

Tree Profile: New Zealand Tea Tree - *Leptospermum scoparium*

General information: There're more than 80 different *Leptospermum* species found - native to Australia, New Zealand and Southeast Asia.

Leptospermum scoparium, commonly called mānuka, manuka myrtle, New Zealand tea tree, or just tea tree, is a species of flowering plant in the myrtle family Myrtaceae. The main attractions are the miniature leaves and rose like flowers in late spring and early summer, which makes them ideal for Shohin and Mame. The colors range from white to deep pink.

Some say: "Leptospermum has the reputation of being the ultimate in forbidden bonsai - getting it to survive can be a monumental task."

Position: Full sun or partial shade - airy for best growth, protect from hot winds! The hardiest species (*L. lanigerum*, *L. polygalifolium*, *L. rupestre*, *L. scoparium*) are hardy to about -8 °C to -10 °C, others are sensitive to frost.

Watering: Keep moist all the time. Lack of water can kill them within a few hours - but NO wet feet, because of root rot!

Feeding: Use a fertilizer for acid loving plants with a diluted solution - their roots burn easily!

Repotting: Late winter, spring or early summer, use free draining mix! Avoid root pruning as long as possible, don't untangle the roots! As per our 'Guru' CJ from WA (presentation at AABC Conference 2011 WA) - shave off a slice from the bottom each year, only reduce root ball over time!

Pruning & Wiring: Keep pinching new shoots back to shape the tree, rarely buds back on old wood. Cutting back beyond leaves results in branch die-back! Repotting, pruning and wiring must be done at different times, or the tree will be over-stressed!

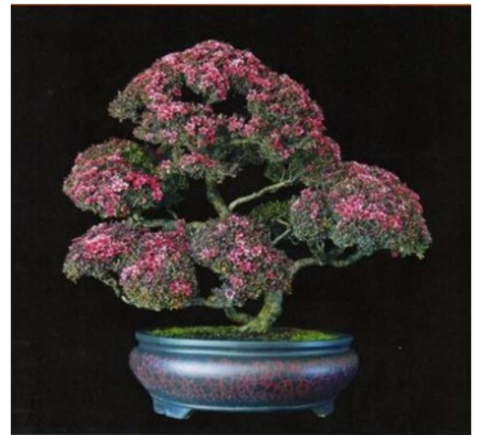
Propagation: Semi-hardwood cuttings using Rootex or similar hormone. Will root in a few weeks!

Pests and diseases: Teatree Web Moth (Webbing Caterpillar), occasionally affecting mainly small leaved cultivars and using insecticides will harm the "good" insects too - remove manually!

Styles: Most styles including - Informal Upright, Slanting, Semi-cascade and Cascade.

Some species suitable for bonsai:

- *Leptospermum scoparium*: New Zealand tea tree, Manuka, tea tree, Australian myrtle.
- *Leptospermum scoparium* 'Kiwi': A dwarf variety with pink flowers and very tight foliage that is cold hardier than other species. Ideal for shohin or mame.
- *Leptospermum rupestre*: A white flowered, naturally arching variety which makes a good cascade or weeping bonsai. From the Tasmanian alpine areas, hardier and more tolerant of branch and root pruning!
- *Leptospermum laevigatum*: Coastal tea tree.
- *Leptospermum myrtaceae*: Australian tea tree.
- *Leptospermum petersonii*: Lemon-scented tea tree.
- *Leptospermum attenuatum*: Paperbark tea tree.



Picture taken during CJ's presentation at AABC Conference in WA 2011



Picture taken during CJ's demo



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