



# the **TREE LINE**

the official monthly  
publication of the

**BONSAI SOCIETY of PORTLAND**

## Upcoming Events

July  
2022

### Monthly Meetings:

July 16 11am-2 pm Saturday Swap Meet and Summer Vendors at the Rose Garden/  
Milwaukie Center

August 23 6-9pm BSOP Monthly meeting, Member Tree Critique

September 27 6-9pm BSOP Monthly meeting, Big Bends on Coniferous Trees with  
David de Groot

### Greetings BSOP,

Hope you're enjoying this beautiful summer we've been having. This month we're having a swap meet in the Milwaukie Center Rose Garden I look forward to bringing a few things to sell and shopping along with the rest of you. Going along with summer, here are a few tips for keeping our bonsai happily watered during our warmer Portland months.

1. On the hottest days, water everything early in the day even if they don't need it per se, to allow the trees to absorb water into their systems before the heat arrives in the afternoon.
2. During the hottest part of the day on hot days, spray the trunks and the foliage to cool them down. Evaporation is a cooling process and this overhead watering can really refresh a bonsai.
3. Whenever we water we should give the bonsai 2 separate passes. The first pass is shorter and sets the bonsai up for good percolation on the second pass, which is longer. If you have a bench, make each pass on a different side of the bench to allow good 360° coverage all the way around.
4. The perfect watering will have a slow trickle of water coming out from the bottom of the pot. Too little and we risk root death with dry zones in the soil. Too much and we flush out nutrients in the pot.
5. On normal days, make sure each tree is drying out before watering. Check every tree individually and water accordingly. We typically let pines and junipers get much drier before waterings than other conifers and most of our broadleaf plants.

Cheers,

*Andrew Robson* BSOP President

# June Monthly Meeting

Andrew Robson was scheduled to speak about Summer care of deciduous bonsai. Because of covid exposure, he cancelled in consideration for the health of club members. Scott Elser stepped up and presented information and demonstrated techniques on Summer care of various pines and other conifers. An excellent selection of trees allowed him to do hands-on explanations. Scott focused on branch refinement, so critical in furthering tree development.





Attentive members learning valuable styling tips



Silent auction items being examined by bidders



Graceful semi-cascade evergreen *All photos courtesy of Jim Baggett*

# Elms in Bonsai

## American Elm, *Ulmus americana*

The American elm, *Ulmus Americana* is a vigorous tree, so growth can be achieved quicker, but the rapid growth requires more frequent attention. After two years in a plastic nursery pot, this tree had a 2 inch base and will end around 22 inches in height. Like most elms, this tree has abundant roots. Zach Smith of [bonsai-south.com](http://bonsai-south.com) estimates another two years to achieve showable development.



This American elm belongs to Suthin Sukosolvisit. This fall foliage photo provides a better look at the individual leaves. One of the reasons you don't see very many American

elm bonsai is leaf size. Full size American elm's leaves are about 5 inches (13 cm), so leaf reduction is required.

## Siberian Elm, *Ulmus pumila*

*Ulmus Pumila* – Siberian Elm is generally considered a weed tree in the United States now. In some areas of the country they are actually outlawed and you cannot plant them on your property. However they are actually growing all over the United States and they can make excellent Bonsai trees. There are some great examples of them over in Europe. In the US Siberians are excellent starter trees to learn on.

*U. pumila* can exist in extremely dry sites, through various adaptive techniques. They prefer contact with the water table as indicated by their natural occupation of seasonal stream beds. They will not tolerate standing water however (Dulamsuren 2009, 23). The water seeking root systems grow to seek pockets of water in the soil substrate as well as widen out to take advantage of the rain that may fall. "The shallow and wide distribution of tree roots facilitated the utilization of shallow water when ground water was not available. This belowground biomass allocation strategy is common and critical for plants distributing in the

semi-arid environments to collect water through vast root systems” (Li Gang 2011, 222). These trees are evolved to withstand insecure water supplies. They do not regulate their transpiration in response to drought stress as some desert plants, but rather continue full transpiration to evaporatively cool the high leaf temperatures during the day. *U. pumila* instead employs the technique of altering the osmotic potential in the roots to raise the water uptake to counter the continuing water loss. (Dulamsuren 2008, 23). This immediate physiological adaptation to drought stress is aided by continued growth incorporating structural improvements to improve water use efficiency and further drought resistance. Small xylem vessels are developed to resist cavitation of the vascular system in the transport of water to the Sibirische Ulme (Wikipedia) leaves (Dulamsuren 2008, 23). Drought damage occurs only under severe conditions.



They make great bonsai. They are very vigorous. I can trim them more than five times in the growing season if you trim back to 2 once you get a shoot with more than 5 leaves. If you want a branch to thicken then let it run, these can get long and messy but in the fall it will look great when you trim to clean up. You need to repot every couple of years to keep the vigor. Robin

Regarding the tendency to drop branches: these elms tend to want to put out shoots from the base of existing branches. If you let these shoots grow the tree will many times divert energy to these small shoots and drop the main branch that they are growing from the base of, and/or existing older branches higher up on the tree. So be sure to get rid of those shoots as they start to grow to prevent branch die-back elsewhere on the tree. Roger Snipes

## Wych Elm, *Ulmus glabra*

The Wych Elm or Scots Elm is a deciduous tree that can grow up to 30 meters and is a Native of South and Central Europe and Western Asia. While they were once the most prolific of Elm, they are now considered an endangered species as their numbers have been severely reduced by the Dutch Elm Disease.

They make Medium to Large sized Bonsai in most upright forms. It is an excellent way of preserving this species because the small sizes of bonsai do not attract the beetle that attacks the Elms and carries the fungus that causes the Dutch Elm disease. They prefer a full-sun area, though at the height of summer some bonsai may prefer a dappled shade location. While they are hardy bonsai plants, if winter temperatures fall below -4C, then they are best over-wintered in an unheated greenhouse. Feed with a balanced organic feed, every two weeks if using a liquid feed, every other month if using a pelletised version or after the pellets have fully dissolved away. Feed the bonsai between early spring and the end of summer.

Young elms grow roots rapidly and need to be repotted every year. Older trees can be re-potted as necessary, generally, if the growth in the current year is not as healthy as it can be, it will benefit from a repotting in the following spring. Use a well-mulched bark, sharp sand, in equal parts. Alternatively, you can use a mix of Akadama, Pumice in the ration of two to one.

Trim back shoots to leave 3 leaves on stem once the stem has fully extended. Make substantial pruning cuts late in the season, to avoid excessive sap 'bleed.'

The 'clip and grow' method is best for styling. If wiring is required, wire in autumn, and remove before wire cuts in in Spring.

## Ulmus minor,

**Field Elm**, belongs to the genus *Ulmus* of the Ulmaceae family. There are different species throughout Europe.

*Ulmus minor* grows up to a height of 30 m (98 ft) with a round crown and gray-brown, rough bark. Older trees have furrowed bark forming block patterns. The branches are brown and sometimes have corky ridges. Size of the leaves vary according to the tree's maturity. Leaves on the young plants are coarse and nascent while on the matured trees are smooth and glossy with a leather touch.

They are 6 to 15 cm in length with the edges double-toothed. The root system is shallow. *Ulmus minor* is capable of regenerating from its roots and stumps, even after being infected by the Dutch elm disease.

The *Ulmus Minor* tree blooms in February and March. It has dark pink to red flowers hanging in bunches. These are pollinated by the wind and develop into fruits known as samaras.

Prefers full sun, USDA hardiness zone 5-7, prefers well drained soil, pH 6.0-8.0. Allow soil to dry between soaking watering. Use a balanced fertilizer and be careful not to overfertilize.

Broom style approximates its natural shape.

***More elms to come.***





Cork  
bark  
elm  
Ulmus  
neri



Chinese elm

**Trees For Sale** including the elms pictured, evergreens including native, Shimpaku, Itoigawa junipers, various pines, mtn hemlock, spruces, moderately priced. Sizes vary from shoh-in to large trees. Also varieties of maples  
Call 503 704 3891 *Editor*

"Hanagasa" Satsuki, in the care of Ron Yasenchuk for many years



**July Haiku**

Summer means hiking  
Camp out among grass meadows  
Coyote yapping.

*Ron Yasenchuk*

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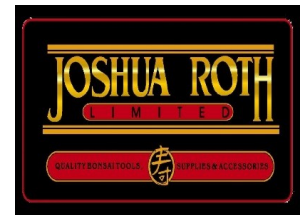


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6707 SW Pine Street, Portland, OR 97223

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!

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