



sydney city  
bonsai club inc.



## NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

**Green Square Community Hall**  
3 Joynton Avenue  
Zetland

**7pm Tuesday 12 March 2013**  
Junipers conifers workshop, Sue will talk on chemicals for bonsai

**7pm Tuesday 9 April 2013**  
Debrief of Royal Easter Show  
Pines workshop  
Sue will demo root pruning a pine.

## CONTACT DETAILS

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## COMMITTEE

**Patron** Dorothy Koreshoff  
**President** Bryan  
**Vice President** Sue  
**Secretary** Alan  
**Treasurer** Chris  
**Public Officer** Warwick  
**Newsletter Editor** Tony  
**Librarian** Marianna  
**Catering** Philip  
**Committee** Richard

## MEMBERSHIP

**Full Membership** \$40.00  
**Concession** \$25.00  
**Family** \$55.00  
**Pensioner** \$25.00

## Welcome to the January / February / March Newsletter

### March Meeting

Junipers and other conifers workshop & Sue will give a talk on chemicals for bonsai.

The Club has bought 5 trees **and we need volunteers to train them**, & bring them back every month so the other members can see how the trees progress.



Warwick gets into the spirit with his Christmas decorated bonsai – do you think he got a bit carried away? To see other bonsai in Christmas finery see page 2

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BONSAI IN THEIR CHRISTMAS FINERY AT THE DECEMBER MEETING



## STORY OF A JAPANESE BLACK PINE

By Sue Brennan

At the beginning of December 2012 I came across a collection of bonsai that had been potted into solid clay and compost and were all suffering massive stress. The clay was either saturated with no air in the soil or set like cement when dry.

In the worse case a group of junipers was struggling in this clay soil in which the underlying compost had rotted and the soil was anaerobic and smelled like a grease trap with grey, smelly, greasy rotting garbage on the bottom of the pot.

One of the suffering trees was a mature Japanese Black Pine, 65 cm tall [2'6"] in a 45 cm [18"] pot.



This tree was allegedly root pruned in August 2012 yet showed no signs of any spring growth. It appeared to be potted in solid clay. When it was removed from the pot only clay was visible encasing the entire root system and the top of the soil. No roots were visible at the edges of the soil mix [clay].

*John Naka - American Bonsai Master:*

*“A bonsai can never be a finished work of art...because it will always be a living piece of nature, continuing to live and grow.”*

*“The object is not to make the tree look like a bonsai, but to make the bonsai look like a tree.”*

The disease on the tree was dreadful with an infestation of Pine Woolly Aphids that was so heavy a secondary infestation of sooty mould gave the branches and foliage a black [sooty mould] and white [woolly aphids] appearance.



Pine Woolly Aphid

The top of the tree was struggling for growth and in places was showing signs of dieback. The lower branches were not so bad but were long and stringy with growth mostly at the end of the branches. All the foliage was lime green which is normally a sign of needing nutrients. In this case it turned out to be smotheration [lack of air] within the encasement of clay.

When a tree needs nutrient and is fed it takes about ten days to show the effect of that feeding and the foliage to show a better shade of green. In the case of this pine within two days of clay removal the foliage responded by changing colour from lime green to a darker green more true to the foliage colouration of a Japanese Black Pine. That rapid response illustrated the urgent need for air within the soil. I sensed the tree gave a sign of relief when the clay was removed and air got into its system.

To remove the clay I first had to let it dry so it would 'shatter' when hit. When wet any attempt at clay removal would tear any feeder roots as the clay was sloppy as if being used for pottery making. When the clay was dry it was removed by hitting it with a rubber hammer and shattering it. When this was done I saw that the tree had not been root pruned. The original root system had just been surrounded in this clay, giving the bonsai the effect of living in a clay oven, the walls of which were either wet or dry with little or no air passing through. All the roots that were visible were black and rotting but within the non root pruned root ball I knew there must be some life. I suspect this tree was actually saved from certain death because it was not root pruned before being encased in clay.

Sooty mould is a secondary infection of a massive insect attack so only the woolly aphids needed treatment. First the tree was sprayed with a strong jet of water to remove some aphids. When it dried the foliage was sprayed to saturation with a pest oil and pyrethrum mixture. The following day the foliage was sprayed again with a strong jet of water and when dry the pest oil mixture was reapplied. The tree was then placed without being root pruned into an open, free draining soil mix.

# STORY OF A JAPANESE BLACK PINE & BONSAI SOIL MIX RECIPE

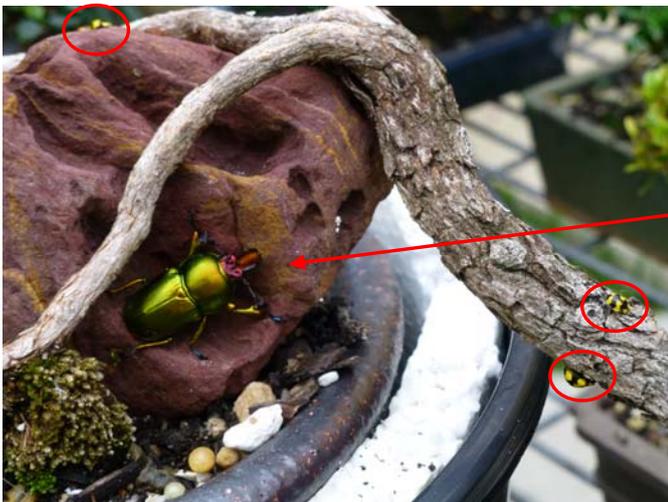
At the first sign of new growth, 2 weeks, it became necessary to remove the foliage overgrowth from the bottom branches to match the weak foliage at the top of the tree, thereby evening out the tree's energy requirements.



It is now 8 weeks since this treatment and the pine is responding well with dry looking young candles greening up and popping out new needles. The aphids have gone and the tree has been wired up in its initial styling. It will be returned to its owner in late April.

An Elm Group Planting growing in Sue's bonsai soil mix

## EASY RIDERS SEEK HEAT RELIEF



## BONSAI SOIL MIX RECIPE

8 x scoops of washed gravel  
2 x giant scoops of coir-peat  
1 x scoop of standard Chicken Manure Pellets

Mix well and add sufficient water so the mix is damp but not wet.

### CRUSHED GRAVEL (SCREENINGS)

Available from Crystal Building Supplies, 13 Crystal St, Petersham, near Queen St.

This must be washed until water runs clear; before using. It is \$6.50 a bag which will fill half an old style garbage bin [not a wheelie bin]

### EASY WETTA COIR-PEAT BRICK

Plain, NO added nutrients, about \$1.70 at Bunnings. Expand it in water as per directions.

### YATES STANDARD PELLETS

Chicken manure, no added chemicals, available at Bunnings in 25 kilo bags, about \$28. There are no smaller bags of basic pellets without additives [chemicals] that I can find.

YOU MUST NOT PUT CHEMICALS AGAINST CUT ROOTS; IT WILL BURN THEM AT THE CUTS.



On the recent 45.8 degree day I moved my more fragile trees under the patio and this *Kunzea ambigua* root over rock was tucked in the shadiest, most protected spot. When I put the trees back on the bench in the early evening I discovered that several insects had taken refuge from the blistering heat: a gorgeous golden beetle nestling in a crevice in the rock, two yellow ladybird beetles on the lower trunk and one at the top of the rock. Come morning they were all gone but I am glad that this bonsai offered them comfort and protection during that awful day - Lee

## Re-styling a Coastal Banksia bonsai

This beautiful semi-cascade Banksia bonsai was made from a prostrate form of *Banksia integrifolia* the Coastal Banksia

The tree belongs to Sue Brennan and in this series of photos Sue demonstrates how to mask out the part of the tree you are thinking of removing so you can get an idea of how the tree will look without actually removing the branch.

Any plain material can be used to mask out branches; Sue is using a black cloth in these photos, other useful materials are tea towels, white paper and even you hand on small trees.



The tree before pruning

My wife said I had to give up  
bonsai or she was going to  
leave me. God, am I going  
to miss her.

Unknown



The tree with the lower branch masked with black cloth



The tree after pruning

# CALENDAR

Date	Event	Details
Sunday 7th April 2013.	Nepean Bonsai Society's Exhibition	PCYC (Police Citizens Youth Club) Station St Penrith
Saturday 13th & Sunday 14th April 2013	8th Collectors Plant Fair	Hawkesbury Race Club, Racecourse Rd Clarendon
Friday 17th to Monday 20th May 2013.	"The Australian Journey" the 26th AABC National Bonsai Convention, Canberra	. email <a href="mailto:secretariat2013@cbs.org.au">secretariat2013@cbs.org.au</a> for more info