

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.



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 May & June 2015

The May meeting featured a presentation and demonstration by one of our favourite bonsai experts Michael Simonetto, on the subject of branch development on deciduous trees using a corky bark elm as the feature tree.

A summary of Michael's thoughts on this subject is included as a separate article later in this newsletter. His expertise in this area is without question, and all members will gain new insight through hearing Michael or reading the notes.

Michael finished up by advising member Adam M on his elm. Adam was not happy with its state of development, and was amenable to Michael's suggestion to start again with all



Above - Michael Simonetto demonstrates pruning techniques for branch development at the May meeting, assisted by wife Allison.



of the branches. Michael showed what he meant, and the results can be seen in the photos! Applying Michael's techniques as discussed, Adam should have an excellent tree for display in a few years.

Above - Michael recommends to Adam M to start again with the branches on his elm, and Right - the result.



Calendar Dates:

- 1 July (Wednesday) Mauro Stemberger workshops demonstration at Geelong Bonsai. Geelong.
 - 2 and 3 July (Thursday and Friday) Mauro Stemberger evening demonstration and morning workshop. Mornington Bonsai Club.
 - 11 July (Saturday) YVBS Artificial Rock Creation Workshop. 1:30pm to 4:30pm. UYCH.
 - 14 July (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. UYCH.
 - 25 July (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 2:00pm. UYCH.
 - 11 August (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. UYCH.
 - 18 August (Tuesday) Intermediate Tutored Workshops with Craig W commence. 7:00pm. UYCH.
 - 29 August (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 January & February - Cont. From Page 1

The June meeting featured an impromptu talk by Rudi on winter preparation and care for our trees, followed by a workshop night with expert advice on hand from our sponsor Tien from Bonsai Sensation and experienced club members including Mark L and Rudi.



Left and Above - Workshop night at the June meeting.

Bonsai Training Courses

The Bonsai Novice Course under the tutelage of Craig W is currently underway and being attended by 8 of our members. The course is structured with a teaching session by Craig during the first half of each session, followed by practical work on the student's trees during the second half of the session. A 30 page set of course notes form a valuable adjunct to the course, and one which can be referred back to in the future. This course has been run most years since our foundation, and most of our members have graduated from it over the years.

The next step after the Novice Course is the Intermediate Tutored Workshops. These comprise another series of 5 consecutive (apart from the scheduled club meeting) Tuesday nights, but feature learning through working on your own trees under the guidance of Craig, rather than any formal teaching sessions. Of course, you also learn from observing other participant's activities as well.

An Intermediate Tutored Workshop Course is planned to commence in August this year, subject to sufficient enrolments but with a limit of 8-10 participants. The cost will be around \$100 in total, which equates to about \$10 per hour over the full 5 week duration - extremely good value for the one-on-one tutelage from a recognized expert like Craig.

Sign-up sheets are available with Marlene, or email her directly at mjerlitschka@iprimus.com.



Right - The first night of the Novice Course.



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

Frank M writes - "I am a Financial Accountant and we emigrated from South Africa in 1999 and settled in Melbourne. I have a wife Glenda and 2 children Lauren and Dean. My interest in Bonsai started after I arrived in Australia. The reason I am interested in soils and growing plants is because I was raised on a farm in South Africa.

"I initially started with cuttings and created about 50 plants. These then grew and by reading up on what to do next I started creating Bonsai out of them.

"I wish to learn more about the Bonsai shapes and characteristics so as to utilise them in my own special creations.

"My other interests are cycling and off road dirtbiking with my son.

"I have grown to like AFL but my love of rugby and the Springboks takes priority!"

Frank is currently participating in the Novice Training Course with Craig W, and no doubt learning a lot.



Special Workshop on Rock Construction

The club has organized a Special Workshop on 'Artificial Rock Creation with Planting' featuring Mark Ludlow from The Master's Apprentice Bonsai School, to be held on Saturday 11th July from 1:30pm to 4:30pm at UYCH, our normal meeting venue.

The Workshop will cost \$30 for participants which includes all necessary materials to construct a small rock and planting, similar to the one depicted on the right. Observers may attend for free!



Participants may construct their own design, however it should be of a small size due to the time constraints associated with a half-day workshop. The skills learnt may be transferred to larger constructions in your own time. The Hebel blocks used to form the rocks are lightweight and easy to form using common tools. They are available from Bunnings as well as other local outlets.

Registrations are essential to arrange the supply of sufficient materials - contact mjerlitschka@iprimus.com.au.

Above Right - typical expected outcome of the Workshop.

Left - One of Mark's larger creations under construction in his Bonsai School.



Ask Mr. Miyagi.....



Q. I'm confused Mr Miyagi, Why do people pinch prune

A. When we prune the growth on a tree it is easy to damage the foliage using scissors, and damage can cause the foliage to turn brown and the branches to scar. With this in mind, branches require foliage to sustain life and over pinched or over pruned foliage can result in damage and dieback.

New growth can enlarge quickly so you can pinch the new growth out early to maintain your desired shape and compact pads. By pinching out the tips of the new growth, you push the energy back down into the branch and promote back budding and this increases the "bushiness" of the pad rather than having the growth grow long and leggy. Do this by taking the new shoots between your thumb and forefinger and pulling off the new growth. Try not to twist the growth off.

The other advantage of pinching out the growth is to thin the foliage on the branch to allow light into the tree, promoting health and reducing the chance of dieback. If the branches become too heavy and full, the foliage that receives no light will die off and could cause health problems for your tree.

Remember: Don't do the whole tree at once, this could stress the tree. Be patient and slowly work over the tree giving the tree adequate time to rest between each prune.

Notes from Michael's Branch Development Night

At the May meeting, Michael Simonetto demonstrated on a corky bark elm, but said that the methods under discussion apply to almost all deciduous tree varieties.

Once the trunk has been developed, select the desired branches and wire them horizontal or slightly downwards, and then let them grow. During the dormant season, cut them back to stubs of typically 1cm length, and then next season let them grow again. In the following dormant season, cut them back to an extension of the previous year's stubs. Wire the short stubs/branches if required after pruning in the dormant season. This procedure results in the development of early ramification near the trunk, and highly desirable tapering from the trunk to the end of the branches. Branches are developed progressively year by year, a cm or so per year.

During the pruning process, avoid straight lines and eliminate anything with an internode distance of greater than about 2cm (depending on the size of the tree - much less than 2cm on smaller trees). Each individual branch needs its own space to allow light access to the innermost parts of the branch. If at any time during the development of the branch structure you become unhappy with a branch or all branches, do not hesitate to cut it or them off during the winter. They will always grow back and give you a second chance.

Generally wire branches in the winter, but some can be done during summer defoliation if the tree is particularly vigorous.

Work on pruning and wiring one branch at a time until it is finished, generally starting at the bottom of the tree, and then move on to the next progressively until the tree is finished. To start pruning, remove twigs from forks, leaving only two branchlets at each fork. Cut to the bud growing in the desired direction of development where possible. Select branches in the right position even if they are of the wrong size - if they are too small, they can always be grown thicker.

Keep front branches very short, but back branches can be longer. Michael doesn't seal cuts on elms, but recommends that sealing is performed on maples.

The crown is the hardest part of the tree to develop, and there is a need to remove a lot of the upward growth periodically and develop horizontal growth to maintain a rounded crown shape.

Right - An example of Michael's work on branch development.



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!

Right - Members at work at the May Saturday Workshop



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: Hawthorn - *Crataegus*

General information: *Crataegus* also commonly called **Hawthorn** or **Whitethorn**, is comprised of about 200 species. A native to temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere in Europe, Asia and North America. Some species producing good autumn colour turning yellow, red or orange. Hawthorn is very suitable for Bonsai due to its quick and fine branch ramification. The other attractions are the clusters of white or double pink flowers in mid-spring and small red berries in autumn. They take about 15 to 20 years to flower! The branches on most species have strong spines.

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

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

Feeding: Once a month from spring to autumn. High phosphorus and potassium fertiliser to promote flowering. In late summer use low nitrogen to harden the growth. Don't fertilize in midsummer!

Repotting: Young plants every year, older ones every second or third year in spring before leave buds open 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 with constant clipping to keep the shape under control. Structural and heavy pruning before leaves appear. Large wounds can take a long time to heal over! Wiring can be done during spring and summer, but best in autumn. Keep checking regularly for scarring!

Styles: Formal upright, Informal Upright, Slanting, Cascade, Semi-cascade, Root-over-rock, Twin-trunk, Clump, Group planting and Saikei. **Any size!**

Propagation: Softwood cuttings in summer, air-layering in spring, root development can take a long time and from seed when fruit is ripe!

Pests and diseases: Aphids, Caterpillars, Powdery Mildew and Rust.

Species most common for Bonsai:

Common Hawthorn/ *Crataegus monogyna* varieties, also known as Quick or Quickthorn. It is a rounded, deciduous tree with fragrant white flowers.

Hawthorn/ *Crataegus oxycantha* (syn. *Crataegus laevigata*), also known as May or Midland Hawthorn, the *Crataegus oxycantha* variety 'Pauls Scarlet' with its profuse, double, dark-pink flowers.

Bodhidharma's Crataegus laevigata 'Rosea flore Pleno'



Orient Bonsai Nursery



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Email: orient_bonsai@hotmail.com

Products

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On The Display Table



A selection of trees on the Display Table at the May and June 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

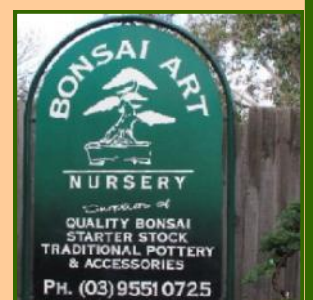
Sat, Sun - 10:00am to 4:00pm

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: July - August

Most species that are used for bonsai are hardy (able to withstand freezing) however, when grown in containers they do not have the ability to bury their roots deep into the ground, which insulates them from the cold. The Melbourne climate rarely reaches zero (freezing) or sub zero temperatures but protecting your trees from the winter elements may still be necessary. Be wary of extremely wet weather as having your trees saturated for extended amounts of time may lead to problems through rotting of the roots, which is invariably fatal!

Having the ability to inspect the detailed branch structure of your deciduous trees in winter provides an excellent opportunity to consider restyling your trees. Here are a few tips to get you through the winter.

- Monitor the weather and protect your bonsais from excess rain, wind and cold. Find the most protected area in your yard. Place them undercover if necessary.
- Keep your trees as well drained as possible. Place bricks or blocks of wood under your bonsais to ensure water is escaping the pot and air is circulating around and under your trees
- Carefully inspect each tree and make any changes that will improve your bonsai. Remember the busy potting season is not far away so having your wiring and pruning complete before this time will take the pressure off.
- Avoid the temptation to repot too early. Wait until the buds start to swell before attempting this procedure.
- Prepare your potting medium and place in a dry area. Organize any other items needed for potting (root picks, mesh, scoops etc.)
- Consider what pot you will use for each of your trees. Place them next to the bonsais that they will be paired with.

It is difficult to predict the changing of the seasons. Trying to schedule with the use of a calendar may lead to problems. Watch your trees carefully and let them guide you.

Kudos, Accolades and Thanks

- Michael Simonetto for his excellent demonstration and presentation at the May meeting.
- To Tien from Bonsai Sensation, who along with our club gurus, provided valuable assistance at the June workshop night.
- To Mark L. for donating the hand-made rock and planting for the raffle at our June meeting.



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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
July & August 2015*



On Saturday 11th July, 1:30PM - 4:30PM at UYCH we'll have a Special Workshop on '**Artificial Rock Creation with Planting**' with Mark Ludlow. Registration with mjerlitschka@iprimus.com.au on 'first come first served'! Cost \$30.00 for participants, observers free! Rock material will be supplied and included in registration fee.



The monthly meeting on 14th July will be a Demonstration on "**Root Pruning**" by Tien Liao from Bonsai Sensation - a great learning night. **NOT TO BE MISSED!** NO Overview/Review Session! Display Table: "**Conifers & Members Choice**".



Our monthly workshop will be on Saturday 25th July, 2:00 PM - 4:30 PM at UYCH.



Our monthly meeting on 11th August will be a Demonstration on "**Pines**" by Steve Jarrold -as always a great night! **NOT TO BE MISSED!** NO Overview/Review Session! Display Table: "**Nebari & Members Choice**".



Our "**Intermediate Tutored Workshops**" with Craig Wilson will commence on Tuesday 18th August and will run for two hours per evening for five consecutive Tuesdays, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM at UYCH (hopping the September **AGM** meeting), finishing on 22nd September. Registration with mjerlitschka@iprimus.com.au

Saturday 29th August monthly Workshop, 2:00 PM - 4:30 PM at UYCH.



Other Events



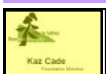
Mauro Stemberger, renowned international Bonsai artist and demonstrator from Italy will be in Victoria in June and July at the following Clubs/Venues:

- Geelong Bonsai Club: Wednesday 1st July - 2 workshops during the day and a demonstration in the evening. Details at <http://geelongbonsai.com/>!
- Mornington Peninsula Bonsai Society: Thursday 2nd July - afternoon workshop and evening demonstration, and Friday 3rd July - morning workshop. Details contact Alan Ph. 5974 4257.



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