



**PBA
Newsletter**

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February 1976

Published by the
POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION
a non-profit organization, in the interests
of its affiliate member clubs and societies
to inform and educate amateur and professional
growers of miniature trees in the
philosophy, principles, and techniques of
the living art form called BONSAI.

POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION
c/o National Arboretum
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on the cover | Designed to be a
symbol one can

identify with the National Arboretum Bonsai
Collection, logo was developed by
Anne Masters, graphics designer from
Bethesda, Md., for the U.S. Department of
Agriculture. Ms Masters is graduate of
Pratt Institute, has travelled in Japan,
and has worked on Time-Life Encyclopedia
of Gardening and for House & Garden.
Design models were Collection trees themselves.
Final selection embodies basic
characteristics of all bonsai in setting
similar to Japanese family crest.

**Order
Convention
Books**



BCI '76, the PBA-hosted Bonsai Clubs
International 1976 Convention, will be
commemorated in two publications. The
first, titled BICENTENNIAL BONSAI, will
be published by International Bonsai Di-
gest, the firm which published the out-
standing BONSAI GEMS in 1974. This vol-
ume will feature, in full color, all 53
trees in the National Arboretum Bonsai
Collection, which all BCI '76 convention-
goers will see during official dedication
ceremonies on July 9.

The second volume BICENTENNIAL BONSAI -
PART 2, will be published by the host,
the Potomac Bonsai Association, and will
cover, in black and white, convention
activities, including all the 20+ native
bonsai which will be on exhibit at the
convention site.

Part 1 may be ordered now from IBD, PO
Box 42101, Los Angeles, CA 90042, at
\$16 per copy, postpaid; after June 30 the
price rises to \$18 per copy.

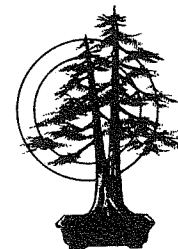
Orders for Part 2 also will be taken
now, with delivery within 60 days of
convention end. Until March 30, the cost
of the PBA volume will be \$3 per copy,
postpaid; from April 1 through June 30,
\$3.75; after June 30, \$4.50 per copy.
Send order and check to BCI '76, PO Box
28308, Washington, D.C. 20005.

**Pre-Register
Now**



PBA affiliate club members are urged to
pre-register for BCI '76 now. As the
convention date draws closer, the pace of
activities also will pick up. Register-
ing now will help cut down the Registra-
tion Committee's later workload and will
put your registration fee to good use as
funds are needed to ready the multitude
of arrangements of a convention.

PBAers may send a deposit or the fee of
\$85 single or \$160 double to BCI '76, PO
Box 28308, Washington, D.C. 20005.



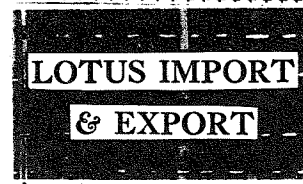
**'Bonsai '75'
Ready**

The official commemorative edition book
depicting bonsai exhibited at the 1975
International Bonsai Convention held in
Miami Beach, FL, last July can be ordered
now.

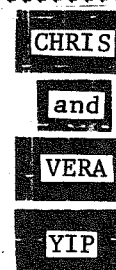
The book contains quality black and
white photos of 75 select bonsai, each
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care, training, and collecting grounds of
each tree.

Cost is \$12 per copy, postpaid, or for
group orders of 10 or more, \$10 per copy.
Checks should be made out and sent to:

John E. Jarvis, Editor
Bonsai '75
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Don't
BUG
Me!

(This is the fourth
in a 5-part series on
measures that can be
taken to help keep
pests away from bonsai
growing areas without
resorting to dangerous
insecticides. The
series is based in
part on a Johnny Hori-
zon Program Information
Sheet (No. 8) published
by the Interior Dept.
in January 1975 - Ed.)

MECHANICAL CONTROLS

Some of the most effective pest con-
trols are relatively common and may in-
volve nothing more than getting in there
and removing pests by hand or with a
blast from the garden hose.

- **STICKY BANDS** around tree trunks will
trap caterpillars and other crawling
insects. Check and destroy daily.
- **CHEESECLOTH** or **MUSLIN FRAMES** built to
encase bonsai will discourage leafhoppers
(most suitable for small collections).
- **ALUMINUM FOIL STRIPS** between rows of
plants being thickened in the ground will
keep many insects away. Wrapping pots in
foil will cause aphids to shy away from
potted trees.
- **HAND REMOVAL** of slugs and snails can be
done for the not-too-squeamish; hunt down
in the evening with aid of a flashlight.
Look under pots and in thick foliage.
- **CUTTING AND BURNING** affected tree parts
will help keep insect infestation from
spreading. This is usually a last-ditch
measure for bonsaiists, however, and the
effect on a tree's style must be studied.
- Frequent **HOSING** of foliage will prevent
red spider mites and mealybugs from get-
ting a foothold. Strong sprays serve the
same purpose for smaller, more delicate
trees.
- Closely allied with the preceding is
WASHING bonsai foliage. Cleanliness is
one of the best insect-deterrents there
is, and one of the easiest to make into a
habitual procedure.

(Next: Commercially available organic
insecticides)

Brown Foliage Not Always Bad

Most novice bonsaists equate browning foliage with tree troubles. It is true that sick trees often display dead foliage, but not all brown indicates such problems -- conifers, for example.

Some dead foliage remains on branches of conifers. In this they differ from deciduous species. The bunches of golden brown foliage at the base of branches are normal. Chamaecyparis and Juniperus sp. especially show this characteristic; Pinus does to a lesser extent. In most cases, the dead growth can easily be removed by brushing or picking it off gently, of course.

Normal die-back occurs at the base of the branches, and is no cause of concern as long as the upper branchlets and growing tips remain green and supple. Then the tree's health is normal. Only if the tips become brown and brittle is there reason to worry. If caught in time, the tree may be saved, but treatment must be started immediately. And even then, it may be too late, for in many coniferous species the appearance of such symptoms means it is already too late. But try anyway.

by JIM NEWTON
Northern Virginia Bonsai Society

Color of foliage also is a general indication of the state of a conifer's health. When foliage normally a rich, dark green begins to take on a yellowish tinge, it is time to check for pests or to ascertain if the tree is receiving all the essential nutrients it needs.

Two pests to look for on an ailing conifer are scale and red spider mites. If any evidence of these insects is seen, immediate action is paramount. Consult any good bonsai or pest-control book for proper anti-insect measures.

If no pests are found, the most likely cause of poor health is food deficiency

(to page 7)

FUDO | dead | but | living

The remains of Fudo, the venerable Sargent Juniper (Shimpaku), may be viewed by visitors to the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. The 600-1,000-year-old (estimated) bonsai acquired in 1970 from Kyuzo Murata, died without ever becoming acclimated to its new home, despite extraordinarily special care. News of its demise was published in the American Bonsai Society's JOURNAL, Vol. 7, No. 4, Winter 1974.

BBG taxonomist Stephen Tim, recognizing the unique beauty of the ancient tree, felt the shimpaku should be preserved.

It is now on display in a special case in the rotunda of the Garden's Administration Building, 1000 Washington Ave., Brooklyn, NY. (from BBG Newsletter, Fall 1975)

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tree of the month | ANDROMEDA

A mix of bonsai and Japanese mythology would not sound too far out. But how about bonsai and occidental mythology? There is at least one instance that has a tenuous connection.

According to Greek mythology, Zeus had nine daughters; they were the Muses, also known as the Pierides. That name was subsequently latinized to Pieris and given to a group of evergreen shrubs we know today as the Andromedas. This common name actually is incorrect, but has become so identified with this member of the Family of Ericaceae as to be impossible to correct now.

Four Species

There are four species, three native to parts of Asia and one from the southeastern United States. The latter is Pieris floribunda, and is the hardiest of the whole group. Commonly called Mountain Andromeda, it is generally pest-free and much in use in gardens, particularly in the New England area. Unfortunately, this species is not adapted to the Washington area, and few local nurseries carry it. The major difference between it and the Japanese Andromeda is that its flowers grow in upright clusters instead of pendulously, and appear a little later in the spring. The floribunda deserves, however, to be tried as a bonsai.

The three asiatic species are Pieris taiwanensis, formosa, and japonica. The Japanese Andromeda is offered locally by

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most nurseries. Luckily, it has all the fine qualities of the Mountain Andromeda, differing mainly, as noted above, in the way its flowers appear in pendulous clusters. It also grows somewhat taller in the wild state, up to a height of nine or so feet.

Good Trunks

As bonsai material, P. japonica tends toward twisted and gnarled trunks quite early in its life. This makes it a natural candidate for bonsai miniaturizing, and is a main factor in its popularity for adding an "oriental flavor" to Japanese gardens.

The japonica will grow well in a shady situation, but more sun will produce more profuse flowering. Foliage is generally dark green and shiny, with normal sized $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch leaves miniaturizing over a period of time to three-quarters or one-half that length.

Several varieties are available, all quite suitable for bonsai, but offering choices for color of blooms, which range from pure white through shades of pink to red. Shape of the alternate leaves also shows some variations, such as toothed margins and variegation.

Identify Buds

Typically, flowers are in terminal clusters resembling lillies of the valley and are urn-shaped, growing in drooping panicles. Blooms that open in spring are from buds formed the previous spring.

(to page 6)

BONSAI: A Guide For Baffled Buyers

the
printed
word

by Portia Bohn and
Wallace B. Stone,
Ten Speed Press,
Box 4310, Berkeley,
CA 94704, 1975
\$3.95

"Another book on Bonsai, how presumptuous!"

These words are the title of the Introduction to this fresh treatment of the living art form in the United States. The authors, both part of the staff of Duso Bonsai, Ltd., of Ellenville, NY, stress they are not experts on bonsai, but are, they declare with equal stress, experts on its various commercial aspects.

Illustrations in the book are of trees imported from Japan and China, none of

national treasure stature. "As a matter of fact," they state, "you are reading what might well be called 'The Book of Non-Masterpieces.'"

And yet, while much of what they have to say has a familiar ring, the freshness comes from their inclusion of a great deal of information about American commercial bonsai. That makes it a new insight for most bonsai hobbyists, and for that reason alone, well worth the price. In eight chapters Bohn and Stone cover a lot of ground with a certain air of irreverence that comes as a distinct surprise to one used to the more staid Japanese authors of bonsai books. This also adds to the freshness of their treatment of oriental cultural aspects of bonsai as occidentals see them.

There is a good brief on Bonsai History (to next page)

Mame Growers Unite

PBAers interested in mame bonsai may also be interested in joining an organization devoted to the tiny miniatures.

the
printed
word

(from preceding page)

in Chapter I, followed by an intriguing second-chapter question, "Bonsai: Investment or Rip-Off?" Then comes a detailing of Instant Bonsai, with no pretense that what can be created here, now, is anything but effort to reproduce as faithfully as commercial limitations permit one of the basic styles of the art as taught by outstanding teachers here in the U. S. and in Japan.

all peaches and cream, but can be rewarding in more than just economics.

Finally, Chapter VIII talks about "Gathered Bonsai," and passes on a bit of advice that ought to urge the hobbyist out into the wilds:

"Natural dwarfs are incredibly moving in their anguished beauty, and present the only possibility for creating a masterpiece of great age in one man's lifetime."

All in all, the chances are the buyer will be a little less baffled after reading this guide. It will be as valuable an addition to your bonsai library as you desire to lessen your bafflement. I recommend it.

reviewed by JIM NEWTON
Northern Virginia Bonsai Society

Chapter IV gives timely insights for both the retail customer and the dealer on what to do when "The Newly Purchased Bonsai Is Delivered." Number 1 - "If it's dry, offer it a drink."

A 12-point Chapter V covers in excellent detail "Bonsai Care," from tools to watering.

"Setting Up A Commercial Nursery," Chapter VI, and "Retail Price Information," Chapter VII, offer the hobby bonsaiist seldom-seen glimpses of what the nurseryman has to contend with; it's not

Brown Foliage... (from page 4)

in the soil. The remedy is NOT generous doses of fertilizer. If used at all, fertilizers should be applied sparingly to avoid damage to roots which may not be able to absorb the extra food.

(Continued March issue)

(from page 5)

Little Care Needed

tree
of
the
month

Andromeda...

Pruning, therefore, should not be attempted until buds are identified and those desired for the following blooming season are chosen. It is one of the first bonsai in northern areas to bloom in the spring. Flower buds exhibit a definite harness, while smooth-surfaced buds are next season's foliage growth. Thus, the direction of growth and number of flowers can be controlled. Late February or early March are ideal times to prune. Pieris blooms well even when dwarfed. The fruit is a small dry capsule.

Andromedas are calceophobes (intolerant of lime), and should be grown in humusy, slightly acid soil kept evenly moist. When moved or transplanted, always leave a generous ball of soil; it does not like drastic root pruning. It does better in a location which is not too windy. Otherwise, it requires little attention.

This tree does have a susceptibility to lacebugs, which feed on the underside of leaves. Spraying in the spring - about May is good - with Malathion gives adequate control.

Propagation is by layering.

For a showy tree that has some very fine attributes, try Pieris. The reward will be anything but mythological.



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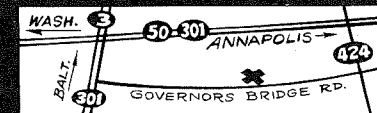
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