



## NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

### Green Square Community Hall

3 Joynton Avenue  
Zetland

### 7pm Tuesday 14 April 2015

Demonstration: Repotting of  
Black Pine if preceding weather  
permits by Sue

### 7pm Tuesday 12 May 2015

Feature Tree: Pines & Junipers

## CONTACT DETAILS



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## COMMITTEE

**Patron** Dorothy Koreshoff

**President** Bryan

**Vice President** Sue

**Secretary** tba

**Treasurer** Chris

**Newsletter Editor** Roslyn

**Librarian** Naomi & Les

**Catering** Philip

**Committee** Lee, Naomi & Tony

## MEMBERSHIP

**Full Membership** \$40.00

**Concession** \$25.00

**Family** \$55.00

**Pensioner** \$25.00

*SCBC wishes to thank Sydney City Council for their continued support for our club by providing the hall at a reduced rate.*

## Welcome to the April Newsletter

### April Meeting

- Repotting of Japanese Black Pine demonstration by Sue. Note: If we experience hot weather in the preceding week we will delay this repotting for one month.
- Member workshop: Bring in your trees – evergreens are this month's feature tree for shaping, pruning and repotting.
- Don't forget to contribute to the short Member Styling Hotspot led by President Bryan. One or two trees are needed each month for open discussion.



The Sydney City Bonsai Club stand at the 2015 Sydney Royal Easter Show

## In this issue:

- SCBC at the 2015 Sydney Royal Easter Show – page 2
- 2015 Sydney Royal Easter Show - page 3
- Focusing on Australian Natives as Bonsai – featuring the Victorian Native Bonsai Club – page 4 - 5
- Tasmanian Plants as Native Bonsai – page 5
- Growing Australian Natives as Bonsai – some myths and tips – page 6
- Bonsai Events Calendar – page 6

## SCBC AT THE 2015 SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW

### SCBC at the 2015 Sydney Royal Easter Show

The SCBC activities at the Sydney Royal Easter Show supports the promotion of the art of bonsai. Both the SCBC bonsai stand, bonsai demonstrations by Sue and active entry into the RAS bonsai competition give the public an opportunity to view and ask questions about our fascinating art.



SCBC stand at the Show attracted a steady stream of interest and a plethora of questions. These questions allowed our club members to explain that a bonsai is a tree in a pot that has had styling, shaping and attention given to it to make it look like an old tree in nature.

They were fascinated to hear about how to actually create a bonsai by pruning roots, branch cutting and foliage trimming and that correct watering, correct soil; appropriate sunlight, correct fertilising; protection from pests and diseases and patience is the key.



Many people passing by just could not believe that our healthy trees were more than forty years old; others wanted to know why their bonsai either died or were not thriving; whilst still others stayed for significant lengths of time at the stand trying to extract a "short course in the art of bonsai". This latter group were encouraged to join a local bonsai club.

Vice-President Sue and President Brian would like to thank all those members who gave up their valuable time in support of the club by working at the SCBC stand this year.

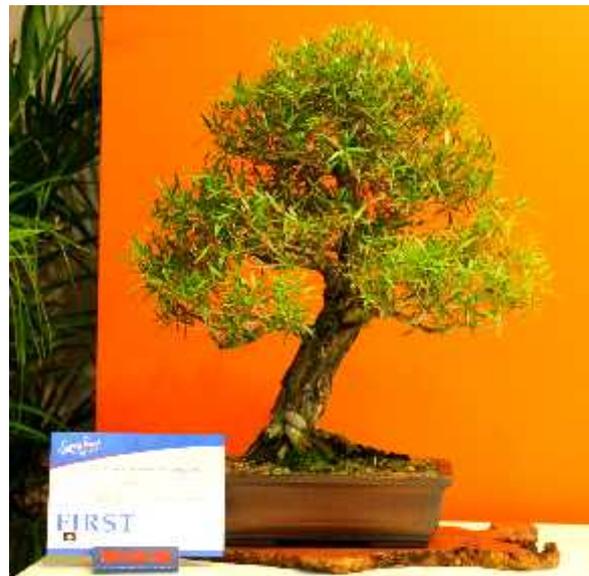
### 2015 Royal Easter Show Bonsai Competition

Our club performed extremely well again this year in the RAS bonsai competition bringing home, five first places, 4 second places, and 2 third places in the various bonsai categories.

This year's Champion Bonsai (Class S5210) and Champion Australian Native Bonsai (Class S5211) went to Mr Colin Hugo.



Champion Australian Native Bonsai and overall Champion Bonsai of the 2015 Sydney Royal Easter Show



Sue's Podocarpus wins the Australian Native (other than fig) class.

## 2015 SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW COMPETITION

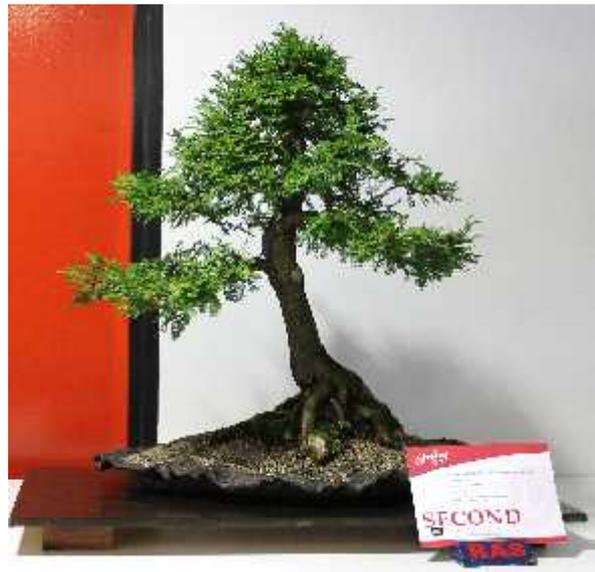
### 2015 SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW – FLOWER AND GARDEN BONSAI COMPETITION

As the Sydney Royal Easter Show bonsai competition is one of the few opportunities where the general public will encounter benched bonsai, it is extremely important that the bonsai community support the Sydney Royal Easter Show Flower and Garden Bonsai competition.

SCBC Vice-President Sue was prolific in her winnings again this year in every category she entered:

CLASS	PRIZE	ENTRY WINNER
512 - Bonsai, any style, under 30cm high.	1st	5088 -Sue
	2nd	5091-Sue
513 - One Bonsai (one tree only), informal, upright style.	2nd	5096-Sue
CLASS: 514 - One Bonsai (one tree only), cascade or semi-cascade style.	2nd	510 -Sue
CLASS: 516 - One Bonsai (one tree only), root over rock or clinging to rock.	1st	5109-Sue
	3rd	5110-Sue
CLASS: 517 - Bonsai, ficus, any style.	3rd	5114-Sue
CLASS: 518 - Bonsai, Australian Native (other than fig), any style.	1st	5121-Sue
CLASS: 519 - Bonsai, any other style.	1st	5126-Sue
CLASS: 520 - Bonsai, group planting (3 or more trees).	2nd	5130-Sue
CLASS: 521 - Bonsai, saikei (landscape).	1st	5134-Sue

Below is a selection of trees in the 2015 Sydney Royal Easter Show:



Sue's elegant tree comes second in Class 513 – One Bonsai, (one tree only) informal , upright style



Bonsai, saikei (landscape) first prize in Class 5134



Whilst this Wollemi Pine did not win a prize, there were several entries where stylists presented unusual trees as bonsai.

## WISTERIA FOCUSING ON AUSTRALIAN NATIVES AS BONSAI

### Focusing on Australian Natives as Bonsai (featuring the Victorian Native Bonsai Club)

In 2013 the Victorian Native Bonsai Club was formed with the aim of bringing together bonsai growers with a particular interest in using Australian native plant species for bonsai. The Club aims to foster the understanding of the use of Australian native species as bonsai, inspire participation and enjoyment by both beginner and advanced growers and to increase the level of knowledge and available information of the requirements and possibilities for growing Australian species as bonsai.



Magnificent Banksia exhibited at the Bonsai exhibition of Australian Natives organised by the Victorian Native Bonsai Club

In Sydney whilst our own club, SCBC, has very experienced people such as Leigh and Sue who have successfully grown magnificent natives and who from time to time provide our club with workshops and demonstrations on Australian natives as bonsai, there is no organised club that specifically focusses on Australian native species as bonsai. With kind permission from the Victorian Native Bonsai Club, I have used information from their website for an article on Australian Natives as Bonsai.

Each year, the VNBC organises a bonsai exhibition of Australian Natives. The 2015 exhibition is being held this weekend, that is, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> April at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Melbourne.



Photo from 2014 Exhibition of Australian Natives, Melbourne

VNBC publishes useful summaries with pictures and conclusions from their club meetings on their website (<http://www.vicnativebonsai.com.au/>).

For example, the February meeting covered "questions as to whether there are any styles which could be specific to Australian species, or whether all of the possibilities are really adaptations of the range of styles which we have learned from Japanese and other experience. A wide range of Australian native bonsai which were in training were presented for critique and discussion.



Eucalypt (Eucalyptus leucoxylon)



Banksia (Banksia serrata)

## FOCUSING ON AUSTRALIAN NATIVES continued

### Victorian Native Bonsai Club

( February 2015 meeting notes continued)



Wattle, "Emerald Curl" (Acacia cognata)



Brush Box (Lophostemon confertus)

General agreement at the conclusion of the meeting:

- "each tree being prepared as a bonsai needs to be treated firstly on its individual merits and possibilities";
- "the traditional principles and guidelines applying to bonsai growing are still very appropriate for native species";
- "the individual growth habits of each species need to be recognised and understood to help get the best bonsai specimen out of each tree"; and,
- "The concept of one or more particular "Australian native" styles was not generally supported at this stage, although who knows where the concept may progress over time as our experience and understanding develop further."

More information on the VNBC meeting outcomes and activities can be found at

<http://www.vicnativebonsai.com.au/>. SCBC will soon join the VNBC as an interstate member which will enable us to receive a copy of their monthly newsletter. A copy of each month's newsletter will be stored in an SCBC library folder for those who are keen on Australian natives as bonsai.

### Tasmanian Plants as Native Bonsai

Will Fletcher who has a nursery titled "Island Bonsai" located near Hobart, commenced developing Tasmanian native bonsai in 1995 and opened his native bonsai nursery in 2008.

On his website ( <http://www.islandbonsai.com.au> ) he explains:

"At ISLAND BONSAI we are concentrating on designing Tasmanian bonsai to represent how these species appear in the wild. These works will be truly Tasmanian. As well we enjoy creating some bonsai following Japanese styles, some are more akin to the Chinese penjing, and some more whimsical pieces where we follow where the plant takes us! There are at least 50 species and varieties of Tasmanian plants that are eminently suited to bonsai."



Smokey Teatree (Leptospermum glaucescens) scrub



Smokey Teatree (Leptospermum laevegetatum)

This coastal Teatree is 8 years old (50x50 cm) and is depicted as growing out into the light from the sea shore.

"Many of Tasmania's better known indigenous plants are well suited to bonsai culture, including Huon Pine (*Lagarostrobos franklinii*), Myrtle (*Nothofagus cunninghamii*), Teatrees (*Leptospermum* sp), Banksias, Hakeas, some of the Acacias, and Leatherwood (*Eucryphia lucida*).



See the Island Bonsai website for more information; to book any visits to his nursery; and/or subscribe to his newsletter.

# GROWING AUSTRALIAN NATIVES AS BONSAI AND EVENTS CALENDAR

## Growing Australian Natives – Some Myths and Tips

Myth 1: Australian Natives are hard to grow – they resent root pruning; don't like to be repotted; die easily and don't like to be wired.

Myth 2: Because many natives are generally found in dry and arid conditions, they don't need much water.

Myth 3: Don't fertilise natives because they are used to nutrient deficient soils.

Tip 1: Australian natives are no more difficult to grow than flora from other regions of the world – some are adaptable and some aren't. Some of our natives grow in dry arid nutrient poor soils and thus send out long roots in search of moisture – however when grown in better conditions they positively thrive.

Tip 2: It is important to study where the trees normally grow. For example coastal banksia (*banksia intergregifolia*) appear to like dry conditions but actually they send roots down and tap into the water table that is just below the tidal area of the beach.

Most Australian natives thrive on moisture – trees such as lilly-pilly, melaleuca, callistemon, watergum, casurina grow along creek banks and in low lying swampy areas. In summer some bonsai growers place them in shallow water trays.

Tip 3: Whilst natives often grow in nutrient poor soils, they do respond well to natural organic fertilizers such as Standard Dynamic Lifter or Charlie Carp. Native-specific granulated fertilizers may also be used. However, do make sure they are low in phosphorus.

Tip 4: Native species have a different growing cycle to the exotics – they grow mainly in the summer and winter as opposed to the exotics which grow spring and autumn. With natives, a growth spurt often follows a rainy period. Hence routine maintenance has to be tailored to fit in with the observed cycle. Thus root pruning and potting should be carried out just as the new buds start to swell.

Tip 5: A very open porous potting mix, (with sharp gravel rather than rounded stones so that moisture is better retained) should be used. Whilst you want high moisture it must not be stagnant. Otherwise you cannot achieve a high exchange of oxygen.

Tip 6: After repotting natives, do not allow them to dry out – particularly in the first four to six weeks.

Tip 7: Pruning should be carried out following major growth spurts, in order to maintain the shape and also pruned after flowering. With species such as callistemon, melaleuca and leptospermum, prune back behind the flowers to remove the seed capsules. This is because these species flower on new seasons growth and if the seed capsules are retained the tree is sapped of energy.

## BONSAI EVENTS CALENDAR

Date	Event	Details
11-12 April, 2015	11 <sup>th</sup> National Australian Plants as Bonsai	Royal Botanical Gardens, Melbourne. Presented by Victorian Native Bonsai Club
12 April, 2015	The Nature of Bonsai	Nepean Bonsai Club, Glenbrook Community Hall, Corner Ross St & Great Western Highway, Glenbrook
2-3 May, 2015	Illawarra Bonsai Annual Show (Autumn)	Sutherland District Trade Union Club (Tradies), Kingsway, Gymea
15-18 May, 2015	Bonsai – A growing Art. 28 <sup>th</sup> Australian National Bonsai Convention	The Hotel Grand Chancellor Adelaide on Hindley. 65 Hindley St, Adelaide
6-7 June 2015	Bonsai By the Harbour	Bonsai Federation of Australia Northern Inc, Sydney Church of England Grammar School's Rowing Facility, 86 Wharf Rd, Gladesville NSW
15 June, 2015	Open Invitation to all Clubs to Celebrate 45 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Illawarra Bonsai Society	Demonstration by Mauro Stemberger & bonsai display, Gymea Community Centre, Gymea Bay Rd, Gymea. Doors open 6.30 pm.