs to be looked at and a decision needs to be made about whether it needs to be watered. At least when it gets really cold the trees outside will be safely put away so that they don't suffer from alternate thawing and freezing. (Remember, don't leave any pots on a concrete surface, it act like a giant heat sink.) I did notice as I looked at the trees outside that there are still a few that need their wire removed that I put on two or three months ago. Check yours too.

I still have my outdoor trees up on their stands. I don't think its been cold long enough to place them into storage. I have the burlap and foam boards ready to box them in to protect them from the wind and sun. There are also a few trees that I will need to put where I can bring them into the garage if they predict temperatures into the teens or lower, such as the crepe myrtles as they are only hardy to zone 6. I have gotten away with leaving my larger Chinese elms outside, but bringing in the smaller ones and the more sensitive azaleas, leaving out the ones I bought from nursery stock.

I am also getting a feel for how often to water the trees inside. Again this is different and will continue to change as the furnace comes on more often drying the plants more quickly. I use aquarium gravel under some plants and zeolite pellets under others to enhance the humidity. I also run a small fan on low to move the air to prevent mold. This is a common thing to do and is used by orchid growers.

As the plants indoors settle in, I will begin a winter fertilization program. Also since they are depending on a light source, it will be necessary to turn them to keep them from growing towards the light, unless that happens to look good. I have my lights on timers. They are on for 14 hours. The fans also prevent heat build up. I have learned by error, not to over water, and not to panic when some species drop leaves by being moved indoors. Right now my lantana and several of my ficus look are dropping leaves, but one of our bougainvilleas thinks its great and had started to bloom.

A Book Report

Four Seasons of Bonsai

By: Kyuzo Murata

I purchased this book at the Half Price Book Store on Bethel late in 1997. This book was translated in 1991 and was originally published in 1984 as *Bonsai no shiki*. In the past I have stated that bonsai books fall into three general categories; general instructions on how to, identification and care; and coffee table books of beautiful trees. While not as large as most coffee table books, *Four Seasons of Bonsai* falls into this last category.

The twist on this book, which caught my eye, is that it is organized into the four seasons. Its chapters are titled; Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. Next as you leaf through the pages you notice that a good number of the trees have flowers or fruit. Also there are a number of pages devoted to flowering accent plants. Each page has text that first identifies the plant and then gives a couple sentences on caring for the plant. An example is "Terihano-ibara (a type of wild rose) The text advises that this plant is managed differently from other wild roses, in that all new shoots from the base are removed, leaving only the old trunks. This rose needs cross-pollination. If there are wild roses in the vicinity, bees will pollinate it, but if –there are not you must provide at least one other plant and cross-pollinate them manually. Then there is a photo caption telling the month age and size of the plant. The one with the rose says, mid-October, 30 years, 7 inches.

As I have paged through this book, I learn something new each time, though there is not a lot of text to read. I also marvel at the quality of the photo compositions; the balance of the tree and the pot. Other times it's the peak flowering or fruiting captured by the photo. This includes some unusual accent plants such as a tray of Lily of the Valley that have been potted for 20 years or a Skullcap that has been potted for 7 years. There are also some unusual trees, such as a Mountain Ash and a Sumac grove.

Then there are those trees that are pictured in different chapters or have a smaller photo on the same page, to show their beauty in different seasons. I did notice that the note on the flowering cherry said it was blooming in late February, I figure its not Ohio. If you decide to add this book to your collection, look for a very red Japanese maple pictured on its cover.

~ review by Ken Schultz

Tree of the Month

Pinus Thunbergii - Japanese Black Pine

Family: Pinaceae

The Japanese black pine, (*Pinus Thunbergii*) is among the very best species of tree for bonsai. This pine was named after Dr. Carl Peter Thunberg, a Swedish student of horticulture who traveled extensively in Java and Japan. This species has long been regarded by many as the "king" among bonsai. Few trees can convey the stoic power of bonsai that a black pine can. It is also a strong tree that responds well to the techniques used in bonsai.

The black pine is a very vigorous tree commonly grown in Japan where heights up to 75-80 feet are commonly reached. *P. thunbergii* are very tolerant of poor growing conditions, surviving in nature on barren, stony soils. It has thick, dark, green gray needles up to 5-7 inches long borne in groups of two. Though these needles are quite long, the size can be reduced in length with the

use of bonsai pruning techniques. A twice-yearly pruning will create flat pads of very dense short branches and completely control the size and shape of this unique tree.

In June remove all the new candles that are longer than one inch. Many new shorter candles will form a whorl of short branches. In November reduce this whorl of branches to a flat forked branch. In this manner, 3-inch needles may be reduced to 2 or even 1 inch. Every other spring, if the tree is healthy, you can remove all the new candles. The following fall, buds will appear where the candles were removed. This greatly shortens the internodes and increases foliage density.

Black pines require full sun and good air circulation. Don't forget to turn the tree from time to time so that light reaches all parts of the foliage. *P. thunbergii* does not like extreme heat, though, especially in the area of its roots. Spray the foliage with water daily during the hottest days of summer. Move to where it only gets a half a day of direct sun to help keep the roots from over heating.

Watering your black pine can be tricky. They may be allowed to go dry between watering but do not over water. Too much water will cause undesired growth in a finished tree. With time and experience you can hold off on the water until the very last minute without letting your tree suffer. If you tend to water often use more aggregate in your soil mix. The mix that I use consists of 50% calcined clay, 30% pine bark, and 10% peat.

Repot in early spring or late summer, every 2-3 years for young trees and 3-5 years for older ones. The first pruning to position the roots will coincide with repotting and reduction of the crown (preferably in early spring). Always leave a good root system. The container may have to be larger than aesthetics dictate so the feeder roots do not dry out and die at the end of a hot summer day. Don't under pot a black pine. To take up nourishment, pines need to have a special type of fungus (mycorrhizae) in the soil around the roots. This fungus appears as a white, stringy material. When repotting, make sure some of this helpful fungus is included in the new soil mix.

Japanese black pine has been a favorite in coastal plantings because of its excellent salt spray and soil salt tolerance and its function as a wind screen. But in the last few years, it has been showing up in plant clinics far too frequently.

The main pest causing Japanese black pines to die in large numbers is the turpentine beetle (*Dendroctonus terebrans*) which frequently carries with it the bluestain fungus (*Leptographium* spp.) These beetles typically feed on the inner bark of the lower trunk and may even girdle the tree. Characteristic signs of the turpentine beetle injury include long clumps of hardened sap around the lower trunk and reddish sawdust around the very small entry holes. In addition, the introduction of the bluestain fungi can destroy cambial tissue and compound the injury caused by the beetles. A pine affected by this pest complex will show a yellowing or rusty browning throughout the entire tree before the foliage begins to die and needles begin to drop, often within the year.

European pine shoot moth causes young shoots to fall over. Infested shoots may extrude resin. The insects can be found in the shoots during May. Pesticides are only effective when

caterpillars are moving from over wintering sites to new shoots. This occurs in mid to late April or when the needle growth is about half developed.

Bark beetles bore into trunks making small holes scattered up and down the trunk. The holes look like shot holes. Stressed trees are more susceptible to attack, so keep trees healthy. Sawfly larvae caterpillars feed in groups on the needles. Sawflies can cause rapid defoliation of branches if left unchecked. Pine needle scale is a white, elongated scale found on the needles. Pine tortoise scale is brown and found on the twigs. Most scale can be controlled with horticultural oil. Aphids, mealy bug and red spider mites, scale, shoot tip moths and beetles may attack the tree and can best be controlled with a systemic insecticide. Do a preventive fungicide spray every two to three weeks with Benomyl or Daconil. This pine is resistant to Diplodia tip blight. ~ John Hill

Bonsai Here and Beyond the Outerbelt

Unless otherwise noted, The Columbus Bonsai Society meets the third Sunday of every month at 2:00 pm. at the Franklin Park Conservatory. Board meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 in the Franklin Park Conservatory library.

November 17, 2002 - 1:00 bring a tree for advice from our Board. 2:00pm Regular CBS Meeting at Franklin Park Conservatory - "How I got started" How did you fall in love with Bonsai? - and, Tool Time with Dan Binder

December 12 , 2002 - Columbus Bonsai Society Holiday Dinner

January 19, 2003 - 1:00 bring a tree for advice from our Board. 2:00pm Regular CBS Meeting at Franklin Park Conservatory -

The Board normally meets on the first Tuesday of the month at Franklin Park Conservatory. The meetings are open to members.

President - Ken Schultz

1st Vice President - Dan Binder

2nd Vice President - John Hill

Secretary - Mark Passerello

Treasurer - Dick Guervitz

1 year Board - Jesse Welton

2 year Board - Linda Fields

3 year Board - Ben William

Librarian - Merida Weinstein

Newsletter Editor - Zack Clayton

Refreshment Coord - Patrica Radloff

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