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*Quotable Quotes*

*Do not be afraid to go out on a limb ... That's where the fruit is."*

*Anon*



Proud sponsor of the Yarra Valley Bonsai Society

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# The Yarra Valley Bonsai Society Newsletter

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

## Highlights from November & December 2022

**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 .

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**Saturday Workshops** are 1-4:00pm on the **Last Saturday** of the month, at the same venue as monthlies!

### Inside this issue:

Trade & Lib Update	2
World Bonsai Convention	2
November Sale Day	3
Long Lunch at David's	3
Workshops with Tony Bebb	3
Bonsai Convention 2023	4
Kudos, Accolades, Thanks	4
Saturday Workshops	4
Air Layer Pod Results	4
Tree Profile - Casuarina	5
On The Display Table	6
Bonsai Calendar	7
Looking Ahead	8
Other Events	8
YVBS Forum	8

The November Club meeting started with a special cameo visit and presentation by Leigh Taafe, Curator of the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection Australia in Canberra and Sam Thompson, Assistant Curator. Leigh described the organization of the collection, and explained that he and Sam were currently in Melbourne personally returning loan trees to their owners, and picking up new loan trees. The collection in Canberra comprises a mix of permanent trees which have been donated to the Collection, and trees on loan for a 2 year period from bonsai practitioners all around Australia where State quarantine regulations permit transport.



Photos—Following Scott's presentation above, members were invited to gather round for a closer look at the defoliation techniques, and for a lively question and answer session.

Following this special visit, our scheduled guest presenter Scott



Martin from Bonsai Matsu gave us a very informative and timely presentation and demonstration on defoliation of deciduous trees. Scott indicated that partial and full defoliation is a useful addition to our bonsai toolbox, but emphasized that trees must be at peak fitness and health to handle the operation.

With a full canopy of leaves, deciduous trees lose sunlight access to the inner branch areas and run the risk of failure of the inner leaves and dormant buds, which reduces the opportunity to cut back to those buds sometime in the future. Removal of some or all of the outside leaves maintains the health of the inner buds, as well as promoting a new series of growth at the leaf removal point to accelerate ramification and promote smaller leaf sizes.

Strong trident maples can tolerate full defoliation, perhaps multiple times per growing season, but Japanese maples are more delicate—total defoliation can be tolerated when the trees are young but older trees should only be par-

### Calendar Dates:

- 10th January (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. Chirnside Hub.
- 28th January (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 1:00pm. Chirnside Hub.
- 14th February (Tuesday) YVBS Monthly Meeting. 7:30pm. Chirnside Hub.
- 25th February (Saturday) "Last Saturday of the Month" Workshop. 1:00pm. Chirnside Hub.

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*

tially defoliated. Partial defoliation involves removal of one of each pair of leaves. If the remaining foliage is still too dense, then the remaining leaves may be cut in half or more but still remain on the tree.

Scott defoliates from the top of the tree, working downwards from there and carefully assessing how much leaves to remove from each area to balance the energy flow to the whole of the tree, especially in the lower branch area. The whole tree should be assessed before starting, to come up with a defoliation plan to follow.

Full and partial defoliation forces a second flush of growth with smaller leaves and extra ramification through bifurcation of growth at each leaf axel (the base of each leaf stem). Scott made the point that smaller leaves naturally result as the tree gets older and twiggy, because of the limited root capacity in the pot.

When defoliating, cut off the leaf but leave some of the stem to guard against damaging dormant buds at the stem base. Only defoliate prior to the hottest time of the year, as new leaves must be hardened off to tolerate extreme heat. Put defoliated trees under extra shade to protect new growth, and remember that trees will require less water after defoliation. Only fertilise after defoliation if the tree is in development stage, but not for more refined trees as we are looking for smaller leaf sizes and internode distances for these. Heavily fertilise all trees in Autumn to build up strength for winter and the next Spring growth flush.

Beech trees are a special case, where the last leaf on each branch should be retained. Other deciduous trees including oaks and hornbeams can be partially defoliated if necessary to allow light access, or can just have larger leaves removed.

Scott repots deciduous trees in July without worrying too much about waiting for buds to swell. He repots pines in August.

The December meeting was our Christmas breakup, and festive goodies were enjoyed by the attending members. Prior to this, a few members talked about a tree that they had brought in, giving some information about its history, stage of development, and plans for the future. Lively discussion from the audience ensued, and advice was offered where appropriate.

The Display Table Prize was drawn during the meeting, and this year was won by Lindsay H. The Prize is intended to encourage members to bring in a tree for the display table to each meeting throughout the year. Each tree has a card filled in on the night identifying the tree and the member. These cards are collected and are all placed into a box for the draw in December. The winning card was from a tree brought in to the February 2022 meeting, and the prize was a lovely pot donated by Tracey F.



*Above - Christmas Breakup meeting in December.*

## *World Bonsai Convention Feedback*

The 9th World Bonsai Convention, 'Doornijl Yoordaniny - Coming Together' was held as a virtual on-line event from 8-16 October 2022 with 570 delegates logging in from all around the world. International demonstrators as well as Tony Bebb from Australia presented at the Convention. They represented the nine diverse WBF regions across the globe.

The big plus was the close up filming of the various tasks being undertaken – something not possible in a hall or large auditorium. The convention provided many additional features not normally seen at a regular AABC convention – including an online auction of 65 items. Extra video presentations were also screened on suiseki, pottery, ikebana and carving. A virtual tour of the National Bonsai and Penjing Collection of Australia (NBPCA) as well as a more detailed coverage of trees from the NBPCA was also screened. Photographic exhibitions of suiseki and bonsai in Australia and New Zealand collections were also provided, which highlighted our native flora in bonsai form and styling.

As well as being screened at scheduled times the presentations were available to revisit as many times as desired for the duration of the convention and for two weeks afterwards.

### **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.



## November Sale Day

The Annual Sale Day in November attracted a full house of sellers taking tables, and many interesting starter plants, bonsai, pots and materials were on offer at generally very attractive prices.

The number of prospective buyers was a little lower than previous Sales Days, but all sellers reported very satisfactory results.

Coinciding with State election day, we even had some people turning up and asking to vote—somewhat confused that the Hub was not a polling centre for the State election as it was for the Federal election earlier in the year!



Above - Sale Day in November.

## Long Lunch at David's

Our thanks go to David R who once again invited all Club members to his home in November for a Long Lunch and to view his bonsai collection—which has grown a little since our last visit with a few extra purchases David has made.

The day provides an ideal opportunity for members to get to know each other better and to exchange views on bonsai and other topics as well as enjoying David's hospitality. Members provided their own drinks and meat for the barbecue, but David very generously provided the salads and desserts.

David's Bonsai Bingo was again a much-enjoyed activity on the day.

Right - Members inspecting part of David's Bonsai collection.



## Workshops with Tony Bebb

In April 2023, the Yarra Valley Bonsai Society will be hosting world-renowned Australian Bonsai artist and AABC Visiting Tutor Tony Bebb for a series of tutored workshops at the Chirnside Park Hub. Tony will also be presenting at our April Club meeting on 11th April 2023.

Tony is from Brisbane and is a frequent traveller to overseas bonsai shows and conventions where he is often asked to participate as a demonstrator. He recently was the featured Australian artist at the virtual World Bonsai Convention in Perth where his choice of a melaleuca forest was inspiring and educational—it is shown in the picture on the left.

It is planned to schedule morning and afternoon tutored workshops in Monday 10th April—note that this is Easter Monday—followed by morning workshops on Tuesday 11th April if there is sufficient demand. Each session will be limited to 8 people, and Tony will circulate around participants to guide their activities. Participants will bring along one or two trees on which to work under Tony's guidance. Morning workshops will run from 9:00 to 12:00 and afternoon workshops from 1:00 to 4:00.

Further details will be provided early in 2023, however if you would like to reserve a spot in one of the workshops, please contact Lindsay H (linhad14@gmail.com or 0403 800 671). The cost of the workshops is yet to be determined but will be in the order of \$50 per session—great value for the opportunity to learn from a bonsai professional of the standing of Tony Bebb.



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## AABC National Bonsai Convention 2023

The next AABC National Bonsai Convention will be held in Perth from 19th—22nd May 2023, hosted by the Bonsai Society of Western Australia in partnership with the Association of Australian Bonsai Clubs.

The National Conventions provide an opportunity to see selected International bonsai artists and some of the best Australian bonsai artists as they demonstrate their techniques and vision on great material.

The featured artists at the Convention will be Yuki Fujikawa from Japan, Rafael Torres from Spain, and Scott Martin and Lindsay Bebb from Australia.

For more information, visit the Convention website <https://aabc23.com.au/>.



## Kudos, Accolades and Thanks

- To David R and wife Judi for once again hosting a social get-together at his home in November.
- To Tracey F for her ongoing donations and in particular for the large pot given as the Display Table prize.

## End-Of-Month Saturday Workshop

The November Last-Saturday-of-the-Month Workshop occurred immediately after the November Sale Day. Perhaps for this reason or maybe because it was election day, attendance was reduced but we did have a couple of prospective members come along to check out our activities. This is often a feature of our workshops and is to be encouraged. If you are at a workshop and see unfamiliar faces, please make them feel welcome and assist them if you are able.

All members please note that there will be NO Saturday workshop in December, as usual, due to the holiday season.

Workshops will recommence from the January Workshop on 28th January.

*Right - Members at work at the Saturday Workshop*



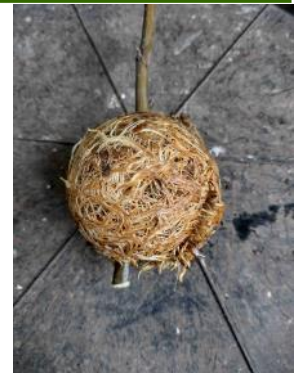
## Air Layer Pod Results

The club stocks air layer pods on our trade table, which are very convenient vehicles for applying air layers to reproduce your plants.

The photos on the right from Lindsay H show the results we are looking for when we apply an air layer—a mass of roots filling the pod on this crab apple.

This example was left attached for almost 12 months, following an inspection after 4 months which showed insufficient root growth at that time.

After separation, the outside of the rootball was carefully teased out slightly, and then planted in a grow pot. Further root work placement and trimming of the branch stub will be done next season.



## BONSAI SENSATION NURSERY

MONDAY TO FRIDAY 9:00am – 5:00pm / WEEKENDS 10:00am – 3:00pm

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## Tree Profile: *Casuarina* and *Allocasuarina*

**General:** According to Wikipedia - *Casuarina* & *Allocasuarina* are genus's in the family Casuarinaceae with together of over 90 species, native to Australia, the Indian subcontinent, southeast Asia, and islands of the western Pacific Ocean. They were once treated as the sole genus in the family, but have been split into four genera (see: Casuarinaceae).

A great native for bonsai use, which could easily rival the Japanese Black Pine for its appearance - if styled accordingly and its hardiness. Although referred to by some as the "Australian Pine" or She Oak, it is not related to the pine or oak families.

**Lighting & Temperature:** Full sun (is best) to partial shade. Frost tolerant to -4.0°C to -8.0°C pending on location!

**Watering:** Casuarinas are thirsty, but tolerate dry soil between watering. Don't allow to dry out and remain dry! Young plants benefit from soaking during dry spells. Good drainage is critical to prevent root rot!

**Feeding:** Liquid fertilizer monthly during growth periods. Slow release native fertilizers like Osmocote can be used when re-potting.

**Pruning and Wiring:** Hard pruning and foliage reduction is possible provided it's done prior to the new season growth start! *Casuarina* will develop a mass of re-growth everywhere; new branches will form quickly for a complete re-style of the tree. "Clip and grow" achieves excellent results. Shorten the needles by twisting and pinching, which will not cause browning like cutting does. Wiring can be done anytime, taking care to protect the delicate bark and branches. Do not wire while the plant is setting buds, wire only woody shoots!

**Repotting:** Early spring is best just prior to bud swelling. Avoid removing the soil and roots immediately around the trunk - not too much root disturbance. Add some washed coarse river sand to your bonsai mix for good drainage.

**Propagation:** Cuttings in autumn or from seeds in spring and air-layering. Collecting from rivers banks, road sides and private property. Permission should always be obtained from land owners! Cut the leaves back and keep/mix some soil from the collection area with your potting mix.

**Pests and diseases:** Scales, mealybugs, spider mites - use specific pesticides. Root rot if poor drainage.

**Styles:** Every style and form of bonsai is possible including shohin and mame!

### Just to name a few species suitable for Bonsai:

***Casuarina cunninghamiana*** - River She Oak, with a dense rough bark and grayish green foliage.

***Casuarina glauca*** - Swamp She Oak, has a light brown rough bark with slender drooping branches.

***Casuarina equisetifolia*** - Beach or Coastal She Oak, also called "Australian Pine" with a rough dark grey bark and much branched grey-green twigs

***Allocasuarina littoralis*** - Black She Oak, an upright fast growing species with fine branchlets and a tough deeply furrowed bark.

***Allocasuarina torulosa*** - Forest or Rose She Oak, slender growth with maroon color in winter.

***Allocasuarina decaisneana*** - Desert Oak, is an attractive, medium-sized, slow-growing tree in dry desert region. It has a cork-like bark that is deeply furrowed and instead of leaves the tree has long segmented branchlets.



## *On The Display Table*



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

## *Bonsai Calendar: July - August*

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). Note that on exceptionally hot days, some of your trees may need watering twice or even three times, to maintain optimum health.
- Bonsai that will require more water: Maples, Camellias, Azaleas, Liquidambar, Elms, Wisterias, Alders, Taxodiums, Beeches, Hornbeams, Pyracanthas, Banksias, Melaleucas, other natives
- Bonsai that will require less water: Pines, Cedars, Corokias,
- It can be a good idea to 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 from both the sun and the wind.
- When looking for shade, avoid placing bonsai directly under garden trees. Pests and diseases can be passed to your bonsai.

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 69  
November &  
December 2022

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 2023*



The monthly meeting on Tuesday 10th January at 7:30pm will be a workshop night—bring along your trees to work on and seek advice or assistance if required. Display Table—"Figs Any Style", or Member's Choice.



The Last Saturday of the Month Workshop will be on Saturday 28th January from 1:00pm to 4:00pm.



The monthly meeting on Tuesday 14th February at 7:30pm will be a presentation and demonstration on "Starting Out With Natives" by our own Lindsay H. Everyone should include native species in their collection, so come along and learn the options for starting out. Display Table—"Natives Any Style", or Member's Choice.



The Last Saturday of the Month Workshop will be on Saturday 25th February from 1:00pm to 4:00pm.

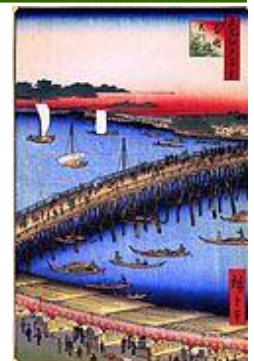


## Other Events

There are no other events currently advised for January and February. Longer term events are:

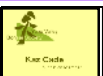


Bonsai Reshaped 2023 at the National Arboretum in Canberra, 24th to 26th March 2023. Comprising Beginner's and Intermediate Workshops with guest international bonsai artists, bonsai markets, and Bonsai After Dark—a relaxed social event where drinks and canapes are combined with a fast-paced bonsai demonstration in an evening session. International artists in 2023 are Jennifer Price from USA and Nik Rozman from Slovenia. For more information, visit [https://www.nationalarboretum.act.gov.au/living-collections/\\_?a=2123627](https://www.nationalarboretum.act.gov.au/living-collections/_?a=2123627).



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](mailto: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.

## 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 us via the society's external email: [info@yarravalleybonsai.org.au](mailto:info@yarravalleybonsai.org.au)