

# PRUNE, PINCH, & WIRE

## Columbus Bonsai Society

NEW

**Sep  
15**

Next CBS Meeting  
2:00 PM  
Franklin Park  
Conservatory

You bring  
A  
Yew

Our guest presenter will be Michael Rusnak, who will give a program on collected yews (*Taxus* sp.). These familiar landscape plants can be excellent bonsai, and their popularity in home landscapes means there is a ready supply.

Michael will illustrate his talk with examples of yews from his own collection, and attendees are encouraged to bring their own yews for discussion and advice.

Any time after the scheduled program will be a BYOT (Bring Your Own Tree) discussion for yews and non-yew species.



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Hello September

Where has the time all gone to? Haven't done half the things I want to...

Sometimes there is great truth in musical comedy lyrics. Every summer I live through seems to feel shorter and shorter...with the winters feeling longer and longer. It may not be true judging by a calendar but certainly feels that way when you're living through it.

The usual summer activity has been supplemented for me and the family by selling a house and downsizing into a different house. We are 'empty nesters' now ( how did I get to be old enough for that?). If you haven't been through the moving process lately its an experience I recommend you avoid at all costs. Especially as one gets more mature-the combination of a lifetime of acquiring stuff coupled with a diminished strength and energy yields a combination that is both frustrating and exhausting. If you contemplate moving pay close attention to schedules. An adult son moving into his own place as you move into yours means you have one less strong back to help with the lifting and toting-plan carefully.

Of course the upside of a new property is the laying out and arranging of a new bonsai set up. Aid been in my previous house 20 years, and the bonsai area sort of grew on an ad hoc basis and was arranged much more for ease and practicality than looks. My wife often made not subtle hints about how nice it would be to have a "prettier" sort of display. Since we are starting from scratch at the new place, there can absolutely be a more thought out, aesthetically pleasing arrangement. Work goes slowly -but it goes.

There are big plans for the remaining meetings of 2024. Remember that the September meeting will be at Franklin Park Conservatory. But all the remaining meetings will not. October and November meetings will be at Contrast Church in Grandview, and the December meeting (our traditional year end gathering) will be at a hospitality venue also in Grandview. Watch your newsletter for specifics and remember that each meeting is posted as an event through the Facebook group.

Speaking of upcoming meetings:

the September topic is working with collected yews and will feature a BYOT tree portion.

October is our White Elephant/ Consignment sale & Pot Luck. If you have plant material and other bonsai or plant related items bring them and offer them to fellow club members. All proceeds go to the seller except 10% going back to the club. To promote the most vigorous sales environment, be sure to invite plant minded friends and family!. This meeting will also be a pot luck so bring an item to share.

In November CBS board member Kevin Faris will present images and experiences from his visits National Arboretum bonsai collection.

Details are coming together for the holiday gathering. I can't remember plans for this event being solidified in September, but things are going well this year! Stay tuned for details.

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## Olives and "Olives"

*By Ken Schultz*

Are you confused when the common name for four different species of tree is "Olive"? Yes, there are four different species going under the banner of "Olive" and only one is a true "Olive", *Olea Europa* and *Olea sylvestrus*, both produce the green fruit that is brined and used to garnish Martinis, *Olea* olives are from the Mediterranean area and are very long lived. *O. sylvestrus* has smaller leaves and is preferred for development into stunning bonsai. *Europa* leaves are opposite and about 2" long; *sylvestrus* leaves are less than 1". Their color is darker on top than the bottom, which is slightly silvery in color. It is an evergreen tree.



This is why the use and knowledge of scientific names can be very important. Confusion can occur when people are discussing two different plants in conversation and end up arguing over their care or use, because of this confusion. For this article I'm going to touch on the four Olives. True Olives, Autumn Olives, Russian Olives and Black Olives.



*Olives continued...*

**True Olives**, Because Olive trees have been under cultivation for thousands of years, there are 72 different Olive tree varieties, *O. sylvestrus* or *O. europa* are typically grown for their fruit (properly called *drupes*) but can also be used for bonsai. I've read about the process of processing the olives to make them edible and wonder how man ever learned to do this? Many specimen Olive bonsai trees are originally field grown. I've seen "ugly stumps" for sale to make into bonsai selling in the thousands, especially those with alleged great age. They bud easily on old wood and have a gnarly whitish grey bark. Their hard wood also allows this who likes to carve deadwood, to explore their artistic side. The downside is that they are not freeze tolerant. In a small pot they may need to be watered several times a day during hot weather. They have a relatively poor root system and may not need to be repotted as often as tropical trees. One site said he only repotted every 5-10 years from mid June to mid July. It does not need a wet acidic soil. It grows naturally in a limestone soil. When pruned they have strong angular growth. Wire late, in early autumn.



I have two and they need to come in when the temperatures drop. I struggle each winter to give them enough light to keep them healthy, When they return outdoors, they spend a couple months recovering their foliage and pushing new growth. Jose' Cueto, who now lives in Spain has an *O. sylvestrus* that he reports is a stunning bonsai. I have also seen a beautiful 250 year old *Sumo* Olive tree at the Expo in Asheville NC.

**Autumn Olive** is not a true Olive. They are a shrub (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) and in the Midwest they are considered to be invasive. You might be able to collect a yamadori Autumn Olive since they grow from Main to Wisconsin and south to Virginia.

Their large leaves (up to 3" with a silver underside) can be reduced by defoliation to create a passable bonsai in a few years since they are also rapid growing, up to 6' in a single year. But they peak out at about 20' tall and 30' wide. They thrive in poor soil and produce berries, disbursed by birds. As usual, man imported them from Asia to create windbreaks and to feed animals, with their fruit, which is edible. These berries, which develop in late summer, are covered with tiny silver scales. Their cream to light yellow flowers, are reported to smell wonderful. They differ from Honeysuckle in that their leaves are "alternate"; Honeysuckle leaves are "opposite".

Because of their rapid rate of growth and wood that is very soft, they are a challenge when creating bonsai from them. Reportedly, they are also known to have branches die for no apparent reason. And reportedly they are not a long-lived tree, so this is not a specimen that you're developing to pass down through your family.





Olives...

**Russian Olive** is also a very hardy invasive species, *Elaeagnus augustifolia* and *E. pungens*. Both Autumn Olive and Russian Olive are related and are deciduous. The Russian Olive is reported less hardy and suffers when temperatures fall below the upper 20's. *E. pungens* is a fall bloomer. Though one person said it takes his Colorado winters. Though it may sacrifice its twiggy branches, making it hard to get good ramification. Lending some credibility to using it for bonsai, I found Ryan Neil keeping one at Mirai. Russian Olives are an even faster grower than Autumn Olives, growing 6'/year up to 45'. The leaves of a Russian Olive have silvery scales on both sides of their leaves unlike Autumn Olives, which only have them on the bottom. This gives the Russian Olive a grey looking leaf. Their bark is brown/grey. As bonsai they will need regular pruning. Both also sprout from the ground around the main trunk. You can remove 1/3 their branches at a time.

Because of the invasive nature of both the above trees, your Nature Conservancy friends ask that you eat all the berries you can to keep them from spreading.



**Black Olives** are tropical trees and cannot take temperatures below 40F. They are *Bucida molinetta* and *B. spinosa*. Due to their tiny 2" long opposite leaves they are often called Dwarf Black Olive. Their leaves are bright green in color, no silvery scales. Young trees have a smooth grey bark, but older trees have a rough trunk that often twists. They are considered to be desirable bonsai material because they easily develop ramification. Inside in the winter, you will need to give it as much light as possible. They are native to the upper Florida Keys (Zone 10) where they can grow up to 40-50' tall, but grow very slowly. They do produce a small black seed capsule, which is found among the 1" long spines along the branches. Yes, this beast has needle sharp thorns. They are also called Spiny Black Olive, but they do not produce edible fruit and their flowers are green.

They need to be kept damp and benefit from misting in the winter. Fertilize them regularly. Pruning results in dieback, so prune longer than you want. Deadwood is an invitation for fungal diseases. The plant growth changes direction by 25-30 degrees at every internode, making them an interesting bonsai. They are susceptible to sooty mold and scale. So, regular spraying with a fungicide may be necessary. A frequently found style for Dwarf Black Olives is Windswept.



From: Sandy Schofield

To: Columbus Bonsai Society

Hello all;

Here is my invite for CBS members to stop by my house

4322 Secludedwood Ct 43230

Sunday Sept 15th 10:00 am - 1:00 pm so folks can still attend the CBS mtg at FPC

**60+ bonsai pots - various sizes - a fair number of larger pots.**

**some bonsai trees - outdoor and smaller tropicals.**

**A Harbor Freight 6 ft x 8 ft greenhouse - possibly 10+ years old so a bit rough - is assembled so would need taken apart to transport - make me an offer.**

Would need to be cash sales as I do not have access to paypal, zelle, etc.

Any questions, you can reach me

schoenfeldsandy@yahoo.com or 614-266-1719

Thank you,

## A Foreigner's Survival Guide for Bonsai in Japan with Darren Bloomfield - Ep36

Darren Bloomfield is a British bonsai artist who moved to Japan over a decade ago as an English teacher. In this interview, he and Kevin share practical tips for foreigners who travel to Japan or even for others who might want to move to Japan as well as insights into the Japanese hobbyist bonsai community and how it compares to the hobbyist community in the west.



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