

CBS Newsletter

August 2020

COVID-19 Pandemic Continues

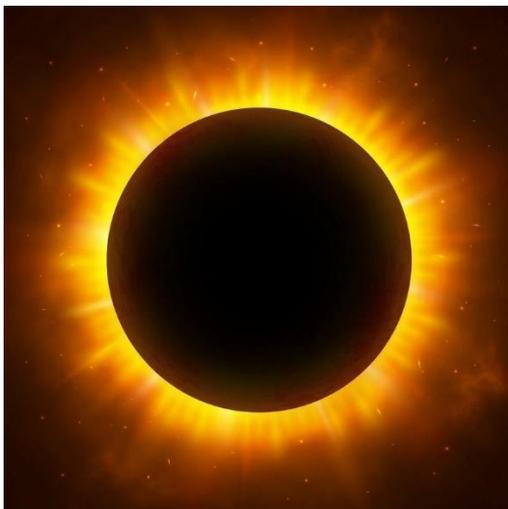
Sunday August 9, 2020 10:00 am Meeting Cancelled

Library Closure Continues

With the pandemic still not contained, and no tentative date for a planned reopening of the library meeting room, the August meeting is cancelled. The Chico Bonsai board is currently considering current alternatives for meetings. If any members have ideas, please email suggestions to chicobonsai.1976@gmail.com or to individual board members [located on the last page of newsletter].

Caring for Bonsai in Summer

Summertime Care Can Keep Your Bonsai Thriving



Eight Tips for Summer Care

Reprinted from Bonsai Outlet

When the heat of the summer comes along, your bonsai tree will stop producing new leaves, telling itself that this is the right number - ***my root system can get through the summer supporting the leaves that I have, and no more.***

Eight things are important right now:

1. Water. The old Japanese adage is to water your bonsai tree three times; Once for the pot, once for the soil, and once for the tree. By going back and forth over your collection three times, it allows the water to soak into the soil and the pot and leave water for the tree to soak into the soil and the pot and leaves water for the tree to take in.
2. Watering your bonsai tree is a tricky thing to get a handle on, even in the best conditions. When it's 100 degrees out, it's a whole different matter. During the summer, bonsai trees are in maximum capacity mode.
3. Your bonsai trees life or death depends on watering this time of year. A day or two of neglect and the soil, and the important little root ends at the bottom of the pot will die. Those are the roots that bring water into the roots system and up to the leaves.
4. Avoid the temptation to water your bonsai tree just to "cool it down." Wet foliage can increase the sun's rays - each drop acting like a little magnifying glass that ultimately does more damage than good. Besides, the water belongs in the soil, not on the leaves.
5. Fertilize! The abundance of watering you are doing now, combined with the inherent nature of porous bonsai soil means that nutrients stay around for a very short amount of time. They literally go down the drain. You should not skip fertilizing this time of year.
6. Soil. Where did it go? With watering, some of it splashes out, some of it drains down the drainage holes and some of it is eaten by the root system. But that's for another article... If you look at your soil level, it's probably well below the rim of your bonsai pot. It's smart to add soil to keep the world your bonsai tree lives in as big as it can be - or at least as big as it's pot. Generally, it's best if the new soil can be placed at the bottom of the pot, not just added to fill the top of the pot to the brim.
7. A bonsai tree plant that is classified as "full sun," is not the same things as planting that tree in the ground and letting it grow to its full size. Full sun does not mean blazing, all afternoon, direct July sun. Every bonsai tree appreciates some afternoon shade. The pot itself in the afternoon sun can rise to temperatures that will cook its roots like linguini.
8. Watch where you point that thing. The water in a hose laying in the sun can reach temperatures of scalding levels. One blast of hot water to your bonsai tree, whether on the foliage or into the soil could kill it. Turn on the hose and give a nearby ant pile a good dose of boiling water for a few moments before you water your bonsai tree.

Reference

<https://www.bonsaioutlet.com/bonsai-tips-for-summer-care/>

Sun Image adapted from: <https://www.vectorstock.com/royalty-free-vector/total-eclipse-of-the-sun-with-corona-solar-vector-21623174>

Questions About Your Trees?

Contact Pat, Ruben and Leo for those hard questions about your bonsai collection

- Patrick Gilmore gilappl@gmail.com
- Ruben Rodarte rubenrodarte123@gmail.com
- Leo Martinez LeoRMartin@gmail.com

A Summer Bonsai Tree

The Dwarf Hawaiian Umbrella Tree, *Schefflera arboricola*

A Hot Weather Bonsai Tree for Beginners

The Dwarf Hawaiian Umbrella tree, *Schefflera arboricola*, in nature grows as a small evergreen shrub and is native to Taiwan as well as Hainan. As such, it can be easily trained into upright bonsai form. The roots respond well to pruning and it is not as picky about watering or as fussy about soil as many other bonsai trees. As it is an evergreen, it has dark green leaves year-round that fan out into an umbrella form which makes it ideal for creating a bonsai style needing a dense canopy. In addition, it has distinctive mangrove-like roots which protrude above the soil. As a tropical tree, it is ideal for hot climates indoors as a year around plant or a

three-season outdoor plant in Northern California.



What makes the *Schefflera Arboricola* a good bonsai for beginners?

The dwarf umbrella tree has many characteristics that make it an excellent choice for beginners. First, it can grow well in lower lighting conditions. Most beginners try to keep their trees indoors. This is one of the trees that actually do well in indoor conditions. They do best in USDA zones 9-11 so most people who live north of Florida, Texas, and California keep them indoors year-round without any issues. If grown indoors, they will do best if exposed to indirect lighting from an east or west facing window or in rooms with fluorescent lighting on for long portions of the day.

Second, schefflera are not very picky about watering conditions. Incorrect watering is how most beginners end up killing their bonsai trees. These trees are pretty forgiving as long as one does not allow the soil to dry out completely. It is good about letting the owner know if it is being overwatered or underwatered. The umbrella's leaves will turn black if it is being overwatered or start to curl at the ends if it is being underwatered.

Additionally, they do appreciate high humidity conditions. Indoor conditions tend to be very dry. To increase the humidity around the bonsai it is recommended you place the pot on top of a humidity tray filled with pebbles and water. The evaporating water humidifies the surrounding air. Avoid abnormally dry areas near heaters, furnaces, and fireplaces.

Lastly, this tree is not fussy about the soil you pot it in. Any free draining soil will work fine with this tree whereas with other bonsai species they can be very picky. They are tolerant of clay, sand, and loamy soils. Schefflera do prefer a slightly alkaline soil so adding a little lime in the soil mix can adjust the pH more towards alkaline if so desired.

Styling Considerations



Schefflera arboricola naturally assumes an informal upright form. They are not ideal for training into traditional Japanese forms, but if made into informal uprights, they make pleasing multiple trunk or forest groups. One of their interesting characteristics are their aerial banyan roots that they send down from lower branches. These aerial roots are great when trying root over rock styles. To encourage branching one can pinch stems back. In a perfect world, try to repot younger trees every one to two years in the spring. You can aggressively root prune if necessary, at that time.

Watering Schefflera bonsai

As mentioned, never let the soil dry out completely. Water when you notice the soil beginning to dry out. When it is time to water, thoroughly soak the soil by watering from above until the water begins to come out of the pot's drain holes. This tells you that the soil is completely saturated which is exactly what we want. You may notice the tree will need less water in the winter months. In addition, you can leave the tree and pot on the humidity tray, on a bed of pebbles. This will help to elevate the roots out of the standing water to avoid root rot and also provide aeration to the root system.

Feeding Schefflera bonsai

Feeding Schefflera is different from watering it, but the two can be combined. You can use any general-purpose Bonsai fertilizer for your Schefflera tree, but be sure to follow the instructions on the product for the correct dosage. Liquid fertilizers can be added to the water when watering the soil. Normally you will want to fertilize once a month in the Spring and Summer months, and less frequently in the Winter due to dormancy.



Final Considerations

Schefflera arboricola is very resistant to pests and diseases outdoors, but if grown indoors be susceptible to **scale**, **spider mites**, and mealy bugs. Additionally, **all parts of this tree are poisonous so keep this tree away from children and pets and try not to get sap on your skin.**

Other Hot Weather Indoor Bonsai Options

There are other choices available that thrive in hot weather, or as an indoor tree for any number of reasons. A few notable species include: Fig (*Ficus*), Fukien Tea (*Carmona retusa*), Bougainvillea (*Bougainvillea*), Brazilian Rain (*Pithecellobium tortum*)

Online Schefflera arboricola links

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VTs0G937tZE> - Care

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfubxKVTyKg> – Repotting and Pruning

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d0TPLluxemQ> – Pruning

References

<http://www.mellobonsai.com/care/Hawaiian-umbrella-bonsai.aspx>

<https://www.mythicalbonsai.com/recommended-bonsai-trees/best-hot-weather-bonsai-tree/>

<https://www.wikihow.com/Care-for-a-Dwarf-Umbrella-Plant>

Image 1 retrieved from: <http://artofbonsai.org/galleries/rayner.php>

Image 2 retrieved from: <https://www.amazon.com/Brussels-Hawaiian-Umbrella-Indoor-Bonsai/dp/B0000DGFCP>

Image 3 retrieved from: <http://www.mellobonsai.com/care/Hawaiian-umbrella-bonsai.aspx>

New Video Posted

A new video, *Basic Styling and Interview with Pat Gilmore* is posted on the CBS website.

Go to this website address or click on this link:

<https://www.chicobonsaisociety.org/videos>



Classified

Do you have bonsai items you would like to sell or trade? Send image, and information to John – jemcdonald@protonmail.com. Free of charge to Society members.

Submit:

- Image [preferred]
 - Description and identification of object being offered for sale
 - Your name, phone or mobile number and or email.
 - Price
-

Financial Status of CBS

- As of April 2020:
- Checking Acct \$6941.31 – Cash on Hand \$237.00 – Total Assets \$7178.31

Chico Bonsai Society (CBS) is a non-profit organization to promote the appreciation, knowledge, and cultivation of Bonsai through education, publicity, display and any other means which would advance the Art of Bonsai.

Membership: Chico Bonsai Society is a social hub based on the common interest of the Art of Bonsai. Membership is open to the general public, come join us. Guests and visitors are always welcome.

Annual Individual Memberships dues are \$30.00 per year plus \$5.00 for each additional member of the household. To join the CBS, mail your name(s), address, telephone and e-mail address plus a check made payable to the CBS for the correct amount to: **Leo Martinez, 1236 Whitewood Way., Chico, CA 95973.**

CBS Board of Directors

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Vice President	John McDonald	jemcdonald@protonmail.com
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The **Golden State Bonsai Federation (GSBF)** is an educational organization which provides services and activities promoting the wonderful art of bonsai. GSBF is made up of member clubs in California and affiliate clubs in the adjoining states.

- **Publication:** [Golden Statements Magazine](#) [free digital version], the official publication of GSBF, is printed four times each year with current bonsai articles and calendars of local club shows and events.
- **Education:** The Federation awards grants to assist the clubs with programs and provides several categories of bonsai scholarships which are available to worthy individuals. There is also an internship program in which qualified students are given assistance to study with a bonsai master in Japan or elsewhere.
- **The Chico Bonsai Society is a current member.**

The **American Bonsai Society (ABS)** is an international non-profit corporation founded in 1967 to promote knowledge of, and interest in, bonsai – and to serve as a national focal point for bonsai fanciers. The ABS publish the *ABS Bonsai Journal*, hold member conventions, and provide educational and support services to the bonsai community.

Individual Membership dues are \$45.00. Join the ABS online at: <https://www.joinit.org/o/american-bonsai-society/4n47EfHaY6Fs6oMoy>.

