

July

As summer heats up, bonsai slow down and sometimes come to a complete stop. The most important work now is keeping trees well watered.

Watering: Watch out for excessive heat and water accordingly. Protect bonsai in small or shallow pots by ensuring a layer of clean sphagnum moss covers the entire surface of the soil to help the tree retain moisture. In particularly warm areas, place trees under shade cloth or otherwise protect them from the hot midday sun. Deciduous trees and white pines are especially sensitive to heat.

Check the amount of water each tree takes in. If you are not sure how dry the soil is, dig down about 1 inch and check. Since akadama becomes lighter as it dries out, and darkens when it gets wet, it is a great aid in helping determine water needs.

Flowering and fruiting trees such as pyracantha, apple, wisteria and rose, need a lot of water. Insufficient water will cause these trees to drop their fruits and can affect the production of next year's flowers and fruits.

Shohin and small size trees (chuhin) can be placed on a tray with porous gravel to help increase the moisture. For root-over-rock trees, place a towel over the stone. Wet towels help to cool down the stone and protect the roots from the heat.

Place water-loving bonsai, like wisteria, bald cypress, etc., in a shallow pan or saucer to keep the roots soaked. Do not submerge more than the bottom quarter of the pot.

Remember to rotate your trees at least once a month.

Spray for insect once a month also.