

Columbus Bonsai Society Newsletter - March 2006

Remember last time when I talked about my yard projects? Last week I got a notice in the mail from my neighborhood association. No, they were not complaining about the mess. I have a pipeline easement across the back of my yard and the operator is going to come through and clean out brush and trees from the right of way. Dept of Homeland Security is pressuring all of the pipelines to maintain a clear arial inspection route. (I guess the jackbooted thugs want to be sure no one is vandalizing the pipeline, never mind the people who live there.) Now I knew about it when we moved in, but it didn't register what that meant in terms of landscaping. No Trees. No bushes over 3 feet. In spite of the fact that some folks have trees in the ROW that are 40 years old. Okay I can live with that, it said that on the deed. Now what is the problem?

New information. “. . . or trees outside the right of way with branches overhanging the right of way or with roots that may extend into it.” Say what? So the right of way isn't really just the 35-50 feet shown on the property map, it's also wherever they decide the roots may extend?

I'm pretty sure the tree I took down was okay, it was just old and dying. The remaining apple and pear may overhang or extend their roots. That being said, my neighbors are going to hurt worse, the ones in back of me that share the ROW just planted apple trees 5 years ago and I know they will be in violation of the actual ROW. The ones on either side have large trees in the same situation, one is a 50' Blue Spruce in the right of way and a London Plain Tree that is 75-80 feet back, but may 'extend'. Boy I'll miss those two if they both go.

So where is this random rant going? Just this. Check out your deed, see if you have restrictions that would involve plantings and be aware of what the ramifications may mean. In my case I have about 25-35 feet at the back of my yard that will have permanent access to full sun. Not bad, and movable things like benches can go there. Unfortunately, that means I need to move my maples somewhere else for semi-shade in August.

Coming Attractions

March will feature soil, repotting tips, and pot selection. What do you need? I'm interested in about 20 gallons of the haydite/pine mix. I'll use about half of that for pines, and the other half will get blended out with my own organic of choice (coffee) for my deciduous trees. Soil will be available in a couple of size bags. The one gallon ZipLoc, and tentatively we will have two and five gallon bags for larger orders. Let us know what you want ASAP so we can have enough material and get it mixed. The club does take a slight markup over the cost of the materials, even if you just want the bag of pure haydite or bark delivered at the meeting. This is still Waaayyy below the cost of soil at a nursery or mail order. Contact us at columbusbonsai@hotmail.com. Ken will have the tool order and hopefully the pots will be here for selection and demonstration/illustration in that part of the meeting where we talk about pot selection. Since we have soil and tools and pots, after the lecture portion of the meeting and break, the Board will provide hands on assistance to anyone who brings in a tree that needs to be repotted. So look at your collection and pick one that is starting to bud break. Bring it in and “we can help”.

We have rescheduled the forest planting workshop featuring bundles of Trident Maples \$40, Larch \$50, or BYO-Saplings \$10 on our January workshop slabs and trays (or your choice of whatever else you have). The workshop is scheduled for April 22, the fourth Saturday in April, the weekend after Easter for those of us that keep track that way. The club will supply soil, you should have pre-ordered your tridents or larch by now, and if not, get out there and collect those volunteer saplings that you left in the ground last year. I will be using a batch of collected volunteer red maples that I have been training for 1 to 5 years, so I will have a good variety of trunk sizes to work with. I purchased a bundle of larch to grow on in a bed for next year or the year after. We are asking for payment for the tree bundles and BYO at the March meeting to ensure delivery and a spot. If you can't be at the March meeting please be sure to contact Ken Schultz to arrange payment. The trees have not been root pruned yet so be prepared to deal with long taproots. You might want to bring muck or a deeper tray to start them in in addition to the hypertuffa slab.

On the fourth Sunday, April 23rd we will be having Boon Manakitivipart as a guest Artist. We have ordered a 24" tall 3-3 1/2" caliper Black pine for the demo. Boon's start in bonsai was the result of a birthday gift: a small juniper bonsai. Before long, he joined the Bonsai Society of San Francisco, the club through which he took his first beginner class in the spring of 1989. Anxious to learn as much as possible about bonsai, Boon studied with as many teachers as he could find in California. Serious study began when he hosted Akio Kondo, Kihachiro Kamiya's first apprentice. Mr. Kondo arrived as what the Japanese call a first-year professional, and stayed at Boon's home for one year. In 1993, the Golden State Bonsai Federation awarded Boon a Teacher Development Scholarship; two years later, he received the Ben Oki International Design Award for styling a Sierra juniper. In 1995, Boon received several informal offers to study bonsai in Japan. Several months later he traveled to Japan where he studied bonsai for one year as an apprentice with Yasuo Mitsuya. Following his apprenticeship, Boon returned to Japan twice a year to continue his study with Kihachiro Kamiya until his passing in January, 2004. In 1998, Boon founded and became the teacher of Bay Island Bonsai, and started his business, Bonsai Boon.

And if you want to see the kind of bonsai that Boon encourages at Bay Island Bonsai, a coffee table style book is available at this link: <http://www.bonsaiboon.com/bib/book.htm> Its worthwhile going to the site to see the sample pages of this book. I have heard that members must have two show ready bonsai. The club description indicates they attend nine workshops a year and participate in all club events. I can only say the trees in the book reflect that level of dedication. They are magnificent. ~ ZAC

Tree of the Month

CARE GUIDE: Cotoneaster sp.

Copyright ©1996 Pine Garden Bonsai

Unfortunately Pine Garden Bonsai in Washington State is no longer in business as the same company.

Pronounce it 'ko TONE ee aster'.

A small leaved, hardy, flowering and fruit bearing bush given to profuse branching, tough enough to withstand most beginners errors, *C. piculata* and *C. microphyla* var. *thymifolia* come close to being the ideal bonsai, especially for those new to the art. We prize these two species because their branch structure lends itself so well to bonsai. Other Cotoneaster species that make nice yard plants are altogether too regular for bonsai; they look like fish bones.

We recommend that Cotoneasters be brought indoors during the cold weather. Cotoneaster in the ground is hardy at cold temperatures, but in bonsai containers or growing pots these plants are more tender. Extended cold temperatures below 20 degrees F, a few years ago left us with many dead Cotoneasters in our can field.

Cotoneasters can be kept indoors all year, if they are exposed to bright indirect light, are surrounded by moving air and misted daily.

WORK ON COTONEASTER any time of the year. Transplant them when the leaves of daffodils start to show above the ground. If you don't mist newly potted bonsai transplants before they blossom, certainly no later than July.

Cotoneasters normally bloom in May (here in mild western Washington), but the following treatment can force a second blossoming around Christmas:

WINTER FORCING COTONEASTERS:

Leave your Cotoneasters out until well after the first frost. Then bring them into a bright, well aerated place. (An east window in an average size room would be O.K.) Prune small branches back, keeping the general shape of your tree. Fertilize one time in November with 0-10-10 (Bloom). New leaves will grow and flowers buds will set at the tips of the new growth.

Flowers will show anytime between Thanksgiving and Christmas. This works most of the time. We really don't understand which variables control the appearance of blossoms, but they probably include the cold temperature, the length of time they are exposed outdoors, the temperature and the light indoors.

FERTILIZING: "Grow Sticks" are good and simple. Break one in half and put the halves into the two corners of the pot. When those two have almost dissolved, break one more and put the halves in the other two corners. That should last a season. Use Bloom, 0-10-10, 6-8 weeks before blossoms form. Also use this fertilizer one time in the fall to harden roots. Or, if you would prefer, use any fertilizer that you use on your house plants diluted about four fold (1:4) each time you water.

PRUNING: Prune every month by removing unwanted new growth; they grow like gangbusters. Prune larger branches once, before new growth begins.

SHAPING RECOMENDATION : Cotoneasters are the ultimate Shohin; Style them to be heavy trunked, but small. They are showy (flowers and berries), active (things happen: flowers, berries identifiable new growth, rapid growth, complex branching.)

CAUTION: Cotoneaster roots are very sensitive to disturbance between August and their Spring growth period, say March.

[So what is the takeaway from this? I have a clue as to why my cotoneasters die off for “unknown” reasons. We can Wickelize them and grow under lights all year or treat them as semi hardy. And that last caution about their roots in fall and winter? Believe it. - ZAC]

Growing Tips

As I look back over the articles that have shown up under tree of the month I wonder if I need a separate title for propagation or Growing Tips. Give me feedback on this idea. This month is a growing tip to carry on and emphasize what Tom Holcomb shared with us at the February meeting. Also if you save your back issues of the newsletter, there was an article on growing black pines and maples from seedlings that you might want to reread for the trident seeds and pitch pines or yedo spruce in the September 2004 issue.

Air Layering

Air layering is a good method of reproducing good-sized plants in one year. It may be done at any time of the year, but the best time is in the spring when the plants are actively growing. At this time the bark is slipping and easily removed. Air layering is based upon the centuries-old propagating process developed by the Chinese of layering (rooting) plants by placing sections of branches that are still attached to the plant in the ground and covering them with earth, having first removed or roughed the bark on the underside.

Air layering is a simple process similar to layering that can be completed in one season. The rooting medium is in the air rather than in the ground.

1. On a healthy limb completely remove a ring of bark 1 1/2 to 2 times the diameter of the branch to be air layered. This should be 12 - 24 inches from the tip of the limb. [Or section of trunk you wish to root - you can have multiple layers on a branch. - Zack] Two parallel cuts may be made with sharp clippers or a knife and the strip lifted off. The branch may be producing new growth, however, the girdled wood must be hardened off.

2. Eliminate all traces of the cambium layer (green tissue just inside the bark) by scraping with a knife. If the bark is slipping scraping will not be necessary, as the cambium layer will be removed with the bark. Dust the exposed surface with a rooting hormone powder recommended for hardwood cuttings or brush on with a paintbrush if it is a liquid solution.

[Be careful not to cut through the phloem layer just below the cambium as that is needed to supply the leaves which are making food for your new root ball.]

3. Cover the ringed area with a handful of presoaked sphagnum moss from which the excess water has been squeezed. Wrap this tightly with medium weight plastic wrap (from the kitchen) and secure with twist ties above and below the ball of moss. (These ties may not be necessary.) Cover this ball with a square of aluminum foil, dull side out to discourage birds from pecking.

[Alternately, you can use black plastic to wrap the sphagnum and eliminate the aluminum. The aluminum is just to eliminate light to the developing root mass and the black plastic will also help keep the growth warm and help speed the development. - from Tom's talk.]

4. Air layers started in the spring have usually formed roots by fall or late summer. Feeder roots will be visible through the plastic.

5. When the roots are visible through the moss, cut the limb from the mother plant at the bottom edge of the moss with sharp clippers. Remove the plastic. Soak in a bucket of water until planting.

6. DO NOT try to remove the moss as it may damage the tender roots. Best results will usually be obtained by planting first in a container although it can go directly into the ground. Air layers will often flower the first year although excessive buds should be removed so as not to strain the plant.

Thanks to the American Camellia Society.

Book of the Month

Indoor Bonsai: Brooklyn Botanic Garden Record

I'm sure I've reported on this small but informative book before but it is a good resource and I was using it to look up some info the other week and thought, it had been awhile. The reason I was looking it over was that the book includes a chapter on "Growing with Artificial Light." An excellent resource for winter reading. There is a discussion about the kinds of fluorescent lights available, their advantages and disadvantages. There is also a Chapter on "Resting Periods, Light Effects & Indoor Bonsai. The thing that I noticed this time is that Jack Wikle is one of the 16 authors who contributed to the text. Jack's Chapter is "One Growers Tips for Success wit Indoor Bonsai.

The price is reasonable, it listed for \$6.95 in 1992 when I bought it. If you are looking for old trees in a coffee table quality book – this is not it. However, it is a great little book. Zack and I were talking about it and he noted that he has a 1972 edition and Jack wasn't an author in that one. It does list 100 plants for indoor bonsai. The descriptions are limited – but they would be a place to start your research on what you can grow indoors. With so many apartment and condo dwellers, indoor bonsai has certainly reached new heights in popularity. I also know that it is available in the public library.

Bonsai Here and Beyond the Outerbelt

The Bonsai Series at Franklin Park Conservatory

A comprehensive beginner's course on this ancient form of gardening. Students receive their own tree and learn the basics of bonsai in a hands-on repotting and styling session under the expert guidance of FPC horticulturist, Mark Ryan and members of the Columbus Bonsai Society. Learn the history of bonsai; compare traditional and American styles; and receive information on basic plant care including soil preparation, fertilizing and pest control. Times: Wednesdays: April 12, 19, 26 6:30-8:30 pm

Instructors: Mark Ryan, FPC Horticulturist and members of Columbus Bonsai Society

FPC Members: \$95, Non-members: \$105 Fee includes tools and nursery-stock tree

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. The meetings are open to members.

March 19: Soil workshop, repotting, pot selection.

April 1: Delaware Gardeners' Fair - Olentangy Liberty High School, Powell

April 5: Beginning Bonsai 1 - Dawes

April 12: Beginning Bonsai 2 - Dawes

April 16: Easter! NO meeting see April 23

April 19: Advanced Bonsai - Dawes

April 22: Forest planting Workshop @ FPC, 2:00

April 23: 4th Sunday of the Month, Boon Manakitivipart

May 21: Refining your Styles - getting ready for the show. How to judge lecture.

June 17-18: Ohio Bonsai Show at Franklin Park Conservatory.

July 16: BYOT workshop – maybe that tree you got at the show.

August 20: Tropicals – NOT FICUS

September 17: Field Trip to Adena and garden tour.

October 15: Chamaecyparis and Off Beat Junipers – Perhaps a guest master.

November 19: Ramification and Fall wiring.

December : Holiday Dinner
President - Daniel Binder
Past President - Ken Schultz
1st Vice President - Mark Passerello
2nd Vice President - Ben William
1 year Board - Denny Sackett
2 year Board - Ross Lebold
3 year Board - Wendy Fissel
Treasurer - Richard Gurevitz
Secretary - Chris "Pootsie" Conomy
Librarian - Merida Weinstein
Newsletter Editor - Zack Clayton
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Refreshment Coordinator - Vacant

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