

**Pikes Peak Bonsai Society**, serving the Colorado Springs, CO area since 1987,  
in conjunction with **Phelan Gardens**, 4955 Austin Bluffs Parkway, (719) 574-8058,

presents

## The Complete Bonsai Workshop

March 10, 2007

Bonsai ("bone-sigh") is the art/hobby of designing and caring for dwarfed potted trees (under 4' tall). Originating over fifteen hundred years ago and developed in Asia, this gardening craft has spread across the globe and now is enjoyed world-wide. Almost any woody-stemmed perennial plant that produces true branches can be used. The container chosen complements the tree's shape without being overpowering.

The composition can have one or more trees and sometimes rocks with smaller accent plants. Ideally, it can lead one's imagination and memory to travel through a magical miniature landscape.

Specimens are obtained from 1) nursery stock, 2) landscape specimens or saplings or wild-grown stock collected with the landowner's permission, 3) cuttings, 4) air layering, 5) grafting, and 6) seed.

Shaping is done primarily using 1) initial pruning and placement in the relatively shallow container, 2) maintenance trimming and pinching, and 3) temporary wiring to direct growth and fill in empty spaces.

Enough water, fertilizer (both organic and synthetic), sunlight, and fresh air is given to maintain the tree's good health but not promote excessive growth. A coarse soil mix provides good drainage.

### **TREES AS OUTDOOR BONSAI HERE (when given appropriate protection from extreme weather)**

#### **Evergreen:**

False cypress (*Chamaecyparis* sp.)  
San José juniper (*Juniperus chinensis* 'San Jose')  
Shimpaku/Sargent's Juniper - (*Juniperus chinensis sargentii*)  
One-seed juniper (*Juniperus monosperma*)  
Rocky Mountain juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*)  
Eastern juniper (*Juniperus virginiana*)  
Dwarf Alberta spruce (*Picea glauca* 'Conica')  
Colorado blue spruce (*Picea pungens*)  
Rocky Mountain bristlecone pine (*Pinus aristata*)  
Japanese five-needle or white pine (*Pinus parviflora*)  
Ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*)  
Japanese black pine (*Pinus thunbergii*)  
Yew podocarpus (*Podocarpus macrophyllus*)  
Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)  
Firethorn (*Pyracantha* sp.)  
Yew (*Taxus* sp.)

#### **Deciduous:**

Trident maple (*Acer buergerianum*)  
Amur maple (*Acer ginnala*)  
Japanese red maple (*Acer palmatum*)  
River birch (*Betula nigra*)  
Boxwood (*Buxus* sp.)  
Buttonwood (*Conocarpus erectus*)  
Apple (*Malus* sp.)  
Mulberry (*Morus alba*)  
Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*)  
Potentilla (*Potentilla* sp.)  
Live oak (*Quercus* sp.)  
Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*)

## TREES AS INDOOR BONSAI HERE

(Particular varieties that can *tolerate* the temperature, light and humidity of indoor conditions, but which still *require* certain levels of these plus good air circulation in order to be healthy and to thrive)

Bougainvillea (*Bougainvillea* sp.)  
Jade tree (*Crassula argentea*)  
Fukien Tea (*Ehretia buxifolia*, aka *Carmona microphylla*)  
Weeping fig (*Ficus benjamina*)  
Narrow-leaf fig (*Ficus neriifolia*, aka *F. salicifolia*)  
*Ficus retusa* (aka *F. microcarpa nitida*)  
Orange Jasmine (*Murraya exotica*)  
Dwarf jade/Elephant's food (*Portulacaria afra*)  
Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)  
Dwarf Schefflera (*Schefflera arboricola*)  
Tree of a Thousand Stars (*Serissa foetida*)  
Catlin elm (*Ulmus parvifolia* var. *Catlin*)

## RECOMMENDED BOOKS

For general information about bonsai, the following are the most highly recommended English-language works in our field:

Chan, Peter *Bonsai Secrets, Designing, growing and caring for your miniature masterpieces* (Pleasantville, NY: The Reader's Digest Association, Inc.; 2006).

Coussins, Craig *The Bonsai School* (Bideford, Devon: D&S Books; 2002).

Gustafson, Herb L. *The Bonsai Workshop* (New York: Sterling Publishing Company, Inc.; 1994).

Lang, Susan and Editors of *Sunset Publications* *Sunset Bonsai* (Menlo Park, CA: Sunset Publishing Corporation; January 2003).

Norman, Ken *The Complete Practical Encyclopedia of Bonsai* (London: Hermes House, an imprint of Anness Publishing Ltd.; 2005, 2006).

With proper and regular care, these trees can live as long or longer than their full-sized siblings. A variety of shapes and sizes can be used with a wide range of trees, providing your garden display area with different colors, textures, leaf forms, and even flowers throughout the year.

Do not attempt to do too much at once with a new tree. Prune one month, for instance, then the next month re-pot. Take your time and get to know the growth patterns and requirements of each particular tree. Try more than one tree at a time. You can use shears and scissors you already have for the initial shaping. As you get more interested and involved in this you can then get the specialized tools.

Outdoor specimens can be brought indoors to be enjoyed, but **only** for a few days at a time. Be careful not to subject them to direct heat or air conditioning.

Indoor specimens can be brought outdoors for a while **if** nights are over 70° F and if the trees are given partial shade from direct sun and protection from winds and hail. Remember that when outdoors their watering requirements will change!

Bonsai: a little bit of continual work and patience bringing a lot of enjoyment over a long period of time, a relaxing and recreative gardening hobby which provides education and experience with nature while creating what could become a living family heirloom.

For much more information, please see [www.phoenixbonsai.com/PikesPeakBonsai.html](http://www.phoenixbonsai.com/PikesPeakBonsai.html)