

## Bonsai Forest | Dawn Redwood

tree + moss seed | seedling training pots | growing medium | bonsai shears  
river stone | directions | recycled US steel bonsai box™ (lid inverts for tray)

**bon** = shallow tray | **sai** = plant or planting

**bonsai** is a recreation of nature, artistically interpreted, that is constantly growing and changing; the art of gardening in its purist sense. While there are masters who have pursued and perfected this ancient skill for generations, bonsai remains an entirely simple process. The tree species for this kit was carefully chosen for its beauty as a bonsai specimen and for its fast growth rate. Your bonsai kit includes everything needed to grow and sculpt an authentic bonsai tree into an elegant work of living art.

**dawn redwood forest** | *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*

Ancient trees related to the coastal redwoods of California, Dawn redwood was once thought to be extinct. In the 1940's, was re-discovered growing in a remote region of central China. What makes the Dawn redwood truly special is that it is a deciduous coniferous tree. Meaning, in the autumn, the light green foliage turns bronze and ultimately, like leaves, drop off as a normal part of growth.

**to grow** | **1.** Place bonsai box™ cover under the bonsai box™ to serve as a drainage tray. **2.** Remove the bag of bonsai soil and tin of seeds from the box. **3.** Take the bag of bonsai soil and mix thoroughly in a bowl. **4.** Take blended soil, put 3/4 cup in each training pot and thoroughly water allowing excess water to drain through each pot. **5.** Remove dawn redwood seeds from tin and divide seeds among the training pots, pushing them down into moistened soil just under the surface of the soil. Lightly cover over the seeds with soil. **6.** Place a piece of plastic wrap over the top of each pot and place in a warm area out of direct sunlight. Do not let the soil dry out. The ideal soil moisture is the consistency of a damp, not soggy, sponge. May need daily watering or more if conditions are warm. **7.** Three to five seedlings should sprout in about 15-30 days. **note.** Temperature is important for seed germination. Soil typically is 5°F/-15°C cooler than the surrounding air. Optimum soil temperature for seed germination is around 70°F/21°C. If your room temperature is cooler than 75°F/24°C you will need to supplement heat with a simple desk lamp about 8" from top of pots. If your room temperature is warm enough, place pots and seedlings in a location with morning sunlight. **8.** When seedlings have their first true needles, remove trees with soil from the training pots and arrange in the empty bonsai box. **9.** Take the bag of bonsai soil and pour the mixed soil around each of the tree seedlings filling the bonsai box. **10.** Sprinkle moss seed over soil surface and water in gently with spray bottle.

**sun & watering** | Morning sun is required to keep your forest healthy. Place in a warm sunny location and rotate the container often to allow all growth to receive sun. In the winter months your forest will need to be stored in a cool location to allow it to remain healthy. Select a cool windowsill, sheltered garage or basement to overwinter your trees in. Water your forest when soil begins to dry out. Cooler temperatures often require less watering. Water the soil deep enough to reach all roots and until water is draining into the drainage tray. **note.** If planting your forest during winter months, when light is low and air is cool, it may help to supplement your growing environment with a simple desk lamp (please refer to note in step 7).

**feeding** | After transplanting seedlings to bonsai box™, fertilize at half strength every 2 weeks until fall when trees go dormant (leaves turn brown). Do not fertilize during dormancy. Fertilize every 2 weeks through the spring and summer after new leaves appear.

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**pruning & wiring** | Use the provided bonsai shears to prune back undesired branches. The forest is best suited to a formal upright style. The Dawn Redwood is a vigorous grower and continuous pruning is needed throughout the year. If you wish to train your trees into a specific shape, wiring is a method commonly used although not required. To best understand this technique we recommend purchasing an instructional book, researching online or joining a local bonsai club.

**re-potting** | It is necessary to re-pot your bonsai when the root system becomes root bound. Re-pot your forest every 2 years. You may use the same pot or choose a new container. When re-potting, use a well drained soil high in organic matter. Re-pot the trees to the same soil level as the previous planting, taking care not to plant the trunk too deep.

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steps 1-2



steps 3 - 4



steps 5-7



steps 8-9



step 10



forest in about 3 years

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