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TREE OF THE MONTH



WISTERIA by Jules Koetsch



WISTERIA

Wisteria, as it grows, presents an appearance of dignity and elegance with its graceful hanging flowers. From the beginning of the month of May until the last ten days of July different varieties of wisteria flower with blooms ranging in hues from white to purple and to pink. However, wisteria often disappoints by not flowering for many years. Therefore it is advantageous to select specific varieties of wisteria which produce bloom flowers.

Japanese mountain fuji (yama-fuji) is one of the recommended varieties - flowering just before or just as the leaves emerge. The time of flowering occurs anywhere from May through July, and the flowers are a purple color with butterfly-shaped bracts about an inch in length. The pendulous clusters of the flowers range in size from 8 to 12 inches. The splendid blooms come in colors of red purple to white with the latter blossoms holding for a relatively longer period of time than the others.

Horticulturalists have developed various cultivars with flowers of different colors and which burst forth as late as in the summer months. In the

This article is a follow-on to the forerunner article "Wisteria" - Tree of the Month for the July 1977 issue of the PBA Newsletter. That excellent article by Joyce Pelletier encapsulated many of the points of concern to the bonsaiists working with wisteria. The following presentation of wisteria information is gathered not only from Joyce's article but also from:

Fuji, by Katoushudan from Drawings and Plans for Flowering Bonsai, Seibundo Shinko Sha, 1974.

The New Garden Encyclopedia, edited by E.L.D. Seymour, B.S.A., published by Wm. H. Wise Co., 1946.

latter category are the American species, frutescens, growing from Virginia south, and macrostachya, found in swampy places from Illinois south.

Tree style: The usual styles for fuji, or wisteria, as a bonsai are the slanting trunk and the semi-cascade. The accompanying sketch is of a grafted tree. Grafting a scion from a wisteria which produces the desired blooms to understock insures that the resulting marriage will produce a wisteria with those desired blooms.

Grafting should be done in March or April just before the plants start to show life after wintering. The understock should be a 3 years old seedling and cleft grafting should be done close to the soil line, which would require topping 4 to 6 inches from the understock. The graft is covered with soil. The Japanese article suggests grafting satsuma sakou fuji onto taifu sakou fuji. The article also states that it is very difficult to achieve success when cleft grafting wisteria and recommends purchasing one that has survived the grafting.

Purchasing a sapling tree - first year: Purchase a grafted wisteria (2 to 3 years old) which has shape and appearance of growing into a bonsai representative of a tree in nature. Purchase a wisteria whose lineage has been authenticated and do the selecting during the middle of May. The leaves will be appearing at that time. This potted sapling will have a height of about 10 inches.

Place the newly bought plant outdoors on a table or shelf. Water the wisteria 2 times each day and polish the pot with oil 2 times every month. (The oil prevents mineral deposits from settling on the pot.) Continue the above actions until October.

In Japan, just as they are entering the raining season, wisteria blossoms sprout. As the flowers bloom, vinelike tendrils grow, and when the flowers have finished blooming, the tendrils stretch 8 to 12 inches in length.

As soon as the flowers begin to fade (appear to be dying) prune all the flowers and vines. Also prune branches, keeping in mind the overall desired ultimate growth pattern of the branches. As pointed out by Joyce in her article: according to Lynn Perry Alstadt (Bonsai: Trees and Shrubs) pruning should be done (1) immediately after flowering (2) in June (3) in mid-summer, and (4) in the fall.

Fertilize and water the bonsai up to October. Before frost hits the plant, put it under some protection because frost can winter-kill the buds from which next spring's crop of flowers would develop.

While in winter storage, insure that the plant does not dry-out by checking daily and applying water when the surface of the soil appears to be drying; about every third day.

2nd year management: Transfer the wisteria during the first ten days of April into a bonsai pot. The pot can be either rectangular or elliptical and should be glazed and be of shallow depth.

Place large size "red ball soil" (terragreen) in the bottom for drainage. Scatter on top of the soil a layer of bone meal. Then for the actual soil mix:
 6 parts - "red ball soil" (terragreen)
 2 parts - "deer swamp soil" (top soil)
 2 parts - leaf mold.

pH can be between 6.0 and 8.0 but preferably on the slightly acid side, pH 6.0 to 6.5.

Reduce the root ball of the plant about one-half the size it has grown to in the previous year. Note that root pruning and the pruning of the blossoms will encourage the formation of next year's flower buds.

Arrange the roots evenly in the bonsai pot and use a chopstick to poke the soil between the roots. After repotting, thoroughly water the plant using tap-water and place it outdoors on top of a table or shelf,

Water and fertilize as described above for the first year. In June limit the extent of new branch growth. Prune out branches which tend to grow toward the interior of the plant. When pruning, always leave one or two buds on the shortened branches.

After the pruning of the blossoms in July, the branches can be wired to refine the shape of the bonsai. Joyce Pelletier pointed out that the branches are very limber when young, then very suddenly become brittle. Nevertheless, branches must be wired when very limber to prevent damage from occurring later when the branches harden. Bark tends to split lengthwise when bending, but if not too serious, healing can take place if the split parts are bound with rubber strips.

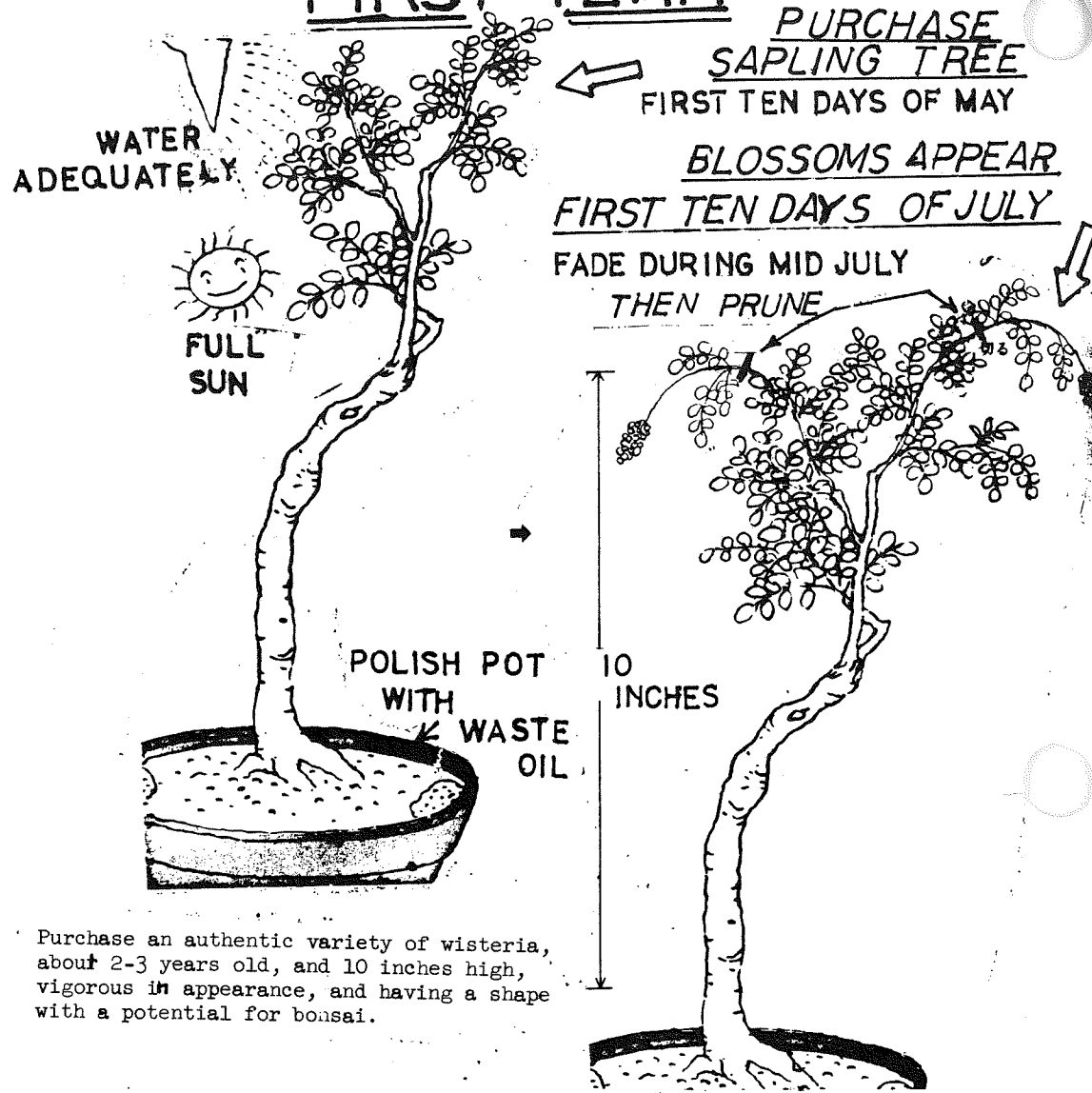
Management after 2nd year: The management of the caring for wisteria after the second year is essentially the same each ensuing year. The differences are too minor to mention.

Disease and insect damage: Large sucking bugs called lantern flies are often found on wisteria anywhere from May through August. They lay their eggs in slits in the bark and cover them with masses of a white wax secretion. Scrape off the rows in their early stages and cover the wounds with creosote. Larvae of the large silver-spotted skipper (butterfly) feed on leaves of wisteria. Spray with a lead arsenate.

WISTERIA

	<u>FIRST YEAR</u>	<u>2 ND YEAR AND AFTER</u>
April 1-10		Place plant outdoors. Water adequately. Apply fertilizer twice per month.
May 10-20	Purchase plant Follow steps for April 1-10 2nd year	
June 10-20	Be certain to prune	
July 1-10	Blossoms appear	
July 10-15	Remove blossoms	
October 15-31	Stop fertilizing	
November 15-31	Leaves fall	
December 1-15	Put in greenhouse	

FIRST YEAR

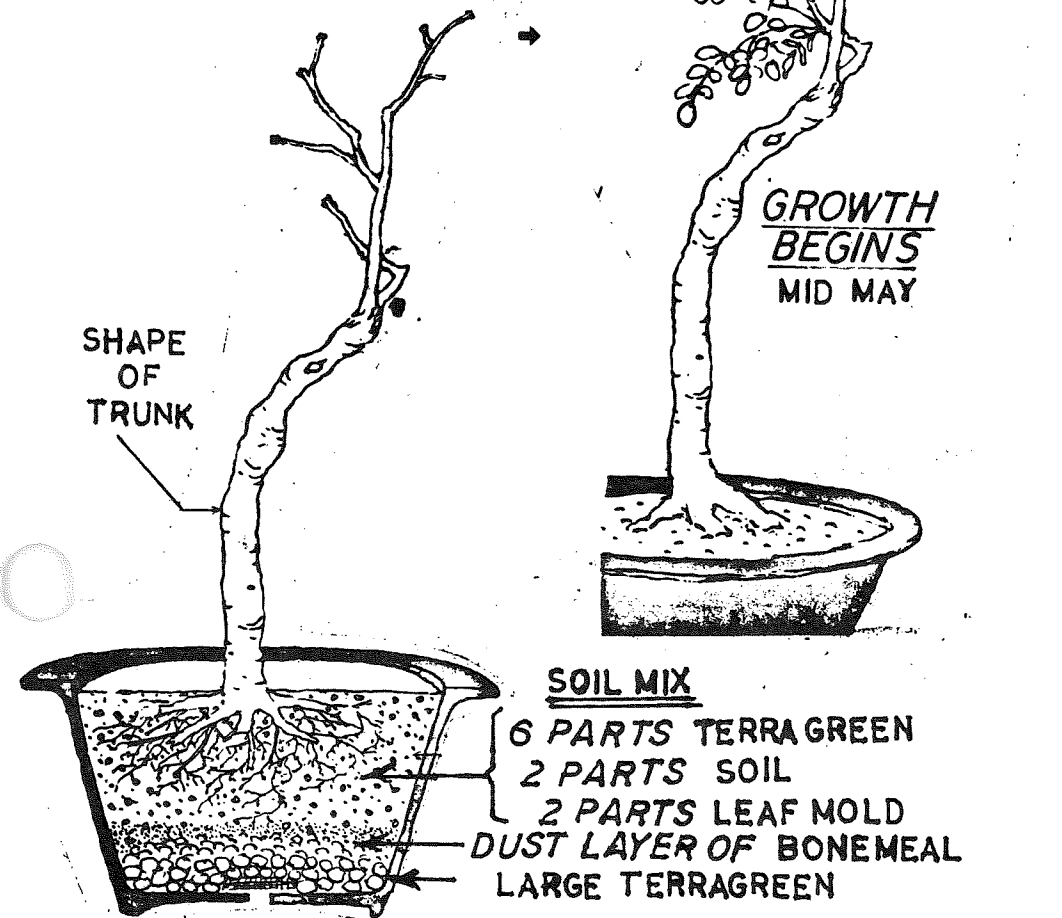


Purchase an authentic variety of wisteria, about 2-3 years old, and 10 inches high, vigorous in appearance, and having a shape with a potential for bonsai.

Immediately after purchasing, place out doors, water and fertilize. When the blooms begin to fade, remove all blooms and prune.

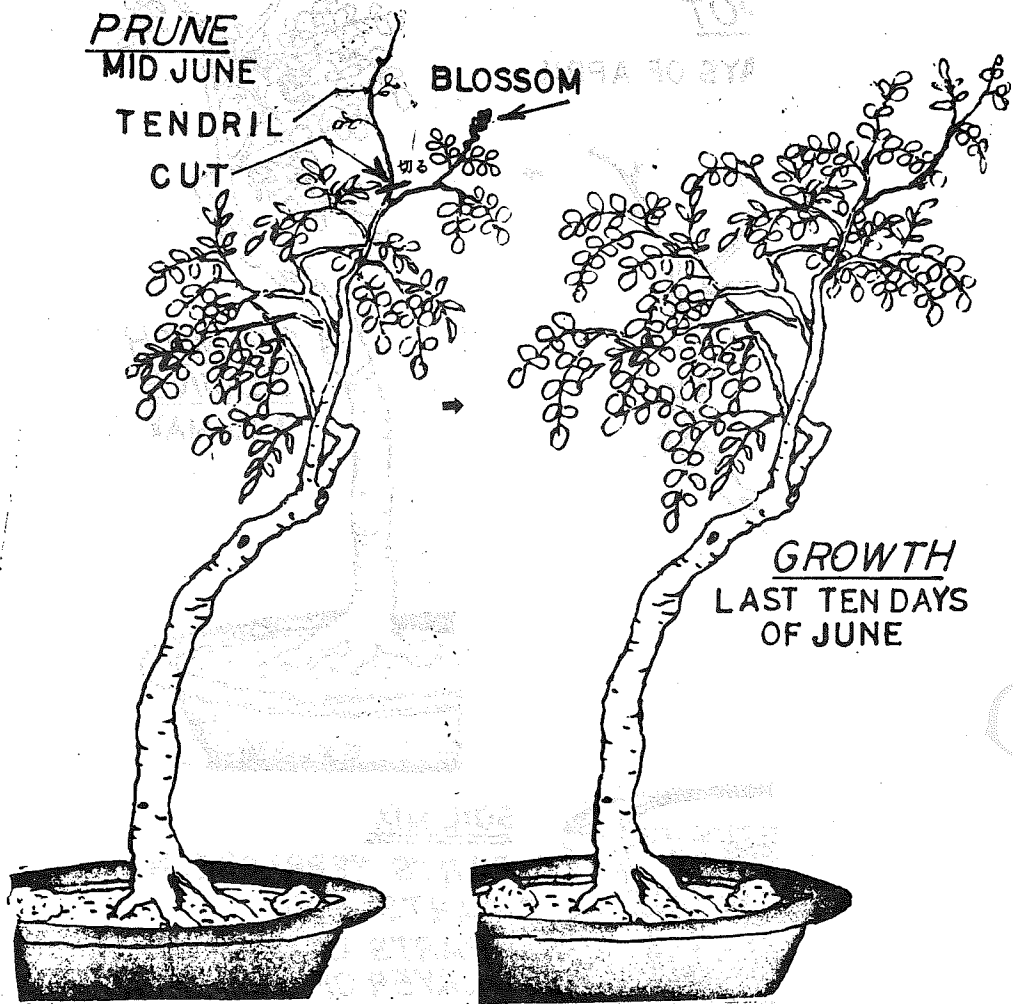
SECOND YEAR

REPLANT IN BONSAI POT
FIRST TEN DAYS OF APRIL



Cut root ball in half when repotting and adequately water during 10-15 of May. Place plant outdoors after repotting (not in shade). Water twice daily and polish bowl twice every month.

SECOND YEAR



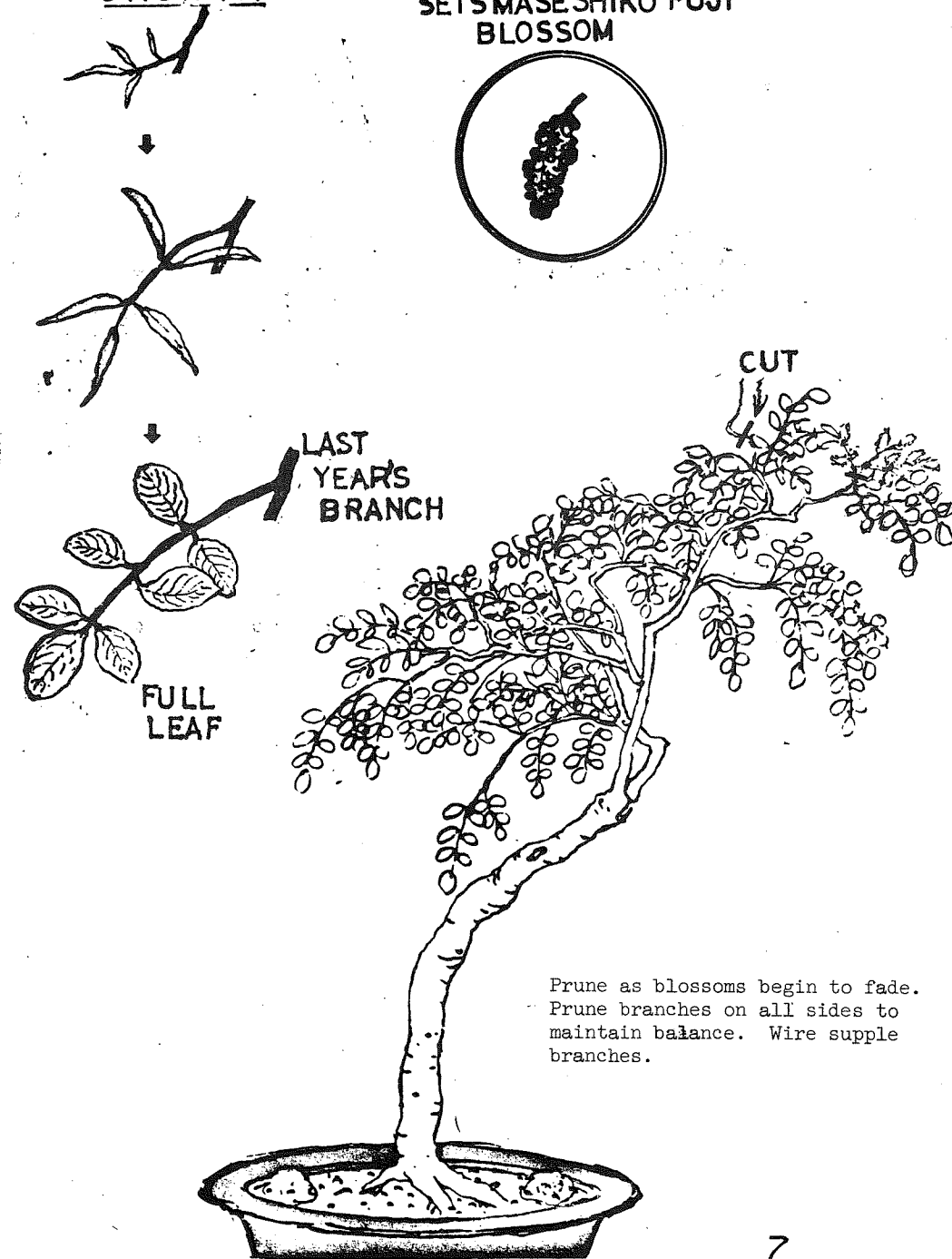
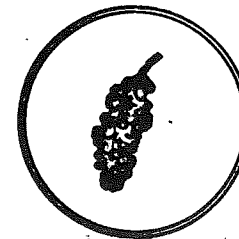
Water twice daily, polish bowl twice per month.

In June, cut new twigs of about 12 inches in length - those with poorly looking leaves and those extending inward toward pot.

you should see the
and the first year
and

STAGES IN BRANCH GROWTH

SETS MASESHIKO FUJI BLOSSOM



Prune as blossoms begin to fade. Prune branches on all sides to maintain balance. Wire supple branches.



CHINA 1981

**Bonsai & Garden Visit
March 11 to April 1**

You can be part of the first bonsai tour to the Peoples Republic of China. Special bonsai exhibits and visits. Six cities in China, two days in Hong Kong. Complete land costs \$2,000 includes three meals daily throughout the tour.

For information & reservations, call or write:

Tour Leaders:

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McKean Road, P.O. Box 305
Spring House, Pennsylvania 19477
(215) 646-8915

U.S. Agent:

China Travel Center
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A HAPPY and JOYFULL NEW YEAR

to all of **PBA** -

our families, our friends, our loved ones

Club Calendar

January 10
Saturday

Lecture on bonsai tool maintainance and film. 10:00 a.m. Gulf Branch Nature Center. Once again Bill Merritt will discuss bonsai tools - how to use them, and sharpen & maintain them in Al condition. Learn how to do it yourself. Bring tools and sharpening stones (if you have them). Free copies of an article on bonsai tool care from New Orleans Bonsai will be available as handouts. In addition, a 20 minute sound film "The Landscape of the Soul" will be shown. This folm presents Kiichi Sana and explores Mr. Sano's philosophy in ultimate simplicity in landscaping, akin to the Zen style of landscape architecture. NORTHERN VIRGINIA BONSAI SOCIETY

January 15
Thursday

Pests and pesticides. 7:30 p.m. Audubon Society, Jones Mill Rd., Chevy Chase. Lecture by Richard Biggs, extension agent, Urban Agriculture Department, Montgomery County. Mr. Biggs will be available for consultation. Do not miss the opportunity to obtain professional advise on what's bugging your bonsai. Raffle. If time permits, a slide show will be presented. Tree of the month: winter-viewing deciduous specimens (e.g. beech, maple). Bring pictures or actual tree if practical. BROOKSIDE GARDENS BONSAI CLUB.

January 17
Saturday

Bonsai Sketches, Western Trees. 2:00 p.m. National Arboretum. A slide show from Bonsai Clubs International will be shown on Western trees - what they are, how and where they grow. WASHINGTON

January 20
Tuesday

Disease and pest control. 7:30 p.m. St. Margaret's Church. Charles Staines of the Maryland Department of Agriculture will give a presentation on problems especially concerning bonsai. He asked we bring sick trees to the meeting. Experienced club members will help beginners part of the evening. NOTE: Members will no longer be called on a regular basis to remind them of the meetings, except that there be a change in the Newsletter announcement, unless we get volunteers to do so. (Volunteers call Jackie Dorsett at 263-3995). Please make note of events as you read the Newsletter. ANNAPOLIS

No Report from:

Baltimore
Kiyomizu

For Information Call:

Dave Bogash 922-9310
Chuck Bird 292-3167

Shoen Bonsai & JAPANESE GARDEN

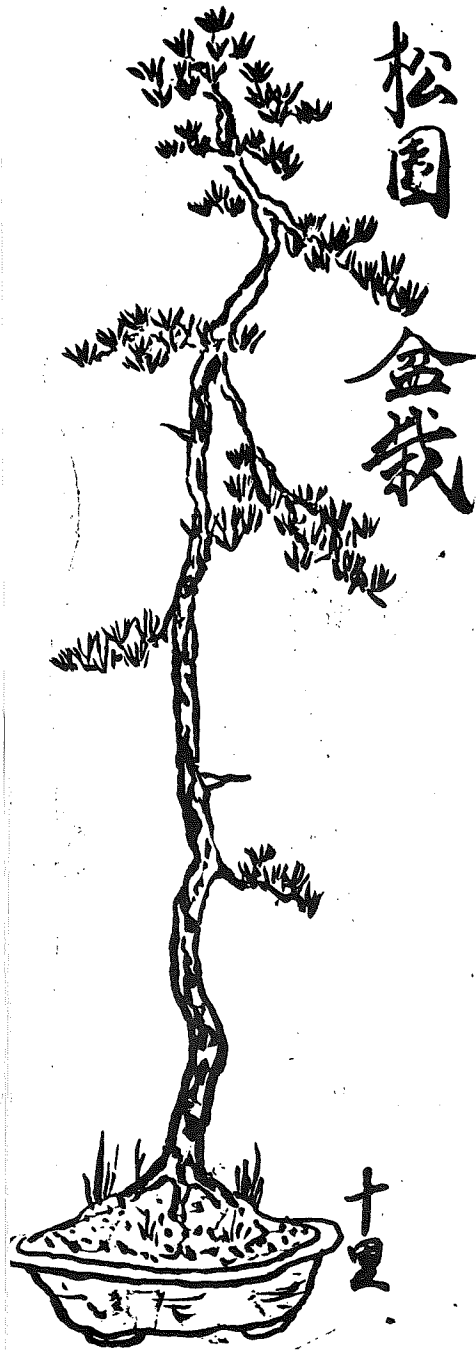
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 (In Jack T. Irwin's Bldg)
 (301) 762-0878

Store Hours: 10:00 - 4:00 Mon. - Sat.
 Closed on Sundays
 Other times available by
 appointment only

Mr. S. Sasaki's Japanese black pines
 are reduced in price to \$100.00 - \$150.00.
 These trees have thick trunks and are not yet
 trained for bonsai. This is the season for
 branch grafting.

We welcome bonsai beginners.
 J. Haga will be at the shop for
 free consultation.

- * BONSAI TOOLS (10% discount for PBA Members)
- * BONSAI POTS, SOILS, GRANITE CHIPS, RAFFIA,
 AND TERRA GREEN
- * BONSAI TREES AND STARTER TREES
- * TREES, WATER BASINS, TOROS, & OTHER ITEMS
 FOR JAPANESE GARDENS
- * SMALL JAPANESE GARDENS INSTALLED
 (MARYLAND ONLY DUE TO INSURANCE)



Naka's Saksuki Book

Last spring many of you expressed an interest in purchasing John Naka's new book on Satsuki azalea at a group rate of \$11 each. It has been decided by the Board that rather than ordering the books and then collectin from everyone, that we ask you to pay for the books prior to their purchase. Please complete the order form below and return to Vicki Ballantyne before March 1. Books when they are received will be distribu ed to you through your individual club.

Vicki Ballantyne, Treasurer
 538 West Street
 Severna Park, Maryland 21146

I am enclosing a check in the amount of \$ _____ (made payable to Potomac Bonsai Association) for the purchase of _____ Satsuski azalea book(s) by Joh Naka.

(Name) _____

(Address) _____

(Phone) _____ (Club affiliation) _____