

BADGER NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE
BADGER BONSAI SOCIETY

MEETING - OCTOBER 9th 2008

7:00 PM at Olbrich Gardens
3330 Atwood Ave. Madison WI

MEETING AGENDA:

Demonstration on a Black Pine as pertains to fall clean-up techniques using a members tree.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Fall is upon us and there is still time to do a number of things to your bonsai before winter settles in. At this point in time you should stop fertilizing with higher numbered fertilizers as you do not want to push new growth that will not likely harden off before the hard freezes come. Instead use a 0-10-10 on your conifers/evergreens to help build up their roots and winter storage of food. This is also a good time to do your fall clean up on pines, which we will do a demonstration at this meeting as Gary will bring in a Black Pine and we will go over what needs to be done. Another activity that we will try to accomplish at the October meeting, if time permits, is that Greg has a juniper that he would like to put a major bend into a branch. We will wrap the branch to protect the bark from and add wire to support it, and then move the branch into its new position. I would like to have some open discussions regarding wintering techniques that members use, to help those new to bonsai to have better results by being able to try these tested methods. And finally I would like to have some discussions on what topics our members would like to have covered in future meetings and we would also like to discuss the possibility of going to electronic newsletters to help us lower our costs.

Looking forward to November, I thought that I would try to demonstrate some carving and finishing techniques for making jin and shari on trees, using hand tools and grinding tools. I believe November is also the month we have elections for our board members

Hope to see you all on October 9th.

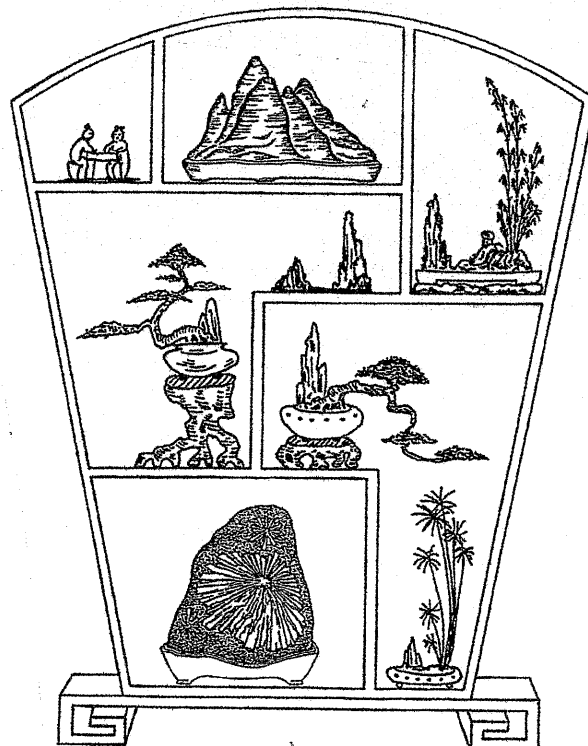
Ron



September Meeting Notes

Last meeting Ron brought in one of his Shimpaku Junipers and shared with us his thoughts and processes that he uses to take a tree and make it into a bonsai. With Shimpaku's, constant attention is needed. Constant pinching is needed not only to make leaf pads but to retain their shape, This action is only one step *many used to enhance the health of your bonsai*. Proper light placement, watering, other care, and proper fertilization is instrumental in creating a happy bonsai.

Ron provided us with a pamphlet on fertilization which he wrote for us. I will provide you with a portion of this pamphlet.



FERTILIZATION for BONSAI

by Ron I

The obvious purpose of fertilization is to feed the tree, as most bonsai soil compositions provide little or no organic matter that may be used as food for your tree.

It is my opinion that most hobbyists do not fertilize their trees properly or often enough to reap the benefits. Those benefits are a tree that is vibrant and healthy and able to withstand many of the stresses that are put upon a tree being raised as bonsai. A healthy tree heals faster from styling wounds or activities; a healthy tree resists pests, fungus and virus attacks. This does not mean that your trees will not experience these maladies but they are often easier to treat and defeat.

Plants require 14 essential nutrients for healthy growth. The absence of any one nutrient in the soil can limit plant growth, even when all other plant nutrients are present in adequate amounts. The three macronutrients that are essential for food production and quality are: nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium (N-P-K).

Fertilizers are chemical compounds given to plants to promote growth: they are usually applied either through the soil, for uptake by the plant roots, or by foliar feeding, for uptake through leaves. Fertilizers can be *organic* (composed of organic matter), or *inorganic* (made of simple, inorganic chemicals or minerals). They can be naturally occurring compounds such as peat or mineral deposits, or manufactured through natural processes (such as composting) or chemical processes.

As I stated earlier, in my opinion most hobbyists do not fertilize enough and maybe not properly. Here are my general guidelines to a better fertilization program:

*Make a plan

- Use a calendar to track applications
- Select fertilizers appropriate for the trees
- Change up the fertilizer types used to give the tree the best chance of benefiting from your feedings
- Apply properly (more is not usually better)
- Apply when appropriate (note weather effects such as heat, rains, humidity, etc.)
- Apply when the tree will readily use it (during peak growth activity times)
- Change what fertilizer type is used according to the season

*Stick with your plan, Don't become complacent.

***DO NOT** apply when your tree is stressed out.

Fertilizing(cont)

My personal program utilizes several different types of slow release fertilizers spread over the pot surface and at each watering these leach into the bonsai soil. These fertilizers should be replaced usually every 60 days as the bulk of what will be released has happened by that time.

In addition I supplement feedings of liquid fertilizers of a 7-9-5 concentration usually weekly and switch in a fish emulsion (5-1-1) feeding once every 6 weeks (a very good foliar feeding).

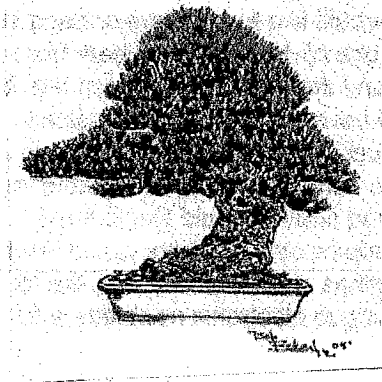
I will mix in Superthrive, which is a vitamin B extract usually once a month.

This year I have started using Micronutrients that Colin Lewis has recommended per directions.

Finally I have been using 0-10-10 liquid fertilizer for trees starting in October and continuing through till bud break in the spring, especially on my conifers that are somewhat dormant in the greenhouse.

YOUR trees are worth the time and effort. Our growing season is too short to miss the opportunities to promote the best growth that you can.

RON



Something I have been working on for a while now is a system for cataloging my trees. Whether a single catalog entry or a multi paged scrapbook showing each tree as it grows and matures into a bonsai. I am interested (and so do I think other members are also) Other members (your) system for creating a paper chase of your trees. Please bring examples to the next meeting or E-mail me your system and your approval to use as an example in the next newsletter.

Thanks again

Found an article in an old copy of Bonsai News. Article is not authored but I believe I can be safe in assuming that Bob E. is the author, it tells some about one of my favorite trees. From Bonsai News March 1997;

Chamaecyparis

C. lawsoniana varieties (Lawson's False Cypress, Port Orford Cedar, Oregon Cedar); *C. obtusa* varieties (Hinoki False Cypress); *C. pisifera* varieties (Sawara False Cypress)

The wild forms of the three species of false cypress important to gardeners grow so tall they are rarely sold, but each has dozens of varieties of such diverse size and shape that one can be found for nearly any landscaping purpose. Those with bright-colored foliage catch the eye when set alone in the lawn; miniature ones are excellent in rock gardens; others make good screens around a foundation or along a boundary.

Most false cypresses have tiny, soft wedge-shaped leaves that look like scales. Color ranges from rich dark green to bright blue green and yellow, with many intermediate shades. The cones are tiny and inconspicuous. The Lawson's False Cypress varieties include *C. lawsonia* 'Allumii', Scarab False Cypress, which is often used to form a narrow dense hedge. Its verticle sprays of rich blue-green foliage make a compact and narrow conical form. Unpruned plants may become 20 to 30 feet tall after about 40 to 50 years, but close shearing keeps them smaller. *C. lawsonia* 'Ellwoodii' Ellwood False Cypress, has thick soft blue-green foliage. It grows only 6 to 8 feet tall and 2 to 3 feet in diameter after about 10 years. *C. lawsonia* 'Nestoides', Bird's nest False Cypress, has dark green foliage; its spreading branches may become 6 to 8 feet in diameter on a flat topped plant only 3 to 4 feet tall after 10 years. The foliage of *C. lawsonia* 'Stewartii', Stewart Golden False Cypress, has yellow tips in the spring, turning dark green later in the year; this color change is especially noticeable on the lower branches. This variety may become a 20 to 30 foot broad cone-shaped tree after 25 to 30 years and should be placed with care because its color demands attention.

The Hinoki False Cypress varieties listed here have foliage that is arranged in cupped twisted sprays. *C. obtusa* 'Crippsii' Cripps Golden False Cypress, has foliage that is yellow when new, turning dark green later in the year. It is narrow and becomes 20 to 30 feet tall after about 25 years if unpruned. *C. obtusa* 'Gracilis', Slender Hinoki False Cypress, is one of the most ornamental evergreens. Its dark green foliage is set on slender stems that droop at the ends. The narrow, conical plants rarely exceed 6 feet in height in gardens and may be kept smaller by pruning the ends of branches. *C. obtusa* 'Nana Gracilis' Dwarf Hinoki False Cypress, is often mislabeled *C. obtusa* 'Nana' the name for a similar but exceptionally slow growing variety. The Dwarf Hinoki False Cypress has thick dark green foliage. It grows slowly, reaching a height of about 4 feet with a spread of 3 feet after

Chamaecyparis (cont)

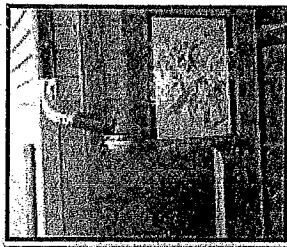
about eight years; it is often used as a bonsai specimen.

Sawara False Cypress varieties include *C. pisifera* 'Boulevard', Boulevard Sawara False Cypress, sometimes labeled *C. pisifera* 'Cyanoviridis', which has soft mossy foliage that is silvery green in summer and greyish blue in winter. It becomes 8 feet tall and up to 4 feet wide in 20 years. *C. pisifera* 'Filifera', Threadleaf Sawara False Cypress, has drooping stringy twigs and forms a dense green mound, usually no more than 6 to 8 feet tall after 10 years. A similar variety with golden twigs is *C. pisifera* 'Filifera aurea', Golden Thread Sawara False Cypress, *C. pisifera* 'plumosa',

The following drawings were made by Bob E. and can be found on the following web site www.artofbonsai.org/galleries. Not sure when Bonsai Bob did these but his drawings sure are timeless.



WINTER PROJECTS



Last month while driving to our meeting I made a detour and picked up a clean food grade 50 gallon plastic barrel with high hopes of making my own rain barrel this winter and be able to feed my trees good clean rain water this spring. Getting a good barrel is the most difficult part. Most barrels are used to transport chemicals toxic to plants, you need to look for barrels that used to hold food materials. Dairy suppliers are a good choice, the last place I used to work at we got some barrels used to import olives from Italy, the barrel I picked up came from a place making aloe products, they even rinsed out the barrel and best of all it was free!

There is some hardware you will have to purchase, and some general tools that you will need:

- 3/4" hose bib spigot
- 3/4" galvanized locknut
- rubber washer with a 1" hole
- teflon tape
- super glue
- silicone
- 3/4" brass overflow valve(male hose MIB adapter
3/4x3/4x1/2")
- 3/4" galvanized locknut
- rubber washer with a 1" hole

For tools you will need:

- drill
- 1" hole saw or drill bit (use 15/16" for a more secure fit)
- utility knife
- needle nose pliers or wrench
- vegetable oil and cloth
- screw driver and 1/2 dozen screws
- mesh screen for top filter

- 1 Clean and rinse your food clean container with mild soap and water.
- 2 Drill a 1" hole with your hole saw or drill bit, just off the bottom of the container for the spigot assembly. Put it as low as possible to maximize easy water use. It is designed to be used with a stand. Use cinder blocks.

Rain Barrel(cont.)

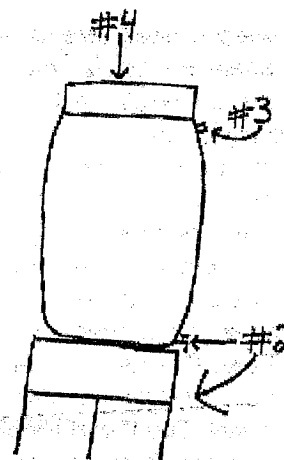
Note: If you are unable to reach down to the inside bottom of the barrel, you might want to use a 15/16" bit and put the washer on the outside of the barrel.

- 3 Drill a 1" hole an inch or so below the rim for your overflow assembly. This hole can go anywhere around the barrel at that latitude. Keep in mind don't put it to close to the top(overflow) or too low (lose water storage). It is recommended that you put a hole 1 to 1 1/2" below the rim.
- 4 Use 1" drill bit to drill a dozen or so holes in the lid. Rainwater will filter through mesh screen then thru the holes into the barrel.
- 5 Take a utility knife to clean up around the holes.
- 6 Wrap the barrel end of the spigot with teflon tape and then screw in the spigot squarely
- 7 Take the rubber washer and glue the surface of one side with a strong glue and reach into the barrel and work it over the threads.
- 8 Screw on the locknut and finish tightening
- 9 Do the same with the overflow valve
- 10 Take the silicone and spread it around the spigot and the overflow valve for added watertightness.
- 11 Attach the wire mesh over the drilled holes in the top.

This should be a fun project the only problem with it is that after this is done the barrel is still bright blue. Not sure if the wife will go for this added color scheme in the back yard.

I have a few more projects in the back of my head. I would also like to hear of any ideas or projects that any of you might have for your bonsai. I will gladly share your ideas here in this newsletter. E-mail me at

Thanks
Greg





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Vice President	Tim
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Treasurer	Gary
Librarian/Newsletter	Greg
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