

# RED DRAGON BONSAI

Welcome  
Well here's spring!! What a great time for bonsai, this has to be the absolute best time of the year.  
We could do with a little more rain that's for sure. Lots of jobs to do around your collection. This is when you find out if your pre winter fertilizing and wire removal has paid off.  
Here at the nursery, we have never seen it so busy, bonsai is growing at an amazing rate. So many new people joining this wonderful hobby.  
Lots of young people which is so great to see. Don't forget to encourage them, and help them with all the things you struggled with when you first started.



Well we finally unloaded all the pots (15 tonnes!) and we have some absolutely magnificent pots if I don't mind saying so myself!  
Lots of different styles and colours. Everything from smaller collector pots to the larger stuff (as seen above.) These are the last big dragon pots we could get. We had 3 sizes, the biggest above, a medium and small but all the small have gone.

We also have a number of large black pines which were field grown. These were dug up and bare rooted and repotted. We always wait until they are established with new growth before they go out for sale. Well they are all jumping and ready. A number of people were waiting so heres your chance. These trees are becoming harder and harder to come by. No-one wants to spend the time anymore growing them, (these are about 15+ years old) so demand is now outstripping supply, and they will only grow in value.  
Chris



BONSAI SAYING:  
THE RESULT; THAT COMES AFTER. YOUR ENJOYMENT IS WHAT IS IMPORTANT. - JOHN NAKA



Bonsai saying:  
I have killed more trees than you will ever own... - William N. Valavanis



Opening hours Monday to Saturday 9.00 – 4.00

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VOLUME # ISSUE #

### SHAPING

All this new growth presents us with lots of opportunities. If allowed to grow feely your tree will probably lose its shape very quickly. The answer to this is obviously trimming and pruning.

Before I go any further, I will explain a method of creating thicker trunks on your trees during this increase in growth.

By allowing a branch which is either low to the ground, or even in the apex, to grow unhindered for a year or so without trimming, will create a much thicker trunk. This really is common sense, obviously the bigger a tree grows, the thicker the trunk required to support it. You can even take it out of its pot, put it in a nursery pot, or box, and whilst keeping aspects of the tree in shape, allow this new branch to extend.

The usual name for this branch is a "sacrifice branch". The reason for this is that the branch is never intended to be a part of the tree, but is grown to create thickness, and is later "sacrificed". Wherever the branch is left on, all below it will thicken. So if you just want to thicken the base choose a branch low down, if you want to thicken the whole trunk, choose a branch in the apex.

Now to shaping.

Different types of trees require different techniques when trimming.

Leafy varieties differ to junipers in the way we cut them. With trees like elms, figs privets etc, we can fairly freely snip away with our scissors, even cutting through the leaves in places with no ill effect. Many trees once they become thick, are cut just like a hedge. Once the clouds are created, just a trimming to keep the cloud shape is all that is needed.

Junipers on the other hand, are treated differently. If you were to just cut away with the scissors, within a week you will have a half brown, half green tree.

The reason for this is that most junipers grow in what is known as "whorls" This is where all the buds grow out at a single point, whereas most "leaf" trees grow with either opposing or alternate buds.

So with the junipers, it is important to "pinch out the new growth to continue to encourage new growth which will produce your cloud like foliage pads.

Now if you look closely at a small part of your juniper that has been pinched out, you will see that the stem is made up of little scale like sheaves. This is where the dormant buds are. Between 2-6 new buds will shoot from this point. After allowing them to grow say 20mm they are then pinched back and each of these will produce 2-6 more buds and so on.

Don't go ballistic and pinch them back to nothing. Many people make this mistake. If these are allowed to grow to long, die back will occur underneath where the sun or light is not getting to. If this has happened you will need to cut through these stems with scissors, or cutters. The whole pad should not be much thicker than 25mm or so.

The important thing to be doing at this time is pushing growth by fortnightly fertilizing. More growth, more trimming, more fertilizing, will develop your tree. I should mention that at this time your tree needs maximum sun, but don't forget to keep up the moisture. Junipers don't like to be wet all the time, so let them become nearly dry.

Also with junipers, you may need to remove some of the dead growth that is underneath the new growth. This can be done by using a chopstick and working it in and around the inner branches. This will readily remove all the old needles. If allowed to remain it becomes a great little hiding place for bugs with all the material they need to build their little homes!

Now your leafy varieties need trimming in different ways. You need to trim your branches to produce more branches. By trimming a tree, the hormone that is in the growing tip has been removed, therefore the tree will produce new buds further back down the branch. This is what we are after. Always cut 5-10 mm in front of the last bud. The reason for this is so as the last bud is not damaged. You can always go back later and cut of any little stubs. If you cut to closely you may get die back and lose the bud you wanted for growth in that direction. Always cut to the direction that you want the branch to grow in. Allow the new shoot to lignify, (harden) before you cut it back.



This is what we are trying to achieve with ramification, it takes but is well worth it!

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