



# the **TREE LINE**

the official monthly  
publication of the

**BONSAI SOCIETY of PORTLAND**

## **Upcoming Events**

**March  
2022**

### **Monthly Meetings:**

March 22, 7-9pm BSOP Monthly meeting, Michael Hagedorn presents:  
Chojubai Quince Development

April 26, 7-9pm BSOP Monthly meeting, Group demonstration utilizing local talent.

### Greetings BSOP,

I hope everyone has been having a productive repotting season. Repotting season is still well underway in my garden, RAKUYO Bonsai, especially for species of trees that we tend to repot late such as Beech, hemlock, juniper and large bonsai.

Last month Lee Cheadle gave us a wonderful overview of repotting, and we followed that up with an informal mentorship workshop that we'll be repeating March 19th. The workshop is geared towards beginners, but all are welcome. Please signup and find more details on the BSOP website.

Planning is underway for our Pre-Bonsai Seminar on May 14th and 15th. This fun weekend of bonsai will be focused on young plants and starter material, and celebrate the legacy of one of our local growers Telperion Farms. More information on how to signup will be out next month, but save the date, especially if you enjoy or have young material.

As our weather shifts to warmer temperatures, keep paying attention to the forecast. Repotted plants and plants that have started growing are more susceptible to cold weather and should be protected from frosts and freezes to ensure minimal risk. If you don't have a greenhouse, these can be placed in an unheated (or lightly heated) garage.

This month Michael Hagedorn is giving us a presentation on quince bonsai, specifically Chojubai, a dwarf Japanese flowering quince popular in the bonsai community. Michael is the leading developer of Chojubai quince outside of Japan, and has been a passionate advocate for their utilization for bonsai. While the topic is geared towards these diminutive little gems, we'll learn a lot about growing young bonsai from scratch as well. Hope to see you at the Milwaukie Center on March 22nd for his presentation.

Cheers,

*Andrew Robson* BSOP President

# February Monthly Meeting

Lee Cheatle presented a program on repotting. He thoroughly discussed the repotting process as he went, using the correct materials and equipment.



Lee presents a pot properly prepared to receive a tree.





Lee has firmly anchored the tree in the pot. This prevents any tree movement which can damage new roots.



Lee uses a bamboo stick designed to pack potting mix firmly around the roots, eliminating any air spaces.



Vendors provided bonsai supplies and pots and there was a silent auction. All photographs courtesy of Jim Baggett.

# BSOP Advisory: Our Tap Water is Changing

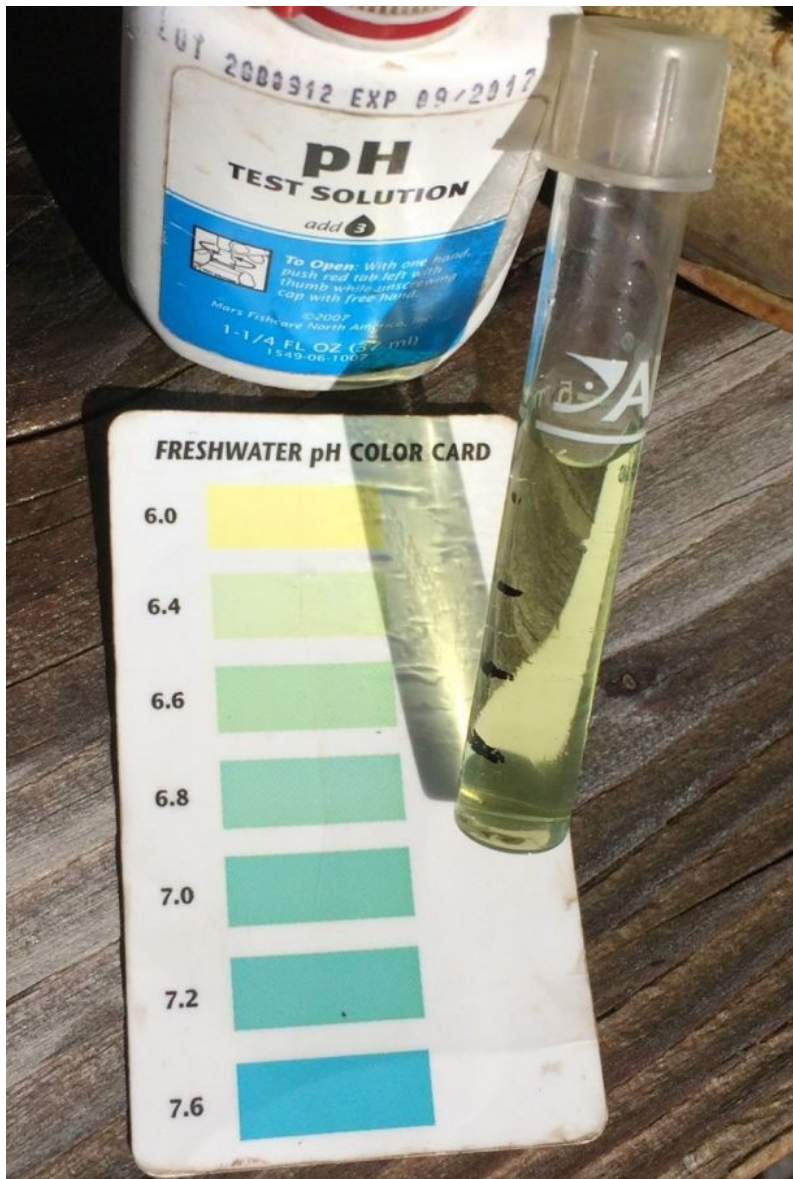
**Background:** the Portland Water bureau is planning to push the service water up to a pH of approximately 8.5, from its current 7.9–8.2. This will be impactful to BSOP members — we want to set them up for success!

## One Essential to Plant Health: Water pH

First posted by [crataegus](#) bonsai (Michael Hagedorn) on May 13, 2016

Have your trees been a bit yellow? Seem stressed out? It may be time to check your water pH.

When our bonsai are watered with an acceptable pH, one variable to plant stress is removed. Mineral deficiencies (high pH) and toxicities (low pH) will be averted in that acceptable range. Any kind of water source, whether it is a well or a municipal source, should be checked occasionally for pH. Some municipal water sources in particular can range greatly over the year, from the low 6's to over 8 in the summer.



- Naturally we might think neutral is best, a pH of 7. And it's not *bad*, you can grow plants in that. But actually the widest range of plants can be grown in slightly acidic pH, so a pH of 6-6.5 is ideal.

- A pH of 8 is *10 times* more alkaline than pH 7, so a bit of accuracy here is a good thing.

- Once we get higher in the alkaline range, above 7.5, we limit the solubility, and therefore uptake, of fertilizer. Phosphorus in particular is one of the least soluble, but is at its most accessible to plants at pH 6.5

Testing pH is best with a freshwater pH kit, which uses drops, found at a pet store and used for testing pH in fish tanks. An electronic reader is another option. Avoid litmus paper. It's not accurate enough.

This shows a pH kit from a pet store... fill water to the white line, add three drops of test solution, cap it, and then shake. This test came out just about right for our bonsai—about pH 6.3. A pH of 6-6.5 is ideal.

OK then, enough of the warm up to the subject...

How then do we adjust the pH coming out of our hoses to get the best bonsai health that we can?

The easiest is to use a siphon for a small or modest bonsai yard. Fertilizer siphons can be used to inject a diluted acid (muriatic mixed with water is best) into the hose. The skinny siphon hoselet goes into the bucket of diluted acid, and is drawn into the hose near the bib. Then the acid injection mixes in the hose as you water. With a bit of adjusting how much acid per gallon of concentrate you have, it is easy to water with a consistent pH coming out of the hose.



The snaky black hose is a siphon, that draws a mix of water and acid up and into the red watering hose—with a bit of experimentation, it's easy to get predictable pH coming out of the hose to water bonsai with. (This one is a brass Hozon siphon, seems to work better than the plastic ones.) Most horticulturists tend to avoid muriatic acid, as the potential for chlorine burn is there; another option is acetic acid. If you use muriatic, use an open tank so chlorine gas can escape, or use acetic acid dilution within a day or two (bacteria tend to eat it which can cause a pH bounce).

For instance, say we have a five gallon bucket of tap water at about 7.8 pH. If we add about 0.5 oz muriatic acid to this five gallons, and siphon it into our hose, it will come out of that hose at about 6-6.5 pH, perfect for our bonsai.

- The siphon works on draw. Be sure to have the water volume of your wand on a set setting, or the pH will change. In other words, if we have a ball valve and we water with less than full open, it will be a different pH than if we have the cock open full. I have a very soft wand and water with it full open, and leave it there, so the pH does not vary at all.
- This does assume that most of you will have water that is, if anything, too alkaline. For water that is too acidic, add baking soda to the bucket in a similar experiment until the right pH comes out of the hose.

And then...be patient!

- *You will not see an immediate shift to greener, happier plants.* Conifers in particular may take two years before they look significantly better. So a bit of faith in the process is a good thing. Stay consistent.

Hardness of water is a separate issue...but adjusting the pH will take care of one of the major water issues one might have.

*(Be sure you don't get muriatic acid on your skin, but if you do, washing it off immediately will do the trick.)*

## BSOP Library News

We have a new book for the library: Forest Penjing by Zhao Qingquan (you older members might remember "Brook" when he was in Portland ages ago). If I may quote the book's flyleaf, this book describes itself as providing "methods of growing and appreciating forest penjing ... described clearly and accompanied by vivid illustrations." It provides "production techniques and principles of artistic creation ... explained clearly and succinctly ... followed by straight forward written and visual instructions for penjing care and maintenance." It is "meant for beginners and experts alike ... this book can help sow the seed of a new love for penjing or to refine the craft of a seasoned penjing designer." And it has lots of pretty pictures!

We also have current issues of the magazine from the American Bonsai Society and Bonsai Focus.

Hope to see you perusing the library between 6:00 and 6:45, when we need to vacate the stage for program set-up.

*Jan Hettick*

Assistant Librarian



Chojubai quince will be featured in the March monthly meeting presented by Michael Hagedorn

# Japanese Black Pine *Pinus thunbergia*

Synonym: *Pinus thunbergiana*

Conifer, evergreen tree, 20-80 ft (6-24 m), irregular but more or less pyramidal in youth, with age spreading and often with pendulous branches. Black-gray, furrowed into irregular scales. Needles in pairs, dark green, twisted more or less spreading, 6-11 cm long, fine pointed, rigid, stomatic lines on each surface, bundle sheath 13 mm long, thread-like segments, persistent. Terminal buds ovoid-cylindrical, apex-pointed, 1.2-2 cm long, not resinous, gray or silvery white. Cones subterminal, symmetrical, ovoid to conical, 4-6 cm long, 3-4.5 cm wide.

Sun. Prefers fertile, moist, well-drained soil, but grows on sandy soils; salt and drought tolerant. Can be grown almost down to the ocean shore, used for reclaiming sand dunes.

Hardy to USDA Zone (5)6 Native to Japan. One of the "most picturesque trees in Japan and it occurs in park like groves, particularly on the Island Sea"....on "flat, sandy beaches, black pine grows on rocky cliffs where it's vulnerable by salt spray"....it grow to 130 feet tall on optimum conditions but under more rigorous circumstances, it seldom exceeds 40 feet....on "poor sites it develops an irregular crown with short twisted branches"...the "contorted character is, of course, also the basis for black pine becoming a major [bonsai](#) subject." (John L. Creech, Asian conifers, NMPPro, Sept. 2002, p. 59-62).

There are several named cultivars, variegated, [compact \(e.g., 'Thunderhead'\)](#) and dwarf forms.

*thunbergii*: after Carl Peter Thunberg (1743-1828), Swedish physician and botanist from Univ. Uppsala who traveled in E. Asia and introduced many plants from Japan.

Oregon State Univ. campus: southwest of Crop Science. (Often the trees on the campus have [numerous yellow and stunted needles](#), the cause is unknown.)

From <https://landscapeplants.oregonstate.edu/plants/pinus-thunbergii>



Japanese Black Pine is a rugged irregularly shaped pine with high salt tolerance. If you've been to the seashore in the northeastern United States, you have definitely seen Japanese black pines. Because of their high tolerance to salt spray and saline soil, the rugged trees used to be one of the first choices for sun-drenched beachfront plantings. If grown in ideal conditions, Japanese black pines can reach a height of 80 feet or more.

The Japanese black pine is not the same tree as [black pine](#) (*Pinus nigra*). The Japanese black pine grows irregularly and asymmetrically without a central leader. The rigid needles, five to seven inches long, are exceptionally dark green. Unlike most conifers, the buds are prominent—one-half to three quarters of an inch long and silvery white, forming an attractive contrast with the dark green needles.



*Pinus thunbergii* (syn: *Pinus thunbergiana*), also called **black pine**, **Japanese black pine**, and **Japanese pine**, is native to coastal areas of Japan (Kyūshū, Shikoku and Honshū) and South Korea. It is called *gomsol* (곰솔) in Korean, *hēisōng* (黑松) in Chinese, and *kuromatsu* (黒松) in Japanese.

In North America this tree is subject to widespread mortality by the native American pinewood nematode, *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*, spread by means of beetle vectors. Subsequently, blue stain fungus invades the plant, leading to a rapid decline and death. This nematode has also been introduced to Japan accidentally, leading to the species becoming endangered in its native area.

Because of its resistance to pollution and salt, it is a popular horticultural tree. In Japan it is widely used as a garden tree both trained as Niwaki and untrained growing as an overstory tree. The trunks and branches are trained from a young age to be elegant and interesting to view. It is one of the classic bonsai subjects, requiring great patience over many years to train properly.





Japanese Black Pine in Ichikawa, Chiba. Photo by Namazu-tron. An example of Niwaki.



*Pinus thunbergiana* var. *corticata* bonsai developed and photographed by Marfoir.



Purple Plum Saikei



Purple Plum

**Trees For Sale** The flowering plums in the photos and evergreens including native, Shimpaku, Itoigawa junipers, various pines, mtn hemlock, spruces, moderately priced. Sizes vary from shohin to all one person wants to carry. Also varieties of maples and elms and accent plants. Call 503 704 3891 *Editor*



**March Haiku**

Fragrant forest pine  
Climate change puts trees at risk  
Have so little time

*Ron Yasenchak*

**PRE-BONSAI PLANTS · BONSAI TOOLS**

- High-fired Pots • Mica & Plastic Training Pots
- Wire • Organic Fertilizers
- Mazama Pumice (1/16-3/8")
- Diatomite Rock from Nevada, USA
- Superior Black Compost • Red Cinder Rock (1/4-5/16")

Est. 1978



25321 NE 72nd Avenue  
Battle Ground, WA 98604  
Phone (360) 687-5641  
D Burnett

**Need supplies?**  
Call ahead for delivery  
at BSOP meetings.



Me? Obsessed with trees?  
Yes. Yes, I am.

Vaughn Chandler champions the trees, landscapes and property investments of the customers in his care. And he's one of the many reasons we've become the premier scientific tree and shrub care company in the world.

Contact us today at 503-722-7267 | bartlett.com

VAUGHN CHANDLER, Bartlett Champion



EVERY TREE NEEDS A CHAMPION.

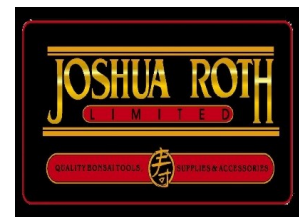
## Portland Bonsai Supply



Order Online  
Local Pickup, Delivery & Shipping  
Order Delivery at BSOP meetings



Akadama in Stock  
**Joshua Roth & Ryuga Tools**  
**Authorized Dealer**  
Soils— Wire—Tools— Pots  
Supplies— Fertilizer



[portlandbonsaisupply.com](http://portlandbonsaisupply.com)



6707 SW Pine Street, Portland, OR 97223

The Bonsai Society of Portland meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

**The Milwaukie Center**

**5440 SE Kellogg Creek Drive, Milwaukie OR 97222**

Enter parking lot from Rusk Road

Visitors are always welcome!

**Board of Directors**

President: Andrew Robson

2nd VP-Membership: Patrice Morrow

Secretary: Jeffrey Robson

1st VP-Programs: Reid Parham

Treasurer: Brandon McMullin

Past President: Joe Johannesen

**Committee Chairs**

Ambassadors:

Auctions: Dane Burrell

Audio/Visual: Reid Parham

Facilities Coordinator: Reid Parham

Fall Show:

Formal Display: Scott Elser

Heritage: Steve Leaming, Brandon Myren

Hospitality: Brandon McMullin

Library: Barbara Devitt

Mentorship: Howard Greisler

Newsletter: Peter Pelofske

Portland Nursery Show Reid Parham

Photographer: Jim Baggett

Raffle:

Social Media: Scott Tice

Spring Show:

Summer Picnic: Joe Johannesen

Vendor Coordinator: Reid Parham

Volunteer Coordinator:

Webmaster: Karl Holmes

Contact information is on the BSOP website [www.portlandbonsai.org](http://www.portlandbonsai.org) under Services/Members Only/Membership Directory