



Derde uitgawe -
2011

Koeda

Pretoria Bonsai Kai

The word Koeda is Japanese and means: 'Graceful branch'. It is pronounced Ko-eda.

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Enige idees, artikels of terug-
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Van die redakteur.

Beste Bonsai Vriende,

Die nag van 21 Junie was die lang-
ste nag van winter 2011. Dit be-
teken dat ons weer oppad is somer
toe. Iets waaroor heelwat lede baie
bly is.

Die watertoediening van ons bonsai
is vir sommige lede 'n moeilike en
onseker taak gedurende die winter.
Daar is onsekerheid oor hoeveel wa-
ter 'n boom met byvoorbeeld geen
blare aan moet kry nie. In die somer
met warm droë weer is dit makliker
en kan ons dikwels elke dag water
gee en nie bang wees vir te veel wa-
ter nie. Ons kan egter net leer hoe
om ons bome te versorg
gedurende die winter as
ons winters ervaar.

Een groot voordeel van
bome in hulle winter
status sonder blare is dat
ons die struktuur van
ons bome maklik kan
bestudeer. Neem dus tyd
en bestudeer elke boom
om te besluit of jy enige

ontwerp veranderinge wil doen.

Een aspek van bonsai wat baie
bevrediging bied is om die vor-
dering van ons bome waar te neem.
Dit is egter maklik om te vergeet
hoe 'n boom gelyk het toe jy met
hom begin het. Daarom is dit 'n
groot hulp as jy fotos van jou bome
het. Otto gee ons, op bl 10, raad
oor hoe om ons bome af te neem en
sodoende goeie rekords te hê.

Geniet die afneem.

Bonsai groete.

Jaco.



**The best winter care for your tree
is to give it almost as much cold
as it would receive in its native
habitat. - Herb L. Gustafson**

Huldeblyk aan Louis Nel - deur Charles Ceronio

It is with sadness that we learned of the tragic death of our friend and internationally acclaimed bonsai Master. We as Pretoria Bonsai Kai were honored to have a member of his stature.

Louis was a member of the Pretoria Kai since the early seventies. Louis was a respected and beloved person with a great personality. He was always friendly and helpful and willing to share his advanced knowledge with everyone.

Louis was very fond of nature and the outdoors and he was a very enthusiastic and skilled bonsai artist. He was a very talented bonsai grower and a number of his trees won international awards. One of his *Buddleias* was selected as one of the hundred best trees in the World. The photo competition was arranged by the Nippon Bonsai Society.

Louis was one of the leading bonsai Masters of our Club and was also invited by almost every Bonsai Club in the country. He was an invaluable source of knowledge and inspiration to all of our Kai members as well as to the rest of the bonsai world.

Louis is regarded as the *Buddleia King* as he introduced the species to our Club as well as to the rest of the country. While jogging one morning, he nearly stumbled over a shrub which was lying along the side of the road. He picked it up and decided to plant it. Luckily the plant survived and turned out to be a *Buddleia saligna*.

At the time the club did not have much experience of indigenous trees and we were all excited about this new plant species suitable as a bonsai. Today Louis's *Buddleia* collection is one of the largest in the country.

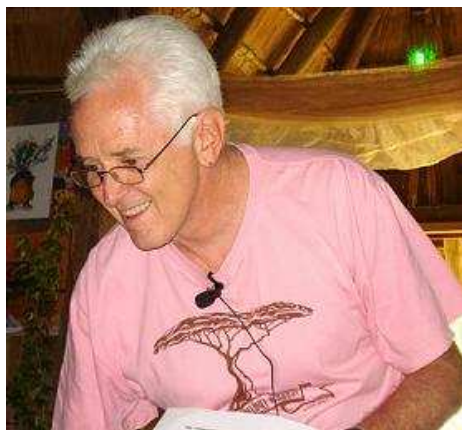


He was not only a very talented bonsai grower but a great orator. His sense of humour was one of his strong points and he won lots of awards for the best speaker on bonsai Conventions. One of his famous sayings after a statement was made was, "It just shows you" and then after a second or two he would continue "Whatever it shows you".

Louis represented South Africa at the 6th World Friendship Bonsai Convention in Puerto Rico in 2009. There he demonstrated one of our traditional African tree styles, namely the Pierneef style. After he styles the tree, he uses a giraffe-hand puppet to show the audience how we used giraffes in Africa to prune our trees in nature.

Louis always pointed out that a bonsai tree should tell a story and he usually explained the reason why he created a tree into a particular style.

His death is a great loss to the Bonsai World and he will be missed by his friends at the club and indeed, by the rest of the bonsai world. ♣



Snippets

Regstelling.

In Koeda uitgawe twee 2011 is terugvoering gegee oor “Maples” waaraan Erika Köhler op 5 September 2009 gewerk het. Fotos is geplaas van hoe die bome gevorder het tot 6 April 2006. Dit is natuurlik onmoontlik dat hulle in 2006 afgeneem is anders het ons terug gegaan in tyd. Die vordering fotos is wel op 6 April 2011 geneem.



Our Environment.

Shower power! A full bathtub requires about 260 liters of water, but taking a five-minute shower saves water by using 40 to 100 liters. Put a little timer or clock near your shower so you can see how fast you are. Save even more water, and money on your water bill, by installing a water-efficient showerhead.



Inspirasie uit die natuur



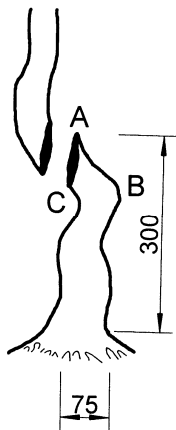
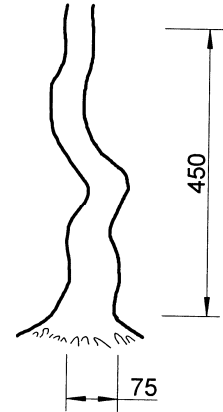
Dikwels word die natuurlike groeiwyse van 'n boom die heel beste gesien as 'n boom alleen in die natuur staan. Hierdie boom is op die pad tussen Modimole en Polokwane afgeneem. Dit is nie bekend wat se boom dit is nie. Die natuurlike groeiwyse is egter 'n pragtige “Broom” en is 'n bekende styl wat baie gewild is in bonsai.

Die vorming van 'n nuwe boom – soos John Naka dit sou doen

Deur Francois van As

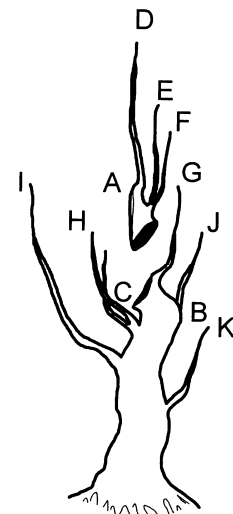
Dit gebeur soms dat materiaal uit die veld, tuin of kwekery, met 'n interessante stam, bonsai potensiaal het maar te lank is om gepot te word. In John Naka se boek "Bonsai Techniques II" verduidelik hy stap vir stap hoe om te maak:

1. Indien die boom 'n basis van ongeveer 75 mm in deursnee het behoort die ideale hoogte ongeveer 450 mm te wees.



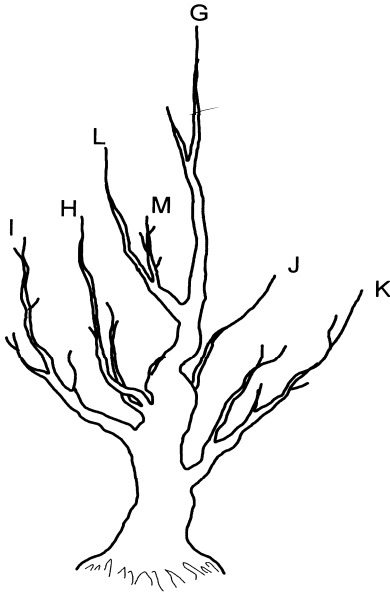
2. Hy stel voor dat terwyl die boompie nog in die grond is (of dan seker in 'n groeipot as dit uit die veld gehaal is) dit gedurende vroeg herfs teruggesny moet word tot ongeveer 300 mm bokant die basis. Die snit moet dwars oor die stam gemaak word met die snykant wat na die son kyk. Gebruik (B) vir die natuurlike kurwe. Seël die snit met 'n boomseëllaar.

3. Die beste tyd om die boompie te begin styl is na 'n jaar se groei. Dan het daar heelwat groei plaasgevind en is daar al heelwat om mee te werk. Spruite (D), (E) en (F) is te hoog en word teruggesnoei vanaf die basis van (G) tot en met (C). Laat (H) en (I) aan die linkerkant, (J) vir agter en (K) vir die eerste tak aan die regterkant.



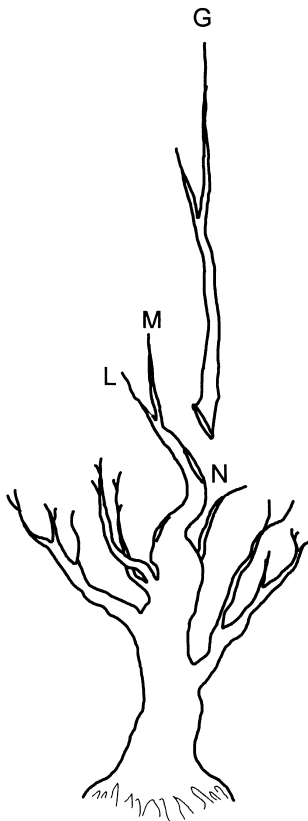
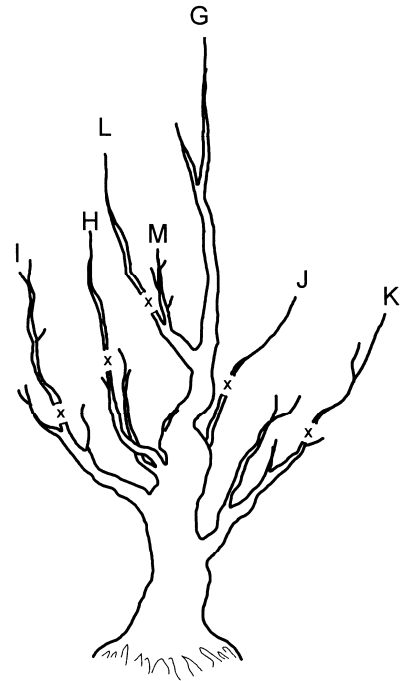
Vervolg op bl 5.....

Die vorming van 'n nuwe boom – soos John Naka dit sou doen



4. Laat die boompie groei vir 'n paar jaar sodat sy takke kan toeneem in grootte en die sekondêre takke (L) en (M) kans kry om te ontwikkel. Dit sal ook help dat die litteken kan herstel.

5. Nadat die takke ontwikkel het word (G) behou en al die ander teruggesnoei. Laat die boompie groei sodat sy stam dikker kan word. Indien nog in die grond kan die boompie die volgende lente uitgegrawe word en in 'n groeipot geplant word. Indien die boompie reeds in 'n groeipot is kan dit nou in 'n bonsaipot geplant word.



6. Wanneer die bo-stam in grootte toegeneem het kan tak (G) by (N) verwyder word. Aangesien (M) die nuwe toppunt gaan word moet spruite (M) en (L) gelaat word. Dit moet egter in die middel geposisioneer word. Die afstand tussen (M) en die basis van die boom behoort ongeveer 450 mm te wees, wat ook die finale hoogte sal wees. ♣

Bron: Naka, J.Y. (1982). Bonsai Techniques II. California: Dennis-Landman.

Nuwe Talent Kompetisie

Gedurende die vergadering van 7 Mei het lede met minder as tien jaar ondervinding in die beoefening van bonsai aan die kai se Nuwe Talent Kompetisie deelgeneem. Die wenner en naaswenner gaan die Pretoria bonsai kai by die eerskomende BRAT byeenkoms verteenwoordig. By die BRAT byeenkoms word al die klubs/kai's van die streek verteenwoordig.



Ons was baie bevoorreg en dankbaar dat sewe van ons lede aan die kompetisie deelgeneem het. Hulle was Duvan Horn, Gerhard Derks, Kobus van der Merwe, Voster Fourie, Kevin Nel, Johan van Zyl en Sunette Roberts.

Bo links is Sunette Roberts en regs Gerhard Derks

Die bome wat gestyl moes word was almal "Juniperus Procumbens Nana". Al die bome was naastenby van dieselfde gehalte en grootte.



Die deelnemers het aan die bome gewerk terwyl die vergadering plaasgevind het en is ongeveer twee uur gegee om die boom te styl. Daar was nie verwag dat die boom in 'n bonsai bak geplant word nie.

Bo links is Voster Fourie, bo regs is Kobus van der Merwe.

Vervolg op bl 7.....



Links is Kevin Nel.



Links is Jenny Moote en bo regs Johan van Zyl.



Nuwe talent kompetisie - vervolg



Nadat die sewe lede hulle stylering voltooi het was die bome deur Erika Köhler, Charles Ceronio en Org Exley beoordeel. Daar is onderandere gekyk na aspekte soos: ontwerp, balans, natuurlike voorkoms, bedrading, snoei werk en oorspronklikheid.

Daar was groot belangstelling by die ander nie deelnemende lede toe die beoordelaars hulle kommentaar oor elke boom gegee het.

Vervolg op bl 8...



Nuwe talent kompetisie – vervolg.

Die keuse van die beoordelaars vir die wen boom het gegaan aan Voster Fourie met tweede plek aan Kevin Nel en derde plek aan Duvan Horn. Al die bome was van hoë gehalte en die lede kan trots wees op hulself.

Die fotos wat geplaas word kan natuurlik nie werklik wys hoe die bome gelyk het nie maar gee darem 'n idee. Ek vra groot verskoning aan Gerhard omdat ek nagelaat het om van sy voltooide boom 'n foto te neem. ♣



Briewe bus / vra is vry.

Jaco

Ek sukkel om my Spekboom blaartjies dig en klein te kry, ek wou die bome al weggooi. Ek sien op die foto van die Spekboom wat jy geplaas het in die laaste Koeda dat sy blare dig en klein is. Kan jy raad gee?

Ingrid Marren



Prof Gareth Bath answers Ingrid as follows:



The Spekboom *Portulacaria afra* has several cultivars with naturally different leaf sizes. Therefore if leaf size is a big issue, then start with a type that is naturally small. These have leaves that are also usually a darker green and the stems are often reddish. However it is possible to reduce size, by selectively plucking off all the outsize leaves, or even complete defoliation and cutting back terminal stems to just a short stem with a few nodes. Otherwise the stem keeps growing at the tip and becomes ever longer. The nodes are clearly visible as rings around the stems. Do not allow the stems to shoot more than a pair or two of leaves.

Sometimes you may have to cut back to bigger branches. Be careful of overdoing it and defoliating too often (more than once a year) as you can get die back and even lose the tree. Do not overfertilise, the tree thinks that Christmas has come and shoots vigorously, often with huge leaves. Ditto with overwatering - the tree will get by on just one or two waterings per week, less in winter. It is after all a succulent and made to survive droughts! Full sun helps reduce leaf size too, don't leave trees in semishade too much. These techniques will also help stimulate side branching and ramification. Allow the tree to become quite potbound before replanting, only every few years. It may all sound tough on the tree, but they are tough and great survivors.

In Koeda uitgawe twee 2011 is die foto van 'n Phoenix graft boom wat by die vergadering van 5 Maart se uitstalling was, geplaas. Daar is verkeerdlik berig dat die boom aan Pieter du Plessis behoort. Na na-vraag is die onderstaande brief van die regte eienaar ontvang:

**Hi Jaco,
Hierdie boom behoort aan my. Alle eer aan wyle Louis Nel wat my aanvanklik gehelp het.**

Beste Groete

Pieter Opperman



Vergadering van 2 April

"Tip of the month" - by Otto Koekemoer

Photographing Bonsai

Apart from all the normal considerations when taking photographs, there are some specific things to keep in mind when you want to take a good photograph of a specimen tree.

The first is to position your camera correctly. Use the zoom function of the camera to make sure that you fill the frame with the subject, in this case the tree and pot. While you do this also make sure that you are on the same horizontal level as the main focus of the tree, which is in most cases the main trunk or where the major branching takes place. By taking a picture from above these features can easily be hidden behind the canopy. To avoid distortions in the shape of the tree and pot it is better to stand further away from the tree and use the camera zoom to get the composition right.

The second important aspect is proper lighting of the tree. The best would be to use studio type electric lights to make sure that there are no shadows or harsh lighting of any part of the tree or pot. But a good alternative is to use natural light through a window or to place the tree outdoors, never in direct sunlight though. It is also difficult to get a good photograph by only using the built in flash but it can work well in combination with another light source.

This will prevent unsightly shadows from appearing in the tree and against the backdrop. It is also possible to take a good picture by only using the ambient light by compensating using a slow shutter speed. It would then become necessary to make use of a tripod to prevent blurring the image.

It is very important to make an effort with the background by setting it up such that it does not distract from the tree. Dark backdrops made from big sheets of paper or non reflective material will make the tree appear brighter and give better definition to the outlines of leaves and branches. Don't place the tree in front of a *busy* background like a garden scene or other trees as it will be difficult to make out what is part of the tree and what is part of the background. Light backgrounds can also be used but be aware of obvious shadows when using artificial lights or flash.

Try to get a setup where the background is out of focus, this will place even more emphasis on the tree. It can be done by placing the tree 2 – 3 meters in front of the backdrop and by using a larger aperture (smaller *f*-number) setting on the camera.



Make sure your camera focuses on the tree and not on a spot on the background. With dark backgrounds, it is important to note that when the camera is set up for auto exposure, the tree and brighter parts of the pot or stand will be overexposed and appear too bright. To overcome this, use the manual exposure compensation (EV +/-) to underexpose by as much as two *f*-stops. It will be expressed as -2 EV (exposure value) on the camera. The reverse is true when shooting against a light coloured background. Take a couple of pictures using different settings and see what difference it makes.

Finally, do a proper matching of the tree and pot with a suitable stand or mat especially with a dark and out of focus background. It will give a good anchor to the tree and avoid the look of a tree floating in mid air. ♣

Vergadering van 2 April



Die tema van die vergadering was die 'Cacade' en 'Semi-cascade' styl. Brandon Roode en Hannes Fritz het die tema met ons oor die style gepraat en ook demonstreer. Daar was 'n paar baie mooi bome in hierdie style op die mini uitstalling en Charles het oor 'n paar van die bome sy mening gegee. Charles se kommentare oor die uitstal bome was baie insiggewend.

Brandon het vir ons 'n aanbieding oor die style op die skerm vertoon wat baie goed en professioneel voorberei was. Hy het ook baie mooi fotos van bome in die styl in sy aanbieding gewys. Ek plaas egter nie die fotos wat hy gewys het nie aangesien ek baie bang is vir kopie reg op die fotos en ek wil nie in die moeilikheid kom nie.

Gedurende Brandon se praatjie en aanbieding het Hannes 'n Procumbens Nana gestyleer in 'n 'Cascade'. Hannes het ook baie raad gegee oor die stylering van bome in die "cascade" styl. Nadat Brandon klaar was met sy aanbieding het hy 'n 'Pyracantha' in 'n 'Cascade' gestyl. Al twee bome het baie mooi gelyk nadat hulle klaar was en sal in die toekoms baie mooi 'Cascade' bonsai wees.



Vervolg op bl 12....



Vergadering van 2 April - vervolg

Brandon het die volgende gesê oor die 'Cascade' en 'Semi-cascade' style:

In cascade styles, the cascading part is called the NAGARE which means "The flow or flowing".

A cascade style bonsai is one in which a major feature extends below the lower rim of the pot. A semi-cascade style bonsai is one in which the major cascading feature extends below the top rim of the pot but does not extend below the bottom of the pot. What determines whether a cascade or semi-cascade bonsai is formal or informal is the part above the rim of the pot. The style depicts a tree in nature growing on a mountain top with all or parts of it hanging over the edge.

Container. The container should be relatively deep and may be round, square, hexagonal, octagonal or a deep cascade. The container may be glazed or unglazed depending on the species of tree.

Styling the tree. Roots: Remove surface soil down to relatively thick radiating roots. Surface roots should radiate in different directions but should be strongest on the side away from the direction of the lean.

Miniture, Literati, Drifwood, Weeping, Exposed root, Root on rock and Root in rock are not styles but characteristics and can all be applied in cascade and semi-cascade styles. ♣



Links bo is die Procumbens Nana voordat Hannes aan hom gestyl het en regs die gestyleerde boom.



Regs is die Pyracantha voordat Brandon aan hom gestyl het en onder hou Brandon die gestyleerde boom vas.



Bonsai Kalender – Deur Francois van As

Gedurende Julie

Teen hierdie tyd behoort julle te weet hoe intens die winter is en wat se beskermingsmaatreëls toegepas moes gewees het. Pasop dat jou boompies nie aan ryp of wind blootgestel word nie, aangesien dit permanente skade kan aanrig. Onthou om water matig toe te dien – ons wil slegs die grond klam hou. Wees versigtig om gedurende die winter te bedraad aangesien vinnige lentegroei die draad kan laat ingroei. Boompies kan laat winter gesnoei word, maak net seker alle wonde word geseël.



Gedurende Augustus

Aan die einde van die winter of begin lente is dit tyd om die boompies te pot of herpot. Dit moet gedoen word voordat die boompies begin bot. Hou hulle maar fyn dop want sommige bot vinniger as ander. Benat net genoeg om die grond klam te hou, soos wat loof verskyn kan watertoediening vermeerder word. Wat voeding aan betref word aanbeveel dat aanvanklike bemesting met lae stikstof inhoud gebruik word totdat die nuwe blaartjies verhard het. Moet nie bladwisselende boompies voed voordat die blare oopgegaan het nie. Die bron wat ek geraadpleeg het beveel ook aan dat boompies wat herpot is vir die eerste ses tot agt weke nie gevoed moet word nie, maak eers seker dat die boom groei anders kan die nuwe ontwikkelende wortels beskadig word. Verwyder enige bedrading wat deur die winter aan boompies gelaat is. ♣

**Despite what we know, or think we know,
we are all in many ways still novices in what
we do because knowledge and experience
has no limit. - William Wilson**

Meeting of 4 June 2011.

"Tip of the month" - by Ben Kruger

Ben het met ons 'n paar dinge gedeel oor sy Kremetart bome wat hy aan mekaar geheg het om saam te 'fuse'. Hy het een van die bome in 2002 by die konvensie gekoop en die ander twee by Safari kwekery. In 2003 het hy hulle vanuit die kwekery sakkies na bakkies geplant en in 2006 na nog groter houers. Hulle het egter baie stadig gegroei en toe besluit Ben om hulle in 2007 in die tuin te plant. Daar was 'n drastiese versnelling in groei vandat die bome in die tuin geplant is. Ben dink dit was ten minste twee keer vinniger.

Tot op daardie stadium was die drie bome nog apart. Duncan het toe in 2008 vir Ben gehelp om die drie saam te bind om een boom te vorm en die drie is weer in die tuin geplant bo-op 'n plastiese sak. Toe Ben die bome na 'n baie nat 2009 seisoen uithaal het een boom se wortels gevrot. Ben het tou by Attie 'n ander boom van dieselfde grootte gekoop om die vrot boom te vervang.



Die bome is weer in die tuin bo-op 'n teël geplant.

Ben het hierdie jaar begin om die boom te styl deur wiggies in die takke te sny om hulle sodoende te kan buig.

Ben het ons gewys dat hy die bome hierdie winter uit die grond gehaal het om droog te bly. Hy sal in die lente die patats afsny en in 'n bak plant. Ben het ook vir ons 'n skermpie gewys wat hy uit elektriese 'conduit' en sak gemaak het om bo-oor sy boom te sit wanneer dit te veel reën of as die son te warm is. ♣



Meeting of 4 June 2011.....continue

Nadat Ben sy 'Tip of the month' gegee het, het Daan du Toit met ons gepraat oor:

Looking after bonsai during the cold season.

Winter care.

Not all plants are as frost hardy below ground as they are above. In some species the previous season's growth, once properly hardened off, can tolerate up to 10 deg C lower temperatures than the roots.

Pots standing on benches are more susceptible to root damage due to cold because the cold air can circulate beneath the pot as well as around the sides and top. The main damage occurs when the moisture in the roots expands as it freezes and literally burst the tissue. Rapid freezing after watering or heavy rain can have the opposite effect. The water in the soil expands as it freezes and crushes the fleshy roots. You can mulch, use pine bark or packing plenty of bubble-wrap or loft insulation around and especially underneath the pots. Keep soil evenly moist but not wet all winter. Pots can also be placed under benches during the cold period. Do not place direct onto the ground; rather elevate using a brick or wood.

Cover your less hardy trees with frost cloth which is available at almost all nurseries.

If you are over-wintering your bonsai in a garage that you also use for your car, make sure you switch the engine off as you have driven in. When starting the car, back it out of the garage and let the engine warm up outside. The exhaust fumes from a car engine can do far more damage to dormant bonsai than the cold. The heat produced may also encourage early break of dormancy.

Winter hygiene.

Many fungal spores and small pests spend the winter in the debris that accumulate on the soil surface, between the nebari, in forks in the branches and in fissures in the bark. Most will be present all year round, in one form or another, and are relatively harmless under normal circumstances. However, small bonsai in the cosy, predator-free environment of a polytunnel are more vulnerable. So before you tuck your trees up for winter clear all leaves, remove weeds, defoliate all deciduous trees and

clear other debris from the twigs and branches and remove all small cobwebs. Keep an eye out for scale insects.

Tweezers, a soft wire brush and an old toothbrush will come in handy.



If trunks and branches have algae growing on them, clean this off with water spray and an old toothbrush. Algae grow rapidly in damp enclosed environments during autumn and winter. Cleaning it now will save you many more hours of work in spring, when you'll have other things to do. It will also help the bark to 'breathe' and preserve emerging adventitious buds.

Some harmful pests lay eggs over winter in the fissures of the bark. Trees with flaky or cracked bark will benefit from an application of a proprietary winter wash.

Preventative spraying using Lime Sulphur is recommended. First cover the soil surface, and tilt the trees. Leave the trees outside for a few days after spraying before tucking them up for winter. The cosy spaces in and beneath the exposed roots are favorite hiding places for woodlice and other insects. Whilst these are not a particular danger to the tree's health, they do burrow in loose material, disturbing surface roots, making gaps between the soil and the pot and dislodging flaky bark. Use tweezers to pick them out –and keep watch for strays.

Although you've spent all summer trying to keep the moss on your pots green and lush, it will provide a home for harmful insects and their larvae.

Continue on pg.....16

Meeting of 4 June 2011.....continue

Besides, in a polytunnel or shed, moss becomes lank and weak, and will normally wither as soon as you put the trees out in spring. If you want to keep the moss carpet for next year, peel it up in large pieces and replant them in a seed tray of moist soil, cover it with chicken wire to keep the birds and cats off, and put it outside on the benches.

Check all drainage holes and clean if necessary. Pay particular attention to removing woodlice, which may have burrowed up through the mesh. These pest can excavate copious amounts of precious soil in their search for decaying vegetable matter to eat.

Pull yellow or dead needles off conifers. Many will have died because their natural useful term has ended, but a pathogen or insect pest may have killed others, so best remove the lot. Take special care to clean the inner branches of dead needles as well. Many pests, especially spider mites, live in this detritus where they reproduce and feed remarkably quickly under winter protection and could devastate a spruce or juniper in a matter of a few weeks.

Watering.

The best time to water is before 10 am in the morning and no later than 3pm in the afternoon. Only water the bonsai if it is dry. If it is windy, your trees will dry out very quickly. They must be moist at all times to avoid damage by frost or wind. Your Baobabs must not be watered until the new buds break. Your soft wood plants must not be over watered.

Winter jobs.

Sharp tools are essential for efficient working and for the health of your trees, and nothing blunts tools quicker than pruning grit-covered roots. Take some time out now to sharpen all your tools carefully or get them done by someone professionally.

Inspect your benches now and replace any rotten or broken slats.

Have you noticed that you never have the right pot for the when you need it? This is the time of year when decisions like that are made, so prepare for next season by deciding on what pots you really need. This is much better than turning up at a meeting in mid summer and buying that nice-looking

pot that seems about right. Nine times out of ten, you get home and find out that it is not right at all, and there's one more pot destined to remain on the shelf and one more tree without the right pot for one more year.

Pruning.

The only problem with pruning in late autumn is protecting the wound from damage before it begins to heal in spring. Cut paste and protection from frost are necessary. Deciduous species gain nothing from being pruned in autumn rather than early spring, but it can be done perfectly well if you want to safe time later. Leave a slightly longer stub than you would if you were pruning in spring. Hollow the wound next season—in summer.

On established deciduous trees the late winter or early spring prune sets the framework for the coming season's growth and has a profound effect on the appearance of the tree in future dormant seasons. If you don't prune hard enough you will be building bigger and bigger problems as the years go by.

Wiring.

Before you wire - de wire. Let your trees rest and stretch for a few months before re-



wiring. In practical terms, this is an ideal time of year to wire any species because the branches are clean, the buds are small and not so easy to dislodge and you probably have more time on your hands. But wiring does cause stress to the tree, which it won't begin to recover from until spring—so concentrate on adjustments rather than drastic shaping. Finish wiring before June and keep the wired trees frost-free.

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Cover any cracks or splits in the bark with cut paste or, in the case of many transvers cracks on the outside of a bend, with something like petroleum jelly. Deciduous trees are best wired during the dormant season. Begin in mid to late July, well before the buds begin to swell.

Wire when the soil is slightly on the dry side and water afterwards if necessary. If the plant is pumped full of water, the twigs and branches will be less flexible and will break more easily. Don't wire while the roots are frozen. The action of bending branches causes a certain amount of tissue damage compressing some cells and expanding or stretching others. If the soil is frozen the tree cannot adjust its water content to compensate for the changes in cell size and some branches might die from drought.

Don't wire the whole tree at one sitting. Take your time by doing a little bit each evening. This way you can consider each move carefully and if you are making mistakes with either the application of the wire or the positioning of the branches, you will have plenty of opportunity to spot them before you have gone to far. Wire is less likely to cut into the bark at sharp bends if you can ensure that it is on the outside of the bend, not the inside. This also helps prevent branch cracking by compressing the tissues rather than stretching them. This is not always possible, of course, but it is a good rule to try to keep.

Always cut wire away to avoid damaging fragile young branches or tender, swollen bark. The thicker the wire, the more important it is to do this. In the long run it is a false economy to try to salvage the wire. It becomes progressively more brittle and difficult to re-apply accurately. You only have to break an important branch once to make the connection. If you must try to uncoil the wire, start with the thinner sizes first. From the tip of the branch towards the base, and hold each turn firmly as you work along the branch.

Bending branches. If you intend to make severe bends in conifer branches, it is best to do that while the tree is resting.

The main danger to the tree during severe bending is the separation of the bark from the wood as it stretches on the outside of the curve and compresses on the inside.

It follows, therefore, that there is less danger of this happening when the bark is stuck fast. Having said that, there's no point in carrying out such operations if the tree has to wait three or four months before it can begin to recover with new growth. Late winter to early spring is best. Bind the branch very tightly with several layers of wet raffia. (Raffia becomes suppler and less likely to snap when wet)

It's easiest to use six or eight strands in a bunch, overlapping at each turn. Try to get the wire to cross the trunk on the outside of the curve. This helps to reduce the stretching effect on the bark as the branch is bent. If the wire crosses the trunk on the inside of the bend, it has the opposite effect—forcing the bark on the outside to stretch and fracture.

Jins and sharis. Autumn and winter are not the best times of the year to make new jins and sharis because the bark is very difficult to remove when the sap is not flowing. But it is a good time to treat existing deadwood areas with lime sulphur. If the wood is bone dry, spray with clean water before applying the lime sulphur - this helps it penetrate.

To darken the usually snow-white lime sulphur you can add wood ash, charcoal or soot. Works just as well as inks but is cheaper!

Arranging your bonsai-en.

Plan for all similar species to be placed together so that their watering and feeding programs are done on a controlled basis. You can start moving your trees around during August. Be careful with figs and only move when there is a possibility of no more frost.

Duncan talked to us about insects. Duncan's talk will be placed in a next issue of Koeda.