

## *Tree Profile: Dwarf Box 'Kingswood' - Buxus microphylla*

**General:** According to *Wikipedia* the *Buxus microphylla*, the **Japanese box** or **Littleleaf box**, is a species of *Buxus* native to Japan and Taiwan in the **family** Buxaceae.

The '**Kingsville**' Box is a very slow growing evergreen shrub with a dense canopy of tiny dark green leaves supported by an attractive old looking trunk. The bark looks old even when the tree is still young! Great Bonsai material!

**Lighting & Temperature:** They're very hardy, but prefer shade to partial shade - keep out of the hot summer sun, as well as hot and cold winds! Frost tolerant to -4°C!

**Watering:** It needs regular watering, daily during summer months when tree is growing, less during winter months.

**Feeding:** Feed every two weeks during the growing season using a well balanced liquid fertilizer. Fertilization should be done during growing season from spring until late summer.

**Repotting:** Suggested every one to two years in well drained soil. Spring is the best time, but can be repotted in summer and autumn if need be, but avoid repotting during very hot weather or during a growth spurt. Box dislikes acid soil, adding an occasional dose of lime is recommended.

**Pruning:** During spring or summer to display branches more and to open the crown, cut away some of the secondary inner branches. You should pinch back new shoots by half when they reach 1/2 inch to maintain the bonsai shape. Pinching and cutting should be done best during growing season. Box is tolerant of radical treatments, such as Jin, Shari and being grown root over rock.

**Wiring:** Anytime on younger branches, but on older branches using guide wires is recommended - they can be very brittle!

**Propagation:** Use semi-hardwood cuttings in spring or autumn, hardwood cuttings in winter (remove leaves).

**Pests and diseases:** Sometimes could be troubled by mites, scale and leaf miners. Overwatering might cause the root rot!

**Styles:** Formal & Informal Upright, Slanting, Semi Cascade, Single or Multiple Trunks, Group Planting and Root-over-Rock.

Excellent for Shohin and Mame due to its leaf size.

There are great articles in **Bonsai Today** issue **97** and issue **107**, which is showing the styling and development of this famous tree pictured on the right.

Picture courtesy of Bonsai Today issue 107!

