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 Phil R - Ballarat Bonsai Society



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The YVBS meets on the **second Tuesday** of each month at Chirnside Park Community Hub
 33 Kimberley Drive
 Chirnside Park

Meetings begin at 7:30pm.



Saturday Workshops are 1-4:00pm 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 2022

The March meeting was a general workshop night where attending members were busy working on their trees, with assistance or advice from others when required.



Above - Members hard at work during the workshop at the March meeting.

The April meeting featured a special guest demonstrator in Chris Xepapas, a very experienced bonsai professional from Tasmania who has trained in Japan and is a registered Visiting Tutor with the national Association of Australian Bonsai Clubs (AABC).

Chris was given a couple of Japanese Black Pines to work on, owned by our member Nick R. Chris co-opted the assistance of Nick and Simon, one of his own students, to do much of the actual work so that both trees could be finished on the night.

The particular cultivar of black pine was known to be extremely brittle, so Chris spent a lot of time instructing his assistants and the audience in how to apply raffia correctly to the branches prior to manipulation. Wet raffia is applied tightly around the branches to prevent the cambium layer from separating from the underlying wood when doing heavy wiring and bending.

Chris explained that it was impossible to develop a finished bonsai on what were stock pine trees,



Above - Demonstration at the April meeting - Chris Xepapas and assistants.

so his aim was to establish the "bone structure" of the future bonsai, which could then be refined over future years to fill out the design into pads on the branches.

Some of the pearls of wisdom dropped by Chris over the course of the demonstration:

Calendar Dates:

- 10th May (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. Chirnside Hub.
- 14th May & 15th May (Saturday & Sunday) Bonsai Northwest Bonsai Exhibition. Footscray.
- 28th May & 29th May (Saturday & Sunday) YVBS 2022 Bonsai Show. 10am to 4pm. Chirnside Hub.
- 29th May (Sunday) BSV Exhibition at Ripponlea, Elsternwick. 9am to 5pm.
- 4th June (Saturday) Satsuki Interest Group Meeting. 1pm. Bonsai Art, Heatherton.
- 14th June (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. Chirnside Hub.
- 25th June (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 2:00pm. Chirnside Hub.

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

Continued Page 2

Highlights from March & April - Cont. From Page 1

- Branches on pines need to droop down, representing their natural condition formed by the weight of snow (in their natural northern hemisphere environment at least!).
- Always aim to reduce growth to bifurcation - i.e. 1 into two branching.
- Leave stubs when cutting branches, which will prevent dieback into the trunk. Stubs can be removed at a later time.
- New buds on pines come from the needle sheath at the base of the needles, so leave this in place when removing needles.
- Bonsai is 90% trunk, so choose stock trees with interesting movement in the trunk, or wire in bends when the tree is young enough to do so.
- Correct root structure at repotting - remove thick roots, aiming to develop a fine radial root structure. Chris likes to sort out the roots before attempting heavy styling.
- Massage the branch before bending, to loosen the fibre structure.
- Aim to wire at 50 to 60 degrees, rather than the more common 45 degrees, to maximize surface contact of the wire and the strength of the wire. Use pliers to gain more strength and leverage when bending. When running two wires against each other, one wire should always be bigger than the other.
- Always lift the pine buds towards the sun!



Above - Placing the branches into position to form the basic structure of the design.

Chris Xepapas Tutored Workshop

On the Sunday morning prior to the April meeting, 8 members were fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in a tutored workshop with Visiting Tutor Chris Xepapas. Members brought along one or two of their trees to work on under Chris's guidance and instructions. The trees varied from raw stock for which design guidance was needed, to more developed bonsai which need further refinement.

Chris always sought each member's view on future development, but added his own thoughts on the various options which were available. In the end, the member chose the direction and then worked with Chris towards that end.

All eight attending members were gathered around one of the trees when Chris wanted to make a particular development or procedural point, so all members participated in the total learning experience.

Participants Patrick I, Steve M, Marlene J, Dean S, Richard J, Fiona M, Sandie C, and Lindsay H all benefited greatly from the four hour workshop. All other members are to be encouraged to sign up for future Tutored Workshops as they may be scheduled in the months and years to come.



Library Check-out!

YVBS has a comprehensive range of bonsai books and magazines in our library, all of which are available for borrowing without charge. 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. Now under the management of new Librarian Fiona M!



Trade Table Cheque-out!

The trade table has been restocked with new tools, wire and other accessories. A selection of pots are 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.



Chris's 10 Wiring "Rules"

Throughout the course of the Tutored Workshop and the Tuesday meeting demonstration, Chris referred to the 10 point Wiring Think List that he has developed, and freely offered to share that with our members. Following is his list.

- 1- Decided placement of branch or trunk. Don't go wiring without a plan of your tree either on paper or in your mind
- 2- Anchor, Anchor, Anchor! A very important process in which the wire is "Anchored" before rolling out the wire on your tree.
- 3- Make sure you use the right gauge wire. If you're not sure use one size up.
- 4- Wire rotation is extremely important especially when bending larger branches or trunks. The wire is applied in the same rotation your branch is being bent.
- 5- Pairing is very important to get maximum use from each piece of wire. A piece of wire has two ends so each end should finish at the tip of a separate branch. Sometimes we pair but one side is an anchor.
- 6- No more 45° spirals when wiring, 50° to 60° is the norm now in Japan especially with heavier gauges of wire. At 50° to 60° rotations, the wire strength is more optimal and we use less wire.
- 7- Wire to the tips where possible. The slightest adjustment can be all the difference in design. Also pines must have their tips facing up towards the sun.
- 8- No more than 2 wires running next to one another. Our bonsai can look over-bearing with too much wire. It's all about getting maximum effect with as little wire as possible.
- 9- No cross wiring. This will cause ringbarking if not attended to. We can cross the rail though if out of sight.
- 10- Each branch and tree is a case by case scenario .

9th World Bonsai Convention

The Convention website for this virtual online convention is now up and running, and open for registrations - go to <https://www.worldbonsaiconvention2022.com/> for details of the program and for registration. Note that the Convention will be ONLINE ONLY.

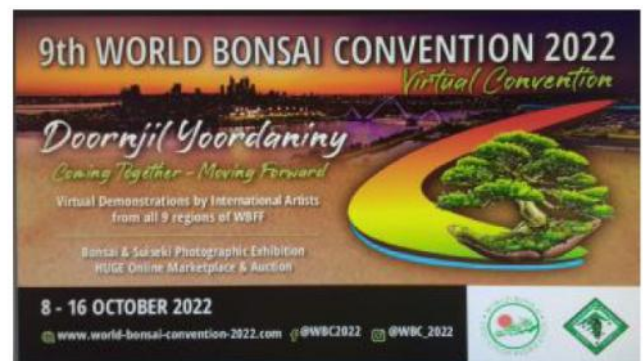
Early bird registrations of \$90 for a full registration end on 31st May 2022, after which a full registration fee of \$140 will apply.

In preparation for the 9th WBC Photographic Exhibition as part of the Convention, clubs and their members including VTP tutors, have been asked to forward high standard photos of their bonsai, especially when they are in top condition for display at club shows.

Every bonsai club member has the opportunity to have their trees displayed as part of the Photographic Exhibition for the Convention during which bonsai from across the Australia-New Zealand Region will be showcased. Photos of suiseki will also be included in this photographic exhibition and members are also asked to send in photos of their best suiseki.

The WBC Photo Exhibition will showcase the high standard of bonsai that is being undertaken within our Australia-New Zealand region to the world.

YVBS will be photographing trees at our Show in May, for submission to the AABC for consideration of inclusion in the exhibition.



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2022 YVBS Bonsai Show

Our 2022 Bonsai Show will be held on the weekend of the 28th and 29th May - i.e. the weekend immediately following the Federal election. All members are encouraged to submit at least one of their trees for inclusion in the Show, with a maximum of three (unless they are part of a mame or shohin sized exhibit). A section of the display area for novice trees is also planned.

Setup will be on Friday 27th May from 5:00pm to 7:00pm. Display trees may be dropped off during this time, or alternatively on Saturday morning between 8:00am and 9:30am. Takedown and tree collection will be on Sunday from 4:00pm to 5:00pm.

Tree submission forms for the Show were forwarded to all members in Patrick's "What's Ahead" email at the start of April and will be repeated in the start of May email. Tree submission forms should be returned to Karen L (lane.karen14@optusnet.com.au, mobile 0411 206 431) by email or hard copy by arrangement. Tree submission forms should be received at least one week prior to the Show so that display layouts and tree labels can be completed prior to Show setup.

We will also have a Sales Area where members can submit trees or pots for sale, and a Sales Registration Form will be included with the "What's Ahead" email at the start of May. Any items not appearing on the submitted form will not be accepted into the Sales Area. Forms should be returned to Lindsay H (linhad14@gmail.com, mobile 0403 800 671) preferably at least 3 days prior to the Show, or accompanying the items during setup by prior arrangement. All goods for sale MUST be individually marked with the registration numbers on the forms.

The Show represents an ideal opportunity to show our trees to the general public and encourage new participants to our hobby and art form. Everything will be easier and run more smoothly if we have sufficient volunteer assistants. Volunteers are required for the following areas: Front door, Club Trade Table, Sales Area, Show Display Area, Friday Setup, Sunday Takedown. Time will be split into 3 hour blocks, and Patrick I will be calling for assistance in the May "What's Ahead" email and at the May meeting. Please offer your aid if possible, remembering that "many hands make light work"!

Members are also requested to promote the Show to family and friends and any social media platforms with which they are involved. The Show flyer was included with the April "What's Ahead" email and will be repeated in the May communication. Limited hard copies will also be available at the May Meeting.

The 2021 Show was extremely successful and well-attended - lets all ensure that the 2022 Show is even better!

BONSAI SHOW 2022



Saturday 28th & Sunday 29th May

10:00am - 4:00pm

Chirside Park Community Hub

33 Kimberley Drive, Chirside Park, 3116

- o Bonsai and starter trees, pots, and tools available for sale
- o Free Entry - Gold Coin Donation



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End-Of-Month Saturday Workshop

Regular Club workshops are held on the last Saturday of every month except for December at our normal venue, the Chirside Park Hub, from 1:00pm to 4:00pm. This year only, we are also foregoing our May workshop due to our Bonsai Show commitment.

The workshops are a relaxed place to work on our trees, discuss our bonsai activities with like-minded people, or seek advice or assistance.

They also provide a first point of contact for interested parties who are considering learning more about bonsai or joining the Club.

Visitors are always welcome! Feel free to drop in for a tea or coffee and a look around and a chat. We are now able to open kitchen facilities again, and masks are no longer compulsory indoors!



Above - Members at work at the March Saturday Workshop

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Tree Profile: Hornbeam - *Carpinus*

General information: Hornbeams are relatively small deciduous hardwood trees in the genus *Carpinus* with about 30 to 40 species. They're found across much of the north temperate regions of Europe and North America, but with the greatest number of species in East Asia, particularly China.

Ironwood is also a common name for hornbeam dating back to the ancient times when they used its wood in ship building.

The alternate, toothed leaves are a mid-green before turning bright yellow, orange or red in autumn. The muscle look smooth bark is silvery-grey-purple.

The male and female flowers are wind-pollinated separate pendulous catkins on the same tree (monoecious), produced in spring, followed by fruit.

Position: Full sun or partial shade in summer - airy for best growth, protect from hot winds and frost!

Watering: Moderate, but keep moist all the time. Increase in summer during growing season!

Feeding: Weekly for the first month after bud burst, every two weeks thereafter until summer. Use ordinary fertilizer as a diluted solution or slow release pellets - stop in midsummer for one month! No feeding for two month after repotting!

Repotting: Every 2-3 years in early spring in free draining mix - prefers a deep pot! Ten years and older trees only when getting "pot-bound"!

Pruning & Wiring: Best time for minor pruning is early spring and after flowering. Allow the initial flush to fully extend and harden off, then prune back new growth very hard. This hard pruning will encourage back budding and a second flush of shorter, more compact growth! Major pruning to be done in late winter, before bud burst. Due to its strong apical growth it may be necessary to cut back radically at the apex, but conservatively at the lower portions of the tree. Wiring from spring to autumn, Korean Hornbeam with its twiggy branches doesn't normally need to be wired, just clip and grow!

Propagation: From seed in autumn, cuttings root easier in early spring

from juvenile tree shoots, softwood cuttings in mid-summer (poor success rate) and air layering in spring.

Pests and diseases: Sometimes caterpillars and aphids, leaf miner, spider mites, could also be troubled by leaf spot, canker, powdery mildew and dieback. Leaf spots are not serious, Canker caused by several fungi, can result in infected branches dieback and entire trees die if the trunk is infected.

Styles: Suitable for all styles in medium to large sizes.

Some species suitable for bonsai:

Carpinus betulus: European hornbeam, bright green foliage turning yellow in autumn, sensitive to strong frost.

Carpinus coreana: The true Korean hornbeam, the fastest growing *Carpinus* species preferred for bonsai. The leaves will be red, yellow or orange in autumn - sometimes on the same branch!

Carpinus turczanowii: The "other" Korean hornbeam, less vigorous and found in Japan, Korea and China, very small leaves and delicate branching growth pattern, has orange-red autumn colour.

Carpinus caroliniana: American hornbeam, blue beech, water beech, tree with a rounded habit and generally prone to multiple trunks, with orange and yellow autumn color.

Carpinus japonica: Japanese hornbeam, nice flowers in spring. Smooth pink-grey bark.



Picture courtesy of S & S Bonsai



Picture courtesy of Wikipedia



Picture courtesy of Wikipedia

On The Display Table



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



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.
- Fertilizing isn't required for any dormant trees, but evergreens can still benefit from a light feeding.

NBPCA Article - Arthur Robinson

At the time the National Bonsai & Penjing Collection of Australia (NBPCA) was officially opened in Commonwealth Park on 27 September 2008, Floriade was bustling all around the precinct. As part of the celebration of our opening, a couple of bonsai demonstrations were conducted for the interested visitors to Floriade. One of the demonstrations was conducted by the late Arthur Robinson from Perth, Western Australia.

Arthur was a member of the inaugural Bonsai Management Committee who were tasked with representing the Australian bonsai community in the partnership with the ACT Government that is called the NBPCA. Arthur was involved in bonsai for six decades before he died early 2021. An expert on the Satsuki varieties of azalea, Arthur studied bonsai in Japan and had perfected the art of tree arrangement in a formal group setting.

Arthur's demonstration on the day was the re-styling of a Satsuki azalea bonsai. The azalea was sourced from azalea grower and bonsai nursery owner, Trevor McComb from Bonsai Art Nursery in Heatherton, Victoria. The variety of azalea is "Osakazuki" which flower a wonderful pink display every November in Canberra.

During the demonstration, Arthur showed that it is possible to remove a lot of foliage from azaleas to establish a good base structure to build new growth upon. He also root pruned quite hard at the same time, effectively bare-rooting the tree and re-potting into 100% Kanuma potting media.

Arthur donated three of his outstanding groups to the Collection. A Japanese maple group, a Trident maple group, and a European Beech group.



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
May & June 2022*



The monthly meeting on Tuesday 10th May at 7:30pm is a workshop night focused on Show Preparation. Bring along your trees for Show display for final tweaking or to seek advice or approval on suitability for inclusion in the Show. Display Table - "Autumn Colours" or Member's Choice.



The YVBS Bonsai Show 2022 will be held on Saturday 29th May and Sunday 29th May from 10:00am to 4:00pm both days.



Note that there is NO Last Saturday of the Month Workshop in May due to Show commitments!



The monthly meeting on Tuesday 14th June at 7:30pm will feature a demonstration on "Grafting Techniques" from our own Nick R. Yes, it is finally happening after postponement in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid lockdowns! Display Table - "Cascade or Semi-Cascade", or Member's Choice.



The Last Saturday Of The Month Workshop will be on Saturday 25th June from 1:00pm to 4:00pm.



Other Events



Bonsai Northwest will be holding their annual Bonsai Exhibition and Sale on Saturday and Sunday 14th and 15th May from 10:00am to 4:00pm both days, at the Footscray Community Arts Centre, 45 Moreland St, Footscray. Entry \$5 for adults.



The next meeting of the Satsuki Azalea Interest Group will be held on Saturday 4th June from 1:00pm to 4:00pm at Bonsai Art Nursery, 236 Old Dandenong Rd, Heatherton. This will be a workshop event, so bring along your azaleas to work on or for assistance if required. Otherwise, just come along and watch what is happening!



The Bonsai Society of Victoria will stage a display at Ripponlea, 192 Hotham St, Elsternwick, on Sunday 29th May, 9:00am to 5:00pm.



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" or in "Library" and are kept for at least six months. If you visit the site and register as a user, please email Lindsay via the club gmail yarravalleybonsai@gmail.com so that he may add you as a club member user, or if you have any difficulties. 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.

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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 us via the society's external email: info@yarravalleybonsai.org.au