



Proud to sponsor the Yarra
Valley Bonsai Society

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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 Cire Services
(Formerly Upper Yarra Com-
munity House or Morrison
House)**

**Old Hereford Road,
Mount Evelyn**

Meetings begin at 7:30pm .



118 B8

**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 July & August 2017

The July meeting featured a presentation on deciduous trees by Tien Liao from our sponsor Bonsai Sensation. He brought along trees worked on at his last presentation in 2016 and talked about their progress.

Trees from last year's demo were purchased at BSV then brought to the October meeting last year. They were pruned hard to encourage back budding. One tree has responded well with lots of new branches.

The biology of the tree Acer Palmatum will be to try to reach for its optimum height, so needs cutting back to inhibit its growth habit. Pruning for density of foliage and branching is really going against the tree's nature. Needs feeding well in growing season.

Tree 2 had impressive nebari, but Tien plans to improve further through root pruning. New branches wired for shape, branches with upward growth preferred. Ideally internodes should be as short as possible.

Most important thing on maples is smooth transitions – shaping, movement and taper. To create smooth transitions, allow pruned section to grow for one to two seasons, then cut near one or two closer back buds. Leave and prune again to closer back buds the following season.

Structure – if you follow one into 2 into 4 into 8 pattern, you can eventually see negative impact with branches all at the tips and not closer to the centre. A better way to structure branches is diamond shaped starting closer to the trunk. Every branch will have an "apex" at the end of the branch, same as the top of the tree.

If a branch doesn't have taper, you have to cut back hard to work backwards to create it. As Tien reiterated many times - "Branches don't grow thinner"!

Branches grow thicker at the tips where they bud, but if you prune the tips you replace the thicker tips with new thinner ones.

Where new buds have shown, Tien wants to wait until the branch pushes out before pruning the rest of the branch off. Pruning makes the tree do what you want it to do. If you remove the tips in pruning, you make the tree "reset the program" in the tree, to recreate itself and re-bud.

Opinions differ, but Tien believes the best time to prune is a light prune in late autumn/early winter, and a hard prune in mid to late summer.

The top of a tree will always be removed and replaced every year, as it will always be the most vigorous part of the tree.

Tien tries not to defoliate a Japanese Maple as results are mixed, especially on older trees. He may do partial defoliation in prefer-



Above - Tien Liao talked about deciduous trees at the July meeting.

Calendar Dates:

- 2nd September (Saturday) YVBS Nursery Crawl. Southeastern suburbs.
- 9th & 10th September (Saturday & Sunday) BSV Ripponlea Bonsai Display. Elsternwick.
- 12th September (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting and AGM 7:30pm. Cire.
- 23rd September (Saturday) Satsuki Society Bonsai Interest Group meeting. Bonsai Art, Heatherton.
- 30th September (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 1:00 - 4:30pm. Cire.
- 10th October (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. Cire.
- 14th & 15th October (Saturday & Sunday) Bonsai Society Victoria Bonsai Exhibition. Box Hill Town Hall.
- 28th October (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 1:00 - 4:30 pm. Cire.

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

Continued Page 2

Highlights from July & August - Cont. From Page 1

ence. Trident maples may be defoliated and pruned, as they do not have the same unreliable response as Japanese Maples.

The August meeting was a general workshop night where members worked on their own trees with assistance where required from more experienced members. The meeting also featured a Bonsai Basics presentation on selecting trees for bonsai use from nursery stock, by our own Howard W.

Howard explained that for most of you, nursery shopping for potential bonsai material will be the way that you acquire your collection. Although it can be hard to find good material, it is a rather inexpensive and fast way to increase your Bonsai collection. Finding the tree within a piece of material is a very hard thing to explain and even harder yet to teach. A Bonsai artist needs to sort out what is possible, what is feasible, and what will work artistically, while keeping within the boundaries set by the material itself.

The greater your knowledge of Bonsai styles, and your toolbox or experience of Bonsai techniques becomes, the greater the ability for you to gain greater insight in what can be achieved from the material that you are examining and to see potential future bonsai. Styling techniques such as wiring, bending and shaping will generally be used to assist the tree to reach its full artistic potential. Your perceived application of these techniques to a particular piece of stock should form a key part of the decision making process.

When Howard is looking at nursery stock for potential pre bonsai his thought processes are based around the premise that stock should have some aspect of uniqueness or interest.

- **Verify that the stock has a stable expanding base**

Dig into the soil in the nursery pot to check this, remembering that reverse taper is not really desirable and can be caused by the true base of the tree being buried below the soil line

- **Stock should have an interesting or pleasing trunk line which should look natural and lack repetition**

Different angles
Differing distances between angles
Differing Planes of movement

- **Stock should have some special feature of interest or focus (focal point)**

Jin or dead branch
Shari dead area on the tree
Bark
A defining branch, hollow or some other feature etc.

- **Branching**

Look at the branching pattern, while most nursery stock will not be trained as bonsai, you should be looking for good thick lower branching and thinner higher ones. It is important that the trunk has low branches, or is capable of back budding to create new ones.

If you cannot see real potential in the stock - walk away. There is no shame in walking out of a nursery without making a purchase, in fact it saves wasting money that could be put to a piece of stock with greater potential at another time and or place.



Above - Howard talked about selecting trees from Nursery stock in a "Bonsai Basics" presentation at the August meeting.



Library Check-out!

YVBS has subscribed to the local bonsai magazines and to Bonsai Focus. 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. The library has been recently reorganized for better access - check it out!

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

Nick K lives in Dandenong North with his wife and one year old child. He is a Procurement/Supply Chain Specialist with a pump supplier.

He has no horticultural background beyond enjoying the outdoors, the veggie garden, and bonsai. He was a teenager when initially got hooked on bonsai, through visiting a now defunct bonsai nursery in Clarinda. His interest deviated through his "partying" years, but he has now come back to the art again.

He learnt his bonsai skills through books, the internet, and killing trees - he hopes that the last point is over now, but wouldn't count on it!

He enjoys the 10 or so trees in his collection, likes all species of trees, but is tending towards pines more and more these days.



Ask Mr. Miyagi.....



Q. Dear Mr. Miyagi. How do I reduce the leaf size on my bonsai?

A. Always remember that many twigs means small leaves. Leaf size takes care of itself. Therefore, don't worry too much about the size of leaves. Create more twigs and the size of leaves will shrink.

On some deciduous trees, defoliation produces more twigs and usually also reduces the size of leaves. Trident maples and elms may be fully defoliated, perhaps more than once per season if they are healthy and vigorous, but most other species should be partly defoliated, on the outer branches only.

Don't fully defoliate evergreen trees, apart from figs which do benefit from full defoliation. Other evergreen trees should be encouraged to twiggiess by pinching back the new growth.

Reducing needle size on conifers is more difficult, and a subject for another day!

Members may submit questions to Mr. Miyagi c/o the YVBS web forum or per the club email: info@yarravalleybonsai.org.au

Bonsai Training Courses

The Novice Course with Craig Wilson has now finished, and we trust and expect that all participants have come away with additional knowledge and skills of the bonsai art.

Due to a shortage of registrations for the Intermediate Tutored Workshops, also with Craig, they have been cancelled for this year. In their place, a series of small group workshops will be organized in the near future, to be held at Craig's nursery in Olinda. If you are interested in attending, please register your interest with Marlene at any upcoming workshop or meeting, or via email or phone.

The workshops are usually organized for a Thursday morning for those YVBS members who are retired, or on Sunday morning for those otherwise occupied during weekdays. They run from 10:00am to 1:30pm, at a cost of \$30 each participant. Numbers are strictly limited due to space constraints, but detailed individual attention from Craig is assured.



Above - Craig offers assistance to Rudi at a previous workshop up at Craig's place.



NEW PRODUCT LINE....for those starting out or with a handful of bonsai, I have introduced a **50/50** mix of **ORCHIATA PINE BARK** and **DIATOMITE 2-7mm** in a **20L bucket @ \$25.00**. Also available are **DIATOMITE 35L bags @ \$25.00** and **ORCHIATA PINE BARK 40L bags (3-6 or 6-9mm) @ \$30.00**. **ORCHID POTS** are available in a range of sizes. To order call Julie **0419 870 240** or email julie@bonsairoots.com.au



Nursery Crawl

Our second club Nursery Crawl for the year will take place on Saturday 2 September, when we will visit Marg Fenn's Hachinoki Pottery, Dinsan Wholesale Nursery, Bonsai Art Nursery, and Collector's Corner bonsai nursery.

It's always a lot of fun searching around for that special something or bargain item - if you find it, great, if not then you can save your money for next time!

All members, guests and friends are invited to attend for the whole day or just for selected parts of call if preferred. Remember that Dinsan Nursery is probably the largest wholesale nursery around Melbourne, has plenty of items for the garden as well as for potential bonsai, and has wholesale prices available for club members when we attend as a group.

Refer to Rudi's separate email for timing and other details, and please let him know if you are planning to attend,



Above - Members battled the heat at the last Nursery Crawl - shouldn't be a problem this time!

Kudos, Accolades and Thanks

- Tien L for his special presentation on deciduous trees at the July meeting.
- Tracey E for taking copious notes on Tien's presentation at the July meeting for inclusion in this newsletter, while your Editor was away!

End-Of-Month Saturday Workshop

The regular Last Saturday of the Month Workshop provides 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. Activities can vary from starter stock development, styling, trimming, wiring, defoliating, carving, to repotting.

All members and guests are encouraged to drop in with or without a tree, or for a coffee and chat. Note the new time of 1:00pm to 4:30pm, which has been introduced in response to member requests for extra time. Members are free to drop in for all of this time, or part of it depending on time commitments or the amount of work you would like to do.

As a new feature, we are also planning on introducing an optional Bonsai Basics tutorial at the start of each workshop, where an experienced member will provide instruction on one of the elements of our craft.

Many present club members were first introduced to the Club through dropping in to a Saturday Workshop, and we hope that this continues into the future.



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: Beech - *Fagus*

General: According to *Wikipedia* the **Beech** (*Fagus*) is a genus of deciduous trees in the family Fagaceae, native to temperate Europe, Asia and North America. The European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) is the most widely cultivated, although there are few important differences, the leaves are entire or sparsely toothed, from 5–15 cm long and 4–10 cm broad. Beeches are monoecious, bearing both male and female flowers on the same plant. The small flowers are unisexual, the female flowers borne in pairs, the male flowers wind-pollinating catkins. They are produced in spring shortly after the new leaves appear. The smooth bark is light grey. The fruit is a small, sharply three angled nut 10-15 mm long, borne singly or in pairs in soft-spined husks 1.5-2.5 cm long, known as cupules. The cigar-shaped buds are rather tender, and beech does not produce secondary buds. Nature's way of protecting these buds is for the beech to retain its dead leaves throughout winter.

Lighting & Temperature: Full sun, but semi-shade in midsummer. The European beech is the most hardy, the Japanese white beech the least. However, protect ALL from frost while young! During periods of high temperatures and low rainfall beeches may scorch, make sure the trees are adequately watered!

Watering: Frequently, especially during hot weather, to prevent the edges of the leaves from drying out. Appreciates misting! Reduce watering in winter.

Feeding: Do not feed for the first month after bud burst. Then feed every two weeks until the end of summer. Start with a high nitrogen fertiliser in spring, switching to low nitrogen fertiliser in late summer. Increasing feeding in late December to early February encourages the development of a second growth spurt.

Repotting: Repotting can be done in autumn or in spring, before bud burst, every 2-3 years for young plants and every 4-5 years for older ones in free draining soil. Carry out heavier root work during autumn repotting!

Propagation: Grafting, seeds sown in autumn, or use cold-treated seeds in spring. Air-layer in late-Spring after spring growth has hardened.

Pruning: Structural branch pruning best carried out late autumn. In winter pay attention to the bud size. Remove the large buds (a) from the tips of upper branches to ensure even growth over the tree. To achieve small internodes and small leaves bud pinching is very important on a Beech as it buds only once a year! As soon as the buds open you pinch out the leaves except for the first two (b). The weakest buds (c) will only produce a single leaf and no new shoot, *unless* the strongest buds (marked a) are pinched back! A beech grows slowly, and does not require much pruning. Hard pruning can be carried out in late-winter or mid-summer. Leaf pruning every second year in late spring is important to reduce the size of the large leaves. It is safer not to defoliate the beech completely, or in the same year that it has been repotted.

Wiring: Generally not necessary. Use branch pruning to shape! If wired, protect bark as it is delicate and prone to scaring.

Pests and diseases: Beech leaf miners, scale, bark beetles, and aphids. Regular inspections of the trunk and branches are suggested for early detection of scales, Beech scale can be devastating to trees. Crown symptoms include leaves of smaller size and lighter green color than normal. In severe cases the leaves wilt and the branches die. Avoid feeding with high nitrogen fertilizers as it seems to worsen the condition of infected trees!

Styles: Formal & Informal Upright, Group Planting and Root-over-Rock.

Some species variations suitable for bonsai:

***Fagus crenata*:** Japanese white beech, more suitable for bonsai than the European beech - slightly smaller stature and leaves. The bark is sometimes bleached with lime sulphur to accentuate its white color.

***Fagus sylvatica*:** European beech, it has the darkest gray bark and darkest green leaves of all the beeches.

***Fagus sylvatica* 'Asplenifolia':** cut-leaf beech.

***Fagus sylvatica* 'Atropurpurea' ('Atropunicea'):** copper beech - it has copper red to brownish-black ovate-elliptical leaves with a smooth gray bark.

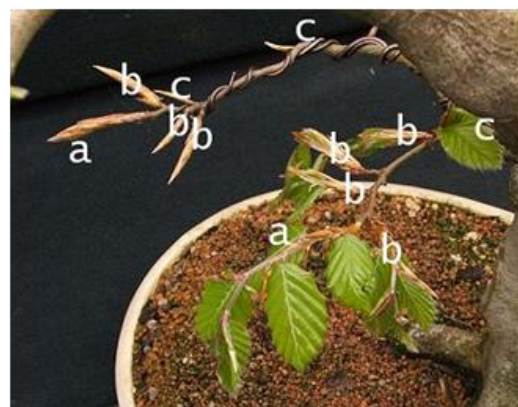


Photo courtesy of Bonsai4Me



Photo courtesy of Walter Pall

Membership Subscriptions

Membership subscriptions were due on 1st July. \$30 for singles, \$40 for families. Please pay at any club function, by cheque to PO Box 345, Mt Evelyn, 3796, or by direct deposit to BSB 633-000, Account No, 134 721257 including your name in the reference field. Please let us know if you no longer wish to retain membership.

On The Display Table



A selection of trees on the Display Table at the July and August meetings.



The display table at our monthly meetings is intended as a vehicle for members to share what they are working on or have created. It promotes constructive discussion and can provide inspiration for all. All trees are of value - they do not have to be of a professional or Show-worthy quality.

ALL MEMBERS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO BRING ALONG A TREE FOR THE DISPLAY TABLE EACH MONTH!

While trees in bonsai pots are preferred, trees in other containers can also be displayed if there is something of interest to share (and if the pots are dry, to protect the tables!)

At the meetings, helpful and respectful comments are encouraged but criticism is strictly banned!

BONSAI ART NURSERY

New Trading Hours

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

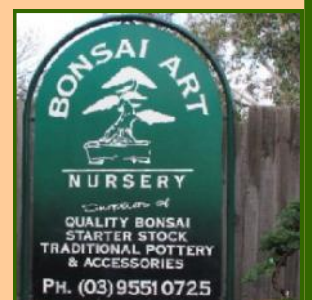
Sat, Sun - 10:00am to 4:00pm

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: September - October

Following are the main tasks to focus on during this time of year.

Repotting/Root pruning

- When repotting, look for ways to improve the overall appearance of your bonsai. For example, changing the position of the tree by turning, lifting or leaning the tree. Also consider alternative pot choices.
- Watch for the buds to swell on deciduous trees. Repot before buds break into leaf.
- Begin your repotting with deciduous varieties such as, maples, oaks, elms (September) and then continue with varieties such as, cryptomerias, azaleas, pyracanthas and pines (October).
- After repotting, keep your trees in a protected area away from extreme weather (hot or cold)

Wiring

- Wire all trees before repotting. This will minimize any movement to the tree after being repotted.
- Deciduous trees should be wired before breaking into leaf. Be careful not to damage the delicate buds while wiring branches.
- Watch carefully for wire damage at this time of year as most trees are growing at a rapid rate.

Pinching/Pruning

- Begin to pinch back new shoots as soon as they appear.
- Frequent pruning/pinching will improve ramification and help reduce leaf size throughout the growing season.
- Remove dying flowers from the tree as it weakens the plant and encourages pests.

Fertilizing/Watering

- With new growth, the need of water and fertilizer increases. Try to observe your trees individually to establish the amount and frequency of water is necessary.
- Avoid overwatering. Remember it is a process of wetting and drying.
- Use a slow release fertilizer (Osmocote/Dynamic Lifter) in combination with a liquid fertilizer (Maxicrop, Charlie Carp).
- It is better to fertilize regularly and frequently in small weak doses than give a strong dose now and then.
- With flowering species, fertilizing should commence after flowering.
- Water your trees (with plain water) before using liquid fertilizer.



Julie 0419 870 240 or

julie@bonsairoots.com.au

Pickup from YVBS/BSV/VNBC meetings, or as otherwise arranged. Also available at the YVBS Sale Day.

Bonsairoots diatomite is a SOIL CONDITIONER, it Should be used to improve the porosity and drainage of soil. Can retain 100% of its own weight in water, because of its ability to hold water, *Bonsairoots diatomite* creates aeration, provides plant available silica, has a high surface area in minute pore spaces into which liquids can be absorbed. Available in 35L bags and 20L buckets: size 2-7mm.

Bonsairoots orchata pine bark is a standalone growing substrate that can be used directly from the bag without sieving. Produced from 100% pure New Zealand pinus radiata bark, it is a unique, stable substrate for potting and re potting bonsai. Available in 40L bags and 20L buckets: sizes 3-6mm and 6-9mm.

Bonsairoots premium 50/50 mix consists on 50% *Bonsairoots diatomite* and 50% *Bonsairoots orchata pine bark*. This mix is extremely successful in the development of masses of fine roots on bonsai plants. It is very open and water drains quickly, helping to avoid root rot.



Squat orchid pots are ideal for growing-on trees, promoting radial root growth and a flat root structure. High quality UV-resistant plastic, re-usable, will last for years.



ヤラ谷間盆栽会

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www.yarravalleybonsai.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 September & October 2017



Nursery Trip "**SOUTHEASTERN EXPOSURE**" on 2nd September, covering the **Din San Wholesale Nursery, Bonsai Art Nursery and Collectors Corner!** We've been invited by Marg Fenn to visit her **Hachinoki Bonsai Pottery**, her son Jase will be here to show us her working space, kiln etc. there'll also be a table set up with pots for sale. (Refer separate email re Nursery Trip)



Our monthly meeting on 12th September will be starting with the Bonsai Basics Review "**Pot selection**" by Lindsay H. Followed by the **YVBS - AGM**. Members turning up on the night are encouraged to bring along the Casuarina which they received last year to show its development. Display Table: "**Japanese Maples & Members Choice**".



Our monthly workshop will be on Saturday 30th September, 1:00PM - 4:30PM at Cire Services - former UYCH.



Our monthly meeting on 10th October will be starting with the Bonsai Basics Review "**Branch selection & placement**" by Lindsay H. Followed by a "**Workshop & Swap and Sale Night**" with our own Gurus! Display Table: "**Accent Plants & Members Choice**".



Our monthly workshop will be on Saturday 28th October, 1:00PM - 4:30PM at Cire Services - former UYCH.



Other Events



BSV RIPPONLEA BONSAI DISPLAY, Saturday 9th September 10am - 4pm, Demonstrations at 11am & 2pm, Sunday 10th September 10am - 4pm Demonstration at 12pm, Rippon Lea House & Gardens, 192 Hotham Street, Elsternwick. Tickets: Rippon Lea Garden Entry \$10 Adults, \$7 Concession, \$4 Child (4-15 years) & \$20 Family (2 adults & 2 children)



Satsuki Azalea Bonsai Interest Group Victoria Meeting on Saturday 23rd September, 1:30PM - 4:00PM, at "Bonsai Art" Nursery, 236 Old Dandenong Road, Heatherton.

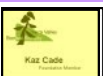


Bonsai Society of Victoria Exhibition, Saturday 14th October 9:00AM - 5:00PM and Sunday 15th October 9:00AM - 4:00PM, at Box Hill Town Hall, Whitehorse Rd, Box Hill. Entry \$5.00.



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.yarravalleybonsai.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@yarravalleybonsai.org.au