



## Bonsai Tasks in July:

**T**his is the month of picnics, beaches, backyard barbecues, swimming pools and all other sorts of summer fun. This is also the time of vacation trips. If you are going away, remember that your bonsai will still require daily care. Although the spring flush of vigorous growth is now slowing, your trees still need constant watering. Indeed, maybe even more during those hot, sunny days of summer. Arrangements for this may be a dependable neighbor, a willing relative or perhaps an automatic watering system. If you have such a system, check it out thoroughly to make sure that it is operating properly and that every tree is getting watered. It's heartbreaking to come home from a week at the beach to find that one tree on your benches is dried out because of a plugged or moved dripper.



Partial shade may be necessary during extreme heat for delicate species, especially maples. High temperatures and wind may cause rapid drying out and cause root burn in shallow pots. Keep up humidity under these circumstances or shade trees from direct overhead afternoon sun. Trees may need watering several times a day on exposed sites.

Some species of evergreens, which include white pines, cedars, some junipers and spruces, display a deeper richer color if given some shade.

When not away, continue with your summer pruning. Do not let your trees grow wild. Though not as severe as the spring pruning, you should still keep the tree's growth in bounds.

Continue to finger tip prune trees such as Junipers. Candle pruning on pines should be completed by this time.

Maintain your feeding schedule for all trees. It is accepted that plants do not take up nutrients if the temperature is above 90 degrees. But, as you all know, those days are few and far between in our area. On days that the temperature goes above 80, you may want to discontinue feeding at that time. I feed constantly with my automatic system, but may skip a feeding on those that I hand water when the temperature is above 80.

Continue to check for pests that may be lurking under leaves, at the base of needles or in bark crevices. Spray only when necessary, with the proper insecticide. I have found that NEEM oil solves most of my pest problems.

Continue to rotate trees for even light and growth. Check wired branches to make sure that the wire is not cutting in. Keep your pots weeded.

Most importantly, take time to enjoy the summer.