



## MEETING COUNT ON THE RISE!!

Our April meeting was on the 11th; a rather miserable, cold day and yet we had a very good turnout. We had 19 people show up for a very good meeting.

We had a lot to discuss and many future things in the works.

And we also got to see the finished pottery that we made at the last meeting. They were all

very good and the hope is that by the next meeting, May 9th, some of these pots will have some new trees in them for us to see. So if you made a pot, try to have something in it for the May meeting for us all to see!!

As a quick note on some past business, Dave talked to the people in charge of the Center and he has informed us that the correct rental for the lockers is



\$3 per month, per locker. Which gives us a total of \$27 per quarter

or \$108 per year. After a short discussion on what we use the lockers for and how convenient they are, we all voted to keep the three lockers.

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### NEXT MONTH'S MEETING: MAY 9TH

- Robert Baran will give a presentation on the history of the Bonsai.

## TREASURER'S REPORT & OTHER BUSINESS

Charlie Richards gave us our treasurers report. As of March 31, 2009, we have \$1,167.29 in our checking account and \$36.37 in our savings account.

**Spencer's:** We had great success at the Spencer's Garden Show this year, thanks in part to Cliff Broyles and all the volunteers.

As it turned out, we were not allowed to raffle off a tree this year, as it was a conflict of interest of sorts between us and Spencer's. But in the end that was OK because the owners of Spencer's contributed \$50 to our Society.

Our volunteers and other people told us that they treated us like royalty and even gave members a 20% discount off anything we bought at Spencer's. We look forward to next year!!!

**Library:** Charlie is still working on the contents of our library. He is working out a system to document what we have.

It was Charlie's suggestion that we charge a \$5 late fee per month on any books or magazines that are over a month late. This was put up for a vote and it passed.

Robert Baran suggested that when Charlie is finished that we put a list of these books in the year book.

**Show Committee:** David informed us that he has chosen the people that will be on this years show committee but we will not be informed of who they are until the next meeting. They will be getting together soon to get things rolling with the show.

**Club Sign:** Cliff Broyles suggested that we get a sign made

that will help us advertise our club when we are at events like Spencer's. Henrietta knows where to get one made for around \$250. She has volunteered to do the artwork for the sign. She was elected to do the complete sign.

This also brought up the discussion on the logo that will be used on the sign and future projects. We have basically two logos, the one used on shirts and the one used on the website. It was agreed by the majority that we would use the shirt logo. Cliff will work on getting it digitized for Henrietta to use on the sign.

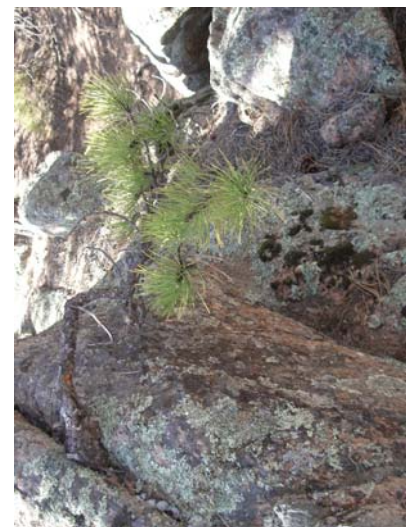
**Club Shirts:** Cliff Broyles will be doing a run of shirts with the club logo on them. He will have more information for us at the next meeting on the cost and when they will be ready. So if you have always wanted a Pikes Peak Bonsai Society shirt, now is the time!!

## YAMADORI- COLLECTING FROM THE WILD

It is that time of year again when we all put those shovels in a backpack and head for the mountains in search of the elusive "Perfect Bonsai".


I personally had the pleasure of hiking around with Ross Huddleson, Peter Apostolas, Bill Fox and my mother, Sonya Alford.

We headed for the Lake George area on April 21st. We had a very successful hunt as you can see from the following photos.





## YAMADORI

ince there are two months left for tree collecting in the wild (June 14th), I have decided to put this article in on Yamadori. It is from the [knowledgeofbonsai.org website](http://knowledgeofbonsai.org/website), by Will Heath. The purpose of these articles are for you to be able to file them away for future use. Enjoy!! (Edited for length and clarity).

### COLLECTING BASICS

All those who collect plants for bonsai should observe the ethical considerations of collecting because the manner in which we collect affects the perception of collectors worldwide. Unethical collecting can give a bad name to bonsaists everywhere and can make it very difficult for others to acquire permission to collect in the future. The following are some considerations that should be personally abided by.

- Always obtain permission from the landowner before you collect. Every single piece of land belongs to someone, be it a roadside, construction lot, field, woods, abandoned house, or farm.
- Collecting anything that you do not own and/or do not have permission to, is stealing.
- Never take the only tree of it's kind in the area.
- Never collect a tree that you are not sure has a very good chance of survival. Experience can tell if a tree can be successfully collected or not.
- Only collect what you will use.
- Always fill in your holes and remove any and all signs that you were there.
- Do not leave your garbage behind and always pack out other garbage that you may find. The key here is to leave the site better than you found it.
- Tread lightly when in the wild, avoid stepping on or damaging the native flora while collecting and leave no sign of your passing. Do not "blaze trails" at anytime, if you can not find your way in and out with a compass or a GPS, you have no business being there.
- You should pack in small seedlings of the species that you will be collecting and plant one or two in the spot that you removed the tree from. Not only will this replace the tree you took, but it will assure that there are trees to collect in the future as well.
- A word of warning. Spring is the time when many animals bear young and it is not uncommon to see fawns or other new born wildlife while walking, leave them be, they need nothing from you and any attention given will help no one and in the case of bear cubs, could cost you your life.

The following is a list of tools and supplies you can carry in your backpack when collecting in the wild.

- Short shovel which you should keep a good sharp edge on. Folding Shovels break easy, don't use them.
- Long handled and short handled pruners.
- A good sharp knife.
- A GPS unit and a compass, in case the former fails.
- A saw. You should carry a handsaw for small jobs and for serious collecting you might pack a battery powered reciprocating saw.
- A small hatchet.
- A pry bar.
- Burlap bags and twine.
- A few plastic bags for smaller trees.
- A small container of dry granular fertilizer.
- A mesh laundry bag for collecting sphagnum moss (*if there is any in your area*).
- A few seedlings of the species you will be collecting.
- Snacks, water, a lighter, and a good first-aid kit.
- A small plastic child's sled, nothing works better for dragging out a tree on flat terrain. (You can also use your external frame backpack for humping out trees on rougher terrain.)
- Also have a lightweight come-a-long for tougher jobs.

### THREE YEAR PLAN

Most of the bigger and older Jack Pines and other species that you may have marked with your GPS are on what is called a three-year plan. The first spring after you find the tree you dig a two-foot trench just outside of the drip line, half way around the tree. Use a saw to sever any roots that you encounter and also to lightly prune the tree to remove any branches that will not be needed or to start to encourage back budding. Fill the hole in being sure to mix in some fertilizer and chopped sphagnum moss. Use the granular type fertilizer for this and you will find that the tree will seldom put roots out past this enhanced feed area. The sphagnum moss greatly helps with new root development where you cut the roots.

The second spring repeat the process except dig your trench on the other half of the circle. By now the roots are well on their way to recovery on the other side and are now closer to the trunk. Once again mix fertilizer and chopped sphagnum moss in when you fill the hole.

The third spring trench all the way around the tree and reach under to sever the taproot, if present. Then tilt the tree one way and slide

burlap under one side. Tilt the tree the other way and pull the burlap through, completely wrapping the root ball. Tie it off with twine being sure to wrap the twine around the root ball also and then lift the whole root ball out of the hole by lifting the burlap, not the trunk. A word of caution here; do not lift or move the tree by the trunk. Doing so will damage the bark and loosen or tear the roots.

### COLLECTING ON THE SPOT

For trees that are not as old or for trips where for reasons the tree must be collected, then variations of the above three-year plan can be used. You can collect older trees in two years or less by making one trench in spring and the other in the fall of the same year and collecting the following spring.

Collecting on the spot requires that you get as much of the root ball as possible to assure survival. The soil conditions in the spot you collect will dictate if spot collecting can be done. Some places you will find create naturally tight root balls close to the trunk, others the roots may go on for yards with no feeder roots close to the trunk. The latter trees should be left alone; they are not collectable on the spot and would require a longer plan such as the three-year plan outlined above.

When you must collect a tree on the spot, great care must be taken to retain as much of the root ball as possible. Trenching completely around the tree and then undercutting the root ball is a far better way than to angle the shovel in and pry. In this way the root ball is less disturbed and the tree's chances of survival is much greater. Waiting until after a good rainfall will help to assure that a good soil mass will be lifted with the root ball or wetting the root ball prior to digging will help the soil to remain in place.

It is always a good idea to be prepared to collect other items while you are out. You can find some very nice stones and driftwood while out, save room for these in your pack. One item you should always collect whenever you are out is Sphagnum Moss. *Editor:(If it is not available in the wild in your area, bring some that you purchased from a store.)* You not only use this for air layering but you also use it in your soil mix for freshly collected trees and as mentioned above, use it to back-fill your trenches when you are spading a tree for future collection.

### AFTER CARE

Once you have collected the tree or trees you wanted, be sure to keep the root ball damp, never allow it to dry out, pack the root ball with moss first and then wrap with plastic or burlap. Use your judgment, depending on the overall health of the tree and the root mass to determine if it will go into a training pot, growing box, or straight into the growing bed. Never style a collected tree until one or two

## YAMADORI (CONTINUED)

full seasons has passed and the tree shows significant signs of healthy growth. However, prune back to encourage back budding if the health of the tree will allow it.

### OOPS

So you collected that beautiful tree you found and to your great dismay, the roots are not quite what you expected. For trees where the root mass is small and there are few feeder roots, treat them almost like an air-layer. Securely tie the tree into a growing box with a soil mixture of 75% sphagnum moss and 25% of free draining soil mix. Use this technique only in early spring as it seems to work best then and it allows enough roots to form to allow you to transplant before the seasons end.

### MICRO ENVIRONMENT

Before you collected that tree it was living in a relationship with other plants and fungus. These relationships can be major, like the Mycorrhizae in the root system or minor, like living in the shade cast by a larger nearby tree or playing host to the moss and lichen growing on its trunk.

These relationships are called Micro Environments and are created by the plants that are growing around the trunk and on top of the root ball. These plants have shaded the root ball, collected dew, held in moisture, supplied nutrients and hosted a vast collection of micro organisms ever since the tree was a seedling. The plant's roots are intermingled with the roots of the tree, at times sharing the same water, nutrients and beneficial Mycorrhizae with the very tree you are collecting.

Removing the tree from its environment is stressful enough without also ripping out these plants that form the Micro Environment that the tree is used to. Removing the plants that make up this Micro Environment will also unnecessarily disturb the fine upper most roots of the tree. When you collect, take great care to collect the whole root ball including all the plants that are growing on it. Be very careful to leave all the plants except obvious weeds untouched as they can be removed gradually as the tree strengthens and totally removed at the next repotting, once the tree has become accustomed to its new environment.

In Colin Lewis's book, "The Art of Bonsai Design", on page 115 in a side article about collecting wild pines he states, "Take as substantial a root ball as possible and wrap it very tightly in plastic sheeting and packing tape. Retain the flora growing in the root ball (apart from dandelions and other obvious weeds). This flora forms part of an ecosystem that the pine also plays a role in. They may share mycorrhiza, or some may influence the nature of the nutrient or trace element content of the local soil."

He then goes on to say, "Subterranean organisms certainly do have a significant effect on the ability of plants to survive stress such as transplanting. These organisms, in turn, can depend on the local plants for their success. In simple terms, don't break the cycle until the pine is accustomed to living on its own new root system."

Use a wooden chopstick to loosen the soil around the edges and bottom, exposing only the slightest amount of roots. The top is left completely untouched. The only roots you remove are thick ones that protrude beyond the confines of the box it will be planted in and these only if you cannot bend them to fit. Sometimes it is feasible to wire a big root to another, bending it inwards so it fits. Cutting off a root on a freshly collected tree should only be done as a last resort. The plants on top of the root ball should be left and all the original soil intact. Deciduous trees may be bare rooted if necessary, but this should never be done with conifers or pines.

### POTTING

Upon potting the collected tree into a training box, set the intact root ball onto a shallow layer of soil and then work a mix of soil and sphagnum moss around all sides, then slightly cover all the surface plants with a thin layer of soil, consisting of 70% lava rock, 10% turface, and 20% fir bark, as they will respond much better this way and will grow up through the soil in a couple of weeks.

### LET A TREE BE A TREE

It has been mentioned in many articles that one should cut back foliage after collecting in order to "balance" the foliage to the recently cut root mass. There is absolutely no way that we can guess the amount, if any, to cut back to achieve this balance.

While it is true that trees have an inbuilt need for balance and that they will go to great lengths to achieve it, some of the current practices are detrimental to the survival and development of the tree.

You see when we slightly cut back the roots on a collected tree we create an unbalance in the tree that the tree is genetically programmed to over come. The excess foliage (in comparison to the freshly trimmed root mass) causes a water loss in the tree by the water diffusing out of the stomata as carbon dioxide diffuses in for photosynthesis and that the smaller root mass can not supply.

The solution to this problem is not cutting back the foliage because we can never know how much. Too little and you still have an unbalanced system, too much and you now have another completely different unbalance in the tree.

Instead, the solution is to let the tree be a tree. The tree will respond to a light trimming of the roots and the resulting unbalance by creating more roots! Yes, exactly what we want and all we have to do is leave it alone. When there are too many leaves on a tree and not enough roots, water stress will increase, leaf growth will stop and root growth will continue until balance is once again achieved.

A tree has built in feedback controls hardwired between the foliage and the roots designed so that the tree stays in balance. We see examples of this all the time; in fact often we use it to our advantage, ever wonder why we so often go against what we see with our own eyes?

In *Bonsai Today*, issue 75 on page 48, Walter Pall states in part two of his "Collecting Trees From The Wild" article, "Trying to balance the crown and the roots of a tree, as is often recommended, makes no sense. The tree itself knows much better what to do. Even Japanese collectors have had the same experience. After digging up a juniper, they leave the branches and needles intact. A year later, they can prune away long branches."

Once the roots have balanced themselves with the foliage, then cut back the foliage. The tree will once again respond to keep balance but this time it will be trying to balance the pruned foliage with the roots, forcing out new growth on branches and also new buds on old wood.

### AGAINST DOCTOR'S ORDERS

Imagine going to the doctor for an illness and learning that he recommends no medicine, no food, no vitamins, and warns against anything life giving at all. We would automatically label this doctor a quack and seek a second opinion, yet we take the same advice regarding our freshly collected bonsai to heart.

It has often been said that you should place a freshly collected tree in the shade and withhold fertilizer for some time. I personally do not subscribe to this school of thought. I cannot see withholding life giving sun or nutrients from a tree that is in great need of repair.

A tree is a very complex organism with many built in controls as mentioned above. Trees have evolved to deal with injuries in many ways, none of which includes changing location to a shady, sterile spot until it heals.

When a tree is injured it goes into a repair mode where cells are produced to start healing wounds and to increase growth in order to replace the missing foliage and/or roots. The tree will once again seek to balance itself and by doing so will require energy in the form of sunlight and nutrients. By withholding either, we force the tree to tap reserves that are best left for uncontrollable events.

## MORE CLUB BUSINESS

*(Continued from page 1)*

Our President, David Conlin will not be at the next meeting. He will be in Pittsburgh and was discussing something about a "bun-in-the-oven" but I don't know what that has to do with Bonsai!!!

Our Treasurer will also be out the next meeting.

**Spotlight on Trees:** Matt McFarland brought in, what we all thought to be, a Cryptomeria and a Bush Cherry. We

discussed the health and things that he could do to help them along.

Henrietta Gregoria, even though it was not a Bonsai, brought in her tray planting of succulents and asked for some advice on pest control.

Ross Huddleson brought in a field collected juniper that was only a month or two old but looked like one hundred!!

**Raffle:** And for our monthly raffle, Steve and Sonya Alford brought in four Lo-

nicera Nitida (Box Honeysuckle) and Claudia Eley brought in a Bonsai stand. This month we made \$23 from the raffle to be added to our ever-growing bank account!!



### *Pikes Peak Bonsai Society*

<http://www.phoenixbonsai.com/PikesPeakBonsai.html>

Pikes Peak Bonsai Society  
Colorado Springs Senior Center  
1514 N. Hancock Ave.  
Colorado Springs, CO 80909  
Phone: 719-385-5933



## CLUB MEETINGS

Non-members and those curious about this art/hobby are always welcome at no obligation!

10 a.m. on the Second Saturday of each month, usually at the **Senior Center** (Ceramics Room),

1514 N. Hancock Ave. (corner of Camarillo at the top of Hancock, 1/3 mile north of Uintah St.), just northeast of downtown Colorado Springs.

(719) 385-5933

Look to this space in the future for want ads, sales ads and a place to put that ad for your business!!

If you have anything to put in this space, let me know.

A 2x3 insert is \$5 for one issue, \$10 for 3 issues, and \$18 for one year.

A 3x4 insert is \$10 for one issue, \$20 for 3 issues and \$36 for the year.

For more information call Steve Alford at 633-9110 (evenings) or email me at [pmprdcchef@msn.com](mailto:pmprdcchef@msn.com)