

Natal Plum Bonsai Care Guidelines

PLACEMENT:

The Natal Plum bonsai requires full sunlight to thrive. It should be placed in a location where it receives at least 4-6 hours of direct sunlight daily. If grown indoors, place it near a south-facing window or under artificial grow lights. The tree is sensitive to frost and should be kept indoors or in a sheltered spot during cold weather. It can tolerate a wide range of temperatures but prefers warm, sunny environments. Outdoor placement is ideal during the growing season, while in cooler climates, it should be brought inside or kept in a greenhouse during winter to avoid frost damage.

WATERING:

Water the Carissa bonsai regularly, but allow the soil to dry out slightly between waterings. It prefers moderate moisture levels but does not tolerate waterlogged soil. Ensure the pot has proper drainage to prevent root rot. Water the tree deeply until excess water flows out of the drainage holes, then let the soil dry out slightly before watering again. In warmer months, increase the frequency of watering, while in winter, reduce watering as the tree's growth slows down. Always check the soil moisture before watering to avoid overwatering, which can lead to root rot.

PRUNING:

Pruning the Natal Plum bonsai is essential to maintaining its shape and size. Prune after the flowering period to maintain a balanced structure. Remove any dead, damaged, or crossing branches, as well as those growing inward toward the center of the tree. Regularly trim the new growth to promote a compact, bushy shape. Pinch back the tips of the branches to encourage branching and a denser canopy. Pruning can be done throughout the year, but avoid heavy pruning before as well as during the blooming period to ensure flower production.

Fertilizing:

Fertilize the Carissa macrocarpa bonsai during the growing season, from spring through early autumn. Use a balanced, solid or water-soluble fertilizer. Apply fertilizer every 4 to 6 weeks to ensure the tree receives essential nutrients for healthy growth, of course the frequency depends on the product you select. Avoid fertilizing during the dormant winter period. Over-fertilization can lead to weak growth and excessive foliage, so use fertilizer in moderation. A light dose of fertilizer before the growing season starts can help stimulate new growth.

Repotting:

Repot the Dwarf plum bonsai every 2 to 3 years, preferably in early spring before new growth begins. This helps to refresh the soil, remove any dead roots, and manage the root system. When repotting, trim the roots lightly to maintain a compact structure. Replace the old soil with a well-draining bonsai soil mix, ensuring the new soil provides adequate moisture retention while still draining well. After repotting, water the tree thoroughly and keep it in a shaded location until it recovers.