

# Journal of The Ottawa Bonsai Society



April 2003

[www.ottawabonsai.org](http://www.ottawabonsai.org)

Vol. 18, No. 6

## *Notes from Your Steering Group*

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St. Patrick's Day, one of Ottawa's very first mild days after a grueling Winter, was the perfect setting for our March meeting. The hint of Spring in the air lifted our spirits and, like our slumbering trees, awakened us to the thoughts of the coming Summer.

A BCI slide show on harmony in Bonsai kicked off our meeting. The emphasis of the presentation was on the difference in oriental art and style to western thinking. It provided a very insightful view into the Japanese influence on the art form.

Afterwards, the always well-prepared Vianney Leduc continued his demo on adding points of interest to conifer trees. Having covered the creation of deadwood in February, he continued with a design discussion on an upright collected Eastern White Cedar. Using his tree and drawings thereof, he explained the design considerations and possibilities of covering deadwood to acquire the most enhancing effect.

He then offered a dramatic alternative that he has planned for the tree involving the splitting and carving of the trunk down the middle to simulate a tree with a hollow or lightning damaged center (the how and why of this was discussed by the club members at great length). It was a very thorough and engaging presentation showing how a tree can be drastically altered and improved.

As Spring is now on us and our trees are coming out of hibernation, our minds are working overtime to discover the treasures that lie in each of our trees. There are times when the hidden design eludes us and/or there is another version which we might find more attractive. Sometimes, another viewpoint will help us steer towards a new vantage point. The April 28<sup>th</sup> meeting is geared towards this goal. The "Bring your own tree for an advice/design alternative discussion" will consist of you and your peers offering ideas and possible uses of material brought in by OBS members. The more OBS members present will help for the success of this meeting.

After a hard Ottawa Winter, the busiest season for the enthusiast is finally here. This is also the most fast-paced season for the society. We are planning an exciting workshop for June, a grafting demo, a club shopping trip for freshly imported material and/or supplies and a possible collecting trip. These are the benefits that belonging to the Ottawa Bonsai Society brings. Watch for these and other exciting events in your OBS journal or better yet, come to the meeting and participate.

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## ***Ottawa Bonsai Society Events Calendar***



### **NEXT MEETING**

## **Bonsai Clinic and Members' Bonsai Sale**

**DOOR Prize!!! A medium-sized blue rectangular bonsai pot**

**Monday April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2003**

**7:30 p.m.**

**Building #72, Central Experimental Farm**

(NOTE: This meeting was rescheduled from the regular date of Apr. 21<sup>st</sup> due to the conflict with the Easter weekend.)

Would you like help on the design of a “problem” tree? Would you like to re-design an existing bonsai? Do you want help wiring, pruning or re-potting your tree? Is your tree sick and you want some advice on what to do? Well, this meeting is specially designed for you! Bring in your bonsai or pre-bonsai stock and get the advice, consultation and assistance of senior members of the society. Several “stations” will be set up manned by a “bonsai doctor” who will discuss your situation and even help you work on it as time permits. Feel free to attend multiple stations to get various opinions. Wire and soil will be available for purchase. **There will also be a Bonsai “Flea Market” / Swap Sale.** Bring in any bonsai, bonsai starter material, cuttings, plant stock, pots, etc. and sell them for a worthy cause. 10% of all proceeds will go to the Ottawa Bonsai Society and you keep the rest. Don't miss all the bargains to be had! **Make sure you don't miss this meeting to give you a head start on Spring, the most active bonsai season!**

### **May Meeting Date Change**

**NOTE:** Due to a conflict with the Victoria Day Weekend, our regularly scheduled May meeting will now be held on:

**Monday, May 26, 2003, 7:30 p.m., Building #72, Central Experimental Farm**

### **Shopping Trip!**

Arrangements have been made to accept an invitation from a bonsai vendor in the extended area, to visit their location in the Joliette Area. The vendors are Suzanne Piché and Robert Smith who run La Pépinère du Gros-Bec Errant (French website at [www.intermonde.net/grosbec](http://www.intermonde.net/grosbec) ). They are located about 3.5 hours away by car. The plan is to leave Ottawa at 8:30 a.m. and stopping for lunch along the way, arrive there around 1:00 p.m. We would stay until 3 p.m. and then return to Ottawa. Please call or email **Vianney Leduc (827-3384 or [vianney.leduc@nlc-bnc.ca](mailto:vianney.leduc@nlc-bnc.ca))** for additional details, to register for the trip and to make arrangements for car-pooling.

## **Eastern White Cedar** **by Vianney Leduc**

### **Information sheet on eastern white cedar**

**Common name:** eastern white cedar

**Botanical name :** Thuja occidentalis

The name “cedar” by itself is the name of a tree native to Africa and Asia

#### **Description**

- the eastern white cedar is a coniferous tree that lives in most of the north eastern part of north America
- it grows as far north as James Bay and as far south as North Carolina
- it can reach 15-20 meters
- it can live up to 1000 years
- the foliage is coarse and scale like, growing in many directions (this is the only drawback of eastern white cedars for Bonsai culture)
- the bark is reddish brown in color
- both the wood and the foliage are highly aromatic
- it is a tree that adapts easily to different type of soil (but prefer PH between 6.5 and 7.5)
- when it grows in difficult climate, it will often become stunted and twisted which make them attractive as Bonsai material (in such climate, the eastern white cedar will grow at a rate of approximately 1 cm per 15 years)
- it is one of the easiest native trees to collect!

### ***Eastern white cedar as Bonsai***

#### **A) soil**

- 1 part coarse gravel
- 1 part organic matter
- 1 part absorbent material

The soil should be well drained and ventilated. Again, this tree adapts well to different soil

#### **B) watering**

- eastern white cedar loves humidity and should not have its soil dry out between watering
- if the soil is kept on the dry side, the tree will loose some foliage
- on hot summer day, water twice a day

#### **C) location**

- in the summer the eastern white cedar should be kept in full sun for best results
- it can live in half shade but will not do as well

**D) fertilizer**

- 30-10-10 half strength once a week between around mid May to mid August

**E) repotting**

- eastern white cedars are prolific root growers, once they are established, and will require repotting every second or third year
- on a 100-year-old white cedar, the roots start turning around the pot after two years!
- remove about 30-50% of the root when repotting
- best time to repot is between end of April and end of May

**F) wintering**

- the eastern white cedar is very winter hardy and can be placed outside for the winter as long as it is protected from the sun and the wind
- sun and wind can dry them up resulting in winter kill
- it is important to thoroughly water the soil before putting the pot in the ground if wintered outside
- they may also be wintered in a cold room where temperature varies between +2 and -5 (do not let the soil dry out if kept in cold room)

**G) collecting**

- the eastern white cedar is one of the easiest native tree to collect since they tend to develop a dense root system (you need to excavate less to get a viable root system)
- they tend to survive with little collected root as long as they are placed in the shade and mist often
- it is very important to give extra winter protection to newly collected tree, they can easily dry out in the winter
- it is best to collect them in the spring but they can also be collected in late summer

**H) foliage**

- branches with neatly layered foliage is hard to achieve
- due to the coarse foliage, eastern white cedar makes better large Bonsai than small one (12" or less)
- one method of trimming the foliage, is to use constant pinching much the same as on Junipers
- weekly fertilizer will provide lush green foliage and lots of growth
- on collected specimen, it is sometime necessary to combine the foliage of two (or more) branches to create the illusion of one large foliage pad
- the foliage has a top side, it is important to wire branches without inverting the foliage (or it will die)
- there is a natural shedding process on eastern white cedar where some of the foliage will turn orange and die in the fall
- it is possible to graft (approach grafting) branches with species that have finer foliage
- the foliage will turn to an olive type color in the fall

**I) Jin and Shari**

- it is an ideal tree for Jin and Shari
  - the wood does not rot
  - occurs naturally on collected specimen

## J) branch pruning and wiring

- it is better to Jin a front or side branch you want to remove since eastern white cedar will NOT grow over pruning scar
  - younger branches are easy to bend
  - old branches on collected specimen are brittle and close to impossible to bend
  - the branches can grow quickly around the wire if left unchecked and therefore require multiple rewiring during a growing season
  - the cedar wood does not heal when a branch is cracked
- 



Vianney at work removing unnecessary jin (because it didn't fit in the car).



Vianney's drawing of a "fish skeleton" and why he wanted additional interest.

## Ottawa Bonsai Society 2001/2002 Executive

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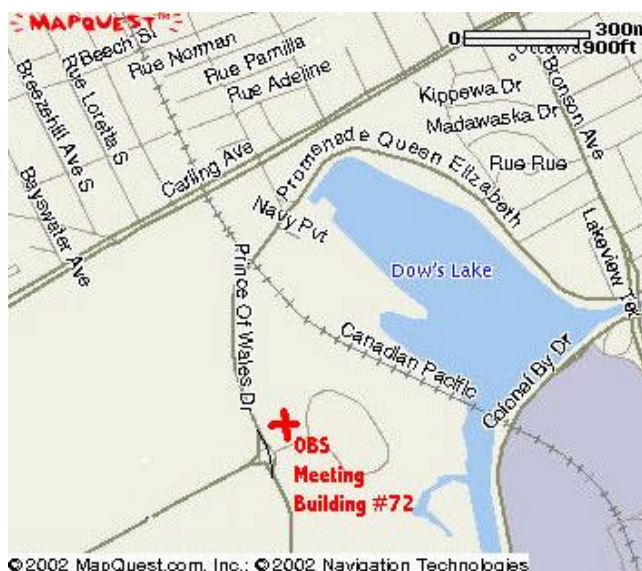
## Steering Group 2002/2003

Yvon Bernier  
Duart Crabtree  
Al Fournier  
Vianney Leduc  
Arne Ojaste  
André Pedneault  
Art Phelan  
Barney Shum  
Gordon Williams  
Murray Wilson  
Matt Yakabuski

\*\*\*\*\* What's New! \*\*\*\*\*

Duart will bring three of M.A. Rahim's trees, a trident maple, a Chinese elm, and a European beech to the April meeting for viewing by OBS members. These trees have been under Rahim's care for the last 20, 7, and 20 years, respectively. The Chinese elm is a specimen piece and has been in the OBS show several times. There will be a silent auction at the **May** meeting giving everyone plenty of time to think about their bids. Minimum bids have been established and will be available at the **April** meeting. Additional information can be obtained by calling **Duart Crabtree at 235-8059**.

### Meeting Location



Our meetings are held at Building #72 at the Central Experimental Farm. Heading south on Prince of Wales, at the traffic circle at the intersection of the N.C.C. Scenic Drive and Prince of Wales, the major entrance to the Experimental Farm and the Arboretum, exit east into the Arboretum. After a very short distance, where the road divides, turn left to Building #72 which will be down a short distance on your left. There is parking just before or just after the building. The entrance is on the street side (east side) and there is a sign reading "Friends of the Farm".

- People who are interested in receiving the Journal through e-mail instead of regular mail, please send a note to [barney.shum@nlc-bnc.ca](mailto:barney.shum@nlc-bnc.ca).
- Suggestions on topics you would like to see in the journal would be welcome and appreciated. Please send them to [barney.shum@nlc-bnc.ca](mailto:barney.shum@nlc-bnc.ca)