

The Vancouver Island Bonsai Society

NEWSLETTER

June 2015



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Door & Raffle: Susan Vidal
Librarian: Kathi Morrison
Newsletter & Website: John Mitchell
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Next Society meeting: Monday, June 15th, 2015



7:00 pm at Garth Homer Centre

Please note new meeting time!

Scheduled: Theme - Summer care & fertilization **Show & Tell** - Evergreen bonsai

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.

Club activities: Please share your thoughts on activities that you would like to see. See the Activities Calendar:

<http://www.victoriabonsai.bc.ca/bonsaiCalendar.htm>

Raffle table: Please consider bringing an item for the raffle table - it is a good fund-raiser for club events and this year promises to be a very good year for special events.

Final meeting at Garth Homer: This will be our last meeting at the Garth Homer Centre. We've held our meetings at GHC since September 1996, just a little shy of 19 years ...



A cork-bark Japanese Maple

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Last Meeting:

Maurice brought in a lovely cork-bark Japanese maple. Members were able to take away some semi-hardwood clippings to try rooting as cuttings.



Maurice shaping a cork-bark Japanese Maple



Maurice explained that this tree (from cutting) developed its corky bark spontaneously without there being evidence of it in the parent



Mark assists a new member with potting-up a Tsukomo "cypress" (*Chamaecyparis pisifera* 'Tsukomo')



Tsukomo "cypress" are a highly desirable, slow-growing species for bonsai, yet almost unheard of as garden centre stock. The tree pictured was raised from a two-inch rooted cutting by Tak Yamaura over a period of thirty or so years.

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The David Rowe Demonstration at HCP

On June 6th, Parksville bonsai expert David Rowe presented an excellent demonstration of shaping a Satsuki Azalea in the Couvelier Pavilion at HCP. David and his wife Susan have been VIBS members for 15 years and David's bonsai history spans 35 years and an international reputation as a bonsai expert.

Satsuki azaleas are one of those legendary species that serious bonsai hobbyists have a hard time passing up, especially if there is any maturity (large trunk, good nebari) associated with the specimen at hand.

In Japanese, Satsuki means "fifth month", referring to the Asian lunar calendar. This translates to June in the Western "solar" calendar. The name refers to the fact that these shrubs bloom primarily in June.

Satsuki azaleas are cultivars of *Rhododendron indicum* and there are over 3000 named varieties in Japan. Their soil must always be kept moist (but well drained) and they grow best in open shade. Satsukis require acid soil (they are "calcifuges" or "lime haters") and are frequently grown in "kanuma" - an acidic soil of Japanese origin (impossible to find on Vancouver Island!). Under alkaline soil conditions azaleas become deprived of iron and the leaves become chlorotic (yellowish) because they're unable to produce adequate chlorophyll. In the Greater Victoria area municipal tap water is usually a pH of about 6.5 - ever so slightly acidic & good for azaleas. Some people incorporate chopped sphagnum moss in azalea growing media to help retain moisture - the moss absorbs & releases nutrients in your fertilizer solutions slowly and helps keep bonsai soil from compacting.

David's azalea was purchased at Japan Bonsai and grown in his Parksville garden for some years before being potted up this spring. Here are the photos:

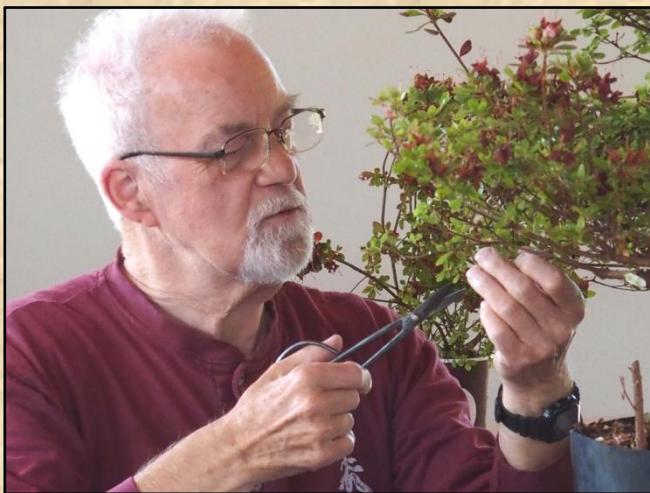


David gave an informative talk as his work progressed ...

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David Rowe Demo (cont'd.)



David clipped ...



... and wired as he went ...



David can be
contacted at:

djrbonsai@shaw.ca



David suggested that he would return with the tree this Fall to show any changes as new shoots & leaves emerge. In time, pads of foliage will fill out the profile and, every June, masses of blossoms will cover all.

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New Venue!

The June meeting will be the last held at the Garth Homer Centre location. After 19 years we have found it necessary to move on. We held our first meeting at Garth Homer in September 1996, after having outgrown the Lutheran Church on Cedar Hill Cross Road in Victoria. Our rent now has been increased beyond what our club finances are able to tolerate so we are moving our meeting venue again.

To my way of thinking (and a thought shared by many) it was a serendipitous rental increase as our new venue is the warm and inviting Couvelier Pavilion at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific. The July meeting will be our first one at the HCP location and, we are sure, the first of many years of meetings centered in this horticultural wonderland.



A photo from the recent demonstration showing the SW corner of the Pavilion

We are experiencing drought conditions! Please monitor your trees carefully!

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N E W S L E T T E R



Do keep in mind that Bob Taylor has a selection of bonsai tools and wire for club members wishing to purchase these supplies. Bob's prices are as reasonable as you will find anywhere locally, I believe. See Bob at the meetings!

Coming Events:

June 15th - June meeting Theme summer care & fertilization. Show & Tell - Evergreen Bonsai

June 28 - Open Garden at Maurice's. The address will be sent in an e-mail to members.

July 12 - demonstration by Tak Yamaura at HCP. 1pm to 4pm Further details TBA.

July 20 - Our first club meeting at the new location - the Couvelier Pavilion at HCP

July 25 - Bonsai 201 Workshop at HCP Shaping 3 gallon Juniper

August 8 & 9 Annual Bonsai Show & Sale at Arts & Music in the Gardens at HCP

August 17 August bonsai meeting at the Couvelier Pavilion - 7:00 pm.

August 25 Rock collecting trip. to a river or beach on Vancouver Island. Details TBA

Coming October 17th: Internationally renowned bonsai artist David DeGroot will be presenting a workshop & demo at HCP. Further details to follow.

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Early summer bonsai tips

Be vigilant about soil moisture. We're in a drought. Be aware of the drying effect of wind. Keep soil moist at all times.

Check for spider mites - they love dry conditions. Misting with clean water helps keep them in check. Junipers are especially susceptible. Tap a branch over a sheet of white paper and they will appear as tiny specks that move.

Watch for aphids. They're everywhere. Woolly aphids, too.

Be sure that trees that require shade, have shade.

Continue to feed with balanced fertilizer at half-strength.



A Satsuki azalea in bloom

photo: John Simpson

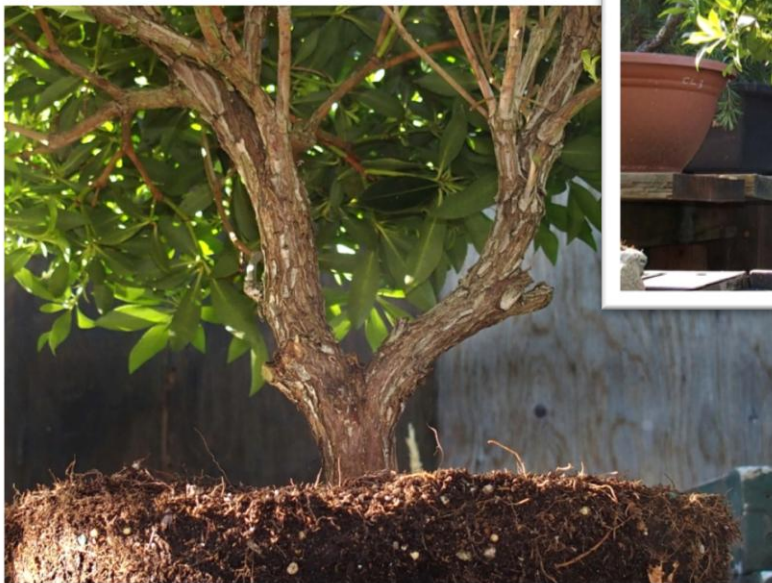
bonsai tips ...

Continue to shape bonsai by clipping. Let branches extend to 4 or 5 leaves, then cut back to two.

Azaleas can be clipped & repotted.



Japanese pieris "Nocturne" - an incredibly full and mature dwarf Pieris I found at Brentwood Bay Nurseries. Nicely textured bark and appears to have good nebari just beneath the soil surface.



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Membership Renewal / Application Form 2015

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

Attached is \$30.00 for single membership ____ or attached is \$35.00 for family membership ____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

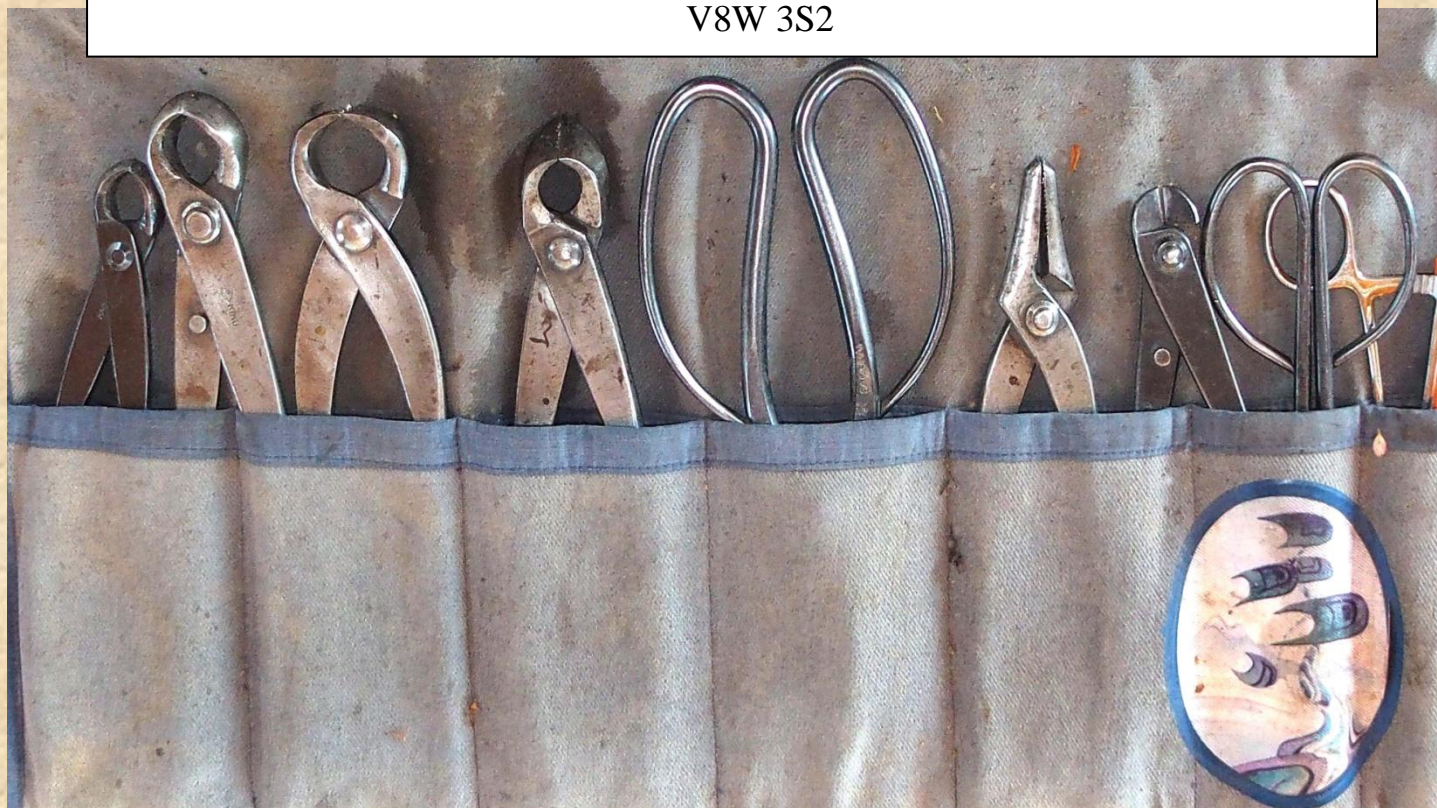
City, Province _____ Postal Code _____

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, B.C.
V8W 3S2



David Rowe's bonsai toolkit (2004 PNBBCA Convention logo on right)