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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 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 March & April 2015

The March Club meeting featured the annual Team Challenge, a light-hearted competition where teams of members are given a raw tree and challenged to create the best bonsai that they can within the given time limit - typically around 75 minutes!

This year, the trees were all nice medium-sized junipers, and the quality of the finished products was excellent as usual, thanks to the enthusiastic inputs from all participating members under the direction of team leaders Tien, David W, Ross R, Steve M and Bill McK.

A number of the trees were purchased by members at the end of the night, including the winning tree, a nice little twin trunk composition developed by Tien and his team.



Upper right - all hands on the tree to meet the very tight time limit.

Lower right - Tien's team studying the initial material, and Left - the final result.

The April Club meeting featured a presentation by noted Melbourne and international bonsai identity Lindsay Farr from Bonsai Farm in Hawthorn. Lindsay spoke on one of his passions, the history of bonsai pots, with particular reference to pots available in Australia.

Lindsay reported that the first known bonsai collection in Melbourne appeared in the early 1900's, but that the art became more widespread post World War II. The famous department store Buckley and Nunn was an early importer and retailer of Japanese bonsai trees in the 1930's! Importation of bonsai continued freely until 1961, when quarantine laws got a whole lot tougher.



Calendar Dates:

- 3 May (Sunday) Australian Plants Society Autumn Sale. 10:00am to 3:00pm Eltham.
- 12 May (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm UYCH.
- 15 to 18 May (Friday to Monday) AABC National Convention. Adelaide.
- 17 May (Sunday) Japan Festival. 10:00am to 5:00pm. Box Hill Town Hall.
- 19 May (Tuesday) YVBS Novice Course commences. 7:00pm to 9:00pm. UYCH.
- 30 May (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 2:00pm UYCH.
- 30 May (Saturday) BSV Annual Sale Day. 9:30 to 11:30. East Kew Uniting Church.
- 9 June (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm UYCH.
- 26 June to 3 July. Mauro Stemberger workshops and demos at various locations.
- 27 June (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 2:00pm UYCH.

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

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Highlights from March & April - Cont. From Page 1

Ellis Ceramics began manufacturing bonsai pots in Abbotsford in the 1950's, and Lindsay showed us one of the molds that they used and one of the pots which it produced. He has also published a complete catalog of all Ellis pots online through his website.

Lindsay favours Chinese pots over the Japanese ones, and avers that most of the trees seen in Bonsai exhibitions in Japan are placed in Chinese pots! Even today, most of the clay used in the manufacture of Japanese pots is imported from China.

He described the rich history of China's pottery from the Ming and Ching dynasties, through to the Cultural Revolution when pots were produced by "Teapot Factory No. 1" at Yixing in China under strict Maoist guidelines.

We were fortunate that Lindsay brought along a range of old Chinese and Australian pots to illustrate his presentation, as well as some of the original catalogs describing the products on offer in what is now the distant past.

Lindsay is very passionate about the subject and delivered an extremely entertaining presentation.



Upper Right - Lindsay Farr with some of the old pots in his collection.

Lower Right - A page from one of the old catalogs of bonsai pots.

Left - a fine example of an old Chinese pot

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.



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

Carol P is married to Russell and has 3 married children, 2 grandchildren and another 2 on the way. She has lived in the Yarra Valley region for over 40 years., and is currently a director of Ray White Real Estate in Mt Evelyn.

Carol has always been a gardener, and first became interested in the art of bonsai in her teens when she tried bonsai based on book learning, somewhat unsuccessfully. In later years through her work in real estate, she visited the homes of bonsai enthusiasts which made her feel that the art was more accessible than she had thought. She was persuaded to join her daughter on a class, and became ignited by the subject. Since joining our club, she has extended her knowledge and continues her development in the art.

Carol originally set a limit of 20 trees for her collection, but has since exceeded this! She doesn't have a specific favourite variety, and thinks that she would like a good cross-section of different species and bonsai forms.

She sees her future life in bonsai as enjoying her trees more and spending more time with them, as well as experiencing the collections of others

Her other interests outside of bonsai are Rotary, general gardening, patchwork, and antiques and their restoration.



Novice Course

The Novice Course with Craig W starts on Tuesday 19th May at our normal club venue, and runs for 5 consecutive weeks, with a break for the June YVBS Meeting. Five participants have already signed up, which is above the minimum and so the course is definitely on, but there is still space available. Contact Marlene mjerlitschka@iprimus.com.au if you would like to participate.

Total cost for the course is \$100, per student which represents something around \$10 per hour, extremely good value. A 30 page booklet of course notes will be provided for each attendee.

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 also an Intermediate Tutored Workshop course scheduled for August, again with Craig leading. Many members have taken this course, many on multiple occasions, and it is an ideal next step after completing the Novice Course, or for those members who want additional guidance on developing their trees. The Intermediate Workshops will also run for 5 consecutive weeks on Tuesday nights, and sign up sheets will be available at future meetings.



Ask Mr. Miyagi.....



Q. Hi Mr. Miyagi, what happens to my trees when the leaves drop, do they hibernate?

A. In a way, yes. In autumn the trees prepare themselves for the cold winter months. Hibernation is used by many mammals to escape cold weather and food shortages over the winter. An animal prepares for hibernation by building up a thick layer of body fat during late summer and autumn that will provide it with energy during its dormant period. Trees do the same thing, storing up valuable sugars to sustain it through the cold months and as they don't make food in the winter. With no food production, they have no use for masses of leaves that would require energy to maintain, so they drop them, which also in turn helps protect the trees delicate foliage from the cold of winter. The store of energy also helps the tree push the new growth, when the soil temperature rises the following spring.

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

“Deep South” Nursery Crawl

The April nursery crawl saw up to 15 members visit Bonsai Sensation, Pearcedale Nursery, and Plantmark Wholesale Nursery in Langwarrin. Fortunately, the rain held off for most of the day, and a number of trees were taken home from all locations.

A visit to Bonsai Sensation is always a pleasure, and Tien is to be congratulated on the vast numbers of starter trees that he has under the shade cloth, as well as the finished bonsai and advanced starters outside. A couple of hours went by in a flash as members browsed the benches, and selected their treasures.

Tien advises on plant selection under the shade cloth at Bonsai Sensation.



End-Of-Month Saturday Workshop

There is a range of trees being worked on at the Saturday end-of-month workshops, ranging from starter stock just starting their journey, through intermediate trees undergoing finer development, to mature bonsai being trimmed or tweaked. Always something to look at and discuss, along with a number of senior members who are free with their advice if required.

Many new members have their first introduction to our club through the Saturday workshops.

All members and guests are encouraged to drop in, with or without a tree, and participate in the fellowship of the bonsai!



Grandfather, daughter and great grandson - three out of four generations represented at the March end of month workshop.

Kudos, Accolades and Thanks

- To Chojo Feature Trees for the excellent bonsai stock used for the Team Challenge at the March meeting.
- To Tien from Bonsai Sensation for participating in the Team Challenge and leading his team to victory!
- To Lindsay Farr for his entertaining and informative presentation on bonsai pots at the April meeting.



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: *Alnus* - Alder

General information: Alder is the common name of a genus of flowering plants (*Alnus*) belonging to the birch family Betulaceae and comprises of about 30 species. With a few exceptions, alders are deciduous, and the leaves are alternate, simple and serrated. The flowers are catkins with elongate male catkins on the same plant as shorter female catkins, which are woody - similar to conifer cones.

The Alder is very suitable for Bonsai and the most commonly used are:

Black Alder - *Alnus glutinosa*, origin in Europe, Central Asia; introduced to Australia, New Zealand, Chile, Northeastern America and Canada.

Green Alder - *Alnus viridis*, origin in temperate Europe, Asia and North America.

Grey Alder - *Alnus incana*, origin in Eurasia and North America.

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

Watering: Likes a lot of water, especially in summer! Keep moist all the time - don't let them dry out!

Feeding: Very little fertilizing required, once a month during the growing season. Use liquid fertilizer or half-strength general purpose food if deficiency symptoms occur.

Repotting: Jung plants every year, older ones every second or third year in spring or autumn when plant is dormant. Use standard bonsai mix - not too free draining to keep the moisture up!

Pruning and Wiring: Cut back new shots to two leaves after four or five leaves have formed. Structural and heavy pruning in autumn - can also be carved. Wiring can be done from spring to autumn - on older trees use raffia to protect the bark. Keep checking regularly for scarring!

Styles: Formal upright, Informal Upright, Slanting, Cascade, Semi-cascade, Literate, Broom, Rock-over-root, Twin-trunk, Clump, Group Planting and Saikei

Propagation: Hardwood cuttings and seed! Cuttings to be taken in autumn after the leaves drop and placed in propagation sand. Seed to be sown as soon as it's ripe and to be kept cool - it will germinate in spring.

Pests and diseases: Aphids, Powdery Mildew and Branch dieback.

Species most suitable for Bonsai:

Black Alder - *Alnus glutinosa*, the bark of young trees is smooth, glossy and greenish-brown while in older trees it is dark grey and fissured. The glossy dark green leaves are rounded, pale green underside and short stalked.

Green Alder - *Alnus viridis*, smooth grey bark even in old age. The leaves are shiny green with light green underside. Catkins appearing late in spring after the leaves emerge - unlike other alders, which flower before leaves appear.

Grey Alder - *Alnus incana*, smooth grey bark even in old age. The leaves are matt green. Catkins appearing early in spring before the leaves emerge. It can create stump and root suckers.



Orient Bonsai Nursery



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

Products

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On The Display Table

All members are encouraged to bring along a tree for the display table each meeting, so that we can all appreciate and be inspired by the work being done by each member, be they experienced or novices.



A selection of trees on the Display Table at the March and April meetings. Even some unseasonable bloomers!

BONSAI ART NURSERY

New Trading Hours

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

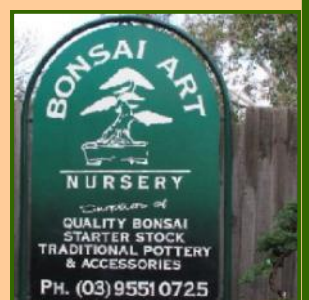
Sat, Sun - 10:00am to 4:00pm

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: May - June

As Autumn draws to a close, your deciduous trees have completed their growth cycle and are in preparation for dormancy. Evergreen varieties may not stop growing completely but their growth rate will slow down dramatically. Among many other tasks, winter is a great time to contemplate styling and restyling your bonsai (especially deciduous trees). Having the ability to see the skeleton of your trees will assist you in improving the basic branch structure and ramification of your bonsai.

Here are a few things to consider over the winter months.

- Remove all fruit and seeds from your trees as it can promote die back and disease.
- Once all the green leaves have changed or fallen you can begin cutting back on deciduous trees to shape with out fear of the tree bleeding.
- After all leaves have fallen, clean up all debris around your bonsai area (including the tops of the pots), to reduce potential homes and hiding places for pests.
- Any trees that have been protected from the summer sun can be pushed back into the open. The winter sun will promote bud development and tighten spring growth.
- Adjust your watering routine as your trees will be using less water. Rain may be more common. Avoid over watering at this time of year as trees are extremely susceptible to root rot. Keep deciduous trees on the dry side to promote autumn colour.
- If possible, make a habit of watering at the warmest part of the day. This will give the excess water a chance to drain before the cold nights.
- Keep an eye on pots that get completely covered with moss. This may interrupt the water intake and increase the chance of root rot.
- May and June are the best times to do heavy pruning and shaping to most conifers.
- Wire and bend branches while trees are on the dry side of the watering cycle. This will improve the flexibility of the branches and so reduce cracking or breaking.

www.orientbonsai.com.au

Orient Bonsai Nursery



盆栽專門店

11 Mahoneys Road
Reservoir VIC 3073

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Container-load of new pots have arrived!



ヤラ谷間盆栽会

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2015

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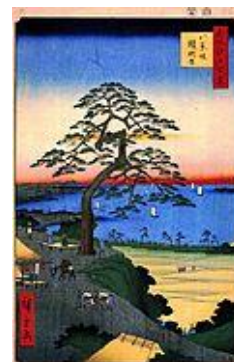
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A group for all lovers of bonsai in the "far east" of Melbourne



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

*Looking Ahead to
May & June 2015*



Our monthly meeting on 12th May will be a Demonstration on **"Corky Bark Chinese Elm"** by Michael Simonetto - a great learning night. **NOT TO BE MISSED!** NO Overview/Review Session! Display Table: **"Informal Upright & Members Choice"**.



Our **"Novice Course"** with Craig Wilson will commence on Tuesday 19th May and will run for two hours per evening for five consecutive Tuesdays, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM at UYCH (hopping the June monthly meeting), finishing on 23rd June.



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



Our monthly meeting on 9th June will start with a Overview/Review Session on **"Winter Preparation"** by Alan H and followed by a **"Workshop Night"**! Display Table: **"Shohin various styles & Members Choice"**.



Saturday 27th June monthly Workshop, 2:00 PM - 4:30 PM at UYCH.

Other Events



Sunday 3rd May the **Australian Plants Society Yarra Yarra** is holding a huge **"Autumn Plant Sale"** again at Cnr Brougham & Main Rd, Eltham, on Sunday 3rd May from 10:00AM - 3:00pm. Demonstrations of propagation methods are from 12 noon, and include seeds, cuttings & grafting. Check out their website www.apsyarrayarra.org.au



AABC 28th Australian National Bonsai Convention, Friday 15th - Monday 18th May 2015, at Hotel Grand Chancellor Adelaide on Hindley, South Australia. Check out their website <http://www.bonsaisa.org.au/>



Sunday 17th May **Japan Festival**, 10:00AM - 5:00PM, at Box Hill Town Hall & Box Hill TAFE, 1000-1022 Whitehorse Road, Box Hill, Costs: General Public: \$5.00, Free Entry : Children up to Grade 6; Disabled persons (+ 1 attendant) & Seniors Card Holders; Persons in Kimono or Yukata. Check out their website: <http://www.jcv-au.org/japanfestival/>



Bonsai Society Victoria is holding its **Annual Sale Day** on **Saturday 30th May**, 9:30AM - 11:30AM at the East Kew Unit- ing Church Hall, 142 Normanby Rd. Entry \$2.00



Mauro Stemberger, renowned Bonsai artist and demonstrator from Italy will be in Victoria at the following Clubs/Venues:

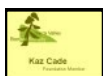
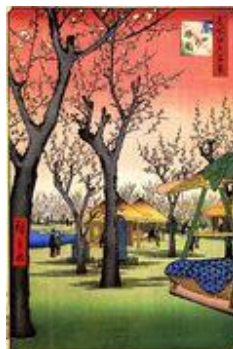
- Bendigo Bonsai Club: Friday 26th June - presentation in the evening, Saturday 27th June - 2 workshops during the day. Details via secretary@bendigobonsaiclub.org

- Bonsai Society of Victoria: Sunday 28th June - 2 workshops during the day, Monday 29th June - afternoon workshop and presentation in the evening. Details at <http://www.bonsaisocietyvictoria.com/>

- Waverley Bonsai Group: Tuesday 30th June - 2 workshops during the day and a evening demonstration. Details at <http://www.waverleybonsaigroup.org/> closer to date!

- Geelong Bonsai Club: Wednesday 1st July - 2 workshops during the day and a demonstration in the evening. Details at <http://geelongbonsai.com/> closer to date!

- Mornington Peninsula Bonsai Society: Thursday 2nd July - afternoon workshop and evening demonstration and Friday 3rd July - morning workshop. Details at <http://www.bonsaimornington.com.au/> closer to date!



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