



# Vancouver Island Bonsai Club

**Wednesday March 3, 2004 . . .**

Steven will make a short presentation on fertilizers, when to start using them and how to apply them.

Chuck will do a forest planting demo with several (9?) Hedge Maples .

***Our Next Two Meetings:***

*Wednesday, March 3, 7:30 pm*

*Wednesday, April 7, 7:30 pm*

*Garth Homer Society Auditorium  
813 Darwin Avenue, Victoria*

**Show and Tell...** Now that we mentioned forests, please bring your forest plantings for "show and tell".

**Things to come...** Please mark on your calendars the tentative date of 04 April for our Field Day at George's farm. This is the occasion when tables are set up at Highcroft Farm on Old West Saanich Rd. and members are encouraged to bring in a tree or two for design consultation, if desired, as well as wiring and potting assistance. It's also a social event with refreshments both in liquid and in cookie form. George will arrange for sunny, warm weather! More in the April newsletter.

For the Field day, George will have some of his trees in the ground for sale, so be prepared to purchase for a very nominal fee a nice tree, and of course we will help you to dig it out.

## **MALL SHOW 2004 - 29 APRIL TO 2 MAY 2004**

Please also mark this date on your calendar and reserve this weekend for our annual fund raising, exhibit, demo and sales. Steven Cook has volunteered to be the Mall Show Coordinator but we need lots of volunteers for sales, security, demonstration, set-up and tear-down.

Sign-up sheets will be available at the meeting and Tibby is the Volunteer Coordinator, so if you have some specific time you would like to reserve, please see her.

For those who are planning to exhibit, please start selecting your tree(s) and ensuring that they are free of bugs and debris. If you need advice, please feel free to bring them to the Club Nights or to the Field Day for advise. Would you be interested in having a professional photo of your exhibit tree? If there is enough interest, the Board would look into it. Please let us know.

**We need your help...** We are missing the green box containing club wire. It was last seen at the David Easterbrook workshop and lecture in late November. We have checked with Garden Works and they report that it was not left behind in the classroom. If a member, in order to help with the moving out that evening, picked up the box to transport it, please let George know at 216-8595 or bring it to the next meeting.

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)



# 2004 Pacific Northwest Bonsai Convention XV

**"Talk to the Trees"**  
September 17 - 19, 2004  
Laurel Point Inn  
Victoria, BC



The registration form for this convention is available from the club website and from the Club Board members and there will be registration forms, for our Club members, at the March meeting.

If you are planning to register, particularly if you wish to take one of the workshops, please decide soon, because the workshops will be filled very fast. The quality of the trees is excellent and the prices are reasonable compare to international standards.

All the information regarding the Convention, is on the Club web site ([www.victoriabonsai.bc.ca](http://www.victoriabonsai.bc.ca)). If you are planning to participate and you do not have internet connection, we strongly suggest that you find a friend, neighbor or relative with internet access and visit the site. You will be able to see photos of the artists, their background as well as the workshop trees, and you will be able to print the Registration form from the site.

There are many levels of registration fees, which are too long to list here, but, as mentioned, they are listed on the web site, and will be available at the March Club meeting.

**Visiting Guest Artists:**

Cheryl Manning, Los Angeles, CA  
Bob Wilcox, Toronto, ON

**Resident Guest Artists:**

David Rowe, Parksville, BC  
Dan Robinson, Bremerton, WA

Friday September 17th Morning Workshops - 9 AM - 12 PM

- |            |                |  |
|------------|----------------|--|
| Workshop A | Cheryl Manning | Material Kingsville Box (Buxus japonica var. Kingsville)<br>Approximate size of tree is 6 -8 inches. Cost \$225  |
| Workshop B | Bob Wilcox     | Material Kingsville Box (Buxus japonica var. Kingsville)<br>Approximate size of tree is 6 - 8 inches. Cost \$225 |

Afternoon Workshops - 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM

- |            |                |   |
|------------|----------------|---|
| Workshop C | Cheryl Manning | Material Kingsville Box (Buxus japonica var. Kingsville)<br>Approximate size of tree is 10 - 12 inches. Cost \$300                              |
| Workshop D | Bob Wilcox     | Material Kingsville Box (Buxus japonica var. Kingsville)<br>Approximate size of tree is 6 - 8 inches. Cost \$225                                |
| Workshop E | David Rowe     | Material Cotoneaster (Cotoneaster microphylla)<br>Approximate size of tree is 9 - 10 inches. Cost \$150   |
| Workshop F | Dan Robinson   | Material European larch (Larix decidua) or Dawn redwood (Metasequoia glytostroboides)<br>Approximate size of tree is 14 - 16 inches. Cost \$150 |



Typical Convention workshop tree photos; from left and clockwise,

Large Kingsville Boxwood; Larch; Small Kingsville Boxwood; Dawn Redwood; and Cotoneaster.

### 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



## BONSAI SOILS

We like bonsai trees with healthy roots, so, soil is probably the most important aspect of bonsai horticulture (as opposed to bonsai art) and is unfortunately often the least understood aspect of growing bonsai. The other two primary areas, watering and feeding (some might include pest and disease control), are indeed important and generally get more attention than soil does. Without appropriate watering and feeding a tree will not be healthy, but good watering and feeding will be less effective if a poor soil is used. On the other hand, a good soil can help make up for poor watering practice and helps to make feeding more effective.

Because of the special needs of a bonsai, and the limited amount of space in a bonsai pot, bonsai soil must be specially mixed to provide three basic needs:

1. Promote the growth of fine feeder roots
2. Provide sufficient moisture retention that the roots do not dry out
3. Provide sufficient drainage that the roots are not in contact with liquid water, which leads to root rot

In addition, the needs of the specific variety of tree must be addressed. Pines, junipers, and other conifers generally prefer soils that are mostly mineral, with little organic matter, and need a soil that dries well (to a depth of 1/2 to 1 inch) between watering. Temperate zone deciduous trees prefer soil with a little more organic matter and prefer soil that is slightly moist all the time. Tropical and subtropical plants often need highly organic soil and soil that is constantly damp. In all cases, however, good drainage of excess water is necessary. There are exceptions of course; bald cypress and wisteria, for example, both do best when their pots are partially immersed in water during the hot summer months.

To promote the growth of feeder roots and to provide sufficient drainage, the particle size of bonsai soil components must be controlled. By limiting the size of soil particles to exclude those that are too small, the growth of feeder roots is encouraged. By using particles that are of a uniform size, good drainage is promoted. Because the mineral component of bonsai soil usually does not absorb water, it is often referred to as "drainage material".

The use of organic components provides moisture retention capability, and provides the necessary micro-environment for the health of the tree. Excluding soil particles that are too large, provides good porosity and also aids moisture retention.

Even the best soil mixture (if there is such a thing) cannot provide all the nutrients and trace elements necessary for a tree's health. That is why bonsai must be fed using fertilizer (organic or chemical) as well as trace elements (if the fertilizer does not provide them).

**Wanted...** A field trip coordinator to make the necessary arrangements to organize a trip to collect Hawthorns from a vacant lot. This is an "urban" collecting expedition, there are no mountains to climb, maybe just a curb or two. If you think you meet all the qualifications for the job, please contact the Board at the March meeting.