



Fujii Notes

Newsletter of the Phoenix Bonsai Society

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Summer Preparation for Your Trees

by Jamie Sims

Keeping your trees alive during the excessive summer heat here in the desert is an art in itself. Phoenix lies in climate zone 13 which is a low or subtropical desert zone. The growing season is from mid-February through November interrupted by nearly three months of incandescent, growth-stopping summer heat. The record lows run from 13 to 19 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 17 to 11 degrees Celsius). Most frosts are light. A scant amount of rain comes in the summer and winter. The average high summer temperature in May is 92°F, June 102°F, July 104°F, August 102°F, and in September 97°F. Plants do most of their growing in temperatures above 50° and below 86°F. The optimum growing temperature is 68° to 77°F. Plants go dormant above 100°F.

A bonsai tree should receive a minimum of five hours of direct sun daily to perform photosynthesis – ideally all in the morning. They should be shaded when the average temperature gets above 95°F, or from around May 15th until October 15th.

The best time to water the trees is between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. or between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m. You may find that watering twice a day is necessary. You may mist the trees as long as the temperature is not above 95°F, because then a fast evaporation rate leaves a residue on the leaves that will burn them (unless you can mist with reverse osmosis water).

You should fertilize during the heat with a low-nitrogen content fertilizer. It is advised to not report, trim or wire during this period. You can do minor pinching, however.

To keep your trees alive and healthy during this period there are things you can do to offset the relentless heat. Shade them with a 100% shade cloth. Bury the pot of the tree in the ground or bare root the tree. Put the tree in the pot inside a wooden grow box filled with some type of forest mulch. Keep the trees that are not ready for a pot in a wooden grow box. Keep the trees in an area of high humidity, beside a swimming pool for example – but watch out for chlorinated water splash-over onto your trees! Or you can set tins of water beneath your little trees.

501 Status is Approved

Thanks to lots of work, the Phoenix Bonsai Society has been approved for 501 status. We can now give to the club and get a tax write-off. We can solicit money from nurseries and others for the club with a benefit to the donor. We thank Mike Apostolos for heading up all of this work that took several years. Others who helped on this are Doug Acker, Max Miller, Bob Jones, Elsie Andrade, Jim Jeffries, Ardie Apostolos, Penny Schneck, Fred Carpenter, and Susie Kingston. Many thanks to all of you!

The 2005-06 club season ended with a B.I.G. (Bonsai In the Garden) at Larry Seymour's home where we admired his collection of 95 beautifully-kept bonsai. They are displayed perfectly with space around each one for better admiration. We hear there is a database to go with them and we are hoping to hear more about this next year at one of the meetings. Everyone enjoyed the food on one of the last cool mornings of the season.

Club members will continue to meet at restaurants once each of the three summer months. Club meetings will resume on Tuesday September 5. Watch your e-mail for the Fall issue of Fujii Notes and the club's on-line calendar at www.phoenixbonsai.com/PCalendar.html.

- ☞ **Bonsai of Scottsdale** (2000) meets at 1:30 p.m. on the First and Third Saturdays of the month at the Via Linda Senior Center, Rm. 2, 10440 East Via Linda in Scottsdale, half a mile south of Shea Blvd. Contact Scottsdale President Tom Ballen, TBallen@aol.com / (480) 502-8639 , or Lyn Searfoss, lynsearfoss@cox.net / (480) 905-9238 , for details.
- ☞ **Tucson Bonsai Society** (1972) meets at 12:45 p.m. on the Third Sunday of every month at the Tucson Botanical Gardens' Porter Gardens facility, 2150 North Alvernon Way (near Grant). Contact David Meyer @ (520) 749-4155 or (520) 722-2000.
- ☞ **Southern Arizona Bonsai Enthusiasts** (2001) meet the FIRST SUNDAY of each month at 12:30 p.m. For information contact: Doris Cavanaugh, doris.c@qwest.net / (520) 290-0522 or Pat & Thelma Patterson, dezertrats@aol.com / (520) 825-9685.

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This newsletter is named in recognition of Hideo "Leroy" Fujii (1925-1998), student of bonsai for nearly fifty years, a founding member of our club, and our *sensei* / teacher for more than twenty-five years. Our club logo, courtesy of grandmaster John Y. Naka, is based on one of Leroy's trees. Two pages of some of Leroy's other fine creations can be found on our web site.

"Learn from your trees: they are a reflection of you."

-- Leroy Fujii

PHOENIX BONSAI SOCIETY

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