

# PFM RAMBLINGS

If you do not wish to receive my monthly newsletter, please send me an email.



**GET it done now**

## YEAH...I THINK SPRING IS HERE (MAYBE)

### Time to finish all the repotting: Trees are budding out.

quickly....get it all done now!

Sorry for the lateness of this May issue, but I am going crazy with spring work. Some days are hot some nights still bring frost, Some repotting notes:

Be sure to check for the best time to repot each species and get it done now.

The best time to repot is just when the buds show life in spring.

Once the transplanting is done, be sure to work on some new trees for your collection.

To keep my self happy and sane, I tend to work on something new in between pottings.

#### NOTE:

I LOVED the orders I received for BONSAI 3-2-1 last month. I never thought it would fool anyone! I do wish the product existed!



*Just planted a Pitch Pine on a great rock and completed the planting with a number of ground covers. I Need more work on the apex now. The trees was in training for several years prior to the rock planting.*

*Drop by and see the results!*

*Plus some other new bonsai in the collection.*

# SERRISA FOETIDA



## **Serissa foetida...Snow Rose**

by Pauline F Muth

**Serissa** is a flowering plant with a number of cultivars. In its natural habitat is a sub tropical and lives in wet meadows and woodlands in southeast Asia . Serissa goes by the common names of **Snowrose**, **Tree of a thousand stars**, or **Japanese Boxthorn**; and was formerly called **Serissa japonica**.

Snowrose and tree of a thousand stars are different cultivars. The only method of differentiating is measuring the difference in the shape and size of the flowers produced.

It is an evergreen or semi-evergreen shrub 45-60 [cm](#) high, with oval, deep green, rather thick leaves. The upright stems branch in all directions and form a wide bushy dome. It is grown for its neat habit, good coverage of branches and long flowering time. It is also valued for its rough, grey trunk which tends to get lighter in color with age. The species descriptive foetida comes from the unpleasant scent given off by the roots when crushed.

Serissa flowers practically all year round, but particularly from early spring to near autumn. The 4- to 6-lobed flowers are funnel-shaped and 1 cm wide. They first appear as pink buds but turn to a profusion of white flowers. Fertilizing is especially important during the long flowering period.

Many cultivars with double flowers or variegated leaves are also available. 'Pink Snow Rose' has pale pink flowers and leaves edged off-white. Other cultivars include: 'Variegata', 'Variegated Pink', 'Pink Mystic', 'Snowflake', 'Snowleaves', 'Mt. Fuji', 'Kyoto' and 'Sapporo'.

Serissa is one of the most common bonsai, especially in Japan. It is not difficult to maintain as bonsai, but is very fussy. It responds adversely by dropping leaves if over-watered, under-watered, if it's too cold, too hot, or even if just moved to a new location. The plant usually grows back to health when put back to better conditions.

### **Lighting:**

- Partial sun to full sun depending on the area. Can take full sun IF kept moist.
- If kept indoors, needs 1000 Lux.
- Use of grow lamps for 12 hours daily is beneficial.
- Too little light will result in leggy growth.
- **Watering:**
- Keep evenly moist.
- If Serissa dries out, it will soon drop its leaves. If this occurs, remember to reduce watering until the leaves return, or root rot may ensue.
- Some recommend misting in dry weather. Some recommend daily misting, but do not mist while in bloom as this causes the flowers to rot.

### **Feeding:**

- Every 10-14 days during growth, use super phosphate each month
- every 4-6 weeks in winter
- Likes slightly acid soil so the occasional application of Miracid is appreciated.



**Pruning and wiring:**

- When in bloom, remove fading flowers to encourage further flower production.
- Prune as needed; the Serissa is a fast grower and may need radical or repeated pruning to maintain its shape.
- Will bud back on old wood; in fact, some books recommend occasionally pruning back beyond old growth to help the plant maintain its shape.
- Wire during the growing period. Serissa will grow air roots and is often used in exposed root or root over rock styles.
- Eliminate unwanted suckers extending from the base.
- Suitable for all styles except formal upright and broom. Suitable for extra small to medium sizes.

**Propagation:**

- Cuttings root quite easily.
- The Samsons recommend bottom heat which would probably induce rooting faster.

**Repotting:**

- Every 1-2 years in spring.
- The newly pruned roots will emit a wretched odor!
- Prune roots moderately, and use basic bonsai soil.

**Pests and diseases:**

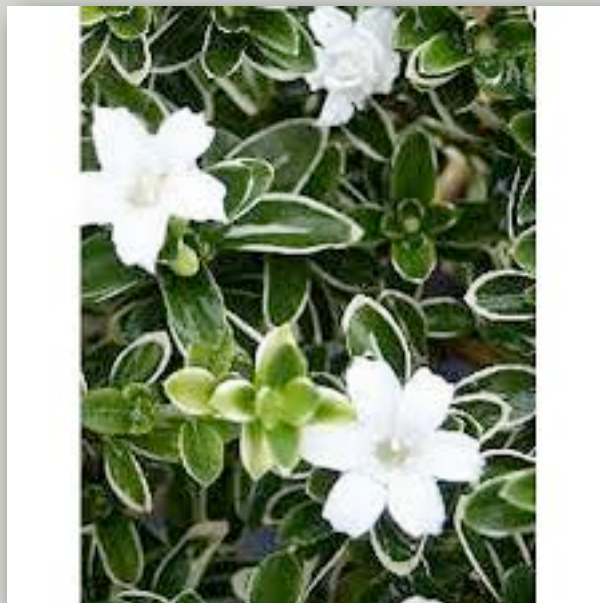
- Red spider mite, scale, wooly aphids, mildew.
- Pests are usually not as much of a problem as a sudden change in conditions such as light, temperature, etc.



## • SOME CULTIVARS

- *Serissa foetida* 'Chinese' - small tubular white flowers which bloom only sporadically. Light green foliage.
- *Serissa foetida* 'Flore Pleno' - double white flowers which are produced throughout the year. Dark green foliage.
- *Serissa foetida* 'Kyoto' - a very tiny dwarf with single white flowers - rarely grows over a foot high.
- *Serissa foetida* 'Kyoto Variegated' - Just what it says.
- *Serissa foetida* 'Mt. Fuji' - This cultivar has larger leaves and a thicker stem than other *Serissas*. It is strongly variegated, with single white flowers. Variegation changes throughout the year, based on temperature, light and nutrient content.
- *Serissa foetida* 'Pink Mountain' - A slow growing cv. with variegated foliage in winter and single pink flowers.
- *Serissa foetida* 'Pink Princess' - Light pink buds opening to white, tubular flowers.
- *Serissa foetida rosea* 'Ahiro Pink' - single pink flowers, variegated foliage.
- *Serissa foetida rosea* 'Cherry Blossom' - single pink blossoms, variegated foliage.
- *Serissa foetida rosea* 'Pink Swan' - single pink flowers, variegated foliage.
- *Serissa foetida rosea* 'Tancho' - single pink flowers, variegated foliage.
- *Serissa foetida* 'Variegata' -green leaves, with yellow or cream colored margins. *Serissa foetida* 'Yatsubusa' - Very dwarf cv. with tiny pink and tiny dark green congested foliage.
- *Serissa foetida* 'White Swan' - single white flowers, variegated foliage. Reputedly stronger than the average *Serissa*, this cv. forms trunks quickly and seems resistant to the normal *Serissa* fussiness!

Credits to clips from the internet Wikipedia, BCI web site and experiences.



## TECHNIQUE OF THE MONTH

Exposed Root Bonsai depicts a tree that over a long period of time has had the soil around its roots eroded away. As this happens slowly, the roots have time to harden off and become part of the trunk.

You may choose to create it by slowly exposing the roots of an older tree or you can create one from a young plant and totally create your vision.

When we create this style in bonsai, it is a very long process.



## EXPOSED ROOT STYLE



## YEAR ONE

1. Start with a well rooted cutting
2. If the plant has enough material to work with, you may do an initial wiring to set in the shape you envision.
3. Find or create a special container to use by finding a container that is deep enough to create the height of a root system you want. Be sure that the container :
  - has enough depth
  - has good drainage
  - can be easily cut
4. Mix a good soil mix of 50% potting soil and 50% bonsai soil to use. Incorporate micronutrients, slow release fertilizer pellets, and mycorhyza spores into the mix.
5. Remove the rooted cutting from the pot and carefully comb out the roots.
6. If there are small roots that you do not want to develop into long roots, remove them.
7. Carefully tie the roots together lightly as a long combed out "tail."
8. Put the roots into a container in the center. While holding it is place carefully pour the soil mix in around the roots. Use a chopstick to remove extra air pockets.
9. Water well
10. During the growing season put in a well lighted position and watch to shape as the season progresses. EVEN watering is the key for even root development. The time release fertilizer will be enough for the season.

## YEAR TWO THROUGH FOUR

1. During potting season, check how the root structure is developing.
2. Add in more time release fertilizer each season. Be sure to work the pellets down into the pot.
3. If you wish to shape the root system, check each year and when the roots seem thick enough , you can shape them around a wooden frame.

## YEAR FIVE to ?

1. Check to see if new soil is needed.
2. Continue to evenly water and fertilize
3. If the roots are thick enough to stand on their own, start removing one to two cm of soil each year by cutting the rim of the pot down once a year.
4. Continue to develop the style of the tree each year.

Once the roots have been exposed to your satisfaction, you can pot the tree into a suitable container. You may need to support the tree with long dowels for a few years.







## TWO GREAT ARTISTS AT PFM THIS MONTH

### Wild Bonsai Weekend

May 24-25 Mark Arpag 10 AM to 4 PM at pfm bonsai studio  
Come and learn the techniques needed to develop incredible  
Easter White Cedar bonsai from

Award Winning Bonsai Artist MARK ARPAG

SATURDAY IS FILLED, SUNDAY HAS OPENINGS

A wide variety of collected material will be available. There will be many sizes of Eastern White Cedar for the workshops. The

workshops are limited to 8 people each day. The fee for the workshop is \$85 per person plus the cost of the tree. Although we will have plenty of trees to choose from, you may bring your own Thuja (Easter White Cedar). Lunch is provided. Bring tools and wire. Other collected material will also be for sale during the weekend from the great collectors of Black Dodge Bonsai. Pauline and David will be available for advice on the collected non Thuja material. THE NURSERY WILL BE OPEN TO ALL DURING THE WEEKEND FOR SALES AND WANDERING IN THE GARDENS

## BONSAI FUN AT PFM BONSAI STUDIO with FRANK MIHALIC MAY 30-JUNE 1

- Do bring your own workshops all day any of the three days for \$85 per day 10 AM OR
- **SATURDAY AT 10 AM JUNE 31 Create a wonderful cotoneaster bonsai.** Trees will be styled but not potted due to the time of the year. Frank will be happy to advise you on its future pot. Fee \$60 per person tree included. Bring tools and wire.
- **SATURDAY AT 1 PM JUNE 31** Bring your own trees or purchase one or more to work on. Use Frank's wonderful design eye to help you create a new bonsai or improve the design of an existing one. Bring tools and wire. \$45 per person
- **SUNDAY AT 10 AM JUNE 1** Bring your own trees or purchase one or more to work on. Use Frank's wonderful design eye to help you create a new bonsai or improve the design of an existing one. Bring tools and wire. \$45 per person
- **SUNDAY AT 1 PM JUNE 1 Create you own bonsai jewelry.** Learn the process of creating a wax image that Frank will use to cast into a piece of jewelry for you. Perhaps an image of your favorite tree or of the club tree or a design of your own. All materials and an instruction book included. See sample at the studio. \$100 per person.



**UPCOMING EVENTS AT PFM BONSAI.** All workshops are limited to 8 people UNLESS LESS ARE INDICATED  
**MONDAY BONSAI STUDY GROUP** IS AN INFORMAL EVENING OF PIZZA AND PLAY WITH OUR TREES AND IS OPEN TO ALL. PLEASE EMAIL SO WE CAN HAVE ENOUGH PIZZA FOR ALL  
**IF YOU NEED SUPPLIES, CALL THE STUDIO, WE ARE HERE MOST DAYS 518 882 1039**

DATE	Morning	Afternoon
May 3	studio open	
May 4	studio open	
May 10-11	Advance Study Group with Ted Matson	Studio closed except for study group members
May 17	open workshop.studio open	
May 18	MHBS meeting Demo and WS guests welcome See MHBS website for details	Guest Artist: Mary Madison THERE ARE STILL OPENINGS FOR THE WORKSHOP
May 24-25	WILD BONSAI WEEKEND with Mark Arpag..see page 9 a few places left on Sunday	Do you love working with collected materials? Save the dates for this event.
May 31-June 1	Frank Mihalic Design workshop weekend...see page 9	Bring your trees and get design help from Frank \$85 per day
June 7	Intermediate class	
June 8	Shohin class and workshop	
June 13-15	Studio closed...come to Wildwood Gardens weekend in Ohio	AN INFORMAL WEEKEND FULL OF BONSAI FUN, FRIENDS AND FOOD
June 28	open workshop.studio open	
June 29	MHBS meeting Potentilla workshop and lesson with Pauline Muth	New members always welcome

## BONSAI EVENTS TO ATTEND



## MidAtlantic Bonsai Societies 2014 Spring Festival April 25-27

There is still time to register

<http://midatlanticbonsai.freewebs.com/fescurr.htm>

## BCI in Australia August 23, 2014

<http://goldcoast2014.bonsai-bci.com>

## 4th National Bonsai Exhibition

[http://www.internationalbonsai.com/store/1708315/uploaded/2012\\_national\\_exhibition/index.html](http://www.internationalbonsai.com/store/1708315/uploaded/2012_national_exhibition/index.html)



## ABS/GSBF Bonsai Visions of the West October 31, 2014 Sacramento, CA

<http://www.gsbf-bonsai.org/convention/>

**ABS TOO FAR TO GO IN 2014?  
PLAN ON ABS 2015 IN BALTIMORE MARYLAND**

## **pfm bonsai studio supports**

Mohawk Hudson Bonsai Society <http://mohawkhudsonbonsai.org>

MidAtlantic Bonsai Societies - [www.midatlanticbonsai.freesevers.com](http://www.midatlanticbonsai.freesevers.com)

American Bonsai Society - [www.absbonsai.org](http://www.absbonsai.org)

Bonsai Clubs International - [www.bonsai-bci.com](http://www.bonsai-bci.com)

National Bonsai Foundation - [www.bonsai-nbf.org](http://www.bonsai-nbf.org)

**Please visit [www.pfmbonsai.com](http://www.pfmbonsai.com) for current happenings at the studio**

## **PFM RAMBLINGS**

pfm bonsai studio

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