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[www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au](http://www.yarravalleybonsai.org.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.

**Melway 118 B8**

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

## Inside this issue:

Trade & Lib Update	2
Workshops at Craig's	2
Member Profile	3
Carving Workshop	3
Mr Miyagi	3
Sale Day	4
Kudos, Accolades, Thanks	4
Saturday Workshops	4
Tree Profile - Leptospermum	5
On The Display Table	6
Bonsai Calendar	7
Looking Ahead	8
Other Events	8
YVBS Forum	8

# The Yarra Valley Bonsai Society Newsletter



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!



## Highlights from November & December 2015

The November meeting featured a demonstration by Trevor McComb from Bonsai Art on Satsuki Azaleas. Trevor is an acknowledged authority on satsuki and propagates many different varieties in his nursery.

Trevor advised that satsuki can be grown in any bonsai style, even miniatures. They can readily be brought indoors when they are flowering, for weeks at a time. In fact this can even be beneficial as it keeps the rain off the flowers and prolongs the flowering period. Put them outside again immediately after flowering.

Trevor reiterated that azaleas are basally dominant, not apically dominant as are most of the trees that we are familiar with. Consequently, we should be sure to encourage growth at the apex and remove excess growth at the base. In fact, when developing young pre-bonsai stock, remove all basal growth leaving just one shoot which should be developed as a long whip, into which movement and shape can be wired. Branch development can occur at a later stage.

Where possible, and especially on mature trees, it is often better to use guy wires to move branches rather than conventional wiring techniques, as satsuki are generally very brittle. When



Trevor's satsuki azaleas at the November meeting.

Continued Page 2

## Calendar Dates:

- 12th January (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. UYCH.
- 30th January (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 2:00pm. UYCH.
- 6th February (Saturday) Nursery Trip "Deep South". 10:00am
- 9th February (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. UYCH.
- 20th February (Saturday) Satsuki Interest Group meeting. 1:30pm to 4:30pm. Bonsai Art Nursery, Heatherton.
- 27th February (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 2:00pm. UYCH.

See also the Events Calendar on our website: [www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au](http://www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au)

## Highlights from November & December - Cont. From Page 1

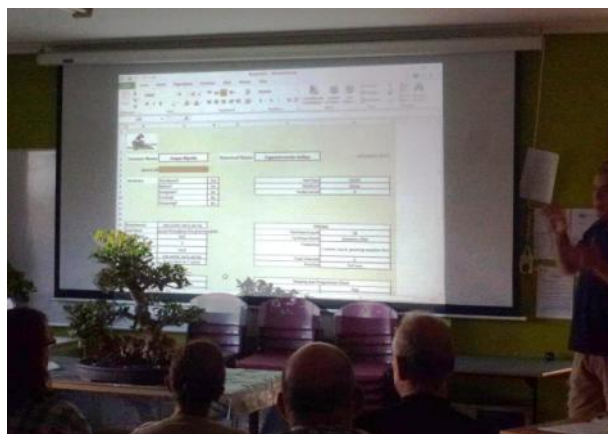
using conventional wiring techniques, be very careful with new shoots, and when removing wire, ALWAYS cut the wire off rather than unwinding.

In general, satsuki like larger and deeper pots - but don't over-pot, they dislike it as the soil tends to stay too moist.

The wood is hard on azaleas and is not prone to rotting. Although the Japanese do not generally use dead wood features on satsuki, it can look good and add character to a tree. In the end, it is a personal preference.

In Melbourne, flowers on satsuki are set by around March, so any pruning after this time will remove flower buds from the next season's

growth.



The December meeting was the Christmas breakup, and festive fare contributed by members was enjoyed by all. Bill McK gave us an update on the YVBS Bonsai Calendar/Database, and promised release immediately following incorporation of a last few teaks requested by members.

David W also gave us a brief presentation on ficus care and development, and then advised members on treatment for their free trees received at the AGM in September. There were also a few ficus trees left over from the AGM, which were gratefully snapped up by members who were not at the AGM. We hope to see some dramatic development of these trees into the future.



Right - Bill's Bonsai Calendar/Database update, and left - Ficus advice at the December meeting.

## Workshops at Craig's Place

From time to time, the club organizes small group intensive workshops with Craig Wilson at his premises in Olinda. Limited to 4-6 people, these sessions provide valuable face-to-face time with our local bonsai expert and are appreciated by members at all levels of bonsai knowledge, from novice through to experienced. Trees at all levels of development can be taken to the workshops and Craig will provide down-to-earth advice on growing or styling, and even hands-on assistance when required.

Two workshops were held in December, and more are planned for February next year. Members are encouraged to participate - the cost is very nominal when compared with the benefits gained.

Right - After Craig has presented a number of possible ways forward for Rudi's callistemon, he ponders his choice!



### 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

Dean S lives in Bayswater with wife Selina and two children, a son and a daughter aged 12 and 9 respectively. Trained as a fitter and turner, he is now a Testing Officer dealing with white goods and gas appliances.

Dean worked for a Japanese boss for 5 years and came to respect the man and consequently Japanese culture in general, including food, gardens and architecture. Bonsai was a big part of this, although his fear of killing them slowed down his involvement!

Fortunately, his son is friends with the son of Trevor Wicks from Waverley Bonsai Group who has demonstrated at our club. Trevor kindly gave him some private one-on-one bonsai lessons to start him on his bonsai journey.

Dean currently has a total of 12 trees in his collection, of which 6 are good and the other 6 he describes as "experimental". At the moment, he is into pines, cedars, Japanese maples, and Chinese Elms.



## Ask Mr. Miyagi.....



**Q. I'm planning on going away over Christmas, will my bonsai be ok for a while?**

**A.** Keeping your bonsai watered while you are away from home has always been problem for enthusiasts. Pruning, feeding and general maintenance work can be left for a week or two without any detriment to your trees but watering *has* to be attended to on a daily basis. I have known a few enthusiasts who have refused to go on holiday during the growing season for fear of losing trees through lack of water! Fears of tree's drying out in their owners' absence seem well founded as one always hears stories of well-meaning friends, relatives and neighbours who have forgotten to water an expensive, prized tree even once while the owner is away on holiday.

Asking a friend or neighbour can work but only if they are reliable enough to remember to water properly on a regular basis. With the Australian summer being hot and dry.

The amount of water a tree may require on a daily basis could be reduced by watering well and then moving the tree to a cool position away from light to reduce transpiration

and moisture loss. This will increase the amount of time the tree can be left without additional watering and if you are only going away for a long weekend this may be satisfactory. Your neighbours may be helpful and have the best intentions but unless they are enthusiasts themselves, they are unlikely to have the experience to know how much and how often your trees require water and more importantly, how quickly the soil can dry over the course of a day, particularly when it is hot and windy. It may be practicable to have a fellow club member who lives nearby water on your behalf or if you have only a few trees, you may be able to drop them off for a fellow club member to babysit until you return. Never rely solely on an automatic watering system as these will regularly let you down and need to be monitored to ensure they are functioning correctly.

Writing Credit: bonsai4me.com

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

## Carving Workshop in 2016

Our club member Michael Simonetto is a frequent contributor to our club through presentations, demonstrations, workshops, and sales tables, and his expertise in all areas of the bonsai art is recognized and keenly appreciated. The club is planning on holding a special workshop run by Michael early in the New Year on Dead Wood Carving. Dead wood on bonsai can be a way of adding the appearance of age to a tree, representing the harsh treatment dealt out by Mother Nature over the lifetime of a tree. It can add considerable character to a tree, but can also be used to eliminate or disguise faults in a tree as well.

Members who have trees which may benefit from the creation of dead wood features, or those who would just like to learn a little more, are encouraged to indicate their interest in participating in the workshop by contacting Rudi at the next meeting, or by email on [yarravalleybonsai@gmail.com](mailto:yarravalleybonsai@gmail.com) or telephone on 0418 369 852.



**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](mailto:julie@bonsairoots.com.au)



## 2015 YVBS Sale Day

The Annual Sale Day in November was a great success in the new venue, Japara Living and Learning Centre in Kilsyth. The extra space available in the main hall allowed sellers to spread out and still left plenty of room for buyers to easily navigate around the goods on display.

Most of the Sellers reported good sales or orders, and many buyers were observed leaving the venue with smiles on their faces and their arms full. On the basis of this day and this venue, many sellers have already pre-booked tables for our next sale day, which will be on **Sunday 13th March 2016**.



Because there was space available, we also elected to introduce a small exhibition area containing more advanced bonsai for display only, not for sale. A bonus for visitors! The dozen or so trees on display were provided by some of the sellers and club members.



Top - the Sales floor,  
Left - the small exhibition  
area, Right - the new  
Japara House



## Kudos, Accolades and Thanks

- To Tracey Francis and Marg Fenn for donating pots as prizes for the raffle held during the Sale Day.
- To all participating sellers at the Sale Day - the quality and pricing of your offerings contributed greatly to the success of the day.
- To Bill McK for all of his hard work on the YVBS Bonsai Calendar/Database - we look forward to using it soon!

## 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.

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

*Right - Lindsay explains some of the basic points of the bonsai craft to two casual visitors who have dropped in to check us out - hopefully future members!*



**Bonsai Sensation Nursery**



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

**Weekends 10:00am – 4:00pm**

Visit our website [www.bonsaisensation.com.au](http://www.bonsaisensation.com.au) for more information



## Tree Profile: New Zealand Tea Tree - *Leptospermum scoparium*

**General information:** There're more than 80 different *Leptospermum* species found - native to Australia, New Zealand and Southeast Asia.

*Leptospermum scoparium*, commonly called mānuka, manuka myrtle, New Zealand tea tree, or just tea tree, is a species of flowering plant in the myrtle family Myrtaceae. The main attractions are the miniature leaves and rose like flowers in late spring and early summer, which makes them ideal for Shohin and Mame. The colors range from white to deep pink.

Some say: "Leptospermum has the reputation of being the ultimate in forbidden bonsai - getting it to survive can be a monumental task."

**Position:** Full sun or partial shade - airy for best growth, protect from hot winds! The hardiest species (*L. lanigerum*, *L. polygalifolium*, *L. rupestre*, *L. scoparium*) are hardy to about -8 °C to -10 °C, others are sensitive to frost.

**Watering:** Keep moist all the time. Lack of water can kill them within a few hours - but NO wet feet, because of root rot!

**Feeding:** Use a fertilizer for acid loving plants with a diluted solution - their roots burn easily!

**Repotting:** Late winter, spring or early summer, use free draining mix! Avoid root pruning as long as possible, don't untangle the roots! As per our 'Guru' CJ from WA (presentation at AABC Conference 2011 WA) - shave off a slice from the bottom each year, only reduce root ball over time!

**Pruning & Wiring:** Keep pinching new shoots back to shape the tree, rarely buds back on old wood. Cutting back beyond leaves results in branch die-back! Repotting, pruning and wiring must be done at different times, or the tree will be over-stressed!

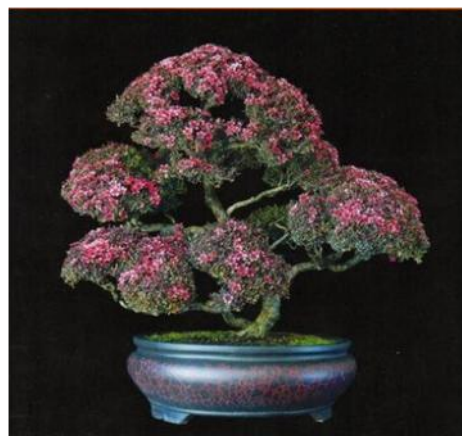
**Propagation:** Semi-hardwood cuttings using Rootex or similar hormone. Will root in a few weeks!

**Pests and diseases:** Teatree Web Moth (Webbing Caterpillar), occasionally affecting mainly small leaved cultivars and using insecticides will harm the "good" insects too - remove manually!

**Styles:** Most styles including - Informal Upright, Slanting, Semi-cascade and Cascade.

### Some species suitable for bonsai:

- *Leptospermum scoparium*: New Zealand tea tree, Manuka, tea tree, Australian myrtle.
- *Leptospermum scoparium* 'Kiwi': A dwarf variety with pink flowers and very tight foliage that is cold hardier than other species. Ideal for shohin or mame.
- *Leptospermum rupestre*: A white flowered, naturally arching variety which makes a good cascade or weeping bonsai. From the Tasmanian alpine areas, hardier and more tolerant of branch and root pruning!
- *Leptospermum laevigatum*: Coastal tea tree.
- *Leptospermum myrtaceae*: Australian tea tree.
- *Leptospermum petersonii*: Lemon-scented tea tree.
- *Leptospermum attenuatum*: Paperbark tea tree.



Picture taken during CJ's presentation at AABC Conference in WA 2011



Picture taken during CJ's demo



## Orient Bonsai Nursery



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## On The Display Table

A selection of trees on the Display Table at the November and December meetings.



## BONSAI ART NURSERY

New Trading Hours

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

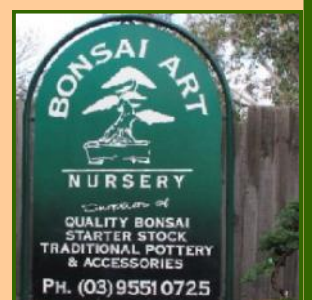
Sat, Sun - 10:00am to 4:00pm

Closed Wednesday

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

[www.bonsaiart.com.au](http://www.bonsaiart.com.au)

236 Old Dandenong Road, Heatherton





## *Bonsai Calendar: January - February*

Watering and Position should be the main focus during the summer months. It's a good time of year to be on the safe side when it comes to caring for your trees.

### **Watering**

- Water evenly and thoroughly. This will encourage roots to grow at the bottom of the pot improving the health of the tree
- Water in the mornings. If this is not possible, water in the evenings but avoid wetting the foliage on species that are susceptible to mildew (Maples, Oaks, Crepe Myrtles)
- Bonsais that will require more water: Maples, Camellias, Azaleas, Liquidambers, Elms, Wisterias, Alders, Taxodiums, Beech, Hornbeams, Pyracanthas, Banksias, Melaleucas, other natives
- Bonsais that will require less water: Pines, Cedars, Corokias,
- Separate your trees into categories based on their watering needs

### **Position**

- Morning sun is best. Avoid the afternoon sun in the summer. If you have to make a choice and put some trees in the afternoon sun, then most conifers and natives can handle these conditions the best.
- Consider the species and pot size when arranging your display. Take extra care when using small or shallow pots as they will dry out quickly.
- Species such as Beech, Hornbeam, Maples, Spruce will scorch if not protected by both the sun and the wind
- When looking for shade, avoid placing bonsais directly under trees. Pest and diseases can be passed to your bonsais.

Summer is a great time to work on your benches, watering systems, shade cloth and weed around your display. If you are going away for the holidays, put some serious thought into how your trees will be looked after. Many bonsai are lost over this time of year.

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# ヤラ谷間盆栽会

Volume 5 No 27  
November &  
December 2015

Page 8

[www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au](http://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  
January & February 2016*



Our monthly meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> January will be a **Workshop Night on - not only - Natives** with Craig Wilson. There will be NO Review/Overview Session! Display Table: **"Natives any style & Members' Choice"**.



Our monthly workshop will be on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2:00 PM - 4:30 PM at Upper Yarra Community House (UYCH).



Our first Nursery Trip for the year **"DEEP SOUTH"** will take place on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February. Bring Friends and Family along as well! We'll meet between 10:00 and 10:30 AM in the car park at:

- **Bonsai Sensation Nursery** (YVBS major sponsor, with 10% min discount), 253 Centre Rd, Narre Warren South - Melway 110/E11;
- Then we'll have a lunch break, which is BYO - with options in Pearcedale for Takeaway/Eat-in. We'll continue at approximately 1:00PM at
- **Pearcedale Garden Centre** (low prices + 10% discount), corner Middle Rd & Baxter - Tooradin Rd, Pearcedale - Melway 140/F6; finishing with
- **Plantmark Wholesale Nursery** - 1075A Western Port Hwy, Langwarrin - Melway 132/G10;

You can join at any part of the trip!



Our monthly meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> February will be a **Workshop Night & Swap and Sale** with YVBS own 'Gurus'! Review/Overview Session - TBA! Display Table: **"Figs any style & Members Choice"**.



Our monthly workshop will be on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2:00 PM - 4:30 PM at UYCH.



## Other Events



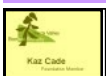
**Satsuki Interest Group Meeting** on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 1:30PM - 4:30PM, at "Bonsai Art" Nursery, 236 Old Dandenong Road, Heatherton.

There's no other information available at this point in time!



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](mailto:info@yarravalleybonsai.org.au)