



Vancouver Island
Bonsai Society

VANCOUVER ISLAND BONSAI SOCIETY

December Newsletter

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Monday December 19, 2011 ...

Christmas Party! Come and join in the festive spirit with your bonsai buddies. Please bring finger foods, either savory or sweet, for pot-luck snacking. There will be tables set up for anyone wishing to sell or swap bonsai or Christmas-related items.

Show & Tell: Decorated Christmas bonsai contest. Let your imagination run wild in decorating your tree. (You could win a prize for the best tree)

Raffle Table - There will be NO raffle table this month.

Annual Mall Show

For a long time, somewhere around 25 years, we have held our annual show at the Hillside Mall. Unfortunately we have been informed that due to the mall's renovations we will not be able to book space for 2012 and possibly for 2013. We are now looking for alternative venues. If you have any ideas please pass them on to one of your board members.

Our Next Two Meetings:

Monday Dec 19, 7:30 pm
Monday Jan 16, 7:30 pm

Garth Homer Society
Auditorium
813 Darwin Avenue
Victoria, BC

2012 Membership Fees

We have decided to raise the annual dues by \$5.00. This additional revenue will help to cover the increases we have seen over the past few years in our hall rental fees. At present our membership fees we take in does not cover the cost of hall rental for the year.

2011-12 VIBC Officers

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

All members who have paid their 2012 dues by the January meeting will be entered into a draw for the beautifully done, Dan Robinson book, *Gnarly Branches, Ancient Trees*, graciously donated by George H.

Society Name Tags

You have an opportunity to purchase a personalized name tag for \$6.00. The name has the society 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.

All members whose 2012 membership fees are paid for by the January meeting will have their name tag included in the 2012 membership at no additional cost.



*Imagine
& Create*

PNBCA Bonsai Convention 2012

September 14th-16th
Vancouver, Washington

Hosted by
The Bonsai Society of Portland
www.portlandbonsai.org



Leaf Pruning Deciduous Bonsai

Reprinted from an article in Bonsai Focus 136/113 written by Morten Albek

'An often misunderstood technique is to totally leaf prune deciduous bonsai; or perhaps it's one of those earlier learned bad habits. How often have we been told in the past to defoliate a bonsai so as to decrease leaf size to achieve a more compact growth? For those who practice this outmoded technique it is time to adjust, because it will not improve our bonsai, rather the opposite. When we want to maintain and/or develop dense ramification and a compact tree it is necessary to understand how the tree reacts to defoliation. This is essentially important when dealing with small shohin bonsai,' explains Tomohiro Masumi, a shohin master from Japan.

'This is because total defoliation will force the tree to make many new long expanding shoots with longer internodes (distance between the leaf pairs), and it also weakens the new growth. The tree reacts rapidly with elongated new growth when all leaves are removed. That's why this technique is not desirable when bonsai need to be maintained and one wants to create dense ramification and small overall volume.

It's important to know that large leaves will hold back the growth of smaller leaves and buds. It is therefore necessary to retain large leaves during training periods, which stops new buds and branches from growing too strongly. When the large leaves have fulfilled their purpose they may be removed once the new growth has matured and hardened off.

It is important that these large leaves are kept at the ends of the twigs and branches only, so enough light is allowed into the interior branches, thereby making back budding and new growth possible. Another matter of importance is balancing the energy of the tree. Weaker branches are therefore only pruned a little or not at all and the stronger branches are pruned harder, so equalizing the strength of the tree.

All upward growing new branches and buds are removed, to secure the desired pattern of natural looking zigzag branches. New buds will emerge shortly after and any growing upwards on the upper part of a branch are once again removed to ensure that they don't shade the new growth., which will not develop if sunlight doesn't fully reach the branches. Another reason to keep all bonsai in full sun is to avoid branches reaching for light, weakening them and growing too long.

The rapid growth of a deciduous tree may require that this task is done again after a few weeks depending on the specimen and the speed of growth. To keep small shohin bonsai in shape with the desired short branches and dense ramification, this is a very important technique to apply. According to Tomohiro: 'In fact it is a benefit for those who live in gentler climates, like Northern Europe. Because you'll have the benefit of slower growth, it's easier to keep a compact tree for much longer than is possible here in Japan.'

The warm humid weather of Japan, with its early start and late ending, gives a long growing season and makes it possible to develop bonsai rapidly from cuttings and seeds. This is a slight disadvantage when it comes to maintaining a finished bonsai - especially shohin bonsai.

In areas with a colder climate growth is slower, but when the trees are in the maintenance stage, it is possible to keep high quality shohin to the right size and shape for more years than in hotter climates like that Japan. Today, where shohin have now been around for some 40 years, trees are growing out of size and will no longer be able to qualify as shohin. A new category called chuhin was therefore created to enable these trees to still be shown at shohin exhibitions.

Shohin Images



Conifers Native to Vancouver Island... (revised 12 Dec. 2011)

Western White Pine	<i>Pinus monticola</i>
Lodgepole Pine	<i>Pinus contorta latifolia</i>
Shore Pine	<i>Pinus contorta contorta</i>
Sitka Spruce	<i>Picea sitchensis</i>
Mountain Hemlock	<i>Tsuga mertensiana</i>
Western Hemlock	<i>Tsuga heterophylla</i>
Douglas-fir	<i>Pseudotsuga mensiesii</i>
Subalpine Fir	<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>
Amabilis Fir	<i>Abies amabilis</i>
Grand Fir	<i>Abies grandis</i>
Western Red cedar	<i>Thuja plicata</i>
Yellow Cedar	<i>Callitropsis nootkatensis</i>
Western Yew, or Pacific Yew	<i>Taxus brevifolia</i>
Rocky Mountain Juniper	<i>Juniperus scopulorum</i> , or
Western Juniper	<i>Juniperus occidentalis</i>

Others in BC:

Limber Pine	<i>Pinus flexilis</i> , and
Whitebark Pine	<i>Pinus albicaulis</i>
Western Larch	<i>Larix occidentalis</i>
White Spruce	<i>Picea glauca</i>
Engelmann Spruce	<i>Picea glauca engelmannii</i> , and
White Spruce	<i>Picea glauca x engelmannii</i>
Black Spruce	<i>Picea mariana</i>

Source: *Trees, Shrubs & Flowers to Know in British Columbia and Washington* 1995
and *Native Trees of Canada* 1979

From the book, *TREE: A Life Story*

Highly recommended to all who want to know more about trees. It was written in 2004 by fellow British Columbian David Suzuki and its all about a wild, western grown Douglas-fir. There are said to be quite a few 2nd hand copies in the used bookstores usually available in the \$5. to \$10. range. Right near the beginning of the book, we are cautioned not to consider this widely known west coast species as a fir, hence the hyphen. See below*

Right near the beginning of this small but highly informational book, we are asked to remember that trees have either seasonal if deciduous, or needles if they are conifers. While both are found in a wide variety of environments, “but for the most part deciduous trees are adopted to climates with long cold winters or to seasonally dry climates at lower latitudes; dropping their leaves in the fall and growing new ones each spring costs less energy than maintaining leaves through extended subzero temperatures. A needle with its small surface area, transpires less water than a broad leaf and works well with a lot of sun and long dry periods, as in the case around the Mediterranean Sea and on the western slopes of North America.” The text goes on to say, “A study conducted in Germany comparing the energy produced and stored by a deciduous tree (in this case a beech) with that of a conifer (Norway spruce) found that the beech photosynthesized for 176 days in one year while the Norway spruce photosynthesized for 260; even with a smaller total leaf surface area, the spruce was 58 percent more productive than the beech.”

This gives us a s bonsai growers some serious direction on managing our trees in the winter months. Here on Vancouver Island we tend to have collected a significant proportion of conifers. We are proud of our Lodgepole pines, Sitka spruce, Mountain hemlock, Alpine, Amabilis and Grand firs, Yellow cedar, Red cedar and Western yew. Most of us can now worry less about a degree or two of frost knowing that our conifers are less apt to be struck down than the deciduous species - the fine maples, hornbeam and many other treasured broad leafed trees of which we are justly proud.

* Scientists have puzzled over the name Douglas-fir finally coming down on keeping it separate from the “true” firs. The near relative of the Douglas-fir is the Mountain hemlock which was furnished with the name “*Tsuga mertensiana*”. When the time came to deal with the close relative, Latin scholars have assured us that adding the word “pseudo” to “tsuga” makes sense., So Douglas-fir now carries the generic name “*Pseudotsuga*” meaning “false tsuga” This seems to have cleared up the whole question.And, did you think that technical nomenclature was simple???

Finally, for readers who may wish to question some of the assumptions above, can check with the Collins English Dictionary wherein Plants are, “any gymnosperm tree or shrub of the phylum Conifer typically bearing cones and evergreen leaves. The group includes the pines, spruces, firs, larches, junipers, cedars, cypresses and sequoias.”

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And here is another tip for winter management of conifers. The president of the Columbia Bonsai Society in Ohio, Zack Clayton, suggests that growers might consider placing poo balls on junipers and pines when the temperature is above freezing. We are left with our own imagination on the creation of “poo”. But he goes on to indicate that the tress will come out of dormancy much healthier if given a touch of bone meal or cottonseed meal. Avoid anything with nitrogen such as found in blood meal or fish emulsion.

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Vancouver Island Bonsai Society

Membership Renewal /Application Form for 2012

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 Work: _____

Email : _____

If you are mailing this form, please mail to:

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



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