

The Vancouver Island Bonsai Society

NEWSLETTER

June 2014



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2014 VIBS Officers

President: Mark Paterson
Vice President: Teague Griffin
Treasurer: Larry Phillips
Secretary: Tibby Solloway
2014 Convention chair: Bob Taylor
Door & Raffle: Susan Vidal
Librarian: Kathi Morrison
Newsletter & Website: John Mitchell

Next Society meeting: Monday, June 16th, 2014

7:30 pm at Garth Homer Centre

Theme: Peter Woodland will be talking about our native Shore Pine, a favorite Vancouver Island bonsai subject.

Activity: After Show & Tell we will do some carving of Shore Pine to enhance the "deadwood" and "jin" effects.

Expert advice: There is a standing invitation to all members to bring in any tree that you would like an opinion or advice on – tap into several hundred years of collective bonsai experience.

Raffle table: Any contributions to the raffle table will be very much appreciated by all. It is a great fund raiser for the club and a very popular feature of our monthly meeting.

Club activities: Please give some thought to what you would like to see happening in the club this year. We will be looking for your opinions over the next couple of months and hope that a survey will indicate what the membership wants by way of bonsai-related activities.

Buy & Sell: trees or stock – members are invited to bring bonsai-related items and sell them at the meeting.

Show & Tell: bring in any trees of interest to discuss with us!

Work on your tree – please feel free to bring in a tree to work on, if you like.

July/ August meetings: We will discuss the possibility of cancelling July & August meetings in order to be able to afford the rest of the year's rent on our increasingly expensive meeting place.

Entering the building: Please be aware that the front door is the only entry/exit to the building.

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This month's meeting will focus on the West Coast subspecies of Lodgepole Pine - **the Shore Pine**. The Lodgepole Pine, in the form found in a very wide area of mainland BC and extending into Alberta (and south into parts of the U.S. along the Rockies), is *Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia*, the tree that forms the incredibly dense stands of slow-growing, slender, closely-spaced trees that are so common along many of the roads through our province. From the photo below, it is easy to see how this tree would have lent itself to First Nations tipi poles and lodge poles.



Above: Lodgepole Pine subspecies "latifolia" in a so-called "dog-hair stand" near Lake Louise, September 2012

The subspecies found on Vancouver Island is the Shore Pine - *Pinus contorta* var. *contorta*. These trees are adapted to many environmental conditions on Vancouver Island, including peat bogs, rocky mountain knolls and sandy dunes from sea level to the sub-alpine.

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Shore Pine (cont'd)

Shore pine is a Pacific Coast species extending from Northern California through the US Northwest, up the BC coast to Alaska. It is fairly unique among pines for its moisture tolerance but can withstand fairly dry conditions, too, and tolerates salt spray very well. Pines are characterised by the number of needles in a "bundle" and the Shore Pine is a "two-needle pine" - there are two needles arising from the "fascicle" to comprise the bundle. A really fine feature of Shore Pines is the relatively short needle length - anything from a half inch to an inch and a half, usually. The short needles really compliment the miniature look we are trying to achieve.



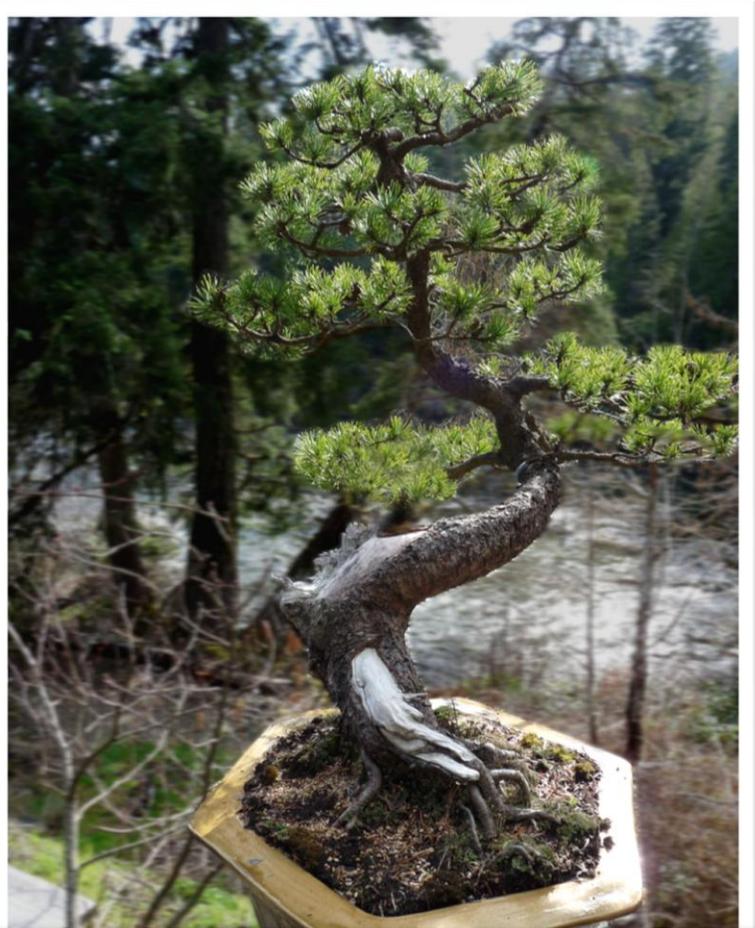
Many of our club members over the years have created spectacular bonsai specimens from Shore Pine collected in the more northerly & westerly reaches of Vancouver Island. These are trees that adapt well to life in bonsai pots (all pines do better as bonsai when given deeper pots still consistent with aesthetic values).

Left: small (Shohin-sized) bonsai Shore Pine

At our June meeting, local bonsai practitioner and landscaper, **Peter Woodland** will offer us his insights regarding Shore Pine as bonsai. Peter has considerable experience with collecting and growing the species. Later in the evening, following Peter's presentation, we hope to demonstrate some "deadwood carving" using hand & power tools to enhance the "jin" & "shari" - Japanese bonsai terms to describe deadwood at the top of the tree and on the trunk.

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Below: A small collected Shore Pine



Right, Top & Below: two ancient collected Shore Pine from the collection of the late "Bonsai Bob" Deryk.

These photos illustrate the degree to which these gnarly little trees lend themselves to bonsai training.



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Here are two photos submitted by David W, an avid bonsai guy from the Nanaimo area. These are Satsuki azalea - an azalea variety prized for their gorgeous bicoloured (usually) flowers. Satsuki azalea are not commonly found in garden centres but oddly enough, a few of them showed up at a major big box hardware store last year, profusely multi-trunked, but still having potential if one was up to the task of splitting the root mass into single (or double/triple trunks) and waiting half a dozen years for them to gain a little weight. Thank you David!

Japan Bonsai in Surrey is about the only place that I know of where we can usually find Satsuki azaleas for sale that are bonsai quality. They can be pricey but just think of how very, very happy they would make you ... every day!
Photos by David W.



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June Bonsai Advice from Maurice

Here is a list of my main activities regarding bonsai during the month of June. These are not necessarily the only ones or the best techniques but they seem to have worked for me over the years.

1. I prune back new shoots on most trees that have achieved a substantial growth (most pines are already de-candled or partly so, the same for most others evergreens.)

Deciduous species with opposite sets of leaves (maples ,Lilacs etc.) can be pruned down to the 1st or 2nd set of leaves. Others trees with alternate sets of leaves (oak,elm,Beech, Birch, cherry, etc...) can be pruned down to 2 leaves or even one leaf on the branch, keeping in mind the over-all shape of the tree or the style planned for the future .

2. I check the early wiring on deciduous for impact of wires on new twigs.

3. I cut off insect-infested or diseased leaves, also some that are too large - cut "inward" new growth (growing toward the centre of the tree) and dead twigs etc...

4. I look for insects presence or damage (bugs are usually easy to deal with...) Fungi and others diseases not so easy - fungicide sometime works...moving the tree to a new location will also sometimes do the trick !

5. June is the time to propagate with soft and semi-softwood cuttings (using what you pruned off the other trees!)*

6. Watering of course is not to be neglected however some trees will suffer from excessive overhead watering (crab-apple, horse chestnut, some maples, etc.) yellowing and fall of leaves will result .

I probably will be able to answer questions in more detail at the next meeting for those interested.

Happy Bonsai-ing !
Maurice

*Note: Be sure to ask Maurice about the soil mixture he uses for rooting his cuttings and his technique for making a moisture-conserving "tent" over the cuttings.

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Photographic memories of last meeting ...

Right: Bob discussing
maples



Below: Tony working on
Mugo Pines



Below: Maurice draws a crowd!



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Left: Maurice shares his knowledge



Right: What's that green monster in the background ... a Triffid?



You might want to Google it ...



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VANCOUVER ISLAND
BONSAI SOCIETY

PNBCA - 2014 October 3-5, 2014
Pacific Northwest Bonsai Clubs Association
Harbour Towers Hotel, Victoria, B.C.

Single Full Registration\$265
Received before July 1st, 2014

Family Full Registration \$470
Received before July 1st, 2014

25th ANNIVERSARY!
1989 - 2014

PNBCA Bonsai Convention 2014:
Colin Lewis Michael Hagedorn John Romano Tak Yamaura

The cut off date for early registration is fast approaching - as is the Convention. It is time for all good people to sign up for the party! A separate mailing will be sent out this week to club members containing registration documents, etc.

The Pacific Northwest Bonsai Clubs Association has a link, with forms in PDF, on the website:

<http://pnbca.com/conv2014/PNBCA%202014%20Convention%20Ad.htm>

There are some very nice trees available in the workshops, waiting to be styled with expert guidance, into lovely bonsai! There are incredible bargains to be had as the cost of some of the trees is almost what we're charging for the workshops. Workshop enrolment is limited!

We will continue to leave sign-up lists for volunteers at the monthly meetings. Thanks to all who have already volunteered!

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Membership Renewal / Application Form 2014

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



Gnarly Nebari