

Chojubai Notes by Shannon Salyer

Growth pattern- Chojubai naturally grow in the clump style. The plant always will sucker from the roots. If you want to maintain a single trunk, you want to pruning those shoots back to keep energy in the single trunk. Single trunk bonsai styles are more difficult to develop and maintain.

Development- Let all extensions grow out in spring. This builds energy in the tree. No pinching. Then cut back in June to 2 to 3 nodes. This is a slow process, but this is how you build ramification. If you have a single trunk bonsai, you should always prune the suckers before they steal energy from the main trunk and branches.

If you are not seeing these extensions in the Spring

- Check that the soil is not too fine or compacted.
- Check your watering and fertilizing. They like both.
- Upsize your container.

Fall pruning...(Once most or all of the leaves have dropped)

Thinning and selecting shoots to focus energy for next year's growth. This means directional pruning. Buds on Right will shoot to the Right... Left to left. We can also stimulate dormant buds that will push in the spring. Fall pruning will lead to bushier plants.

Wiring - 2 good times

- November through February... no leaves. Easier to wire.
- June through July...after you prune for the first time.

Repotting- There are 2 times to repot.

- Spring..when the buds start moving.
- Summer..after you cut the long extensions from spring. You then defoliate the remaining foliage. Do not bareroot completely, but take enough soil off to obtain your objective. Try to keep more roots than in Spring. Also, be careful not to overwater until you see new buds popping. You should see new buds in about a week or 2.

Soil

50% Akadama, 25% Pumice, 25% Lava. 1/8" to 1/4" size particles.

Care- Chojubai love water but not soggy feet. They love fertilizer too. Chojubai are best maintained in a deeper pot than normal.

Placement in your Garden- Chojubai love full sun. They do need protection in early spring though. They are one of the first species to push. Therefore, the new foliage is tender and can be burned by frost.