

The Vancouver Island Bonsai Society

NEWSLETTER

September 2013



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2012 – 13 VIBS Officers

President: Mark Paterson

Vice President: Vacant

2014 Convention: Bob
Taylor

Treasurer: Larry Phillips

Secretary: Tibby Solloway

Newsletter & Website: John
Mitchell

Next Society meeting: Monday, September 23, 2013

Show & Tell: Please bring in your favorite early fall trees.

Those of us who have returned from Spokane may have a story or two to share (what happens in Spokane gets shared at the meeting!)

Demonstration: TBA

Raffle table: We will have the always popular raffle table – please bring in your donations to support the Society.



The bonsai stroll ...

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Not your typical bonsai!

Several years ago the Club had the pleasure of hosting Joan Greenway, a member of the executive of Bonsai Clubs International. Joan made a special trip to Victoria from her home in Ontario to present us with an award recognizing our long-standing association with the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. We were presented with the BCI Medal of Excellence for our continuous display of bonsai at the Gallery since 1976. The Art Gallery's display of bonsai is unique in Canada and by association recognises the significance of bonsai as an art form.

While Joan was visiting the topic of conversation got around to non-traditional bonsai and she informed us that Jade plants (Genus *Crassula*) had become a very popular indoor bonsai subject and that, in Britain and elsewhere, she knew of clubs that specialized in *Crassula* bonsai.

I was reminded of our conversation with Joan when George H presented a very nice little arrangement last weekend as several of us chatted over a late breakfast at a local restaurant. George had come across a *Peperomia* among a selection of tropical plants and was quick to imagine the little plant in a bonsai pot (after all, one translation of the words "bon" & "sai" is "plant in a pot").

After viewing George's little bonsai *Peperomia* I was inspired to visit one of my favourite sources of hard to find succulents: Brentwood Bay Nurseries. As

luck would have it I was fortunate enough to time my visit with the beginning of their fall sale! The final tally over a couple of days was six *Picea abies Gregoryana* (a slow-growing dwarf cultivar of Norway Spruce) that have great bonsai potential, about a dozen irresistible succulents with no real bonsai potential but very lovely plants and two very nice Jade plants (*Crassula ovata*) that I thought would work well as a first step into non-traditional bonsai.

Peperomia are indoor plants that appreciate filtered sunlight. Direct sunlight will bleach their leaf colours. They shouldn't be over-watered – let the soil dry between watering. They thrive in a bonsai soil mix.

Jade plants (*Crassula*) are easy-to-grow plants native to South Africa and have evolved to survive with very little water. They too should be allowed to dry out thoroughly between watering. In this case a dry soil encourages a stronger, farther ranging root system that better anchors the plant. *Crassula* are apically dominant and tops should be pruned to encourage lower branching. Never use cut paste on *Crassula* – it virtually assures rot! They adapt well to most bonsai styles including Shohin.



Peperomia caperata (Emerald Ripple Peperomia)

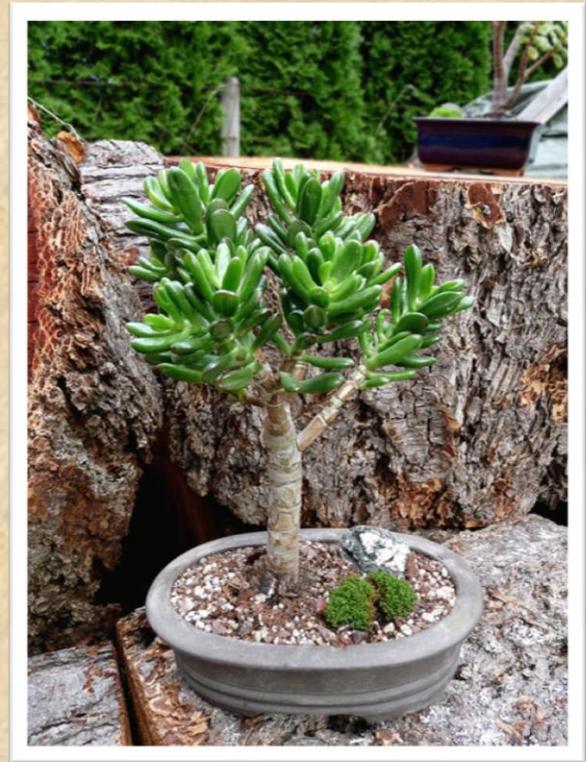
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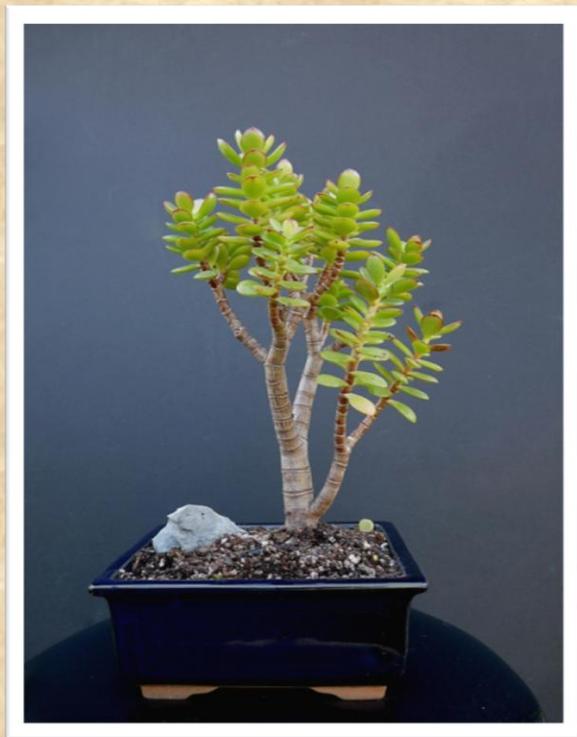
My just-created Crassula bonsai:



This ...



... becomes this



Bonsai created from house plants and succulents may not be to everyone's taste but through the website we do field requests from people wanting advice on how to create indoor bonsai. The little "trees" pictured here are fun to create and can easily lend that bonsai aura to a number of indoor locations.

Next month I'll show you another alternative favourite: Ficus benjamina... the Benjamin fig. This is a tree whose indoor bonsai potential is, I think, underutilized.

Brentwood Bay Nurseries is well worth a visit – lots of plants, shrubs and trees of every description and a tremendous variety of Japanese Maples.

I did leave behind some nice little Korean Fir in gallon pots that had "potensai" written all over them. Well, not literally ... but I'm sure you know what I mean.

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Here are a few web site links to check out:

<http://www.bonsai4me.com/SpeciesGuide/Crassula.html>

<http://www.drought-smart-plants.com/crassula-bonsai.html#axzz2f7EvyuyN>

<http://www.bonsaitoolchest.com/download/jade.pdf>

Bonsai Garden Grand Opening

Sunday, September 15th saw the long-awaited official opening of the Bonsai Garden at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific.

Opening remarks were delivered by Ron Cox, President of HCP. For the remainder of the afternoon people strolled the gardens and chatted while Tak Yamaura of Japan Bonsai worked his unique styling magic on a Shimpaku juniper that he had been nurturing for over thirty years. Skies were overcast but the rain (and thunder& lightning) held off until the end of the event. Here are a few pictures (thank you to Greg N for your photographic contribution!):



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With the elegance and grace of a Tai Chi master, Tak led the audience through a wonderfully complex styling of a Shimpaku juniper into a beautiful cascade style bonsai.

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Tak and his assistant begin work on the wiring for final placement of the branches



Detail of the wrapping and wiring necessary to make some of the extreme bends in the branches.

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Brentwood Bay Nurseries Ltd.

FALL PLANT SALE - 30 to 50% OFF

SALE STARTS SAT. 7th SEPT. TO SUN. 29th SEPT. 2013

50% OFF ROSES - 30% OFF SHRUBS (including Rhododendrons & Azaleas), PERENNIALS, SUCCULENTS, VINES, DOGWOOD TREES, JAPANESE MAPLES, POTS AND CONTAINERS.

1395 Benvenuto Avenue, Brentwood Bay. Tel: [250-652-1507](tel:250-652-1507)

We are located beside the Church & State Winery on the concrete road leading west to The Butchart Gardens just off West Saanich Road at the Keating X Road traffic light

Nursery hours:-

Mon. to Fri. 9.30am to 5.00pm.

Sat. 9.30am to 4.30pm,

Sun. and hols. 10.00am to 4.00pm.



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Membership Renewal / Application Form

I wish to renew my membership _____ or I wish to apply for membership _____ (new member)

Attached is \$25.00 for single membership _____ or attached is \$30.00 for family membership _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City, Province _____ Postal Code _____

Phone (Home) _____ Phone (Other) _____

Please provide your e-mail address for information about various activities and notification of the posting of the Newsletter to the website: _____

If you are mailing this form, please mail to:

Vancouver Island Bonsai Society
Membership Coordinator
PO Box 8674
Victoria, BC
V8W 3S2