

Proudly sponsoring the Yarra Valley Bonsai Society

www.orientbonsai.com.au



Proud sponsor of the Yarra Valley Bonsai Society

www.bonsaisensation.com.au



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The YVBS meets on the
**second Tuesday of each
month now at Upper Yarra
Community House
(Formerly Morrison House)**

**Old Hereford Road,
Mount Evelyn**

Meetings begin at 7:30pm .



Saturday Workshops are 2-
4:30pm on the **Last Saturday**
of the month, at the same
venue as monthlies!

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The Yarra Valley Bonsai Society Newsletter

Highlights from January & February 2015

The January meeting featured a presentation by club member David W who spoke on ficus (fig) bonsai. David brought along a number of his own figs that he has been cultivating for over 30 years - illustrating very effectively the depth of his expertise!

Notes on ficus culture from David's presentations are included later in the newsletter.

David also assisted and advised club members who had brought in their own fig trees on the best course for future development and styling.



Above - David W explains the development process for his magnificent ficus at the January meeting.

The February club meeting was a workshop night, with assistance being provided by Craig W and also from major sponsor Tien of Bonsai Sensation, as well as other of the more senior members of the club.

A Review/Overview session was also held on the night, the subject being the YVBS Website and Forum, conducted by Davor T.

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Above - Craig assists Ross with his tree at the February Workshop night.

Calendar Dates:

- 7 March (Saturday) Second nursery crawl 'Deep South'.
- 7 and 8 March (Saturday and Sunday) Ballarat Begonia Festival Bonsai Exhibition. 10:00am - 5:00pm Ballarat.
- 10 March (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm UYCH.
- 28 March (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 2:00pm UYCH.
- 4 and 5 April (Saturday and Sunday) Mornington Peninsula Bonsai Exhibition. 9:30am to 4:30pm Sat, 10:00am - 4:00pm Sun. Mt Martha.
- 4 to 6 April (Saturday, Sunday, Monday) Bendigo Bonsai Easter Exhibition. 10:00am to 5:00pm Sat & Sun, 10:00am - 4:00pm Mon. Bendigo.
- 11 and 12 April (Saturday and Sunday) Native Bonsai Symposium. 10:00am to 4:00pm. Royal Botanic Gardens.
- 14 April (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm UYCH.
- 25 April (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 2:00pm UYCH.

See also the Events Calendar on our website: www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au

Highlights from January & February - Cont. From Page 1

Davor explained that the YVBS website contains a wealth of information on club activities including a downloadable archive of all newsletters, and a Forum (or blog) which provides news and information to members and is a means for members to ask questions or raise issues of general interest.

Members who missed the session and want further information should see Davor, Rudi or Lindsay.



Above - some of the activity at the February Workshop night.

Left - Davor explains the YVBS Forum and website in the Review/Overview session.

February Nursery Crawl

The first Nursery Crawl of the year, 'Go West', occurred on a very hot day in February. A number of members visited Plantmark Wholesale nursery in Thomastown, major sponsor Orient Bonsai, and club member Mark Ludlow's Master's Apprentice Bonsai School and Nursery.

A great day was had by all, with many purchases being made at all venues, especially Plantmark where garden plants seemed to out perform future bonsai stock.

It was good to see Mark's premises on our first visit there. Over 3,000 trees in a suburban backyard puts our individual collections into perspective! Mark's Hebel brick rock

carving work was inspected, both the finished product and work

in progress. We hope to take advantage of his expertise and have him run a weekend workshop for members later in the year. Keep an eye open for interesting rocks or landscape examples that you might want to copy, or just use for inspiration in your own design.



Above - A loaded trolley at the Plantmark nursery visit.

Left - Mark's rock carving nearing completion.



Library Check-out!

YVBS has subscribed to the local bonsai magazines produced by the AABC and Ian Glew. Copies of all issues are in the library for perusal or borrowing. Remember, the checkout period for books and other library material is one month. If you check out a book and are not able to make the next meeting, you can return the book at a workshop or even post it to the club PO Box.

Trade Table Cheque-out!

The trade table has been restocked with new tools, wire and other accessories. Lorraine Simpson and other pots also in stock. Don't forget the club's tool sharpening kit, available for use at meetings. Anything else you would like to see stocked? Just advise at the trade table or to any committee member.



Member Profile

Jean B has been an active and enthusiastic member of our club for over 3 years, and we feature her in this issue to acknowledge and celebrate two major milestones in her life - she has just turned 85, and also celebrated her 60th wedding anniversary. Congratulations Jean!

Jean has two children and 3 grandchildren, and is currently, as she describes it, Director of Home Management.

She first became interested in bonsai in the 70's and went to some classes and lectures, eventually some Japanese Masters visited and she went to the Burnley Horticultural College to enjoy. Then her passion for golf intervened - when she went to country golfing events her trees suffered so she decided to sell everything.

About 5 years ago she decided to have a few years of pleasure with the bonsai interest that never really left her.

Jean prefers deciduous trees, and credits much of her bonsai knowledge to the members and connections of YVBS.

Her other interests apart from bonsai include all forms of sewing and crafts, machine work and embroidery in it's many forms - wool silk ribbon smocking applique & fabric painting but her favourite is 'StumpWork', a 3 dimensional embroidery technique.



Novice Course

The club has scheduled a 5 week Novice Training Course to be held from 19th May to 23rd June this year. Each session will be held from 7:00pm to 9:00pm on consecutive Tuesday evenings at our normal venue at Upper Yarra Community House, skipping only the YVBS meeting night. The instructor will be Craig W, and the cost will be approximately \$100 in total per student, which equates to around \$10 per hour - very good value.. Each student will receive a 30 page printed set of course notes.

Participant numbers are limited to 10 to ensure that everybody will get individual tuition time - it is a very hands-on and practical course. Places can be reserved by contacting Marlene as soon as possible.

This is an extremely valuable course made available at a very good price for members. All new novice members are strongly encouraged to enroll - it gives a very good grounding in the basics of our shared hobby.

There is a minimum number of 4 participants for the course, which is necessary to offset the costs associated with tuition and venue hire. If there are an insufficient number of participants enrolled, then the course may be cancelled and combined with the Intermediate Tutored workshops scheduled for later in the year.

Right - A Novice Course from a previous year.



Second Nursery Crawl

The second club nursery crawl for the year is coming up on Saturday 7th March, where we will be heading to the 'Deep South' and visiting Bonsai Sensation, Pearcedale Nursery, and hopefully TJ's Wholesale Nursery.

Bonsai Sensation was considered "sensational" by all at our previous visit, and Tien tells us that it is even better now - it is the biggest specialist bonsai nursery in Victoria, with a great range of bonsai starters and established trees in almost every species.

Pearcedale is a general nursery but an old favourite that always seems to have a few gems of trees available at special prices. This will be our first visit to TJ's, but Rudi has checked them out and approved them so they should be good! They are in the process of moving premises, so if they are not ready to receive visitors on the 7th, we will try for an alternative.

Please let Rudi know if you are planning on attending.

Notes from David's Ficus Night

The following notes are some of the nuggets of information presented by David W during his January presentation.

- Ficus is a premium Australian native bonsai species. *F. Rubiginosa* (Port Jackson Fig), *F. Macrophylla* (Moreton Bay Fig) and *F. Coronata* are all native to Australia and make excellent bonsai subjects. They are very hardy and should be placed in full sun, but avoid frosts.
- Figs are repotted during the warmer months, when nighttime temperatures are always in excess of 10deg C. They require a free-draining potting mix – David favours 50% coarse sand or diatomite mixed with bark of potting mix with the fines sifted out. Figs can be bare-rooted and the rootball hosed off without problem.
- Grow figs in a large pot to develop a thick trunk. It is problematic to grow figs in the ground around Melbourne due to the prevalence of frosts in the cooler months.
- Aerial roots on figs can be encouraged by wrapping the trunk with toilet paper, and then covering with cling wrap. This provides an always-moist environment around the trunk to facilitate root formation.
- David doesn't favour growing figs from seed, as they will so easily root from even large cuttings. Place the cutting in sand with sphagnum moss on top, and you will obtain a 90% success rate. The best time to strike cuttings is summer.
- Prune figs to a shoot coming down – it is not necessary to seal cuts. Hollow out the trunk wound after branch removal, and if necessary on large wounds, re-scar with a razor blade or sharp knife each year to facilitate healing over.
- Defoliate figs to reduce leaf size and to increase ramification. Only defoliate healthy trees in summer and only do it once for each tree per year.
- Fertilise figs with liquid fertilizer once per week during the warmer growing months. They do not need feeding in winter. Any liquid fertilizer can be used, and can be supplemented with solid fertilizer pellets as well.
- Never sit figs in water trays.

End-Of-Month Saturday Workshop

A cooler January day greeted us for the January last Saturday of the month workshop, with members appreciating the conditions



as they worked on their trees. Always a relaxed atmosphere, but with plenty of advice and assistance available if required. It is great to see a variety of trees being worked on, we can all learn from each other and appreciate the trees in their various stages of development. All members are encouraged to drop in to work or for a coffee and chat - 2:00 to 4:30 pm.



Kudos, Accolades and Thanks

- Craig W for facilitating at the January workshop night.
- Tien from Bonsai Sensation for his assistance at the January workshop night.
- Mark L for allowing us to visit his premises for the first time during the February nursery crawl.



Bonsai Sensation Nursery



Trading hours: Monday to Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm

Weekends 10:00am – 4:00pm

Visit our website www.bonsaisensation.com.au for more information

Tree Profile: *Prunus*

General information: *Prunus* is a genus of trees and shrubs, which includes the plums, cherries, peaches, nectarines, apricots and almonds. More than 400 species are spread throughout the northern temperate regions of the globe, with the greatest variety in Japan, China and Korea. Many of them are widely cultivated for fruit and ornament. One of the true joys of spring and autumn for deciduous bonsai are small leaved and flowering and/or fruiting species. Mostly grown in informal styles for their flower and/or fruit display. The blossom colors range from pure white through all the shades of pink and red. Attractive rugged bark and twiggy branches.

Position: Full sun, but semi-shade in summer. Protect from hot northerly winds in summer and from frost in winter.

Watering: Most varieties need frequent watering, more often in summer. Reduce watering in winter. Do not allow the flowers to get wet or they will rot.

Feeding: Every three to four weeks after flowering has finished through to late summer. Use liquid fertilizer or half-strength general purpose food, switching to a formula high in potassium towards the end of summer. No feeding through the high heat of summer, but it can be resumed thereafter till mid-autumn.

Repotting: Every second year in spring, using free draining soil. *Prunus serrulata* may need annual repotting, which can also be done in late autumn, after leaves drop. Always soak in Seasol after potting your trees.

Pruning and Wiring: Cut back new shots after flowering in late spring and reduce the fruit - if any, to reduce the stress on the tree! Can be carved and pruned back hard, flowers on new wood. Wiring can be done from spring to autumn - on older trees use raffia, the branches are very brittle and to protect the bark - better use tie wire.

Propagation: By layering in summer or grafting in winter and early spring. Difficult to grow from cuttings! Dig stock in autumn!

Pests and diseases: Birds love to eat the flower buds, protection may be necessary in spring. Lots of bugs love to chomp the leaves; some varieties are more resistant to insects and disease than others.

Some species suitable for Bonsai:

***Prunus mume*:** Japanese flowering Apricot, single or double flowers in whites, pink and reds.

***Prunus salicina*:** Japanese Plum, small white flowers, bright red autumn foliage.

***Prunus serrulata*:** Flowering Cherry, 'Kanzan', used mainly for its remarkable flowers, pink, and so profuse they can completely obscure the branches. 'Hisakura', deep pink single flower. 'Shirotae', fragrant white semi-double flower.

***Prunus spinosa*:** Sloe Plum, spiny shrub, small white flowers, small black fruit. Mainly used for hedging and other utilitarian purposes.

***Prunus sinensis*:** Bush Cherry - This small-leaved cherry bears pink or white pom-pom shaped flowers.

***Prunus subhirtella 'Autumnalis'*:** Autumn Cherry, white or pink semi-double flowers. Small leaves with brilliant autumn color. It has the added advantage of more delicate twigginess than most cherries.

***Prunus tenella*:** Dwarf Russian Almond with bright pink flowers.



Orient Bonsai Nursery



11 Mahoneys Road
Reservoir VIC 3073
Phone: 03 9460 3059
Email: orient_bonsai@hotmail.com

Products

Bonsai starters
Mature bonsai
Pots
Figurines
Tools

Services

Bonsai classes
Repotting and trimming
Wedding gifts

www.orientbonsai.com.au



On The Display Table



A selection of trees on the Display Table at the January and February meetings. Note - the photos of the two trees immediately above are heavily enlarged - they are sub-miniature bonsai.



BONSAI ART NURSERY

New Trading Hours

Mon, Tues, Thur, Fri - 9:00am to 5:00pm

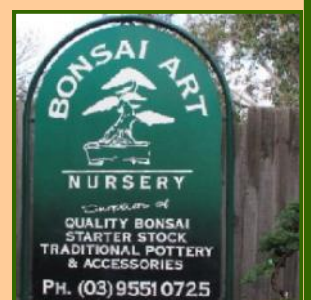
Sat, Sun - 10:00am to 4:00pm

Closed Wednesday

Great selection of bonsai, starters, and pots including a range of quality Japanese pots.

www.bonsaiart.com.au

236 Old Dandenong Road, Heatherton



Bonsai Calendar: March - April

The occasional glimpse of brilliant colours is the most rewarding sign that autumn is on its way. For many species, this can be the most exciting time in the growing season. Deciduous trees such as Maples, Hornbeams, and Elms can put on a dazzling display of yellows, oranges and reds as they would in nature.

Here are a few tips to help make the most of this time of the year.

- When the weather begins to show signs of coolness, progressively give your deciduous trees more sun. This will encourage autumn colour throughout the foliage. Watch out for the occasional hot days - especially for Japanese maples!
- Don't water the foliage on deciduous trees in the evening to avoid mildew! You can lightly mist azaleas.
- Turn your bonsais fortnightly if they get uneven light. This will ensure next years buds will develop evenly around the tree.
- Species such as azaleas, camellias and many fruit trees should not be pruned at this time if early spring flowers are desired. Azalea can still be pruned if shape/style is the priority - seal the cuts! New shoots should be reduced to two and the remaining shoots shortened to two sets of leaves.
- Late summer growth will strengthen and increase the girth of trunks and branches. Inspect for wire damage, remove wire and rewire if needed for shape.
- Late summer provides a small window of opportunity to carefully repot some bonsai. Eg figs, most natives and some pines and junipers. Be very conservative with root pruning conifers at this time. Weather can be unpredictable, keep them in a sheltered position for a few weeks after the work.
- Use an organic fertilizer (liquid) high in potassium and phosphorus to encourage woody growth in the trunk
- Remove old fruit and flowers.
- Fertilize pines in autumn (not spring) to help reduce needle size.

While enjoying your autumn display, put some thought into winter survival.



CHOJO FEATURE TREES **MELBOURNE'S HOME OF BONSAI** **BONSAI PENJING NIWAKI** **SALES SERVICE DEMONSTRATIONS LESSONS**

Due to popular demand, The Chojo Feature Trees Membership will begin in May. Members will receive discounted prices on the quality goods and services available at Chojo Feature Trees as well as entry to demonstrations, workshops, and exhibitions throughout the year. We will touch on other forms of art such as Niwaki, Suiseki, and botanical drawing. Some of Australia's most experienced bonsai artists as well as international experts will be teaching and demonstrating. All of the functions will be hosted at our gallery surrounded by one of Melbourne's finest Bonsai Collection equipped with a professional workshop for serious demos. If you would like information about becoming a member, contact the nursery and we will fill you in on everything you need to know.



New Location
365 Mount Dandenong Tourist Road
Sassafrass

Phone – 0434 622 565 Email – jbaroo@yahoo.com
 Website – www.chojo.com.au
 Facebook – facebook.com/chojo.featuretrees



ヤラ谷間盆栽会

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www.yarrawalleybonsai.org.au

A group for all lovers of bonsai in the "far east" of Melbourne



Yarra Valley Bonsai Society
PO Box 345
Mount Evelyn, Victoria 3796
Australia

*Looking Ahead to
Mar & Apr 2015*



Our second Nursery Trip for the year **"DEEP SOUTH"** will take place on Saturday 7th March, covering **Bonsai Sensation Nursery, Pearcedale Garden Centre & TJ's Wholesale Nursery** (also interesting for "non-bonsai" partners). More details to follow closer to the day!



Our monthly meeting on 10th March will be a **"Team Challenge Cup"** with various species - a great fun and learning night. **NOT TO BE MISSED!** No Overview/Review Session! Display Table: "Members Choice".



Our monthly workshop will be on Saturday 28th March, 2:00 PM - 4:30 PM at UYCH.



Our monthly meeting on 14th April will be a **"Special Presentation/Talk on Bonsai Pots"** - History, Qualities, Values etc. by Lindsay Farr and maybe he even comment's on some of our member pots. Display Table: "Autumn colors & Members Choice". No Overview/Review Session!



Saturday 25th April monthly Workshop, 2:00 PM - 4:30 PM at UYCH.

Events from Other Clubs



Ballarat Begonia Festival Bonsai Exhibition. Saturday 7th March 10:00AM - 5:00PM & Sunday 8th March 10:00AM - 4:00PM, at the Robert Clark Centre in the Botanical Gardens at Lake Wendouree, Gillies Street North.



Mornington Peninsula Bonsai Society Annual Exhibition. Saturday 4th & Sunday 5th April, at the Balcombe Grammar 389 Nepean Highway, Mt. Martha. Opening hours will be 9:30AM to 4:30 PM on the Saturday and Sunday 10:00AM to 4:00 PM.



Bendigo Bonsai Club Easter Exhibition Saturday 4th to Monday 6th April, Uniting Church Hall, Forest St, Bendigo. Opening hours will be 10:00AM to 5:00 PM on the Saturday and Sunday and 10:00AM to 4:00PM on the Monday.



VICTORIAN NATIVE BONSAI CLUB presents
Bonsai Exhibition of Australian Native Plants
Domain House
Dallas Brooks Drive
Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne
10am-4pm
Saturday April 11 - Sunday April 12 2015
Entry: \$5.00
Children under 16 free
www.vicnativebonsai.com.au

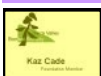
VNBS Symposium on Australian Plants as Bonsai

at Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, on Saturday 11th April & Sunday 12th April, 2015. More details on www.vicnativebonsai.com.au - check it out!



YVBS FORUM: For new members, it bears repeating that our club has an on-line bulletin board and archive. In addition to the announcements and discussions on topics of bonsai interest, the forum also contains many newsletters from other clubs around Australia. These are to be found (surprise, surprise) in the folder entitled "Newsletters from Other Clubs" and are kept for approximately six months. There are also publications such as "Bonsai Magazine" and the "Satsuki Society Newsletter" which are archived in the library folder available only to members. If you visit the site and register as a user, please email Rudi via the club gmail so that he may add you as a club member user. Just visit our main webpage

<http://www.yarrawalleybonsai.org.au> and follow the FORUM link on the left to the forum.



Member Benefits Refer to the website for a list of discounts to members upon presentation of a current & valid YVBS Membership card. "Freebies" of donated items are also made available from time to time at monthly meetings.

ADVERTISERS & SPONSORS:

Advertising on our website and/or in the newsletter is available for any registered business or sole trader. Society Sponsorship opportunities are capped at three for any year, however supportership opportunities still remain for any business in an area related to the craft of bonsai.

For a prospectus or further information contact Rudi via the society's external email: info@yarrawalleybonsai.org.au