



Ambassador's Message

I am very pleased to know that the Indian Bonsai Association is going to hold its annual Bonsai exhibition in April 2007.

It is already a well-known fact that the year 2007 is being celebrated as the “Japan-India Friendship Year” with the primary aims of expanding on people-to-people exchange and deepening the mutual understanding between Japan and India. As part of the 'Japan Year in India', over 90 Japanese cultural events will be organized in different cities of India during the year, to highlight the historical and cultural interchange between our two countries.

Bonsai is a graceful Japanese art that involves growing of miniature trees or plants as they appear in nature. A unique aesthetic sense is expressed through the vigour, shape and structure of the plant. Bonsai is gaining in popularity all over the world as a constructive pastime appealing to one's sense of visual beauty and nurturing.

I hope this Bonsai exhibition being held by the Indian Bonsai Association would help familiarize the Indian audience with one of the integral and popular aspects of Japanese culture.

YASUKUNI ENOKI

Ambassador of Japan to India

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From The Editor's Desk

It gives me great pleasure to be writing this editorial. The Indian Bonsai Association has come a long way from its inception . Our Annual Exhibition is an important event on the Delhi Cultural calendar. This year the Japanese Embassy is celebrating 'Indo-Japanese Friendship Year' and our exhibition is one of the official events on their calendar.

Bonsai as an art form is really growing and more and more people want to learn this art. This is amply demonstrated by the number of people who visit our annual exhibitions. Bonsai teach us the virtue of 'patience' without which we cannot exist in this fast moving world.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Shiela Dikshit and the Delhi Government for putting us on the International Bonsai Map by sponsoring our International Bonsai convention in 2005. It was a great success. Also the participation by Bonsai clubs from all over India helped create a bond at the national level.

Our annual exhibition is being held at ITC Hotel Maurya Sheraton and Towers for over 22 years. We thank them for their support and may this bond grow stronger.

I would also like to thank the Japanese Embassy and Japan Foundation for their continued support to our Association over the past few years.

May I request all the members to share their Bonsai experience with other's by writing articles for the Bulletin. Our Bulletin is an informal way in which we communicate with other Bonsai enthusiasts, so please write and share, that is the way we will grow and learn from each others experiences. All Bonsai articles will also be added to our website www.indianbonsaiassociation.com.

Finally I would like to thank you all for giving me the opportunity to edit this Bulletin because I actually learnt a lot along the way!

Saveena Gadhoke

President's Message

Our Association has grown over the years to become an internationally recognized body. The guiding principle of keeping it as a hobby group of non-commercial nature has helped in maintaining high ethical standards. Indian Bonsai Association runs on mutual trust, sharing and collective decision making, this approach has insulated us from groupism and fragmentation. We are indebted to our Late Founder Dr.(Mrs) Leila Dhandra for her foresight in instilling these values since the very beginning.

We are fortunate to have Past Presidents and other senior members who are always ready to guide, teach and work. No work is small for them as it was amply demonstrated by our past president Mrs. Neera Neelambra who stepped in to take charge as Secretary, which happens to be the most difficult task in our organization.

We have several shortcomings and efforts should be made to overcome them. Participation by members in workshops and exhibitions is not optimum. Members should do basic work like soil preparation, pruning, wiring and watering themselves and not depend on helpers.

We are planning to set up meeting timings to suit males and working ladies. We should make efforts to have activities on weekends to encourage participation by this sub-group. There is scope for starting Bonsai School, counter for sale of Bonsai material and pots etc. at reasonable price to encourage beginners. The regular complaint of non-receipt of letters can be rectified by using Internet.

Members should visit our website www.indianbonsaiassociation.com as we plan to use our website for giving a lot of information in the near future. You will be glad to know that our annual exhibition is one of the official events celebrating the Indo- Japanese Friendship year 2007.

I thank all fellow bonsai lovers for giving full support and co-operation during my tenure.

Dr. H. Om Ahuja

Activities held in the year 2006-2007

Date : 10th July 2006

Venue : ITC Hotel Maurya Sheraton

The new session began with a 'Pruning Workshop' conducted by Ms Shyama Balbir-our executive member. Ms Shyama, a talented bonsai enthusiast & lady with green thumb gave an informative talk on caring and pruning of bonsai plants.

Date : 25th July 2006

Venue : ITC Hotel Maurya Sheraton

Dr Hari Om Ahuja, our President gave a very interesting talk on Potting & Caring a plant, potted in the ground to achieve an aged and thick trunk in least possible time. Meeting was well attended . Membership fee was collected in both the meetings.

Date : 17th August 2006

Venue : ITC Hotel Maurya Sheraton

It was lecture-demonstration by our executive member Ms Sheel Yadav on 'Rock Planting'. Members enjoyed the various techniques involved in creating a rock grown bonsai.

Date : 30th August 2006

Venue: ITC Hotel Maurya Sheraton

This was a 'Rock-Planting' workshop. A follow up of the previous meeting, it was well attended and many enthusiastic members created rock planted bonsai and were helped by other experienced members. Membership fee was collected in both the meetings.

Date : 12th September 2006

Venue: Bhagwan Mahavir Kendra

Members viewed & learnt a very interesting style –Wind Swept Style. It was a demo-cum workshop by our very talented & experienced executive member Dr Sumedha Tanja. It was a well attended meeting.

Date : 30th October 2006

Venue: National Bonsai Park, Lodhi Garden.

It was a lecture demonstration on Training and caring of Junipers by our Past President Ms Renu Vaish –a gifted and experienced bonsai expert. She shared her vast knowledge about this beautiful plant with members. It was a well attended meeting.

Date : 30th November 2006

Venue: National Bonsai Park, Lodhi Garden.

This was a Juniper workshop-a follow up of the previous meeting . Many members brought their Junipers to be trained or discussed by Ms Renu Vaish and were thrilled to see the results.

Date : 21st December 2006

Venue: Bhagwan Mahavir Kendra

Ms Neera Neelamberra our own Past President (present Secretary) shared her knowledge and experiences on giving a plant more interesting look by creating 'Jins, Sharis & Sabamiki'. It was a very interesting talk

and members tried the techniques on their plants with her help. Dr Ahuja our President also shared his knowledge on the subject. Meeting was very well attended.

Date : 17th January, 2007

Venue: 1-Casia Avenue, Westend Greens, (Sridhar's Farm)

It was a memorable morning at Sridhar's farm with Mr Peter Chan- a renowned Bonsai Master. Peter Chan worked upon mature bonsai plants brought by our members. It was a demo-cum-workshop followed by the lunch. Members not only learnt various skills for grooming and training of Bonsai trees but also enjoyed Mrs Sridhar's beautiful garden and her hospitality. Thanks to Ms Prabha Sridhar for arranging the programme so perfectly.

Date : 16th February, 2007

Venue: 14, Alipur Road, Ms Kiran Jain's Residence.

It was a very interesting meeting at our ex President Ms Kiran Jain's residence who is not only a bonsai enthusiast but a teacher also, She has a vast collection of bonsai plants at her terrace. Ms Kiran gave a demonstration on making 'Artificial Rocks' by using chicken wire net, fiber cloth and quick drying cement. A unique method to create a rock instantly. Members were delighted to see her years old bonsai plants. Her hospitality made the members very comfortable. More than 50 members attended the meeting.

Date : 23rd February, 2007

Venue : F-10\2 Vasant Vihar, Ms Neeru Verma, Residence.

This programme was a visit to a beautiful Terrace Garden created by Ms Neeru Verma at her residence. There was a talk by Ms Neeru Verma on planning and laying out this unique garden.

Date : 22nd March, 2007

Venue : D-37, South Extension Part II, New Delhi.

This was be a plant selection meeting for those members who want to display their plants at the Annual forthcoming exhibition. Plants were selected and trained to give the final finished look by the Senior executive members.

BONSAI EXHIBITION

The most awaited Annual Event of Indian Bonsai Association is being held on Sunday, 8th April, 2007 at Kamal Mahal ITC Hotel Maurya Sheraton and Towers, New Delhi .



Enthusiastic members participating in a workshop



Mr. Peter Chan conducting a workshop which was hosted by Mrs. & Mr. Shridhar at their beautiful farm.

Adenium -an Interesting Plant

-Sudha Jain

Adenium a generic name is derived from the word Aden, one of the places of origin of this genus. Among many rare flowering shrubs, Adenium is a highly ornamental potted shrub. Its old specimen looks like a garden sculpture. This plant is an excellent Bonsai plant.

There are three species of Adenium as- described below:

1. ADENIUM MULTIFLORUM (ORIGIN - TRANSVALL, KUGER PARK TO THE LIMPOPO, SOUTH RHODESIA & ZAMBESI)

This is known as 'Impala Lily' a most attractive succulent shrub with fat, swollen trunk 3-10ft. high with poisonous milky sap, During the growing season the thick, stubby branches are covered with dark green, simple alternate fleshy, deciduous, spirally arranged leaves, The funnel shaped flower, white edged with crimson, looking like bright stars in the yellowish dusty vegetation.



2. ADENIUM OBOSUM (ORIGIN - E . AFRICA, MOZAMBIQUE, TANGANYIKA, KENYA & UGANDA)

This is known as ' Desert Rose'. It is a spreading succulent bush, 6 ft.high, with thick, fleshy twisted base and short branches; Deciduous obovate fleshy leaf, glossy dark green with pink midrib 3 inches long when young sometimes with minute hairs, showy flowers with spreading petals, pinkish edged



with carmine or all carmine -rose colour.

3. ADENIUM SOMALENSE (ORIGIN - KENYA, SOMALILAND ,ADEN)

This is known as 'Mock - azalea" similar to obesum, with swollen stem having fleshy leaves, long obovate pointed blush - green and smaller flowers pink to white.

For excellent growth and constant flowering, this plant needs a rich porous compost and sunny location, prefers morning sun. The plant should be protected from scorching rays in the summer months and frost in winter. In winter plants should be watered carefully, more water is harmful.

Mature plants flower freely and bear many seeds in long pods. It takes about a month for the pods to mature from the date of pollination. This can be propagated from seeds, cuttings.

Freshly harvested seeds are sown in seed pans in seed compost containing 2 parts of leaf mould, 1 part sand and, 1 part sandy loam soil and covered with glass. After germination the 'glass is removed. Mature cuttings root easily in sand. The percentage of the germination of the seeds is almost hundred percent as they are collected from older well established plans.

An Unforgettable Visit by Marc Noelanders

-Shyama Balbir

The month of August is always one of hectic activity for all Bonsai lovers. The weather is one favourable for profuse growth and if the plants are not taken in hand, you could lose the shape to wild maverick shoots. Just as we geared up to discipline our plants, in walked the Belgian Master, Marc Noelanaers.

The Indian Bonsai Association hosted the visit of Marc Noelanders (a master of Bonsai) who lives in Belgium but makes countless trips to Japan. He gives demonstration in the Netherlands, Germany, Italy and several other countries, India being one. He takes care of the gardens of the Queen of Belgium, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Al Gore etc. Since 1990 Marc has been constantly occupied with Bonsai. He passes on his knowledge and skill to small groups of pupils during the weekends.

Born on Dec 29th 1960, Marc grew up among the oak trees of Eastern Belgium. He was influenced by eastern mysticism that drove him at an early age of 13 years to Karate. He trained for several years to international level when his Master wanted him to learn Bonsai to balance the ying and yang of his personality. He never looked back.

He stayed for a long time in Japan, initially only watering, fertilizing and pruning trees till he was allowed to,work on trees.

He worked under masters like Sensei Kimura, John Naka and several others. What an illustrious career !!

Everyone amongst us, Bonsai lovers, has experienced an evening when you are all alone, sitting in front of a bush, dreaming of a Bonsai, visualizing a Bonsai. But creating one is another story altogether. That is when a Master like Marc was a God send !

Marc, started his visit with a demonstration, on the 10th of August 2005, at the Kamal Mahal, Maurya Sheraton, Delhi.

He started with a Ficus Long Island, belonging to the Association. It was in its wild form but with great





potential. Marc, with his experienced hands, crafted a new tree. He says that while he is working on a tree he becomes part of it. There was pin drop silence and the audience watched with deep concentration. Eventually a Bonsai evolved. There were gasps of admiration for his skill.

Thereafter he picked on trees that he thought were suitable, brought by the members of the Executive, like Sheel Yadav, Renu Vaish, Kanta Bukhari, Neera Nilambara. Each one was a jewel in the making.

This was followed by a Critique of the plants on display. These plants have often been the centre of attraction -at the Annual Bonsai Show. He started by asking the audience about each one of the plants: "What" he asked "were the good and the bad points of the tree". The audience participated enthusiastically. Thereafter the creator of that Bonsai was asked what he/she would like to do. Each one went home feeling that something more could be done to their Bonsai. Marc said that a Bonsai is never finished. There is always more to be done.

There was a break for refreshments followed by more work. Marc is a hard task master. Insight into each plant gave us all tremendous knowledge and widened our perspective.

The evening was for our visitors to go sightseeing. Lalitha Jain, our Past President, gave them a memorable look at Delhi. She helped them With some useful shopping.

On August 11th, Marc and his friends went on the never-to-be-missed trip to the Taj Mahal. The stupendous monument must have made Marc feel that "Big too can be beautiful".

The morning of August 12th, saw frantic activity at the Mahavir Kendra in Delhi, where a workshop was organized. There were far too many plants for one individual to handle. However the previous Karate experience gave Marc the stamina and patience to oversee each and every plant brought by members. His advice to each one of them was to have a fresh perspective and look at a plant "out of the box". His unconventional style of looking at a plant from all possible levels and angles, even almost upside down made us realize the multi facets to this art form. He tames the wild growth to show it in a new form. It Was one of the most satisfying day for all the members !!

The Indian Bonsai Association was proud to have such a Master in their midst. We look forward to many such visits in the future as well !

The Juniper Survival Guide

-Sunil Gadhoke

With small needle like leaves, Junipers offer excellent and versatile possibilities for Bonsai culture. Although it is a hardy plant variety, yet, it is perceived to be difficult to grow and maintain. Honestly this was my initial experience, as I lost countless plants. It was therefore a challenge to learn to make them survive, and I am happy to share my experience.

INITIAL GROWTH YEARS

Essentially the object is to produce the right material for bonsai culture. Fresh nursery stock lacks a good root ball and is not developed enough. It needs to be grown in training pots (8", 10" or 12") for 2 to 4+ years. Although Junipers are prolific growers, the thickening of branches is a slow process specially, in the Bonsai pot. An extensive and compact root ball is very important for healthy and strong growth.

Generally plants collected from the ground or the wild do not have a compact root network, branch placement needs to be refined and new ones developed. It would be necessary to first grow such plants in a training pot.

Plants should therefore be allowed to grow for a few years. The new growth should be cut back every six months to develop a compact and dense plant, which is suitable for training as a Bonsai. Giving a shape, style and form to a plant is the first important step. The process of wiring and training should begin as also the process of branch selection and development.

As the name indicates, Juniper Prostrata's natural habitat is horizontal. The primary branch should be trained upright/semi upright or if possible, to suite the final style. Otherwise, you will inherit a bend or a kink near the base, which is avoidable because it limits the styling potential. The plant will give out several primary branches. The healthy ones may be retained and the other ones removed. However, if from the outset you have a clear picture of the end result, you can keep only the main trunk and remove the rest.

Pic. 1 demonstrates the end result for stage 1 of development. The plant is now ready for transplantation into a Bonsai container, which may be done in the appropriate season.



Pic. 1 Stage 1 material wired and shaped by visiting Bonsai Master Hirtoshi Saito.

Junipers do not naturally develop a taper. However, this can be achieved by cutting the plant back to create new leader. This is best done in the training pot.

GROWTH IN BONSAI CONTAINER

The plants may be transferred to a Bonsai container once an extensive and compact root ball has been formed there is a strong and thick trunk, strong and several secondary branches. It is ready to receive a final shape and training for its life as Bonsai. I would not go into details regarding pot selection, as this is common to all Bonsai.



Pic 2. Growth and training in subsequent years as a Bonsai

HABITAT

Junipers love natural sunlight and therefore, should always be grown under full sun. In-fact, they should not be grown in shady areas or under trees. This would make them look thin, lanky and unhealthy.

An understanding of the weather and seasons is very important for survival. North India faces extreme temperatures from middle of April to about middle of August (until the complete onset of Monsoon). Junipers can handle this extreme weather provided they are suitably protected and the timing of activities such as re-potting, pruning, wiring, cutting etc. have been carried out keeping in view this window of harsh weather. During this period it is advisable to put a 50% to 80% (green or Black) agro shield cover. Agro shield gives the required insurance against any human shortcomings in managing the watering of the plants. Good ventilation is important. Plants should be kept in open and away from walls and preferably on the ground floor. The Action of wind on higher floors is lot more and this can be a problem in the hot months due to its severe drying effect. On higher floors a barrier may be created with dense shrubs to shield the bonsai.

POTTING MIX

Soil should drain well and remain on the dry side. Junipers do not like soils, which remain highly hydrated all the time. Water logged plants would turn yellow on the tips and eventually the whole plant will turn yellow and finally die. Care should be taken to ensure that the drainage holes remain open. An effective potting mix would comprise of 35% mature sludge, 35% leaf mold and 30% river sand. In addition, the filtration layer should preferably be rounded gravel. This is same gravel which is used for filtration in deep bore wells (if it works there, it will work here). Do not mistake this for marble chips. In fact, in my view marble chips and Stone Dust need to be avoided. The plastic mesh used to cover Drainage holes should have large openings. The standard plastic mesh is not suited, as it tends to clog with soil after a year or so. However, it may be used, by puncturing several larger holes.

WATERING

In summer it is essential to water the plants twice a day early morning and late evening. Daily watering is particularly important and must be religiously carried out. During winter months November to Feb once a day watering will do. Be careful not to over pamper your Junipers with water!!! In Monsoons, water as required.

WIRING, PRUNING AND CUTTING

The most important principle to keep in mind is the prevailing season and the oncoming season. The average daily temperature is an indicator to decide if it is safe to work on the plant. In my experience, Junipers handle moderate temperatures very well i.e. up-to 35°C. As it gets hotter, till about 39°C it becomes a bit risky and beyond that the plant should not be touched. An eye on the oncoming season is

also necessary. So, for any drastic action, allow maximum time possible (2 to 3 months) before the onset of extreme temperatures so that the plant would have fully recovered.

Accordingly, wiring may be done from October to March, and in August. During monsoons the branches become quite flexible and easier to work. However, care should be taken not to inflict too much trauma to the plant as September can be quite harsh.

Pruning may be carried out from mid October to Mid December and from Mid February to Mid March. The plants hibernate in between, though it is safe to work on them, it can be avoided due to the low temperatures and possibility of shock. The plants which, are pruned from Oct-Dec, may not start to bud till end February. However, this should not cause any concern as come spring, you can bet they will spring. On plants pruned in this time, occasionally new buds may be yellow. This should not be a cause of concern, as, the days get hotter, they, will turn to green. Turning of yellow is due to the action of frost and not due to water logging. Pinching of new buds (de-budding) and clearing unwanted growth might also be carried out. Plants which were pruned or cut back in late autumn / early winter may be pinched in March. Repeated pinching is to be totally avoided.

Heavy cut back with shears may be carried out on younger plants. As they grow older, you can exercise some caution. I personally carry out heavy cutting and pruning between Oct.-Dec. and lighter pruning/cutting in Feb.-March. So that plant has fully recovered and is in the pink of health by the onset of the extreme temperatures and dry months. De-budding also may be carried out during these months. It is however important to understand that Junipers DO NOT like frequent interference. Therefore, after working on a plant, it should be left to grow for the next five to six months. Accordingly, if heavy pruning/cutting is carried out in early winter, then the plant may receive light pruning in Feb-March or in Monsoon. After each pruning, cutting or re-potting it is important to spray Bavastine the plant to keep the Fungus at bay.

Unlike deciduous varieties, Junipers cannot be totally stripped off the foliage / cut back to bare trunks. At least 50% of the foliage should be retained. Secondary and tertiary branches should also not be made completely bare. This is to keep sap flowing or totally bare branches will most likely dry.

Following heavy cutting or pruning the plant should be protected from full direct sunlight for at least 7 to 10 days. The plant may be kept in a shaded area and not over watered. It is also important to take it out, as Junipers do-not like to stay in shade for too long either.

REPOTTING

After root pruning and cutting, Junipers take a long time to give new roots (about 6 months). They may even demonstrate prolific growth, but, this is misleading and don't get fooled. Junipers require a long period of moderate temperatures (not high) to re-establish it-self so as to face extreme temperature. What this means is that the repotting should be done about 5 to 6 months before the onset of extreme temperatures, especially in cases where extensive root cutting is required. This would mean repotting in August or end October at the latest. Of course, if you were repotting from a bonsai pot to a training pot with minimal root clipping, this may be done either in Oct-Nov. or even in Mid Feb. However, for reasons explained above, I would prefer to complete all repotting by November.

The biggest challenge comes when we re-pot from a training pot to a bonsai container. Since the root ball is large, doing it in two stages with one-year interval is perhaps the safest course and one I would recommend, till sufficient experience has been gained. However, I have had 100% success with re-potting in the monsoons. The advantage is that plants can be transferred in a single stage from the training pot as the plant gets a long period (8-9 months) to re-establish itself on the remaining roots before the onset of next hot period.

The best way to repot Junipers is to give a clean horizontal cut to the root ball without disturbing the remaining root ball. This is very important in older trees. Younger fresh material can handle removal of soil from the roots, but older tree do not tolerate it.

The watering holes must be kept clear and un-blocked. If water logging is noticed, immediate attention needs to be given to either open the drainage holes or re-pot the plant.

Frequent repotting is not necessary. So long as the plant is demonstrating healthy growth and there are no signs of water logging, repotting should be done every 3 or even 4 years.

FERTILIZATION AND PESTICIDES

Liquid fertilizer prepared with neem khali is adequate and safe to use. This may be applied once a week during the growing phase and stopped in Monsoon. I have personally not found the need for any chemical fertilizers.

Plants in training pots can be fed mature gobar in moderate quantities. Best is to top feed the plant in end Feb. once a year. This helps in healthy growth and development. I would urge you to experiment with it with a few plants first before using it on all the training material

It is important to note that NO UREA should be used on Junipers. If you do, they will most certainly dry and die. In this context, it is also important that you don't use any pre-mix potting soils available. Simply because you don't know for certain what chemicals are added and there is a grave risk to the plant.

Bavastine diluted in water should be applied once every two weeks through out the year and once weekly during monsoons. It is also applied immediately after pruning, cutting and repotting. Keeps the fungus at bay, which can otherwise kill Junipers.

TROUBLE SHOOTING

Common problems you may encounter:

Plant on feel is very dryApply bavastine

Water logging is observed i.e. plant is not drying out - Clear drainage holes or re-pot if problem does not go away.

Plant turns from green to yellow - Indicates root damage due to water logging. Repot the plant. Cut back and remove damaged portions of the roots.

Water logging-Clear drainage holes or re-Pot if required

Plant turning yellow on tips-Indicates root damage due to water logging. Repot the plant by cutting and removing damaged roots.

MONTH→ ↓ACTIVITY	* END OF OCT - NOV	MID DEC -JAN	MID FEB -MARCH	APRIL- JULY	AUGUST	SEPT. - MID OCT.
Habitat Sun Light	Full	Full	Full	Filtered	Semi Filtered	Filtered
Wiring, Pruning, Cutting,Debudding	OK	Light	Light	NO	Light	NO
Repotting	OK	OK	OK	NO	OK	NO
Fertilization	OK	NO	OK	OK	NO	NO

Note (*) the October season start in around last week of October, once the max day time temperatures are down to around 30°C.

The Classic Flavour

-Renu Vaish

The International Bonsai Convention April 2005 held by our association invited three bonsai masters from different parts of the world.

- 1) Mr. Peter Chan from London.
- 2) Mr. Robert Steven from Indonesia.
- 3) Mr. Hirotoshi Saito from Japan.

Each of the bonsai masters had their area of expertise and also very different ways of dealing with the bonsai material which is why we have so many different styles & philosophies.

I had a healthy juniper which I was growing for a cascade style, & I thought it would be a good idea to have Mr. Saito work on it. It was fantastic to watch my cascading juniper change into a slanting style and one realises how each person visualises things differently.

Mr. Saito's style is a very classic conventional style of Japan. He visualised the end result after a thorough inspection of the then cascading juniper and then made a diagram of what the plant should look like after a few years of training. This was a very important lesson I learnt from him. It is good to have a visual, which you can refer to everytime you sit to work on your plant later on, which could be a few months.

The following pictures give an idea of what was done on the cascading juniper & the sketch of what it should be after a few years. (hoping it will survive!).



Before shaping and pruning

Pruning in progress



Mr. Hirotoshi Saito believes that through a continuing interest in the beauty of Bonsai you will -

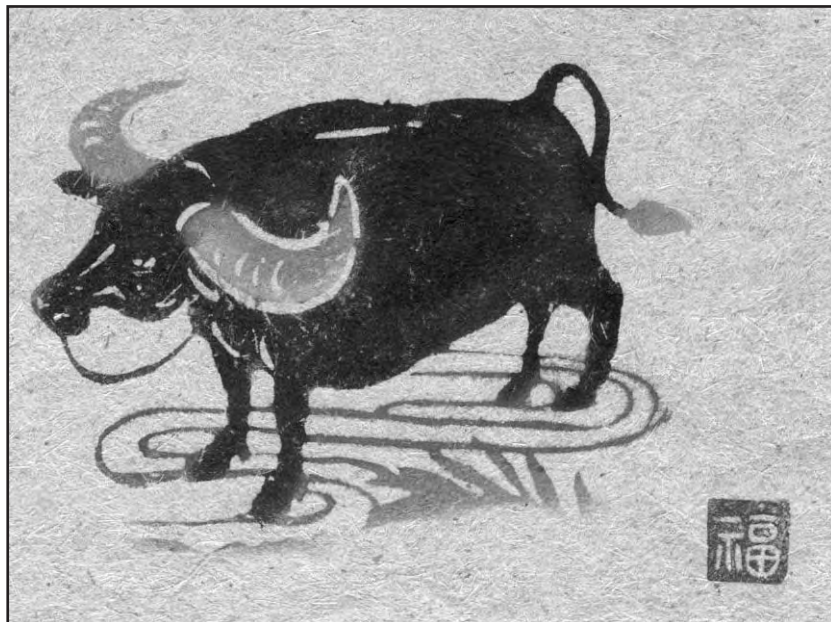
- Develop a greater interest in nature and the environment.
- Have a better appreciation of plants.



After pruning and future design drawn by the Master Mr. Saito

- Improves your level of patience.
- Develop your imagination.
- Gain new friends.
- Improve your sense of art.
- Improve well-being in your mind and body.
- Mature your positive thinking.
- Create bright and happy conversation with family and friends.
- evolve a sense of appreciation for your and others accomplishments.
- Gain new and extensive knowledge.
- Discover and recognise others good points.

Need we say more in favour of the art of bonsai!



A drawing by Bonsai Master Mr. Hirotoishi Saito

Basics of Bonsai

-Kanta Bukhari

As we know, Bonsai is a plant, growing in a shallow container, since, a small quantity of soil is required to keep it going. In general, a Bonsai survives, in a good weed free, adequately fertilized, garden soil, for a year. During this period the roots spread grasping the soil firmly. In order to raise a good Bonsai, a beginner should obtain, a healthy, preferably old plant, suitable for a Bonsai. This could be from a nursery or dug out from your own collection. The structure and shape of this freshly gotten plant should be such as to be fitted into a small and shallow pot. In the, rainy season or on arrival of the spring season, a pot should be taken with legs for facilitating easy drainage. If the hole gets sealed, it causes water logging, which results in the plant dying due to rotting of the roots. As regards the soil, taking equal amounts of clay, sand, peat moss and leaf mould will be a good practice.

In the following years, the roots which develop tend to become pot bound hence the need for repotting. The roots need to be trimmed since they would have multiplied immensely leaving no space for the soil. The soil also needs to be changed since its nourishing capability is depleted. This process encourages the growth of fine roots and improves the aeration. The frequency of repotting varies from plant to plant. Adding of fertilizers depends on the amount of growth, but it is likely to be normally 2-3 times during spring month. Liquid fertilizers, if properly diluted are often most beneficial.

Training one's bonsai and giving it the desired shape is every individuals own choice. However following certain norms laid down by the great bonsai masters, in this regard, will yield delightful results.

The above tips coming from a bonsai lover, who knows marginally more than an absolutely novice, may inspire some, who have been aspiring to start creating a Bonsai. A Bonsai is not merely a plant transplanted into a shallow container but an artistically, patiently trained, wild tree, with constant care. A regal old tree, excellently shaped, is in real sense a Bonsai.



General Awareness of Bonsai Care

-Rekha Modi

As a keen Bonsai lover I have always faced the question of how to take care of the tree. I am told by my teachers and Bonsai friends that unless you can spend time every day, you should not own a bonsai. One should not forget that it's like a living pet and can not be neglected. It needs daily care from watering to daily grooming, regular clipping and also manuring from time to time for its health and growth.

The most important thing to remember is that a bonsai tree is not an indoor plant. It's a tree which grows out doors, and to keep healthy it needs sun, air and water everyday. The more beautiful the bonsai the more temptation there is to display it inside the house, but this should be managed by having more bonsais so that they can be rotated in turns.

Considering the care step by step, one of the most important factors is the placement of the tree. It should not be kept directly on the ground but on a stand or table in a sunny but sheltered spot. Protection from heavy rain and strong wind" is recommended so that the branches may not be damaged or the tree uprooted. The placement of the pot should be such that all sides are exposed equally to sunlight so that the foliage can develop evenly.

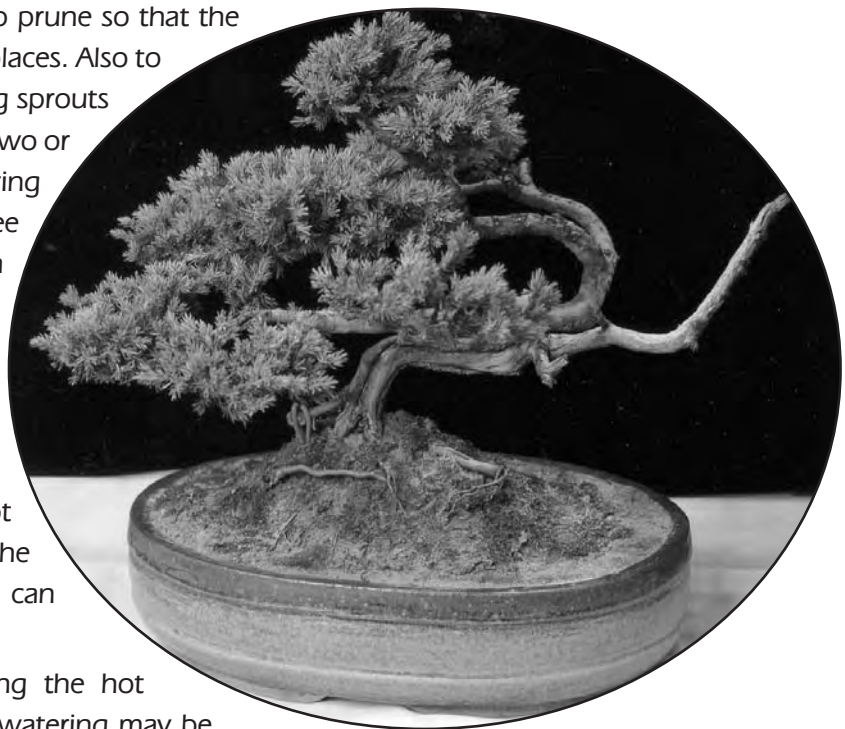
Another important aspect that needs to be addressed is watering. Bonsai experts say more trees die of over watering rather than less watering. A watering can with a fine spray and a long spout is ideal so that the water falls evenly like rain. The bonsai should be watered thoroughly from all sides with enough water to saturate the soil and drip out of the drainage hole at the bottom of the pot.

From time to time Bonsai should be carefully weeded as weeds steal the nourishment from the soil.

The care of the tree also varies from season to season. In winter the trees, especially cold-sensitive species like imli and ficus benjamina, should be protected from frost. The bonsai should not be fertilized as winter is a dormant period. As the branches are bare it's a good time to shape and reshape and check the wire which has been used on the trees.

Just before spring is a good time to prune so that the new growth will come at the right places. Also to preserve the design of the tree, long sprouts should be nipped back leaving just two or three buds. As growth is rapid during this time it is a good period for the tree healing process, so one can take a chance with jinning. The trees can be exposed to partial sunlight and gradually to full sun as the new growth hardens. Dilute nitrogen rich fertilizer may be used to encourage the foliage. One can pot and repot and change the soil for the health of the tree. Mild insecticide can also be used if necessary .

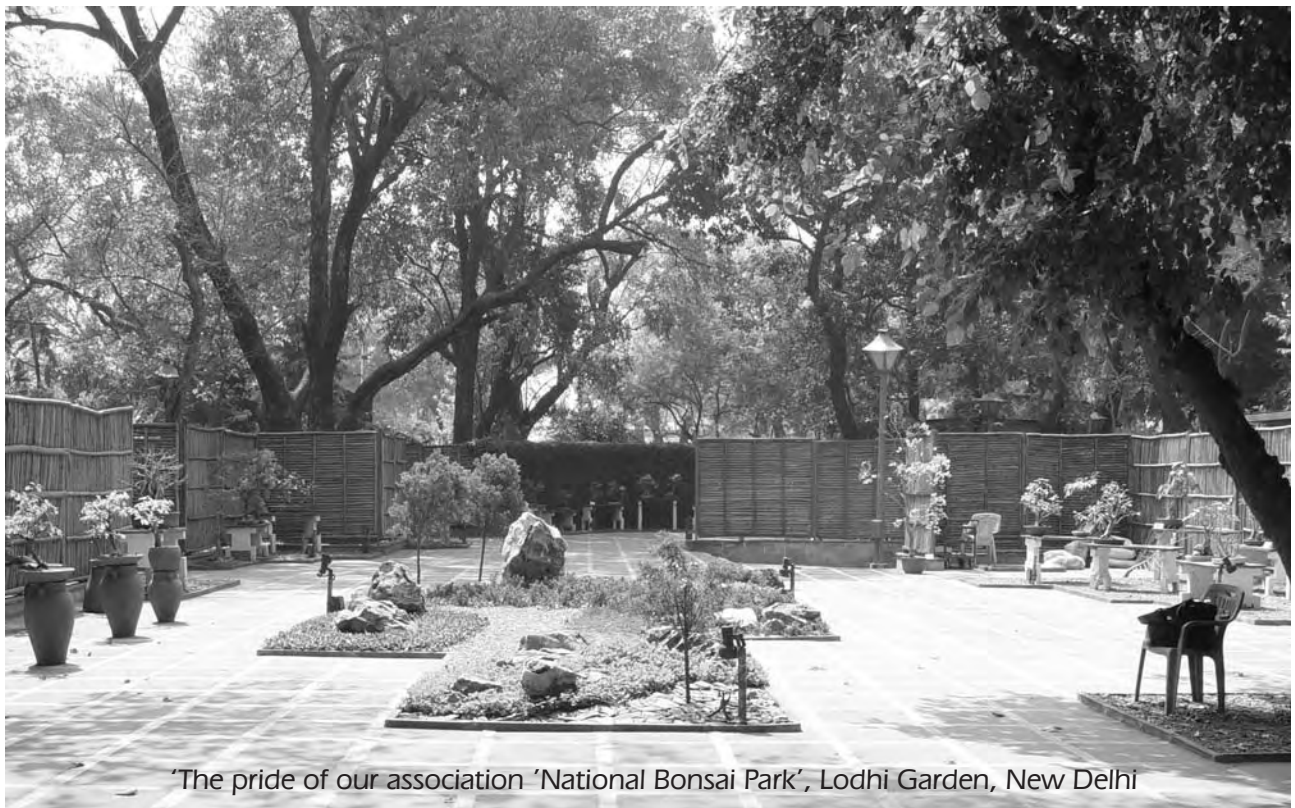
One has to be very careful during the hot summer months as more frequent watering may be



needed as the weather grows warmer. Try spraying water around the area where the bonsai are placed to increase the humidity. Check the drainage holes of the bonsai pots to ensure that roots or soil are not blocking them, resulting in poor drainage that can even kill the tree. Protect the trees from the hot summer breeze and also from very strong afternoon sun. The leaves should never be moistened in the middle of the day when the sun is on them as they will burn.

The Monsoon is a very welcome season for bonsai and garden lovers. As the sap is rising and leaf buds are developing it's a very good time to pot or make new bonsai trees. Do not forget to protect them from heavy monsoon rain, so that the soil does not get washed away. Pruning should be continued, and wire should be checked so that it does not interfere with the circulation, but is tight enough to hold the bends in the trunk and branches in place.

The final beauty of bonsai lies in its training and each one of us must strive to see that the tree is developed to its greatest beauty. By giving a little time and care everyday one can enjoy the satisfaction of possessing a beautiful treasure of one's own making.



'The pride of our association 'National Bonsai Park', Lodhi Garden, New Delhi

Rock Grown Bonsai

-Sheel Yadav

During a trip to the hill side you must have seen that the plant grows on top of the hill & the roots travels downward in search of food and nutrition .Therefore these plants have very long roots. Few plants grow in the cracks of mountain and hang to one side of it. In the ISHITSUKI style this natural phenomenon of tree growing on hillside is miniaturized. Placement of plants in this style have two different patterns.

- A. A plant grows into the crevices of rock and does not have any connection with the soil in the pot. Here rock itself acts as a container
- B. Plant grows astride a rock and roots travels downward clasping the rock.

To achieve a good rock grown bonsai composition the plant, rock and container should be in harmony. For this choosing plant and rock very carefully is important. For selection of rocks one has to look out for a few very important things. Rock should be rough textured, rugged, jagged and irregular in shape with crevices in it. It should have at least one focal point. The rock should be dull colored and light in weight. Few easily available rocks are:

- a) Khangar : Burnt cock pieces from factories are called khangar. It is most suitable option as it is dull colored, have interesting shapes with lot of crevices and hollow spaces. This is available as building material.
- b) Rocks from hills also have interesting shapes, texture and colors.
- c) Stones from river bed are found in interesting shapes as flowing water pressure makes different patterns.

Selecting the plant for this style is equally important. Any basic styled bonsai can be used depending on which scene you want to create. While selecting plant material keep a few points in mind. They are:

- 1) Plant should be small leaved.
- 2) Plants which can survive in harsh conditions such as less water, less fertilizer or exposed roots is better.





Mulberry, jade, juniperous prostata, wax malpighia, small leaved ficus, elm, fironia limonia, carmona microphylla, chinese karonda are a few plant species which are suitable for rock grown bonsai style.

After selecting plant and rock decide which one will be the dominating factor. For this composition container should be low rimmed and dull in colour. Slate can be used as container. Wash the rock thoroughly. Then decide front and back of rock, accordingly decide direction of plants. Make base of rock stable. Now mark passage of roots on rock leaving focal point uncovered. Fix copper wires to tie roots. Fix plant astride on top or side of the rock accordingly with roots trailing downward from both sides. Atleast three roots should be visible in front. Lead roots downward in the soil. Fix them with wires. Apply peat moss and clay mixture on roots and cover them with spaghnum moss. Spray water and keep in shade for a few days.

Aftercare of this plant is very important. With sunlight and heat temperature of rock increases, which can damage exposed roots so regular water spray is must. Keep giving liquid fertilizer at regular intervals.

For a root in rock style display fill a shallow tray called suiban with water and place the rock in center to give illusion of a rock tower in center of river or sea One can also give the illusion of water by sprinkling very fine gravel of dull color around rock to give effect of water.