




NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

Green Square Community Hall
3 Joynton Avenue
Zetland

7pm Tuesday 9 July 2013
Root pruning deciduous tree
Learning from failures - Sue
AGM

7pm Tuesday 13 August 2013
Root pruning deciduous tree if not
in new growth. Bring in favourite
bonsai books. Swap & Sale night

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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

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MEMBERSHIP

Full Membership \$40.00

Concession \$25.00

Family \$55.00

Pensioner \$25.00

Welcome to the July Newsletter

July Meeting

Annual General Meeting – please nominate for office

Learning from failures - Sue

WORKSHOP : Root pruning deciduous trees



Bryan taking notes while Sue delivers her excellent presentation on selecting bonsai stock plants at last month's SCBC meeting

Reminder: Club Membership Fees due in July

- For photos & notes from the June meeting - see page 2
- For two good books for beginners – see page 2
- For a photo-story on transforming an Olive bonsai – see page 3
- For a great article for bonsai newbies check out 'How do I start?' pages 4 - 6
- Events Calendar page 6

A final note from the Editor:

This is my last newsletter; my thanks to everyone that contributed over the 7 years I have been writing and editing the newsletter. A special thanks to Lee Wright and Sue Brennan for their continued help and support - Tony

JUNE SCBC MEETING – PLANTS ON SHOW & EDITOR'S NOTES



A beautiful Chinese Elm bonsai and companion plant



A beautifully rugged Olive bonsai and companion plant

NOTES FROM JUNE MEETING:

Pines fit neatly into two groups when it comes to pruning:

Black, White & Red Pines – which we more commonly see in Sydney get energy through their roots. These pines can be cut back onto older wood (a 'death cut') and will recover



Black Pine bonsai photo courtesy:

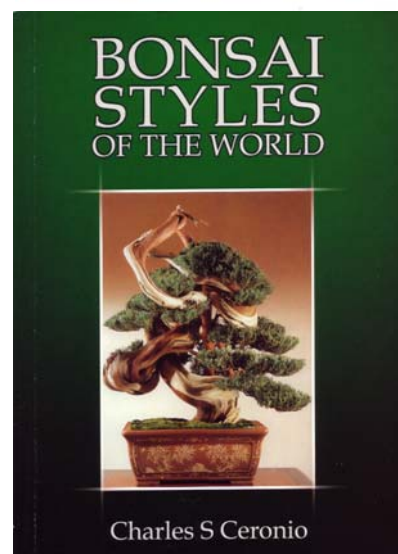
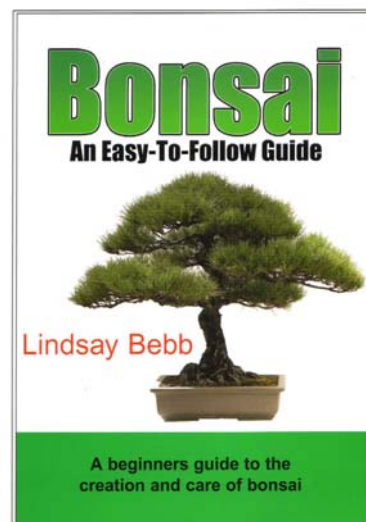
<http://www.bonsaiinformation.com/01%20Black%20Pine%202.jpg>

Scots, Austrian & Mugo Pines - get most of their energy through their leaves. This means without their leaves these plants will not be able to recover. For this group of pines remove half the length of the candles to encourage back branching



Mugo Pine bonsai photo courtesy:

http://www.artofbonsai.org/art-of-bonsai-awards/2009/aob_094_pinus_mugo.jpg



Two good books for bonsai beginner; in the August meeting please bring along your favourite books to show other members

PHOTOSTORY – TRANSFORMING AN OLD OLIVE

What do you do when someone nicely gives you an overly large, not too attractive olive base???? Get out the Dremel and an array of bits.

“The carving improved the tree so much, gave it a story, made you want to look at it, see inside to what mysteries it might hold.

That's IT. The carving took a mute stump and gave it a story. I like that and it's true.”

Lee



Before



After – a living work of art

HOW DO I START? COPROSMA

Newcomers can find it hard to choose suitable stock plants to make into bonsai because they lack the ability to see into the future. This is a natural part of the learning curve and the more bonsai you create the further forward your vision for a tree can extend.

You want to look for a tree that has:

1. a reasonable nebari [surface roots] that gives balance to the tree and looks as though the tree has a firm foundation on the soil surface.
2. You want a trunk with movement and not one that looks like a telegraph pole.
3. You need a natural looking trunk with taper to accentuate the proportions of your tree.

And since newcomers are reticent about spending big money for stock, you want a plant that is not too expensive but offers styling possibilities. As the old adage says:

You have to kiss a lot of frogs before you find a prince.... You have to study a lot of stock plants to find one that offers you possibilities.

I picked up a \$20 bronze leaf coprosma after assessing the eight or so plants on offer.



Why did I buy this particular plant? Aside from the beauty of the golden wood and the tiny bronze leaf this particular plant had a natural movement.

Not much but enough to take it away from the boring straight trunks of the others that were available.

I ignored the masses of branches at the top of the tree and looked at the branches around the main crotch of the tree. There were a couple that I could work into a design.

The first step and often the hardest for a beginner is to know how much to remove. Too much and you have lost your tree or so delayed any development that you despair. Too little and you don't get your blueprint for the tree established.

I have had a bronze leaf Coprosma and know they develop well with dense foliage pads and shoot back on old wood. Look at the other plants in the selection and study their growth habits. Shooting back on old wood is a very important requirement to make developing your style easier. How can you tell if they shoot back on old wood? Look for a plant that has a lot of small branches coming off the larger ones.



Taking the plant back to the bare bones of the proposed style becomes easier with practice.

- I have removed almost all the top growth.
- I want the tree to be about 18 cm in height.
- The left branch could become the first branch; there's the possibility of a back branch and an apical branch.
- There's the need for a lot of growth.

Basic wiring and branch placement – I have wired the lowest branch as a possible first branch but am also styling the second left branch to fill the negative space created by the high position of that branch in case the lower one doesn't develop enough. It has to thicken sufficiently to be the largest branch and I'm not sure the tree will do that. It can serve as a sacrifice branch to hopefully thicken the lower trunk but Coprosma tend to sucker more than thicken.

HOW DO I START? COPROSMA & MELALEUCA



In the case of every branch; I have styled only the sections closest to the trunk. The branches have been left longer because of the season and the need to leave leaves on to feed the tree until spring growth.

Once the tree starts shooting I will shorten the ends to start bringing the growth areas closer to the trunk. I am also reluctant to shape the smaller branches more at this stage because their attachment to the trunk is not 100%. Better to do a bit and wait and still have a branch.

At the conclusion of the initial styling the tree does not have a back branch as I have used the proposed back branch for a right side branch. But it is early days and spring is coming.

I feel that months down the track the lower left branch will be removed and I will modify the upper left branch position to bring it a bit more to the front as the main branch.

Once that is done I can then modify the position of the right branch. At that stage adjusting the branches will be easy, the attachment to the trunk will be better and a bit more growth will give a better feel.

This tree is going to look ratty for a good year before the shape starts to fill in and it becomes the tree I am working towards. But during that time I have the pleasure of the incredibly tiny leaves and the wonderful colours of the plant – all of which will only increase as nature and I work towards a lovely shohin bonsai.

Botanical names mean something:

Coprosma = Greek *kopros*, meaning dung & *osme*, meaning smell, referring to the foul smelling flowers of some species

Melaleuca = Greek *melanos*, black & *leucos*, white, bush fire blackened trunks have white areas when the paper bark sheds. Early explorers thought the black and white bark was natural not the result of bush fires

Melaleuca

I picked up a *Melaleuca* ???, choosing the one that had the best nebari and trunk movement. *Melaleucas* shoot back on old wood and develop quite well so there is a lot of potential in this tree with nicely developing paperbark. The tree's main styling disadvantage is the weight at the top of the tree and the straight section of upper trunk. The weight can be cut away, the trunk can either be cut lower and a new leader developed or I can develop branches that come a bit across the upper trunk to conceal the straight part.



The first step with any new tree is to remove all the material you don't see in your design:

1. Dead branches are the first to go,
2. along with branches growing in directions against your design that can't be wired without breaking them,
3. branches that shoot very close to another branch wherein you would choose the branch best placed or best thickness for your design.

It is not always the best branch that is kept. You can have a branch with beautiful movement but it is too thick or not quite the right angle so you choose a thinner branch that can be shaped to how and where you want it and let it thicken as the tree develops.

It is very important to lighten the visual weight of the tree as you go towards the apex and try to achieve a taper. This plant has all the branches growing upwards, some almost past the repositioning.

HOW DO I START? MELALEUCA & EVENTS CALENDAR



Once the branches that you don't want are removed you have a better idea of the style you can achieve but this close up photo shows the excess weight at the apex before I start eliminating branches.

Now all excess branching have been removed, the triple apexes have been reduced to one, the branches wired into the position that compliments the tree. I will reposition the bottom left branch a bit lower but feel I have done enough at this stage to take it from the upward growth to just below horizontal. Too much enthusiasm for reshaping can cause the branch to break. Better to do a bit and wait a bit and end up with the branch properly positioned and still there.

The tree is full of buds, there will be more design decisions in several months when shooting starts in spring. I don't want the tree any taller than it is now so the apex will be altered a bit as it develops. To allow the tree to get any taller will be to diminish the size of the trunk.



Always style with the idea in mind to increase the width and power of the trunk. The taller the tree the thinner the trunk becomes visually. The shorter the tree the stouter the trunk.

This front is best as the other side has a bit of reverse taper and the roots are better from this side as well. Select and style your tree from the bottom up but keep in mind a tree needs to be like a pyramid with the greatest visual weight at the bottom and getting lighter as your eye goes upward.

This may look sparse now but it now has better balance and a lot of potential for the future bonsai I see in it. The lines are clean and clear yet leaving areas to be worked on when new growth develops.

Date	Event	Details
August 17-18	Bonsai Society of Sydney Exhibition	featuring Mr. Masa Hirao (Japan), Checkers Resort, 331 Mona Vale Road, Terrey Hills
Sept 6-8	Illawarra Bonsai Society "Tops Weekend Workshop"	Featuring Robert Steven, Tops Conference Centre, Stanwell Tops.
Sept 21-22	Bonsai Society of Australia, Annual Show	Don Moore Community Centre, North Rocks Road, North Rocks.
October 6-7	Sydney Bonsai Spectacular	Merrylands RSL, Military Road, Merrylands
October 12-13	Canberra Bonsai Society, Annual Show	Daramalan College, Dickson, ACT
October 19-20	School of Bonsai, Annual Show	Ray Nesci Nursery, Dural
November 8-10	Newcastle Bonsai Society, Annual Exhibition	Charlestown Bowling Club