

Pikes Peak Bonsai Society



June 2015 Issue

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Inside this issue:

- Different types of Bonsai soil
- Our Bonsai show in July

Our next meeting is going to be on June 16, 7:00 pm at firehouse # 14 located at 1875 Dublin Blvd. Colorado Springs, CO 80918



Bonsai Soil

There are many different kinds of mixture used to plant bonsai. Most soil mixtures have one thing in common, they don't use garden soil. This is because shallow pots don't drain as well as soil in the garden and as a result the roots can stay too wet and rot.

Soil PH is a measure of acidity or alkalinity of the soil on a scale of 0 to 14. Neutral is 7, while less than 7 is acidic, greater than 7 is alkali. Soil PH affects the amount of nutrients that are soluble in water and therefore, provides the amount of nutrients available to plants. Some nutrients are more available under acidic conditions while others are more available under alkaline conditions. Most deciduous trees prefer soil that is nearly natural 6.5 PH. But conifers prefer a slightly more acidic soil, around 5.5 PH.

Akadama - particles of pelletized clay which the Japanese use extensively for potting their bonsai.

Turf - looks like Akadama, but it's not. This product is used to aeration of grass on golf courses and baseball diamonds. You can buy it in 50 pound bags from turf supply and lawn maintenance companies, they are not usually available at local garden stores.

Haydite - another brand name that is the rock equivalent of Turf. Similar products may be found marketed under names such as Permatil and Staylite.

Poultry Grit - You can purchase this by the bag from your local feed or farm supply store already separated into correct grades. Poultry grit is composed of fragments of crushed granite which farmers fed to their chickens to help them grind up corn.



Making your own bonsai soil

Soil recipe:

1part lava rock

1 part pumice – try to get the dark kind

1 part Akadama – you can use turface instead

A cup of horticultural charcoal (per 5 gallon mix) – the kind that is used for orchids

A cup of decomposed granite (per 5 gallon mix) – this is for pine or Juniper trees

For deciduous trees, use small size mix (1/16” - 1/4”) and add 1 extra part Akadama. All ingredients must be bone dry, sifted and sized. The dust is discarded.

Bonsai Show

Our bonsai show will be on July 17, 18 and 19 at the 21C library, located at 1175 Chapel Hills Dr. Colorado Springs, CO 80920. We will be putting our members trees on display for this show, so if you are interested in placing your trees at the show please let us know. Steve Alford will also be showing us how to get our tress and pots ready for the show so if you are interested in having your trees in the show, I would suggest you attend our next meeting on June 16. Please contact me or Steve if you are interested, as we will have to make sure we have room for all the trees that will be displayed at the show. We will also need info on the trees, the following questions need to be answered: Common name, Botanical Name, Style (Formal upright, forest, cascade etc.), Year training began, Approximate age of tree, current owner/designer, and source (where the tree was bought). Please provide this info in advance so we can type it up on a display card. I am looking forward to see our members at the show so please do not hesitate to participate in this event.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2015

June 16

Discuss and show how to protect trees from the elements; hail and sun. Plan a nursery crawl for this month where we will go to a local nursery and look for tree material for the upcoming workshops with Potentilla with Todd in September. Look for volunteer to host a workshop at their home for Potentilla in August.

July 17, 18 & 19

Bonsai show at the 21C library located at 1175 Chapel Hills Dr. Colorado Springs, CO 80920

July 21

Propagating with cuttings, seed grafting and air layering. A workshop will be planned at S&S Bonsai for grafting.

August 15

How to make Potentilla bonsai tree workshop with material we got in June's nursery crawl. We will meet at 9:00 am at my house, 1957 Dewhurst Dr. Colorado Springs, CO 80951.

August 18

Show the Potentilla bonsai that we made in the previous workshop.

September 19

Workshop with Todd Schaffer from Denver on Junipers.

October 20

Discuss winter preparedness. Polyhouse designs, garage use, basement windows etc. Plan Christmas party for 2015 and nominate people for the next board.

November 17

Elections. Will announce other agenda later on.

December 15

Christmas Party at Bass Pro Shop. No monthly meeting