

# February

- Continue planning for the busy months ahead. If you haven't used dormant sprays last month do so this month. Do not use dormant sprays if a freezing condition is anticipated within 24 hours.
- Plan and scout out areas for collecting native material. Collecting this month in central and eastern NC should be O.K. Be certain to get owner's permission before collecting plant material.
- Take special care in watering. Do not water when soil is frozen. Wait for warmer weather and then water thoroughly during morning hours before the next freeze sets in.
- Wait to pot up flowering trees such as Apricot, Plum, etc. Enjoy the flowers. However, don't hold off until you see tiny leaves showing - that's too late to root prune.
- You can start to prune fruiting trees this month. See above for re-potting and root pruning flowering trees - much depends on local weather conditions.
- If you want to try your skill at grafting pines and conifers they can still be grafted this month. You can also start grafting deciduous trees late in the month.
- If you haven't prepared a supply of bonsai soil mix for your trees do so this month. Otherwise you will be caught in the middle of your very busy re-potting activity playing "catch-up" or "catch as catch can" in providing soil mixes for your bonsai. Preparing soil mixes now will save you time and frustration in the months to follow. Don't delay mix up your soil NOW.
- Keep an attentive eye on the weather. In late February it is possible to start re-potting but check your trees closely. If buds begin to swell on deciduous trees and there is no danger of freezing for several days you can transplant and root prune.
- **CAUTION** - watch the long-range weather forecasts and don't be too hasty to root prune or to re-pot if forecasts call for continued freezes and below normal conditions.
- Take the time this month to clean and sharpen your bonsai tools. The months ahead will call for much use of scissors, pruners, knives, chisels or carving tools. A SHARP TOOL CAN PREVENT INJURY BY CUTTING WOOD CLEANLY INSTEAD OF JAMMING OR SLIPPING AND CAUSING ACCIDENTAL INJURY.

## **TRANSPLANT/ROOT PRUNE:**

- Almond - after flowering
- Apple - as buds begin to appear
- Apricot - after flowering
- Bald Cypress when leaf buds just begin to show color
- Cherry - after flowering
- Crabapple - as buds begin to appear
- Plum - after flowering
- Quince - Chinese when normal bud activity begins
- Redbud - as flower buds appear
- Zelkova - when leaf buds begin to show green color

During the last week of February you can re-pot and root prune early sprouting species of deciduous trees such as the Japanese maple "Kiyohime" and western maple "Amur".

## **BRANCH PRUNE:**

- Bald Cypress ONLY when actively in growth with new foliage out to the tip of the branch or if dormant and the branch is at least ½" in diameter (pinkie-size)
- Pine - red/white
- Quince - Japanese after flowering
- Apple, Crape Myrtle, Juniper, Spruce, Sweetgum

## **WIRE:**

Bald Cypress, Cedar, Chamaecyparis - Hinoki, Cryptomeria, Cypress, Fir, Juniper, Pines - all,  
Podocarpus, Spruce, Yew.