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Supporting Our
local club....



The Yarra Valley Bonsai Society Newsletter

PO Box 345
Mount Evelyn, VIC 3796
Australia
www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au
ABN: 92 966 395 686
A0052264P

The YVBS meets on the
second Tuesday of each
month at **Morrison's**
(Morrison House)
Old Hereford Road,
Mount Evelyn

Informal 'Review & Overview'
sessions begin at 7:00pm with
a call to order at 7:30.

Melway 118 B8

Saturday Workshops are 2-
5pm on the **LAST** Saturday of
the month, and now at the
same venue as monthlies!

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Highlights from March—April 2011

Second YVBS Show a Success! Obviously the highlight for March-April was our second show, conducted over the weekend before Easter. Despite the surprisingly fine weather for the one-day show, we didn't have the same number of attendees as at our first show in 2009, but from comments of those attending we clearly raised the bar above our well-received first show.

We have a few photos here, but for more please follow the photo-bucket link on the homepage of our website: <http://www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au>

A video of the show will soon be posted on the website, and we'll let the membership know when the editing has been completed.



Calendar Dates:

- 10 May [Tues] 7.30pm YVBS Monthly Meeting; Morrions. "The Return of Iron Chef"
- 28 May [Sat] "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 2pm Morrions.
- 4 June [Sat] YVBS-sponsored Nursery Crawl #2
- 14 June [Tues] YVBS Monthly Meeting; and AGM 7.00pm Morrions.
- 18 June [Sat] Forest/Group Planting Demo with Barry Woods. 1.30-4.30pm at Morrions.
- 25 June [Sat], "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 2-5pm, Morrions.

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



**Bonsai-The
Imagination
Tree**

136 York Road / Mount
Evelyn, VIC 3796

(Melway Ref 120 D1)

<http://www.sashieda.com.au>

Getting to Know You...



Pam T: I have a wonderful family – Husband, Children, Grandchildren and two beautiful “Rag Doll Cats”. My introduction to Bonsai was when YVBS began holding their meetings at Morrisons, Mt. Evelyn where I am employed. I attended a meeting and then became hooked. It is a bit soon for me to say what my favourites will be. At present all of them. My other interests include Tarot, Numerology, Biodynamic Gardening and Rudolf Steiner’s Spiritual Science. During winter I enjoy watching football and supporting the Geelong Cats. I have recently taken up Calm Water kayaking for the warmer months of the year.



Raymond L: I am always looking forward to be in the meeting and workshop regularly to further my knowledge on bonsai, and also to the friendliness and approachable members who always offer help and guidance. I have a lovely wife who loves gardening and flower arrangement and that has influenced me to become a green thumb. I have no particular trees or styles of bonsai as favourites but like to have something of a challenge.

In each newsletter, we profile a member or two as a means of getting to know each other better. In that spirit, and as our group continues to grow, members are reminded to bring their nametag/membership cards to meetings

Ask Mr. Miyagi.....



Q. I have heard a lot of my bonsai friends talking about this product called diatomite, can you please tell me what it is and how I use it?

A. Diatomite, also known as Diatomaceous earth is a chalk-like, soft, very fine-grained, siliceous sedimentary rock, usually light in color. It is very porous (porosity 70-75%), very low in density, non-toxic and a non-hazardous mineral. Diatomite is a 100% organic, natural product made up of the fossilised skeletons of trillions of microscopic, single cell fresh water aquatic plants. Diatomite is used in applications in

several industries such as, pet litter, snail and slug repellent, oil and chemical absorbers, insulation, paint production and for horticultural uses such as hydroponics. Diatomite stimulates healthy growth of plant root systems. It conditions the soil by making silica available to plants and by helping the soil to retain moisture while preventing the soil from compacting. Diatomite absorbs water quickly and slow releases both the water and nutrients to the plants while allowing oxygen to reach the roots. For use with bonsai it can be used straight (100%), or mixed with other types of bonsai soils and pinebark. I have had good success with a 50/50 balance of diatomite and bonsai soil, but depending on your climate and the type of tree, the ratio can be modified to suit. Diatomite comes in several size grades, with 2-7mm most commonly used for Bonsai.

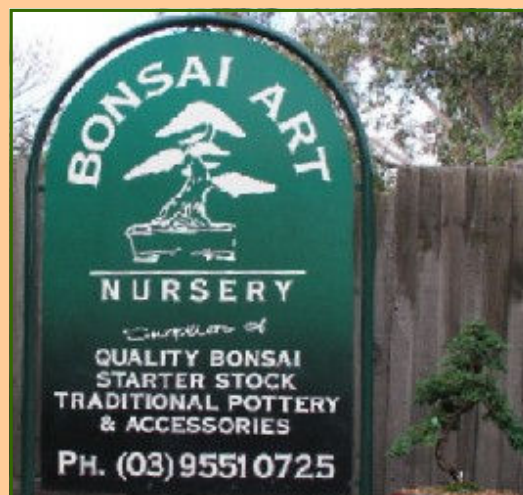
Members may submit questions to Mr. Miyagi c/o the YVBS web forum or per the club email: info@yarravalleybonsai.org.au

BONSAI ART NURSERY

*Come down and see our newly acquired stock
of JAPANESE pots!*

236 Old Dandenong Road, Heatherton
Closed Wednesdays and Sundays

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Beautiful New Pots Have Arrived!!! At Fantastic Prices.



Our shipment of high quality large bonsai pots have arrived.

Various shapes and sizes available including copy Tokoname.

We are very excited and we hope you are as well.



Websites Of the Month:

We've mentioned this one before but it bears repeating! The National Bonsai and Penjing Collection in Canberra is growing by leaps and bounds. If you visit our capital and don't include this in your itinerary you are missing out on something special.

<http://www.cbs.org.au/NBP/CA/Index.htm>

QUIZ QUESTION:

(Answer— page 5)

True or False? When a tree is dormant, you don't have to worry about the water content in the soil?



Trade Table Cheque-out!

We've recently restocked some tools and have heaps of wire in sizes from 1mm to 8mm. The new shipment of Polo shirts, tool roles and aprons are available for purchase. Don't forget the club's tool sharpening kit, available for use at meetings. Anything you'd like to see stocked? Contact Warren or any other Committee mem-



Library Check-out!

Members are

reminded again that the check out period is for one month. If you check out a book and are not able to make the next meeting, you can return the book to Bill at Morrisons during office hours or even post it to the club PO Box (PO Box 345 Mount Evelyn VIC 3796) Check out is free and we hope to keep it that way with prompt returns and due care of checked out items. Thanks!

DON'T FORGET THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: TUEADAY 14 JUNE at 7.00pm AT THE CLUB'S USUAL VENUE MORRISONS in MOUNT EVELYN. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2011-2012 FOLLOWED BY A BONSAI TRIA NIGHT! The current president and secretary, who have served since the club's inception, will not be standing for re-election and there will be other office and non-office holding members of the Committee also not standing for re-election. Now as our membership has topped 100 (!) it is a crucial time for some strategic planning for taking our Society through the next stage of growth. Without more involvement from more members, the fear is that some of the fantastic momentum we have seen for this growing club may stale or stall. So get involved!

Our stock brought for sale at the recent YVBS is only the tip of the iceberg! Our back growing areas are basically full of stock of all sorts of varieties. Although we're not far away from bare-root season we still have plenty of values of interest to bonsai enthusiasts. Of particular note would be the thick Chinese Elms of which we have several hundred!

We're open every day 10am-4pm except Mondays. Remember: YVBS members receive a discount on cash sales down to a mere 10% above our wholesale price!

www.atozbonsai.com.au



The oaks and the pines, and their brethren of the wood, have seen so many suns rise and set, so many seasons come and go, and so many generations pass into silence, that we may well wonder what "the story of the trees" would be to us if they had tongues to tell it, or we ears fine enough to understand. ~Author Unknown



“Tim’s Tips” Corner



As we move into winter, feeding and watering can become a challenge, especially for the novice grower. Some species become quite prone to root rot or simply a water overdose. Tropical figs for example can be easily over-watered in the winter. Black spotting on yellowed leaves is a sign of this. That said, they should not be allowed to fully dry out either. Certain dormant deciduous trees follow the same basic rule of thumb: the soil should be kept moist but not soaked. I may have mentioned in an earlier installment the ‘cake is ready’ tip. Much like you can use a knife to see if a cake in the oven is done, you can use a similar approach for watering. If you put a knife or flat bit of metal (even an off-cut of thick wire) into the soil and it comes up as clean as it was when inserted, then chances are the soil can use a bit of water. If it comes out with bits of soil clinging to it, then more than likely it is sufficiently moist for a dormant tree. As far as feeding goes, don’t really bother feeding a dormant tree.... Wait until very late in winter or early spring. So I guess in other words, the tip to winter feeding and watering is to first learn and observe what trees become dormant and when; that’s half the battle!

Tim Vivoda is the owner of A to Z Bonsai in Monbulk. His section appears in each newsletter.

Tree Mini-Profile: Beech - *Fagus*

General Information: The beech genus is a small one, with about a dozen species. The beech most commonly grown as an ornamental tree is the European Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), widely cultivated in North America, Asia as well as its native Europe. They have smooth, pale gray bark, and ovate leaves which look similar to those of the hornbeam. The most distinctive feature of the beech is its unmistakable cigar-shaped buds. These 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. For this reason - and the fact that they make for an interesting winter bonsai—the beech’s dried leaves should not be removed from the tree. Many lovely and colorful cultivars of beech are available and gained in popularity in the bonsai world.

Lighting & Temperature: Full sun, but semi-shade in midsummer. The European beech is the most hardy, the Japanese white beech the least. However, all beeches can benefit from winter protection in their early years. During periods of high temperatures and low rainfall Beeches may scorch. Make sure trees are adequately watered and mulched.

Watering: Frequently, especially during hot weather, to prevent the edges of the leaves from drying out. Reduce watering in winter. Appreciates misting. If they are watered especially well in late December to early February, they may have a second growth spurt.

Feeding: Do not feed for the first month after bud burst. Then feed every two weeks until the end of summer. Increasing feeding in late June-early August encourages the development of a second growth spurt.

Pruning and wiring: 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. Prune new shoots from 3-5 nodes to 1-2 nodes.

A beech grows slowly, and does not require much pruning. However, because it does not produce secondary buds, it is important not to allow the internodes to become too long. Beech can be wired, but wiring saps the vigor of the tree, and should not be left on longer than three months. The bark of the beech is delicate and needs protection. It is best to do most shaping through pruning. Beeches tend to concentrate its vigorous growth at the top so you do need to watch lower branches don’t become weak and die. In winter pay attention to the bud size. Remove the large buds 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. It is a long-term project to grow a specimen beech, young beeches are therefore often used in forest plantings.

Propagation: Grafting, seeds sown in autumn (or use cold-treated seeds in spring).

Repotting: Spring, before bud burst, every 2-3 years. *F. sylvatica* may be repotted in autumn, taking advantage of its second growth spurt, more drastic pruning of roots can be done in autumn than spring. It is recommended using professional well-drained Bonsai soil.

Pests and diseases: Beech leaf miners, scale, bark beetles, and aphids. Aphid colonies on the lower branches can be dislodged with a strong stream of water from the garden hose. Colonies are often disposed of by predatory insects. Borers such as flat-headed apple tree borer or two-lined chestnut borer bore into trees weakened by stress. Prevent the insect infestations by keeping trees healthy with regular fertilization and watering in dry weather. Regular inspections of the trunk and

branches are suggested for early detection of scales, Beech scale can be devastating to trees. Certain caterpillars can be controlled with sprays. Insect identification allows proper spray to be used. Usually none of the diseases are serious, provided soil is not compacted and is well-drained. Several fungi cause leaf spots but are generally not serious to warrant chemical control. Powdery mildew causes a white coating on the leaves, most common late in the season. Bleeding canker forms cankers from which a brownish liquid oozes. 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.

Some species suitable for bonsai: *Fagus crenata*: Japanese white beech; *Fagus sylvatica*: European beech; *Fagus sylvatica* ‘*Asplenifolia*’: cut-leaf beech.

Fagus sylvatica ‘*Riversii*’: purple beech - dark purple-black leaves.; *Fagus sylvatica* ‘*Atropurpurea*’ (‘*Atropunicea*’): copper beech.



Bonsai Forum Review

(aka: "The Dynamic Sifters" or "Thread Grafts")
by JS

Using the forums for advertising the club.

The forums can be a great way to get the message out about our club and what we are doing. On AusBonsai, details of our show were posted about 2 months out from the event and we had someone put up a message in the thread every two weeks which brought it back into people's attention.

This is a great and free method of advertising and we should embrace it whole heartedly. However we also must ensure we are not overdoing the use of the forum without first consulting with the webmasters.

One other very important part of this form of advertising is that we answer any questions that arise from the thread as quickly as possible so people know we are serious about the topic. We must also be sure to add follow up and post event photos and information to be sure that people see what the event was all about and hopefully attract new people to the next one.

We have had some great feedback from the event and the photos that were taken by Ruth really did the trees justice. If you wish to check out the thread you can find it by following the link below.

<http://www.ausbonsai.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=25&t=7568&hilit=yarra>



Quiz Question (Answer):

FALSE! But as most bonsai enthusiasts have learned (the hard way!) over-watering can be as lethal as under-watering.

Given our wet winters here (particularly this year!) over-watering is a real risk for some trees.

Few things are as harmful to a tree as having the roots sit in pooled water over a wet winter, particularly if the tree has recently been root-pruned. It's all a matter of balance: dormant trees should have soil that's moist but not soaking.

Another point to note is that the past year's growing may have clogged the drain holes. It is particularly vital to keep soil free-draining throughout the winter. Otherwise you might as well put your tree in the aquarium with the fish!

That said, remember that natives are NOT on the same timetable as exotics (northern hemisphere deciduous and conifer species.) See Tim's Tips in this newsletter.



Orient Bonsai Nursery


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New arrive

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(Dragon pot & table,

large Glaze &unglaze pot)



Last week of Sale:

Orient Bonsai Nursery will conclude its annual 10-50% off sale over the weekend of 18-19 June. Orient Bonsai is open every-day except Tuesday!



Courses for 2011

The Novice Course for Autumn 2011 begins in May. At the conclusion of this course we hope to begin on 5 July an intermediate course which will also last five weeks. Depending on demand, we may run another section of the Novice Course in early spring. Depending on enrolment numbers, the tuition for the course is +/- \$75.00 for YVBS members and \$100.00 for non-members.



ヤラ谷間盆栽会

March - April
2011
Vol. 4 No. 2

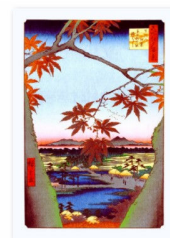
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A group for all lovers of bonsai in the "far east" of Melbourne



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

*Looking Ahead to
May and June 2011*



Our May Monthly Meeting will have the RETURN OF IRON CHEF. Feedback from membership points to this being the highlight of 2010. Don't miss the fun! Chairman Kaga is already getting his wardrobe pressed and his hair styled!



Our first two nursery crawls for 2011 will take place in May and June. See the calendar via our website for all the details. The nursery crawl trips are a great way to get to know other members and to learn about how to shop for stock conducive to bonsai crafting.



On Tuesday 17 May, our Novice Course with Craig Wilson will commence. The course will run for five weeks for two hours an evening for five consecutive Tuesdays (hopping the June monthly meeting). Dates for the course are listed in the calendar section of the website. Following the conclusion of this course, we hope to begin on 5 July (with sufficient enrolment) another intermediate course. The intermediate course will be more akin to a series of structured workshops and tutorials than a 'course' in a traditional sense. Sign up sheets are available at the monthly meetings and workshops



The AABC Convention will be held this year in Fremantle over the weekend of 17-19 May.



On Saturday 18 June our club is honored to host a special demonstration on Group/Forest Planting with Barry Woods at our usual venue at Morrisons Mount Evelyn from 1.30-4.30pm



Stay tuned for details on workshops with Chris DiNola (17 July) and Michael Simonetto (23 July)!

Accolades, Kudos, and Thanks..

- To Tim of A to Z for stock discounted for the May "Return of Iron Chef" session.
- To Jarrod, Mike, Rudi everybody on the Show Committee for all the work they have done for putting on another very successful show.
- Credit is also due to all club members who helped out on Show Day. Once again an amazing group effort that allowed us to set up and take down in record time!
- In anticipation of our AGM in June, thanks are due to all outgoing members of the club's Committee of Management who put in hours of work to keep our club growing and vibrant!



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