

March

- This month is the beginning of concentrated bonsai activity. It is (depending on weather conditions) the start of a new growth cycle. Check your trees carefully for indication of new growth. For deciduous trees the best time to re-pot, transplant and root prune (if necessary) is when the buds begin to swell and before the emergence of new leaves. CAUTION: It is better to be a little early than late.
- Check condition of your bonsai prior to root pruning. There is no need to root prune if the roots are not pot bound (masses of roots pushing against the sides of the container) and roots indicate healthy growth (white root tips). REMEMBER that root pruning will induce new growth below and above soil level and could drastically change the shape and design of your bonsai. However, a change of soil and re-potting (without root pruning) can be beneficial to the health of your bonsai. If you are potting your bonsai for the first time into a bonsai container you will have to root prune to reduce the root mass to fit the container. Pruning and pinching during the growing season can control the new top growth this procedure will induce.
- Re-potted and root pruned bonsai should be placed in a shady area for at least two weeks. After two weeks the trees can be gradually brought out into full light and your normal display area.
- Fertilizer should be withheld for at least six weeks to allow new roots to grow into the new soil. After the six-week period you can start a regular fertilizer program.
- Top pruning and wiring, if called for in the schedule, should be done prior to re-potting or root pruning.
- March is also an excellent month to collect native plant material in North Georgia to add to your growing bonsai collection.
- Depending on weather conditions insect activity could begin this month.
- Your display benches should be scrubbed and painted with a wood preservative. You can clean your benches with a solution of 1 part household bleach to 9 parts of water to kill fungi, mold and algae. You can use a pump-type pressure sprayer to spray the solution and let stand for 5 to 10 minutes. Scrubbing with a brush may be necessary for stubborn areas. Rinse thoroughly with clean water. When completely dry apply a wood preservative even over treated wood to prevent early decay. As with any chemical to be used around plants read wood preservative label before using.

TRANSPLANT/ROOT PRUNE:

- Almond - after flowering
- Apple - as buds begin to appear
- Apricot - after flowering
- Azalea-after flowering
- Bald Cypress - when leaf buds begin to show color
- Beech - before buds come out
- Birch - as new leaves appear
- Crabapple - as buds begin to appear
- Honey Locust -as new shoots appear
- Hornbeam - before buds come out
- Jasmine (winter) - after flowering
- Plum - after flowering
- Redbud - as flowers begin to appear
- Serviceberry - before buds open
- Sweetgum - as new buds open
- Witch Hazel - before leaf buds open

- Wisteria - after flowering
- Camellia, Cedar, Chamaecyparis - Hinoki, Cherry, Cotoneaster, Cryptomeria, Cypress, Elm, Fig (figus), Ginkgo, Hackberry, Hawthorn, Hemlock, Holly - all, Juniper, Maples-all, Pear, Peach, Persimmon, Pines-All, Podocarpus, Pomegranate, Privet, Pyracantha, Spruce, Yew, Zelkova

BRANCH PRUNE:

- Azalea - after flowering
- Apricot - 2/3 after flowering
- Bald Cypress only when actively in growth with green foliage to the tip of branch (or when dormant and the branch is at least ½ inch in diameter - pinkie size)
- Nandina - if old canes are too long
- Plum - 2/3 after flowering
- Quince (Japanese) - after flowering
- Apple, Cedar, Camellia, Cotoneaster, Cryptomeria, Cypress, Elm, Fig (figus), Hawthorn, Hemlock, Holly - all, Hornbeam, Juniper, Maples - all, Mountain Laurel, Pear, Pines - all, Privet, Sasanqua, Spruce, Sweetgum, Wisteria, Yew, Zelkova

TRIM/PINCH NEW GROWTH:

- Azalea - pinch new soft growth until June 15
- Bald Cypress only when actively in growth with leaves to the tip of the branch
- Beech - only new growth is trimmed in the spring; wait until new buds have elongated to where you can see individual leaves and then trim back leaving 2 to 3 leaves.
- Crab Apple - trim new soft shoots
- Hackberry - after new 3-5 nodes leaving one or two nodes - anytime during the growing season
- Hawthorn - prune new soft shoots

FERTILIZE:

Cedar, Chamaecyparis - Hinoki, Cherry, Cryptomeria, Cypress, Juniper, Peach, Pine - cork bark, Pomegranate.

WIRE:

Cedar, Chamaecyparis - Hinoki, Cherry, Cryptomeria, Cypress, Juniper, Peach, Pine - cork bark, Pomegranate.