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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 .*



**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 September & October 2017

The September meeting featured the Club's AGM, where the new Committee of Management was elected - refer to the later article in the newsletter.

The meeting also featured a Bonsai Basics presentation by Lindsay H on Pot Selection, covering the various types of bonsai pots available and the 'rules' which help determine which pot suits a particular tree. Masculine versus feminine features were discussed as well as proper proportions of pot width to tree height, and the pot colour to complement tree species and characteristics.

As has become traditional for the AGM, each attending member received a free tree - this year a Coastal Tea Tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*) tubestock specimen. Discussion ensued on how to wire and twist the trunk while the tree was still young, to produce interesting trunk shapes especially lower down, which can produce a more interesting bonsai as the tree develops.



Above - Members displaying progress on their Casuarinas from 2016.

Below left - The Club's Life Members with their new badges.

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## Calendar Dates:

- 4th & 5th Nov (Saturday & Sunday) Ballarat Bonsai Exhibition. Ballarat.
- 4th & 5th Nov (Saturday & Sunday) Goldfields Bonsai Exhibition. Castlemaine.
- 11th & 12th November (Saturday & Sunday) Bonsai Northwest Exhibition & Sale. Footscray
- 11th & 12th November (Saturday & Sunday) Geelong Bonsai Show. Belmont, Geelong.
- 14th November (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. Cire Services.
- 18th & 19th November (Saturday & Sunday) Satsuki Society Bonsai Exhibition. Bonsai Art, Heatherton.
- 18th & 19th November (Saturday & Sunday) Lilydale Show including bonsai exhibit. Lilydale.
- 25th November (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 1:00pm. Cire Services.
- 2nd December (Saturday) Satsuki Interest Group Meeting. 1:30pm, Bonsai Art, Heatherton.
- 12th December (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. Cire Services.

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

## *Highlights from September & October - Cont. From Page 1*

Some members brought in the Casuarina trees from last year's AGM to show the progress achieved to date. We look forward to next year's AGM where progress in this year's Leptospermum can be assessed.

Three new Life Memberships were awarded at the AGM to George M, Julie H, and Lindsay H for their unstinting service to the Club over many years. They join previous Life Members Rudi J and Marlene J. All were given newly sourced Life Member badges to denote their status and as a token of the Club's appreciation.

The October meeting was a very well-attended workshop night where members worked on their own trees and advice could be sought when and where required from the more experienced members present. In addition, Lindsay H presented a Bonsai Basics session on Branch Selection, which covered the general concepts of left-right-back progression of branches around the trunk, starting from about one-third tree height and progressing upwards, becoming closer together nearer the top. As with many bonsai 'rules', those associated with branch selection can provide useful help when styling a tree from nursery stock or other raw material, but should be considered guidelines rather hard and fast rules which must be adhered to under all circumstances.



*Above - Workshop night at the October meeting.*

## *Sale Day Cancellation*

A Club Sale Day was scheduled for 25th November and indicated on the 2017 Syllabus, however the Committee regrets to advise that this has had to be cancelled due to a "perfect storm" of circumstances - our normal venue of Japara House had been booked for our scheduled date (for a wedding, of all things), and there are so many other things occurring in the bonsai world around this time that an alternative date could not be found which would not clash with something else.

Our apologies to all prospective vendors who had indicated an interest in booking a sale table for this event. Please keep your enthusiasm on hold until early 2018, when we will hold a bigger and better sale day, possibly at a new and hopefully even better venue. More details to come later on dates and arrangements.

## *2018 Wall Calendars*

The Club has produced calendars over the past few years in several formats, once using commercial pictures but most featuring our own members' trees. It is planned to do the same again for 2018, and photos have been taken at various meetings and workshops over the course of 2017 from which a selection of tree pictures will be made for the calendar. The format will be a wall calendar in double A4 format spiral bound, and will include YVBS meeting and workshop dates. The cost should be around \$10 to \$12 each, and delivery will be in December this year. Nice to have for your own kitchen or office wall, but also makes an ideal Christmas present!

Although we should have a handful of extras, essentially they will be ordered in response to members' preorders, so if you are interested, advise Marlene J of your requirements by the November meeting at the latest.



### **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

Margot T lives in Belgrave with her 3 children, and is a retired teacher. She is unable to attend our Tuesday meetings, but she is a regular attendee at the last Saturday of the Month Workshops, thanks to Dean S who has kindly volunteered to provide transport for her.

She has no formal horticultural background other than an interest in gardening, but has been involved with bonsai since around 1970 - resulting from a love of trees but a lack of space! Her bonsai knowledge has come from involvement with various clubs, the internet, books, and hands-on experience.

Her oldest tree is an azalea dating back to 1989, but she has a lot of different species including maples and junipers.

Margot hopes that her bonsai future involves more development on her trees, and thus ever-improving bonsai.



## Ask Mr. Miyagi.....



**Q.** Dear Mr Miyagi. I have a lot of trouble with blackbirds digging into the soil on my bonsai and flinging it everywhere. What can I do?

**A.** The birds are hungry and looking for juicy grubs to eat, and your pots look moist and tempting during the summer months when it is hard to dig into the dry ground. To discourage them from digging into your pots and possibly exposing and damaging your tree roots, you could try covering your pots' soil surface with shade cloth or plastic mesh - gutter guard or fly screen are good options.

Alternatively, you could place naphthalene balls or flakes (standard mothballs) in bits of old stocking or thin socks. Place these behind pots, and NOT on soil or in a position where precipitation might wash onto a section of soil in a lower pot, as with shelved bonsai displays. This works well and will not harm plants, provided the 'sachets' are EXTERNAL to the pots.

Fortunately, blackbirds seem to have a good short-term memory, and so they should quickly learn that they do not like the environment around your pots and avoid revisiting the area. It may be possible to dispense with these special arrangements once they have learned their lesson. At least until the following year!

*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)*

## New Committee

The new Committee of Management was elected at the September AGM, and now comprises:

President - Geoff Pettman

Vice President - Rudi Jerlitschka

Secretary - Lindsay Hadland

Treasurer - Julie Healy

Membership/Marketing - Marlene Jerlitschka

General Members - Marian Woodall, Howard Woodall, Mark Leopold

We welcome Mark to the Committee for the first time, and thank him for stepping forward to help run our Club. Many thanks also to retiring Committee members Davor Topolovic and Madalyn Parlet who have stepped down due to other commitments.

Although the Committee is charged with the responsibility for running the Club, all members are encouraged to assist them with activity suggestions, and also with volunteering their time and efforts where they can at all club meetings, workshops, and other events.



**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)



## Yarra Glen Special Workshop

Following an invitation from the Yarra Glen Living and Learning Centre, YVBS conducted an adult Special Workshop in Yarra Glen on 27 August 2017 for a total of 10 interested participants who each paid \$25 for the experience. Running from 10:00am to around 1:00pm, each participant selected a tree and a pot from the range provided by the club, trimmed and styled the tree, wired it up, and then potted it into their preferred bonsai pot. A really concentrated learning experience.



Able led by Howard W with assistance from Rudi J, Marlene J, and Lindsay H, the participants heard a little about the origins and meaning of bonsai and received instructions on how to style and pot their tree - and most importantly, how to keep it alive and thriving once they got it home!

A good time was had by all, and two attendees signed up for club membership on the day.

Subject to demand, we hope to run further community Special Workshops during 2018.

## Kudos, Accolades and Thanks

- Thanks to Tien of Bonsai Sensation for assistance in providing the trees for the Yarra Glen community workshop.
- Congratulations to Howard and Marian W for winning the People's Choice award for their English Elm at the BSV Bonsai Exhibition in October.

## 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.

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.



Above - Members at work at the September Saturday Workshop



**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: *Pieris Japonica* - Japanese Andromeda

**General:** According to *Wikipedia* the *Pieris* is a genus of seven species of shrubs in the family Ericaceae, native to mountain regions of eastern and southern Asia, eastern North America and Cuba. Known commonly in North America as andromedas or fetterbushes, and in Australia often known as Lily of the Valley, they are broad-leaved evergreen shrubs growing to 6 m tall and 3m wide. The lanceolate-ovate leaves are spirally arranged, often appearing to be in whorls at the end of each shoot with bare stretches of shoot below. The young leaves in spring are typically brightly coloured. The fragrant flowers are bell-shaped, white or pink, arranged in racemes 5-12 cm long. The fruit is a woody capsule which splits into five sections to release the numerous small seeds. Japonica is probably the most commonly used for bonsai. CAUTION the leaves are poisons!

**Lighting & Temperature:** Full sun, but semi-shade in midsummer. Frost hardy to -5°C.

**Watering:** Moderate - keep moist, but over-watering can cause root rot. Avoid water with high lime content. Reduce watering in winter.

**Feeding:** Use low nitrogen fertilisers like for azaleas and rhododendrons, an occasional dose of Miracid helps to keep the soil acidic.

**Repotting:** Repotting in spring, before bud burst, every 2-3 years for young plants and every 4-5 years for older ones in free draining acidic soil (like Azaleas).

**Propagation:** Air-layering, greenwood tip cuttings in spring or from semi-hardwood cuttings in summer. Cuttings are slow to take root!

**Pruning:** Trim back new shoots during growth. Can be used for most styles and sizes. Has a long flowering period, and can be pruned while still in bloom. Remove flowers as they fade. Hard pruning can be carried out after flowering

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

**Pests and diseases:** It is generally a very hardy plant but is susceptible to Lace Bugs. Leaf spot, Chlorosis - yellowing of leaves due to iron deficiency and Phytophthora root rot can be a problem.

**Styles:** Formal & Informal Upright, Semi Cascade, Windswept and Root-over-Rock

### Some species variations suitable for bonsai:

***Pieris japonica*** (also called *andromeda japonica*): Japanese andromeda - has drooping clusters of flowers up to ten centimeters long.

***Pieris japonica* 'Christmas Cheer'**: Japanese andromeda.

***Pieris japonica* 'Compacta'**: Dwarf andromeda, dwarf lily-of-the-valley bush.

***Pieris japonica* 'Variegata'**: Variegated dark green leaves with white edges.

***Pieris formosa***: Chinese andromeda - possibly the most attractive andromeda, with showy white flowers and fiery red new shoots.

***Pieris floribunda***: American mountain andromeda, mountain pieris, mountain fetterbush - highly toxic!



Photo Courtesy of ChineseBonsaiGarden.com





## On The Display Table



A selection of trees on the Display Table at the September and October meetings.



Accent Plants → enlarged for detail





## *Bonsai Calendar: November - December*

This time of year is always an exciting time for any bonsai enthusiast. Small buds have turned to vigorous growth in just a few weeks. Vibrant greens and blues of fresh growth are spreading across most conifers. With this growth comes the need for increased water and food.

Always keep an eye on the weather this time of year. Winds, heavy rains and extended dry periods makes for unpredictable growing conditions. Pay extra attention to the bonsais that have just been repotted. If you are relying on an irrigation system, perform regular inspections to ensure all trees are being watered properly. Prune your trees in order to keep new the growth nice and compact.

Here are a few tips to get you through the season.

### Position

The sun and wind are good for your trees, however some varieties will benefit from protection (Beeches, Hornbeams, Maples, Azaleas), as the leaves will easily scorch if the tree is in the wrong position. When putting trees in strong sun, trees must have a consistent water cycle. Avoid using shade directly beneath overhanging trees as animal droppings and leaf debris can create problems.

### Watering

Water thoroughly. Shallow watering encourages roots to grow at the surface of the potting mix (trees will dry out faster). If trees are root bound take extra care with saturating root ball. Organize bonsais in "like watering" sections to assist in your watering cycle. Potting mix should not be left to completely dry out.

### Pinching and Pruning

Pinching and pruning should be attended to as soon as leaves develop and shoots elongate. Buds that develop where branches are not needed should be rubbed off immediately. If a branch is needed, allow bud to grow keeping the terminal bud to help increase the girth of the branch

Conifers may require finger tip pruning- removing buds at the tip of the growth will push growth back onto the branch and create smaller foliage

### Potting

Most repotting should be complete. Varieties such as Chinese Elms, Azaleas, and Junipers can still be potted with care. Varieties such as Figs, Pomegranates, Pyracanthas and Natives can be potted even later. Pines should not be re-potted after spring finishes.

## *Treasures from Japan*

David R visited Japan earlier this year on a bonsai tour along with two other members Alan H and Victor B, and returned with heavily over-loaded suitcases filled with pots, figurines, and other memorabilia that he found there.



At the September meeting, he shared with us a group planting on a Japanese bridge-like pot, innovatingly arranged on a mirror to simulate water (see photo right).

He also brought in three medium-sized Japanese figurines, for use as display ornaments - too large for use in a bonsai composition!



## *BONSAI ART NURSERY*

**New Trading Hours**

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

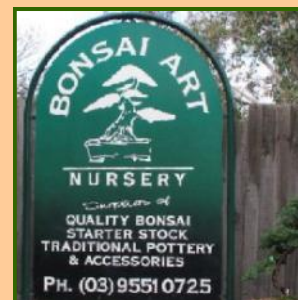
**Sat, Sun - 10:00am to 4:00pm**

**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**



# ヤラ谷間盆栽会

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September &  
October  
2017

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[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  
November & December 2017*



Our monthly meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November will be a Presentation/Demonstration on "**Olives**" by Steve Jarrold. **A NIGHT NOT TO BE MISSED!** No Bonsai Basics Review Session! Display Table: "**Azalea any Style & Members Choice**".



Our Last Saturday of the Month **workshop and swap & sale** will be on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November, 1:00PM - 4:30PM at Cire Services - former UYCH.



On Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December, YVBS will hold its annual **Christmas Break-up** and "**Informal Discussion**" about **ANYONE OF YOUR TREE(s)**! Display Table: "**On or in the Rocks and Driftwood & Members Choice**".



No Last Saturday of the Month Workshop in December!!!



## Other Events



Ballarat Bonsai Society Bonsai Exhibition on Saturday, 4<sup>th</sup> November 10:00AM - 5:00PM and Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> November 10:00AM - 4:00PM, at the Robert Clark Centre in the Botanical Gardens at Lake Wendouree in Gillies Street North, opposite the Glass House. Entry \$ 4.00, Kids free!



Goldfields Bonsai Society Exhibition on Saturday, 4<sup>th</sup> November and Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> November 10:00AM - 4:30PM, at the Old Tea Rooms Castlemaine Botanical Gardens, Downes Rd, Castlemaine. Entry \$ 3.00, Kids free!



Bonsai North West Bonsai Exhibition & Sale, Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November, 10:00AM - 4:00PM and Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November, 10:00AM - 4:00PM, at Footscray Community Arts Centre, 45 Moreland St, Footscray. Entry - Adults \$5.00, Children under 15 free with adult!



Geelong Bonsai Club Annual Show Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November, 9:00AM - 6:00PM & Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November, 9:00AM to 4:00PM, at Masonic Hall, Regent Street, Belmont. Admission Adults - \$5.00, Pensioners & Students \$3.00, Children accompanied by adults under 12 - FREE!



Satsuki Interest Group **Annual Azalea Bonsai Exhibition** on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November & Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November, 10:00AM to 4:00PM, at "Bonsai Art" Nursery, 236 Old Dandenong Road, Heatherton. **Morning & Afternoon Demonstrations on both days** by **Arthur Robinson**, Satsuki bonsai artist, and Chairperson of the Satsuki Society of Australasia Inc. **FREE ENTRY!**



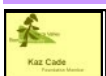
**Lilydale Show** - Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November. Lilydale Show Grounds, Main Street Lilydale. For more Details please check out <http://www.lilydaleshow.org.au/tickets>



**Satsuki Interest Group Meeting** on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 1:30PM - 4:00PM, at "Bonsai Art" Nursery, 236 Old Dandenong Road, Heatherton.

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)