



Lighthouse Bonsai Society



Next meeting Sat. May 30, 9:00–12:00 at Boca Raton Community Center, 150 Crawford Blvd 5th Saturday of the month due to Bonsai Society of Florida Convention in Orlando, May 21 through May 25

Tree Talk
By
Rita Rosenberg
Watering Bonsai



May Program—Repotting, Repotting, Repotting! Bring your Tree and repot with us and be sure to bring a snack too!!! Soil for purchase will be available.

As with all plants, water is vital to the survival and healthy growth of bonsai. Some find it difficult to assess the watering needs of bonsai. It is best to ignore how you water your other plants although there are some similarities. This article is related to outdoor bonsai. Very few species can be kept indoors. Keeping your trees outdoors is best for the happiness of your trees. If our trees are happy we are happy. The frequency of watering depends on the plant material, consistency of the soil, depth of the bonsai container, and the weather. Only when it rains can bonsai watering be skipped. If there is a "chance" of rain but its bright and sunny with clear skies, I water. The weather reports are not always correct. Mild weather may mean watering just 3 or 4 times a week. No single schedule can be applied to all bonsai. Every bonsai should be checked daily for soil moisture. It is important that the correct watering routine is carried out in order to maintain the health of any type of bonsai. Misting cleans and refreshes foliage, but is not a substitute for watering. In very hot or windy weather, especially with bonsai in very small pots, soil moisture should be checked twice a day. If you are not able to check twice a day especially with trees in tiny pots, you can sink the pot halfway up to its rim in a container of water and pebbles. The best way to check if water is needed is to stick your finger an inch or so down into the soil. If it is moist it doesn't need to be watered. If you will be gone all day and it is a hot or windy day then water the tree before you leave. Bonsai should never be allowed to dry out or become soggy. The goal in bonsai watering is to provide even and moderate moisture. Allowing the pot to sit in water should be avoided unless it is the tree's first watering after being potted. Too much watering will cause the roots to become soggy and will rot causing your tree to die. If your tree dries out and the leaves wilt, mist the leaves and soak the soil. Move the bonsai to a shady spot until it recovers. Then move it back to its normal location. Your daily observation of your tree will let you know how much water it needs. Bonsai in very course, rapid draining soil may need more frequent watering. When you water, notice whether the water is coming through the drainage hole of the container. When it does you will know that the water has saturated the roots and the bonsai has had enough. If you are going away for more than a day or two and you don't have a timed watering system, you will need to make sure your bonsai are properly watered. If you are having someone water for you make sure you give them specific instructions and let them watch how you water.

We all learned a lot at the April Meeting when Vlad styled some of our members trees with potential and put them on the path to becoming Beautiful Bonsai.



Rodney Clemons
Saturday, June 20
There's still a few spots left
to work with this Bonsai
Master. \$25

Don't forget your gift for the Raffle Table