

MONTHLY TIPS

(Ed.'s Note: The following was written by George Buehler, the editor of the 'Bonsai News', the monthly newsletter of the Greater Louisville Bonsai Society.)

We are approaching the time to watch the predicted outside temperatures, especially later this month. If the temperature is predicted to be 55 degrees F or lower, tropical trees should be brought inside. As I write this, I know that we will get at least one night of these temperatures and after bringing my tropicals in, will have to take them back out the next day. I call this the "fall tropical shuffle". It is better to be safe than sorry. Early this month, you may want to treat your tropicals with an insecticide and a systemic insecticide to ensure they are free from insects before bringing them in. As you pick up the pot, look underneath to make sure there is not a spider's nest or worse an ant nest. Depending on the weather prediction, I usually start spraying my tropicals with a water hose every few days to wash off some of the potential insects.

Evergreens and deciduous trees need to stay in their current location for quite some time. They both need to be exposed to cold temperatures so that they can start shutting down for the winter. Deciduous trees should start changing color late this month. Don't forget the pictures of their fall colors. Fertilization should continue but using a low or no nitrogen fertilizer. Blooming trees should be treated with a high phosphorous fertilizer like super phosphate once during September and again in October to encourage bud set.

If you didn't get around to the fine wiring on your trees last spring, it can be done now, especially on evergreens. Make certain you note in your early spring tasks that this wire needs to be removed or it will scar the tree when it begins its spring awakening.

As the trees start their dormancy periods, they will require less water. However, each tree will need to be examined daily to determine if it needs watering.

Visit some of the local nurseries. This is the month when surplus trees and supplies can be purchased at a discount.