

Tsuru Soars

Friends of the Gresham Japanese Garden Newsletter



A Boost by Volunteer Groups



(Left) Three NHS Centennial students filling a large hole with soil. (Right) Another student B&B a shrub.



On a brisk morning during Garden Saturdays, six students from Centennial's National Honor Society gave of their time to fill some really large holes created by trees being dug out, while others learned how to wrap root balls in burlap and twine. Three weeks prior, Volunteer

Coordinator Sue Protz received a welcoming inquiry through [Volunteer Gresham](#), a City of Gresham website to connect citizens with organizations needing volunteers.

The Gresham Japanese Garden relies solely on volunteers to maintain all the spaces they occupy. During this renovation, they find themselves with some pretty large tasks. Volunteer groups who come during our regular

*a red maple
late autumn colors
holidays soon*

— Bill Peterson

Garden Saturdays, especially from high schools, have proven that work exponentially gets accomplished. And, we're so grateful.

You could tell my group were scholarly because they didn't need to be loud or boastful. They were serious about engaging in service—an impressive crew for sure!

- Jim Buck, volunteer and retired school administrator

If you are interested in organizing service work for your group, please contact sue@greshamjapanesegarden.com

What Should Your Focus Be for Pruning?

From now to about February, the focus in your landscape should be pruning pine trees and maple trees.

MAPLES

Maples are defined by their characteristic opposite branching pattern, where branches grow directly across from each other, forming pairs. And, maple trees are deciduous, making the branching structure much easier to see when in silhouette. Over time, especially in uprights, this branching pattern creates a distinct layering of branches. In contrast, weeping maples are characterized by their graceful, cascading effect, creating a layered canopy.

It is beneficial to prune now, when maples are in their winter dormancy and the tree's sap has ceased circulating.

When you start to prune, focus first on removing dead, diseased, and damaged branches. This alone, especially on a weeping maple, will really open up the tree for you to make easier decisions on your next cuts.

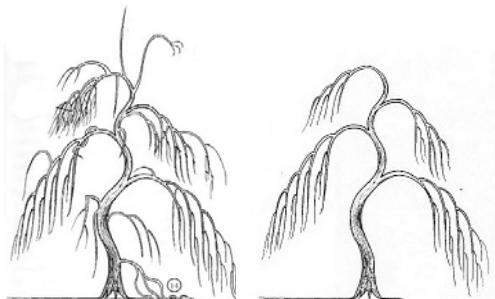


Fig. 1: Accentuating its natural growth with structural cuts

Then discover what you like about the tree's growth, *and* what you don't like. Factors to consider: Location - Do you need to prune away from the house, or away from the driveway/pathway? Sun Exposure - Take note what direction the tree faces the sun. The tendency is to prune the sun facing side harder, because it's denser. But, beware: maples have thin bark, making them prone to sunscald.

And then there's aesthetics. Find the natural growth by following the trunk from the thickest up to the thinnest. Let the tree tell you what to prune. Look for graceful, elegant line. (See fig 1). The goal is to combine all these factors when making your pruning plan.

An added factor with a weeping maple is branch direction. It's counter intuitive, but when pruning, more often than not, prune the bottom branch, leaving the branch that is growing upward as opposed to hanging down. (See fig 2).



Fig. 2: Leave the upward growing branch to enhance the beauty of the arching branches.

To learn how to create space through layering, take our maple pruning workshop with Francheska Snyder next November.

CONIFERS

The biggest difference between pruning maples as opposed to most conifers is that conifers lack abundant dormant buds on their older, interior wood, and will not generate new growth if pruned back beyond existing green foliage. Case in point, driving down the road you see a mugo pine with one whole side a jumble of dead branches. This happens when the gardener cut too deep into the interior where there was no new growth. That area will never recover.

A good rule is to start at the top.

1) Efficiency: Knock the debris from dead leaves, insects, etc. and the pruned foliage downward as you prune.

2) Safety: Accidents happen. Get through the hardest part while you're fresh.

3) Foliage Density: Most tree growth occurs at or near the top. Prune thinner than the bottom. (See fig 3).

Conifers really benefit from having a five-year plan. The mugo pine could have been saved by a five-year plan shearing a little each year.



Fig. 3: Showing the difference between the top foliage density, as opposed to the bottom.

Limber Pine (*Pinus flexilis*)

Gyozan Pot

Chilly Mountain Morning

- Display by Bobby Curtright



Roses



In November's newsletter we wrote about the new rose garden in Main City Park, thanks to local rose plant enthusiasts.

Recently, Paradise Acres came through with even more roses. They donated 30!

As Annie Curtright was transplanting, her reaction, "two are climbers—perfect growers for a trellis in the new garden. hint... hint!"

Vandalism



The azumaya had just received a major facelift of all new wood in the interior when one morning we discovered someone had defaced the moon window.

These acts of vandalism are disturbing on many levels, and are the reason we will install a remote-controlled entrance gate as part of our renovation plan.

Specimen Tree and Shrub Sale

November has been a busy time in the renovation of Tsuru Island. It started with the installation of 35 fence posts around the perimeter of the island. Thanks to Hillside Landscape Maintenance for digging all the holes!

November and December are also the perfect time for transplanting, when the ground is saturated, and the nights are cooler.

Some of the trees we had dug up from the garden will be relocated, but many have been removed and are ready for another home.

Please help us find homes for these specimen trees and shrubs. They are balled and burlapped, making them easy to transport and transplant.

NOW IS THE TIME TO PLANT

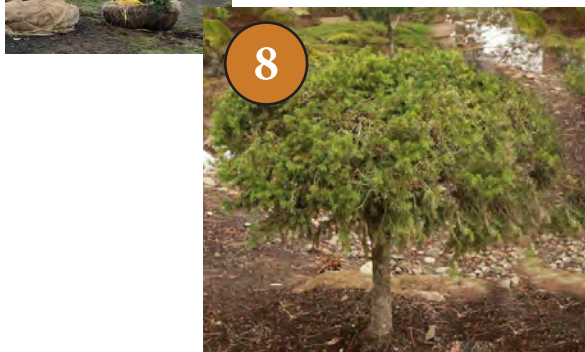
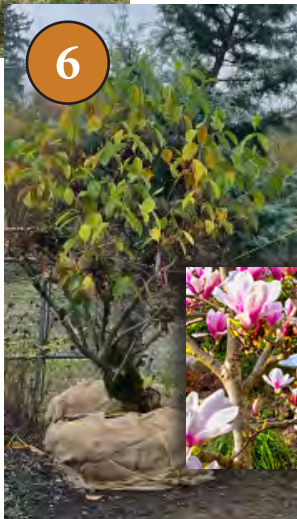
There are plenty more mature shrubs and trees for sale. Make us an offer. All proceeds will go towards the renovation of Tsuru Island.

**Plant Sale:
Every Saturday from
9:30-noon,
or text
(503) 502-7340
your desired time to
check them out.**

Deliveries available.

*If you're not in need of a tree,
we truly appreciate
and welcome
end of year monetary or in-kind
donations.*

greshamjapanesegarden.org/support/donate/



- 1 **Arizona Blue Cypress:** Beautiful mature. Pyramidal shape and silvery-blue foliage. Grows to 40'.
- 2 **Pine:** Pruned to resemble a pagoda.
- 3 **Tri-color Beech Tree:** Stands about 10ft tall, and at maturity. Beautiful structure.
- 4 **Euonymus alatus 'Burning Bush':** Fiery red, low maintenance.
- 5 **Picea glauca 'Pendula':** Beautiful mature. Pyramidal shape and silvery-blue foliage. Grows to 40'.
- 6 **Magnolia Bush:** Pollarded to keep small. Multi-stem. Currently 5'.
- 7 **Contorted Filbert:** 14 years old, and only 6'.
- 8 **Nidiformis Spruce:** Slow growing, on a 18" standard.
- 9 **Laceleaf Maples:** In different stages of maturity. Green and red.

Pruning Courses

[REGISTER FOR PRUNING COURSES HERE](#)



Spring Pine Candling: Sunday, May 3, 2026, 1-3pm – \$45 at the Gardens of the Gresham Japanese Garden

LAURA DUFALA, INSTRUCTOR: This course piggybacks on Maryann Lewis' pruning conifers class, but with an emphasis on a variety of pines. Laura will focus on pruning in the Niwaki style (cloud pruning), and walk students through her decisions for pruning each variety of pine.

Wreath Making Workshops

[REGISTER ON WEBSITE](#)



Holiday Wreath Making at the Garden: Monday, December 1, 2025, 6-8pm or Sunday, December 7, 2025, 2-4pm - \$60

Two workshop times to choose from. These fun, creative workshops sell out quickly. You will have a wide variety of plant material and homemade bows to choose from to create a large wreath to take home. Wine and appetizers are included too!

Specimen Tree and Shrub Sale



A weeping diadora trained for a trellis.

Now every Saturday morning, or by appointment

Stop by Saturday mornings, or text [\(503\) 502-7340](tel:5035027340) to make an appointment. Many of the trees and shrubs were taken off Tsuru Island, and we must clear out our shade house where they are currently being stored.

Planting during the rainy season allows the tree time to establish its roots, and be ready to flourish next year. Create an instant impact on your landscape.



Spring blooming camellias for sale.

The Art of Bonsai Class

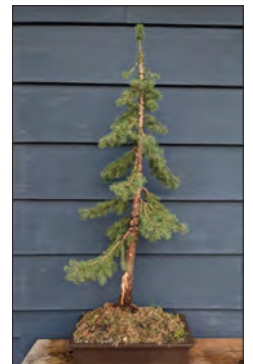
[REGISTER FOR BONSAI WORKSHOPS ON THE WEBSITE](#)

The Art of Bonsai: Monthly on the third Saturday, 1-3pm or third Thursday, 6-8pm – \$45 at the Kyoudou Center with Bonsai Master Bobby Curtright

Every month, a new modality and plant are introduced. December's class will focus on a holiday spruce. Yes, you can shape like a Christmas tree or take your art a different direction. Bonsai Master Bobby Curtright will share insights on styling based on the spruce you choose for the workshop. Wiring will be an option.

Group Kobo: Sunday, December 14, 2025, 1-4pm – \$20 at the Kyoudou Center

Drop-in format to refine your bonsai, practice wiring, or plan future enhancements.



Introduction to Ikebana Class

[REGISTER FOR IKEBANA ON THE WEBSITE](#)



Introduction to Ikebana: Tuesday, December 2, 2025. 1- 3pm – \$50 at the Kyoudou Center

NANA BELLERUD, IKEBANA INSTRUCTOR: In Nana Bellerud's workshop she will share some material and design ideas for the holidays, while still keeping the principles and core concepts of ikebana. Students can incorporate these holiday ideas into their arrangement.

Materials used in the photo are New Zealand Flax and Hydrangea.