

October

- Check wiring on all deciduous trees. Wire should be removed if it is starting to cut into the bark. If wires are not removed the branch may die over the winter. It is easier and safer for the bonsai to cut the wire off in small sections rather than trying to un-coil it from the branches and trunk.
- Be aware that sudden spurts of warm weather may start new growth on deciduous trees and broadleaf evergreens such as azaleas. To prevent this, keep such trees in a cool shady area of the garden. There is always a chance for some frost this month. Semi-tropical or tropical bonsai should be gradually moved into a protected area during the first 2 weeks of this month. The cooler (40°) or lower temperatures in late October could injure semi-tropical or tropical bonsai.
- As cooler days and nights arrive there will be lesser demand on water by your bonsai. Be careful not to over-water your trees. In event of a freeze, do not water frozen bonsai; wait until the soil in the container thaws before watering.
- Strong top growth on conifers should be trimmed. On deciduous trees you can safely shorten this years growth slightly after all leaves have fallen. At the end of the month you should remove all fruit and seed pods to maintain strength in the trees. Berries on such trees as cotoneaster and holly can stay on until spring if the trees are in good health.
- You can start to collect azalea, maple and rhododendron seed this month. Maple seed can be planted outdoors this month and next month. The seed will germinate next spring without requiring stratification in a refrigerator. Be certain to mark the area where you sow the seed.

TRANSPLANT/ROOT PRUNE:

Apple, Camellia, Cherry, Cotoneaster, Holly - all, Jasmine-winter, Juniper, Mountain Laurel, Peach, Pyracantha, Quince, Rhododendron, White Pine, Yew.

BRANCH PRUNE:

Beech, Birch, Chamaecyparis-Hinoki, Cypress, Gardenia, Hawthorne, Holly - all, Hornbeam, Juniper, Mountain Laurel, Peach, Quince, White Pine, Yew, Zelkova.

TRIM/PINCH NEW GROWTH:

- Pine-black - bud pick to 2 buds every other year
- Pines-strong top growth
- Tamarix-trim 2/3 current growth
- Apricot, Boxwood, Cedar, Chamaecyparis-Hinoki, Cherry, Citrus, Cypress, Juniper, Pear, Plum, Willow

FERTILIZE:

Fertilizing the following bonsai can be beneficial over the winter by using a fertilizer containing a very small amount of nitrogen such as cottonseed meal, composted cow manure or diluted fish emulsion. Single super phosphate is highly recommended at this time of year since it does not contain any nitrogen. The concept in using fertilizer at this time of year is to maintain a supply of nutrients for root and trunk development without start up of top growth, which would be easily damaged or killed by the onset of cold temperatures. A teaspoon of single super phosphate for an average size bonsai should be sufficient; 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon for mame bonsai. Larger bonsai will require more but do be cautious; less is better. If you are in doubt - don't fertilize until next spring.

Apple, Apricot, Azalea, Bamboo, Camellia, Cedar, Cherry, Citrus, Cotoneaster, Crabapple, Cryptomeria, Chamaecyparis-Hinoki, Cypress, Hemlock, Holly-deciduous, Juniper, Mountain Laurel, Peach, Pear, Pines, Plum, Podocarpus, Pomegranate, Privet, Pyracantha, Sasanqua, Spruce, Tamarix, Wisteria, Yew, Zelkova.

WIRE:

- Azalea-main branches and trunk only
- Chamaecyparis-Hinoki, Cotoneaster, Cypress, Hemlock, Quince, Sasanqua, Yew