



VANCOUVER ISLAND BONSAI SOCIETY

November Newsletter

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Monday Nov 21, 2011 ...

Show & Tell - Winter silhouettes.

Topic: Wiring. We will have a discussion and demonstration of wiring technique and then get a chance to practice.

Raffle Table - There will be the usual raffle table this month.

Coming In December -

Annual Christmas Party

Show & Tell : Decorated Bonsai Trees

Topic: Members' sale and swap along with food and great company!

We Are Now A Society

At the last meeting we took a vote with respect to our club becoming a Society. This vote carried unanimously. As you can see by our logo and newsletter title head, we are now officially a Society. In the upcoming months we will discuss what this change means to our club and some of the exciting things that are being looked at for our future.

Our Next Two Meetings:

Monday Nov 21, 7:30 pm
Monday Dec 19, 7:30 pm

**Garth Homer Society
Auditorium
813 Darwin Avenue
Victoria, BC**

Upcoming Activities

Sept. 14 - 16, 2012 - Pacific Northwest Clubs Association Convention "Imagine and Create" Hilton—Vancouver, Washington.

2011–12 VIBC Officers

President	Bob Taylor
Past-Pres	Randy Kowalchuk
Treasurer	Judy Horsland
MallShow Coordinator	Vacant

Club Name Tags

You have an opportunity to purchase a personalized name tag for \$6.00. The name has the club logo and name engraved on a green background with white lettering. We are taking orders, so if you are interested please sign up at the next couple of meetings. You can also contact Sharon MacDonald at ssmac@telus.net to place your order.

Trees of Medium Size

Some members of the club believe we should be giving more attention to "Shohin Bonsai". There is a good book on the subject by Danish artist Morten Albek, called *Magic Miniature: Shohin Bonsai - Unlocking The Secrets Of Small Trees*. For those who read the quarterly magazine International Bonsai will find in each issue a column named *A Little Magic With Shohin Bonsai* by John Romano who lives and teaches his subject in New England from his home in Rhode Island.... Why do you suppose both these artists modify their art form with the word "Magic"?

We quickly learn that in Japanese the word "shohin" means small so it must always be associated with an object. In this case, putting the words together, shohin bonsai clearly means small bonsai. Looking through the Google pages into a website, West Coast Bonsai, comes up with other information such as that "shohin bonsai may not be higher than 25 cm (that's 10 inches) when measured from the edge of the pot to the top of the tree", but we are cautioned that sometimes the rules "have to be taken with a bit of laciness"

We are informed that, "Basically most experts believe that you must be able to hold the shohin in one hand and, at the same time, it must express the beauty of a large tree in miniature. The exact measure of the height of the tree is less important.

So here we have two important aspects before a tree can be called a shohin bonsai: 1. There are size limitations - try to get along with 10 inches or less but, perhaps 11 or 12 inches might be considered if other quality factor are taken into consideration: 2. "It must express the beauty of a large tree in miniature." No cheating on this qualification!

So, let's learn from each other. Early In the new year of 2012 we will ask the members to look over their material and bring in for us all to see trees that they believe potentially fit these two cardinal conditions.

Winter At The Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection



To all Our Friends,

As autumn slips toward winter, we see daily changes taking place in the bonsai on display at the Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection. All trees, even evergreen conifers, shed at least some of their old foliage this time of year. Our gardeners and volunteers are kept busy grooming the trees to remove yellowed interior foliage on the conifers, and leaves that have faded on deciduous trees. The loss of leaves and grey, drizzly days lead many would-be visitors to think that the best season for viewing the bonsai has passed; but such is not the case.

Most of the major bonsai exhibits in Japan take place between November and February. Why? Because this is the “Winter Silhouette” season – the time of year when, minus a concealing cover of leaves, the true architecture of each deciduous tree is revealed. Bonsai artists spend years, even decades developing mature branches that divide repeatedly into ever smaller and more complex patterns. Winter is the ideal time to enjoy bonsai as an elegant fusion of artistic vision with natural beauty. Photographers will find that a rainy day is their friend, as an overcast sky erases harsh shadows, and colours of wet surfaces are richer and more intense. And, if a passing shower catches visitors by surprise, they can always find umbrellas for loan in the Rhododendron Garden gift shop. A guided tour of the Bonsai Collection is offered each Sunday at 1:00 pm without a reservation and with no minimum group size. Tours start at the courtyard tent or by checking in at the Rhododendron garden shop. Our open hours are 10 AM – 4PM, Tuesdays through Sundays (closed Mondays)*. Please plan to join us and share in the beauty of our “Winter Silhouettes” this year!

***Winter Holiday Closed Days include:**

Thanksgiving – Nov. 24

Christmas Eve – Dec. 24

Christmas Day – Dec. 25

New Year’s Day – Jan. 1

Free Guided Tour of the Collection offered each Sunday at 1:00 pm throughout the year. Reservations are not required, and there is no minimum group size.

Group tours are available by appointment on any open day, 10 person group minimum, No charge. Call 253-924-5206 or contact david.degroot@weyerhaeuser.com.

Currently on exhibit: Weyerhaeuser Company display of forest practices, products, and services in the Courtyard Program Tent. Through April 29, 2012

November 19th through March 11, 2012 – Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection Viewing Stones

David De Groot
Curator

Wiring Bonsai Trees to Shape the Branches

Wiring is a crucial technique to train and style Bonsai trees. By wrapping copper wire around the branches of a tree you are able to bend and reposition the branches. It will take a few months before the branches are set in their new shape; the copper wire should than be removed.

When to wire a Bonsai tree?

Wiring can be done year-round for most tree-species. During the growth season branches grow thicker quite fast and as a result the wire will cut into the bark, creating ugly scars. Check on your tree regularly and remove the wire on time.

Material?

Using the right material is essential for wiring Bonsai trees. Basically, two kinds of wire can be used: anodized aluminium and annealed copper. For beginners it is advisable to use the anodized aluminium, which is easier to work with and sold in most (online) Bonsai shops. Wire is available in a range of different thicknesses, varying from 1 to 8 mm (see photo 1, below). There is no need to purchase all the available wires; buying 1mm, 1.5mm, 2.5mm and 4mm thick wire should be perfect to start with. When wiring thick branches it is recommended to wrap them first with raffia, which will protect the branches from being damaged by the wire when bending them.

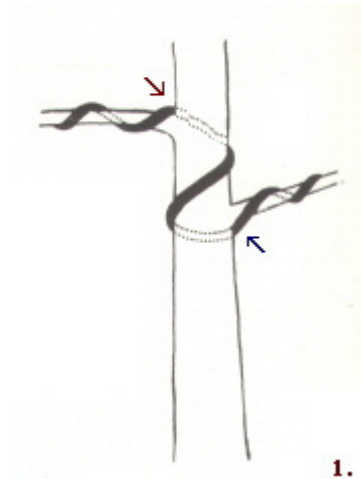


How?

Try to wire two branches of similar thickness located near each other with one piece of wire (double-wiring, see photo 2, above) where possible, and wire the remaining branches separately (single-wiring). Wire all the branches you intend to shape before actually starting to bend them. When wiring an entire tree, work from the trunk to the primary branches and then start wiring the secondary branches. As a rule of thumb, use wire of 1/3 of the thickness of the branch you are wiring. The wire should be thick enough to hold the branch in its new shape. Both wiring techniques will be discussed in more detail now and information about how to safely bend the wired branches will be provided at the end of this page.

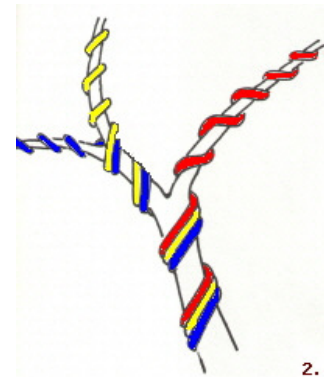
Double-wiring

1. First select the pair of branches you will wire; these have to be of the same thickness and located near each other on the tree. Do keep in mind that the wire should wrap around the trunk at least once (preferably twice) so the wire will not move when bending the branches later on.
2. Now cut off the right length of wire to wrap around both the branches.
3. Start with wrapping the wire around the trunk and proceed with the first branch. Wire from the base of the branch to the very tip before starting to wire the other branch. The wire should be wrapped around the branches at an angle of 45 degrees; this way the wire will enable the tree to grow thicker while remaining its new shape.
4. When you intend to bend a branch downwards directly at the trunk make sure the wire comes from below (see the lower blue arrow at photo 1). The wire should come from above when bending a branch upwards (see the upper red arrow at photo 1).
5. After you have wired all suitable pairs of branches continue wiring the remaining branches using the single-wiring technique.



Single-wiring

1. Similar to the double-wiring technique, cut off the right length of wire and start with wrapping it at least twice around the trunk at an angle of 45 degrees.
2. When multiple wires are applied at the same part of the trunk/branch try to put them neatly in line (see the coloured wires in photo 2).
3. Now continue wiring the branch.



Bending the wired branches

After having wired the entire tree you can start bending and repositioning the branches. Use your hands to hold the outside of the branch with your fingers, now bend the branch from the inside of the curve with your thumbs. This way you reduce the risk of splitting branches by spreading the force around the outside of the branch. When a branch is in position stop moving it, as repeated bending will likely damage the branch. Try to bend straight sections of branches slightly to make it look more natural.

And then? Aftercare

Place the tree in the shade and fertilize as you would normally do. Watch the tree closely during the growth season and remove the wires in time to prevent them from cutting into the bark. Do not try to recycle wire by unwinding it as this might damage the tree; instead, cut the wire at every turn making it much easier to remove.



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Please call us at 250-477-4143 for a consultation

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