

# SOUTHERN BONSAIST

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## BONSAI DEVELOPMENT

### THE JUNE ACBS MONTHLY PROGRAM

Each member of ACBS can bring one bonsai. That bonsai will be evaluated and a development plan for the next 12 months formulated. It will be difficult to do this program in the time allocated but possible if we start on time and focus on the program. If we have a great turnout we might make this a two part program.

Every time you touch your bonsai it should improve the tree. If you know exactly what you need to do and when it should be done you can move forward efficiently and speed the development of your bonsai. It's possible to develop a great many bonsai at the same time but you must know how to move them all forward along a individual path. Each bonsai is moving on it's individual path with individual needs but in a group. Complex, yes but developing a way to manage that complexity keeps it all moving forward.

Joe Day

**ACBS June 1st**  
**Regular Month Meeting**  
***Bonsai Development***  
**7 P.M.**

***Tokanoma: Members Bonsai***

***Host: The Kuntz***

***Due to the complexity of the process only 1 bonsai from each member will be used for a development plan.***

***Dues for 2010-2011 July to June can be paid at the June meeting.***

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## 2010 TRI-CITIES SHOW PHOTOGRAPHS

John Lee our "web-master" has posted the photographs of the bonsai on display at the Tri-Cities show. Thanks to John Lee's efforts our newsletter and bonsai can be found by anyone on the net. I know the site is viewed by a wide range of people around

the world. The regional show will be hosted by Pensacola next year. They have selected a show location and are making plans now for this event. One good bonsai is all you need and you have almost one year to get that one bonsai show ready. There are no

restrictions on what you can show at a regional show. If you are doing bonsai you have something on your shelf that could be show ready for Tri-Cities Regional show 2011 in Pensacola, Florida.

Joe Day

## THE FIRST 60 DAYS

You get 90% of your development with any bonsai the first 60 days after you see new growth. 60 day out of 360 days so those days a very important. If the weather gets hot and dry for the rest of the Summer that development might be all the development you get for the year.

We in a normal weather cycle start getting afternoon rain during the month of June. These rains can come every few days. If they come frequently it makes for one hell of a muggy Summer but it also cools the air, the bonsai benches, the bonsai pots and bonsai soil. This makes for

good growing conditions. This Summer rain can and will extend your growing period. How long it extends the growth depends of how long the rain last.

A normal year brings frequent 90 degree and possible frequent above 95 degree weather during July and August. This bring on for non-tropical bonsai a slow to now growth condition.

September brings back high 80% temps and nights into the 60's and at times 50's. September and October over the past 200 years in our area are dry months. Without the rain and with rain our

bonsai have another period of growth. How much growth depends of weather conditions.

The first 60 days are the only dependable time that you can expect good growth. Without the Summer rain or a earlier start to cold weather in September can limit your growth to just a few months.

How much growth any bonsai will and can have during the first 60 days depends on how strong the bonsai was the previous year.

Each cycle depends on the previous cycle. The current cycle sets up the next cycle.

Joe Day

## COMPLEX CYCLES

Every bonsai species responds differently to the constantly shifting weather conditions we have each year. You begin to better understand how that species will grow by either remembering or recording how the species grew each year and noting the weather conditions. Over a few years you will come to

realize the exact timing will change each year but the species will stay close to the same growing schedule.

If you have a collection with many different species knowing the approximate growing cycle will allow you to better schedule your potting for each year. It allows you to better use your fertilizer by

applying the nutrients when they can be best used by each species. One of the largest advantages to knowing the growth cycle of a species is knowing when is the best time to wire the species. The longer you can leave wire on a bonsai the more effective the results.

Joe Day

## DEFOLIATING MAPLES-1

You do not defoliate the thread leaf maples. They are the Japanese Maples that have the very fancy frilly leaves. They usually do not have the ability to set and grow two leaf cycles in one year.

Trident Maples and most Japanese Maple that have the normal shaped leaves can be defoliated. Japanese Maples that have not been grafted are strong trees. Trident Ma-

ples are very strong trees. Defoliating is the very simple process of cutting all the leaves off a bonsai Maple. The tree responds by creating another set of leaves. These leaves did not have a full year to get ready to grow so they come out smaller then the leaves you just cut off. Simple but.....

The tree you defoliate must be in good health.

You need the weather to work with you. If you defoliate a Maple and the weather turns hot and dry for a long period the Maple will not push out new leaves. If it tried to push new leaves they would just dry out and die. The best time to defoliate is about 6 weeks after the first set of leaves come out. The 6 weeks gives the tree time to set up strong new roots before they have to support pushing out a new set of leaves. Joe Day

# IT'S THE COMPLEXITY

Every factor is a changing factor with bonsai. The climate in your back yard. The climate for the season. The way you fertilize. How often you fertilize, what you fertilize with and how much fertilizer you use. The water you water with, how often you water, how you water are factors. The size and shape of the bonsai pot. If you use clay or mica pots. If you are using a slab, growing on a rock or in a rock are factors. If you are using a wood growing box. The soil you use, what you use to create your soil, how much soil is in your pot, the size of the soil particles and how they are layered or not

layered in the container. How you repot, how often you repot, how much root is removed when your repot is a big factor. How you make cuts, when the cuts are made and how the cuts are sealed or not sealed.

Where your bonsai are placed in your yard how they are placed is a factor.

How much time you spend with your bonsai. What you do when you are in your bonsai area is perhaps the largest factor to creating bonsai. What tools you have, how sharp they are and how you use them are factors. What type of disease protection you

are using, how you use and how often you use it are factors. Do you use a micro-nutrients solution and how often you use it. Are you doing bonsai with species that love your climate and work with your lifestyle or some well know species that you just want to grow.

All these factors change the amount of success you will have with any species. How do you find the best method? You have to look at each bonsai every day and see if it is healthy and happy. If it is not you must discover ...why and correct the problem.

Joe Day

## TOP OFF

At times you will have a bonsai that will be dry much earlier than the other bonsai. A simple approach is to take some Pine bark mulch and cover the top of the soil of your problem bonsai. About a one fourth inch covering will make a lot of difference. Pine bark if it is not completely dry will wet quickly and dry very

slow. Years of experience has shown the Pine bark will not easily float off when you water or when it comes a hard rain.

This method works will all species but with Japanese Maple it seems to give a double benefit. It keeps the soil moist and releases moisture into the canopy reducing leaf burn. The only downside I

have found is roots will grow into this mulch layer. If you allow the mulch to totally dry out you loose those roots and weaken the bonsai. This is not a big problem as the Pine bark takes a long time to dry. This has been my "go to" method for many years and it always works.

Joe Day

## DEFOLIATING MAPLES - 2

Continuous defoliating is the process of trimming off a few of the largest leaves of a Maple every few days. This slow but very safe process both opens up the canopy and encourages smaller leaves. Area defoliation is the process of cutting off all the leaves in one area of a bonsai. This process is often used to encourage back budding in the defoliated area. This process is usually safe but if you defoliate an already weak

area of a Maple you might cause the tree to abort a branch.

I defoliated three Trident Maple in the past few weeks. The lack of weather stress and a few days of rain have allowed the Maples to both back bud along the branches and put on a set of smaller leaves. Be careful about the following:

When you remove the leaves from a tree root function slows down a lot so the soil

will dry slower. Keep the soil moist not wet but never allow it to dry. If the buds dry out at this point you loose the tree.

Do not fertilize. The point of defoliating is to make smaller leaves. Fertilizing will push larger leaves.

Semi-shade is a must. Enough light to encourage bud push but not enough to dry the tender growth.

Daily care is a must.

Joe Day

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## Thanks

*June is the end month of our bonsai year. July starts our next cycle of ACBS events. Every year is different. Our mix of events, our mix of members, our mix of programs make each year stand on its own. Bonsai is a wonderful hobby filled with some of the nicest people on earth. Thank each of you for your help in so many ways. I'm always impressed with how everyone pitches in on every project and makes it both easy and fun. That everyone pitching in includes the members of the other bonsai societies that become a part of our activities. I have visited with lots of other bonsai societies. How do they differ? The faces you see are different, nothing else is. No bonsai is ever finished so the art of bonsai is ..doing bonsai. With the strength of our membership we will go forth into another year and see what it brings. ACBS belongs to the members of ACBS. What happens in the next 12 months depends on what the members want to happen. The only scheduled event we have is our participation in the 2011 Regional Show. All other normal events depend on the desires of the membership. Make your desires known. President Joe Kubn has graduated from USA and now is a daily employed working man. I know over the last few months he has had a plate full of responsibilities. Life never slows down but his new mix of activities will allow him to again be our holder of the door keys and manager of our ACBS. We welcome him back at the June meeting.*

*Joe Day*

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