

The Vancouver Island Bonsai Society

NEWSLETTER

January 2016



Contents:

Greetings!	2
Bonsai pots	3
Contribution trees	4
Coming events	6

2016 VIBS Board Members

President: Mark Paterson
Vice President: Vacant
Past President: Bob Taylor
Treasurer: Larry Phillips
Secretary: Jim Haskins
Door & Raffle: Susan Vidal
Librarian: Kathi Morrison
Newsletter & Website: John Mitchell
Board member "without portfolio" Jim Morrison

Next Society meeting: Monday, January 18th, 2016

7:00 pm at Couvelier Pavilion, HCP

Scheduled: Theme: Comprehensive Yearly Tree Care **Show & Tell - Winter silhouettes**

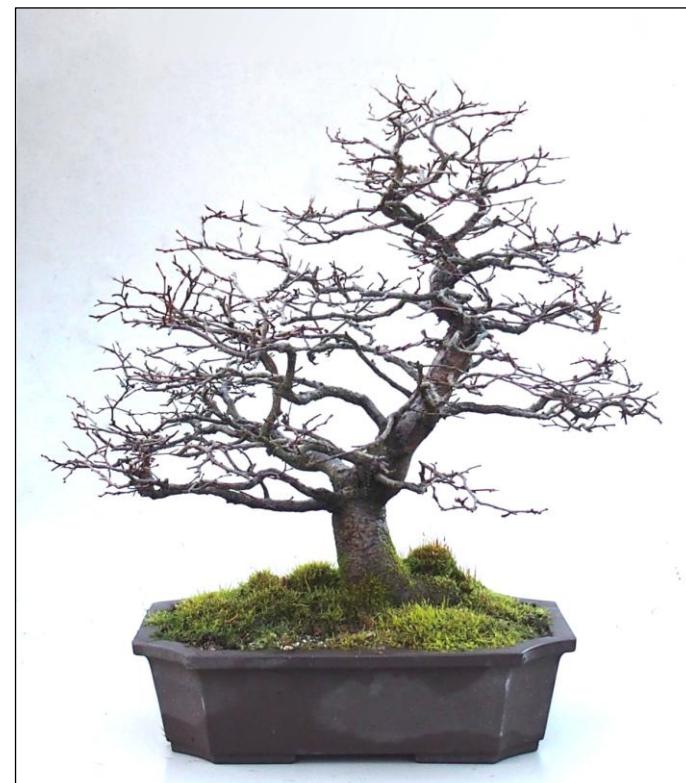
Expert advice: There is a standing invitation to all members to bring in any tree that you would like an opinion or advice on – tap into several hundred years of collective bonsai experience.

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: Your donations to the raffle table are appreciated!

A Request for scent-free meetings: People sensitive to scents can come down with severe headaches and feel quite unwell after exposure. Out of consideration for our fellow members, we would ask that our meetings be scent-free.



An Elm bonsai in winter silhouette

The Vancouver Island Bonsai Society

NEWSLETTER

Greetings Everyone ... and Happy New Year! - Here we are at mid-Winter on the West Coast! Things have been rather slow in the world of local bonsai but the time for some very important seasonal activity is looming and we should begin to prepare for the repotting and shaping activities that will kick off the 2016 bonsai year.

There are experienced bonsai hobbyists who successfully re-pot many tree species throughout the year but early spring is the generally accepted 'prime time' for many species used in bonsai. The trees are still dormant, or at least semi-dormant, and cuts to the roots heal quickly with the renewed growth cycle about to begin.

There are exceptions – azaleas are better pruned to shape and re-potted in late Spring, after flowering and Potentillas bloom on the ends of branches they should also be pruned & potted after flowering. Other exceptions exist - know your species!

Some components of bonsai soil (Japanese Akadama and others, Turface, Fir/Pine bark, sea soil, etc) break down over time in a process that sees the particle size becoming smaller and the resulting a denser mass of soil holding too much water (and too little oxygen), rather than the ideal fast draining and distinctly more particulate bonsai soil.

Root growth over a certain period begins to negatively impact drainage efficiency, which, in turn, necessitates repotting. It's nice when the need to repot because of root growth coincides with a need to replenish broken down soil.

At this month's meeting we will begin the Annual Tree Care Program & discuss seasonally appropriate bonsai care.

For those of us who haven't moved our bonsai from table, stand or bench to the ground, or unheated shelter, this is the beginning of that time that will determine the success, or not, of our informal root-system, cold-hardiness experiments!

Please remember that 2016 membership fees are now due.

The Vancouver Island Bonsai Society

NEWSLETTER

Another Victoria Source for Bonsai Pots

Randy K, resident bonsai expert at Lee Valley Tools and a long-time club member, informs us that GardenWorks has a stock of bonsai pots. I dropped in and took a few photos at the Blenkinsop Road location:



The pots are mame to shohin bonsai size - somewhat small but very suitable for much of the stock available in this and other garden centres. Prices appear to be reasonable – ranging from \$12.99 to \$19.99. There seemed to be limited numbers but I didn't ask whether there were more in stock, or whether available at other GardenWorks locations. Quite nice pots!

While at GardenWorks I noticed that there were a selection of small *Ficus microcarpa* that might make nice indoor bonsai. These Ficus don't always appreciate disturbance to the root system but I've had some success with spreading the ginseng-like roots in a bonsai pot. They are sensitive tropicals so they are OK with gradual acclimatization to outdoor full sun in summer but don't expose to anything less than double-digit temperatures.



These plants were about about 6" to 8" (15-20cm) tall from soil surface to top of plant. I believe that they are on sale for 20% off. Regular price is about \$25.

The Vancouver Island Bonsai Society

NEWSLETTER

Contribution Trees — A VIBS program

by Mark Paterson, VIBS President

The Vancouver Island Bonsai Society is pleased to announce we can give a nice bit of potential bonsai stock to every member for a group project! We have plans to make part of the year about creating bonsai together. Then, at our yearly bonsai market, we will sell them as fundraisers for the club.



We will give every member of the society who wants one, a tree in a 1 gallon plastic pot, and a bonsai pot to put it into. You get to take the bonsai home, talk to it, water it, take pictures and submit them to the club, everything.

But we want to do a few bonsai-ish things together. We will give out the trees at the April meeting. There we will do the first shaping of our trees, together. After a period of time to rest after pruning, we are going to pot the trees up in May, maybe early June.



We will have a month that's devoted to learning about and making pots before we get to that step. Another couple months of fun and adventure at your house awe deliver our tree babies off to the Arts and Music festival in early August where the trees will move on to their next stage of bonsai life, likely with a new 'parent'...

A 1 gallon potted bonsai usually sells for \$45 at the bonsai sale. Depending on the pot you use, your tree is available to you at any time for about \$25. So if you fall in love with the little art piece you can purchase it. And honestly, why wouldn't you? If you just show up to three key meetings you get a pretty little tree with a great history of having fun with friends. Bonsai in groups is fun because sometimes you try some technique you wouldn't have tried on your own and it works out!

The Vancouver Island Bonsai Society

NEWSLETTER

Contribution Trees – A VIBS program (Cont'd)



But you can do more! Maybe you can get in on the purchasing trip in early April. Can't make it to the April meeting for your tree? Meet us at the Horticultural Center of the Pacific (HCP) to pick up and shape your tree. Maybe you make your own pot at a workshop in June for your tree. Then if you don't buy your tree you may get the satisfaction of seeing some bonsai enthusiast buy the tree that you made.

So that is the program – to contribute to your bonsai education by making bonsai together. Sounds like fun!

Mark Paterson
President- VIBS

Photos: Mark P

Please remember that 2016 membership fees are now due.

Remember, too, that even in the mildest winters, Vancouver Island can experience a severe 'cold snap' in February and/or March. These can be particularly damaging when extended warm conditions have caused trees to break dormancy and begin active growth, only to be hit by sub-zero Centigrade temperatures that freeze the flowing sap and cause trunks and branches to rupture, often resulting in the death of a branch or the entire tree.

For anyone who wants to learn the descriptions of various bonsai styles or refresh what they knew, here is a good page from Bonsai Experience:

<http://www.bonsaiexperience.com/TypesofBonsaiTrees.html>

I find that a quick moment looking over the page locks a search image front & center prior to a trip to a local nursery.

The Vancouver Island Bonsai Society

NEWSLETTER

Coming events:

March 13th - Styling workshop with Tak Yamaura. Bring your own tree or purchase one of Tak's trees. 1PM - 5 PM Enrolment limited to 8 participants. There will be no silent observers at this event. Cost of workshop only (does not include cost of tree): \$125

May 8th Annual Bonsai Club **Field Day** at the Bonsai Garden at HCP 10AM until 4PM

May 28th Workshop **Introduction to and Care of Bonsai** presented by **Maurice Bombezin**
Time: 8:30 AM – 12:30PM Classroom at HCP. Free to bonsai club members. Limited to 12 participants. There will be no "silent observers" at this event. Bring your own tree.

We're doing everything we can to coordinate the return of **David DeGroot** in September an exciting prospect, indeed, given the enthusiastically positive feedback we received after his October workshop here.

June 11th Bonsai pot and slab workshop. **Anton Nijhuis** from Campbell River will present an all-day workshop on building bonsai pots and slabs using a variety of cement mixtures and wire 'armatures'. Participants will be able to learn techniques and take home a bonsai pot or slab to use for your bonsai or landscape groups. All materials supplied.

<http://www.kew.org/discover/blogs/how-create-slab-planted-bonsai>

There will be an enrolment limit of 15 persons. There will be no "silent observers" at this event. Cost, including materials: \$100 per person. Location: the Classroom at HCP.

August 6th & 7th – Arts & Music in the Gardens at HCP, including our **Annual Bonsai Show & Sale**

September 25th – internationally acclaimed bonsai artist **David DeGroot** will be returning, by popular request, to present another **advanced bonsai styling seminar**. There will be 2 workshops – one at 8 AM and another at 1PM Enrolment limit is 6 persons per class. Cost: \$150 per workshop. Bring your own tree. Silent observers \$20

November 21st - the VIBS **Annual Bonsai Auction**. Bonsai and bonsai-related items at very good prices!

Please remember that 2016 membership fees are now due.

The Vancouver Island Bonsai Society

N E W S L E T T E R

Vancouver Island Bonsai Society

Membership Renewal / Application Form 2016

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



John M

**Bonsai Garden Guardian – Pacific Tree
Frog at the Hort Centre January 17th**