



the **TREE LINE**

the official monthly publication of the **BONSAI SOCIETY of PORTLAND**

Upcoming Events

August
2022

Monthly Meetings:

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

Sept 27 6-9pm BSOP Monthly meeting, Big Bends on Conifers by David de Groot

October 25 6-9pm BSOP Monthly meeting, Deciduous Fall Work, Andrew Robson

Greetings BSOP,

I hope you're staying cool this summer and keeping the bonsai hydrated! It was great to see many of you at our July swap meet. I'm looking forward to our meeting this month, which is a bring your own tree critique for any of those who need some direction and assistance in where to take the design and development of their bonsai. This will be a positive-focused critique, highlighting what is good about the trees you're bringing and how to take them a step farther in their development. Hope to see you there!

Andrew Robson BSOP President



Ulmus parvifolia /Chinese Elm Bonsai



Ulmus pumila/Siberian Elm

BSOP July 2022 Swap Meet



BSOP members, guests and friends chose from a wide variety of trees in various stages of development as well as lots of pots to put them in.





Customers got some good deals and people enjoyed themselves in a comfortable setting.

All photos courtesy of Jim Baggett



BSOP T-SHIRTS NOW AVAILABLE

Farm to Table T-Shirts are now available!

Please go to our website: www.portlandbonsai.org to place your order for these great shirts. They are \$25.00 each with pick up at the next BSOP meeting or shipped for an additional \$3.50.

We also are pre-ordering Telperion Farms commemorative T- Shirts. These are black with a tasteful Telperion logo.

Please order online for \$25.00 each and either pick up at a BSOP meeting or ship for \$3.50.

All proceeds from these shirts will be donated to the Santiam Canyon Wildfire Relief Fund!





An Exhibition of Extraordinary Bonsai

NOVEMBER 12 - 13, 2022

A juried exhibition featuring 75 outstanding bonsai displays and a selection of the community's top vendors. It's an event not to be missed.



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VENUE:



210 Burma Rd. Oakland, California



Judge John Sutter Regional Shoreline, an East Bay Regional Park District Facility

Elms in Bonsai

Winged Elm, *Ulmus alata*

General information:

Usually 40 to 50 feet high, Winged Elm can reach 90 feet in height with a 30 to 40-foot spread. Canopy form is variable from pyramidal to vase or rounded. A North American native, this fast-growing deciduous tree is identified by the corky, winglike projections which appear on opposite sides of twigs and branches. Branches rise through the crown, then bend in a sweeping manner toward the ground. The size of the wings varies greatly from one tree to another. It has light brownish gray bark with shallow fissures. Its leaves are alternate, narrow, doubly serrated and slightly hairy underneath. Flowers appear before the leaves in Spring, are born in clusters and are without petals. The fruit is a flat winged capsule containing one seed. Winged elm grows in full sun but prefers shade. Zones 6 through 9. Tolerates drying out between waterings.

Pruning and wiring:

The winged elm is a fast grower, quickly producing the fine twiggy growth and small leaves which makes it popular like Zelkova. This makes it a good candidate for the clip and grow method of training. It will take heavy pruning throughout the growing season. They are vigorous top growers, so when pruning keep more leaves on the lower branches and less on the upper branches. The twigs tend to grow in a naturally pleasing zig-zag manner and the leaves reduce to a half inch or less.

Propagation:

Propagate easily from cuttings taken in the spring as the buds begin to swell. Seeds should be planted as soon as they ripen.

Repotting:

Tolerates a wide range of soil types and moisture levels. It seems to prefer a soil loose and gravelly with a high humus content.

Pests and diseases:

The biggest problem is Dutch elm disease which can kill trees. Some trees are susceptible to powdery mildew, causing varying degrees of leaf color changes in fall, right before leaves drop.

Mites can yellow the foliage but usually cause no permanent damage.

Scale insects can infest Winged Elm along branches.

Scale infestations are often missed due to the thick, corky bark along the twigs.



Winged bark

Winged elm



Chinese Elm, *Ulmus parvifolia*

The Chinese Elm is indigenous to China and south-east Asia. In its native environment it can reach heights of up to 80 feet (25 meters). It develops fine branch ramification with small leaves, appropriate for bonsai. The Chinese elm thrives in either full sun or partial shade. In temperate climates, it can be left outdoors during winter months. If you have an indoor Chinese Elm Bonsai you can place it outside during Summer, but it's best to bring it into a cool, but frost-free, room in Winter. Cold hardiness varies depending on the region of origin. Trees from northern China are more frost-hardy than those coming from southern areas. Depending on winter temperatures, Chinese Elms either drop their leaves or keep them until Spring when the new shoots emerge.

Watering

The Chinese Elm can not endure prolonged drought or constant moisture. Wait until the top-soil is dry, and then water generously, making sure the entire root-mass is watered.

Fertilizer

Fertilize well during the growing season. You don't need to use any fancy fertilizers. A combination of solid organic fertilizer with a well-balanced liquid chemical fertilizer works great. No fertilization during Winter when the elm tree is dormant.

Pruning and wiring

The Chinese elm thickens rather quickly and requires frequent trimming in order to produce a dense network of fine branches. Allow the shoot to extend 3 or 4 nodes before pruning it back to 1 or 2 leaves. The tree buds well from old wood after strong pruning. The best time to prune larger branches is in late autumn. The Chinese elm is ideal for shaping with standard wiring and guy wire techniques.

Repotting

Chinese Elm trees should be repotted every two years when they are young. As they grow older and larger they can be repotted in longer intervals. Spring is the best time to repot. The elm's roots tend to grow crooked and intertwined, so it's important that root pruning be done carefully and with precision to create a nice nebari. It has no special soil requirements, but it's best to select a well-draining soil. A standard soil mixture will suffice.

Propagation

Use cuttings to propagate the Chinese Elm Bonsai trees. It's easy and rarely presents any problems.

Pests and Diseases

The Chinese Elm is often infested by spider mites or scale when humidity is low. Appropriate pesticides should be used, and frequent spraying with water helps to deter pests and diseases. Spraying with thinned lime-sulfur or systemic pesticides can cause the Chinese Elm to lose all its leaves, so avoid these products.

'Seiju' and 'Hokkaido' are popular cultivars.



Cork Bark Elm, *Ulmus parvifolia* 'Corticosa'

There are questions about the nomenclature of *Ulmus parvifolia*, sometimes called *Ulmus neri*, *Ulmus parvifolia neri* or even *Zelkova neri*. One bonsai person has two trees labeled *Zelkova neri* and one labeled *Ulmus parvifolia* and can't tell them apart. The names *neri* or *nire* are in common usage, but may be inaccurate. Bonsai empire has a forum discussion which helps a little. There is *Zelkova serrata* known as Japanese Graybark elm and there is *Ulmus parvifolia* which has named cultivars. All are good for bonsai.

The cork bark elm can be a street tree with a height and spread of 45'. Hardy to zone 5a, one of the hardier elms. Grows into a strong vase shape typical of elms. Grows best in sun.

In bonsai, the Cork Bark Seiju Chinese Elm (*Ulmus parvifolia* 'Seiju') is a wonderful pick for those that are new and/or want a low-maintenance species to grow in the home or office. It's also known as 'Seiju Lacebark Elm'. It can be a good indoor bonsai choice; so long as there's a strong light source nearby since it tolerates urban environments well.

During the spring, it quickly grows many small (about 1/4 to 1/8 inch in size) serrated-edged oval-shaped shiny dark green leaves. The younger multi-stemmed branches have gray-colored corrugated bark. The older ones develop a rough textured bark while the old mature bark on its trunk has a deep fissured corky texture that's dark brown. The Seiju Elm's roots enjoy moist but well-drained soil.

During the late summer, tiny ornamental reddish-green flowers appear and turn into single-seeded wafer-like samaras (each tiny seed is surrounded by a flattened circular papery wing) that mature in fall. Their leaves typically turn an undistinguished dull yellow in fall, but sometimes they can produce more interesting shades of yellows or reddish-purple before they drop off the branches.



Even when it drops all of its leaves during the winter, they have a fascinating appearance because of its crackled look all over. One of the most ornamental features of this tree is its mottled bark. On mature trees, the bark can flake off reveal patches of striking light colors ranging from gray, cream, orange, brown, and green.

'Seiju' is a dwarf cultivar that is primarily used for rock gardens and bonsai. It is the slower cousin of *Ulmus parvifolia* 'Hokkaido', which features a slightly larger leaf size and a faster tree growth rate in comparison.

Two examples of cork bark elm bonsai, left and following page





Cork bark elm, *Ulmus parvifolia*

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*



Chinese elm



Ron Yassenchak and his son just finished this small garden. Trees are Mountain hemlock, Jack pine and lodgepole pine.

August Haiku

"In that morning light
A sky gets painted colors
Soon the day is bright"

Ron Yassenchak

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

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5440 SE Kellogg Creek Drive, Milwaukie OR 97222

Enter parking lot from Rusk Road

Visitors are always welcome!

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