



sydney city
bonsai club inc.



NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

Green Square Community Hall
3 Joynton Avenue
Zetland

7pm Tuesday 13 March 2012
Presentation on preparing your
on bonsai for display part 2 &
workshop. Easter show roster.

7pm Tuesday 10 April 2012
This meeting CANCELLED please
come and visit our stand at the
Easter Show

CONTACT DETAILS

 0432 461 025

 info@sydneycitybonsai.org.au

 sydneycitybonsai.org.au

 PO Box 486
Summerhill NSW 2130

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 March Newsletter

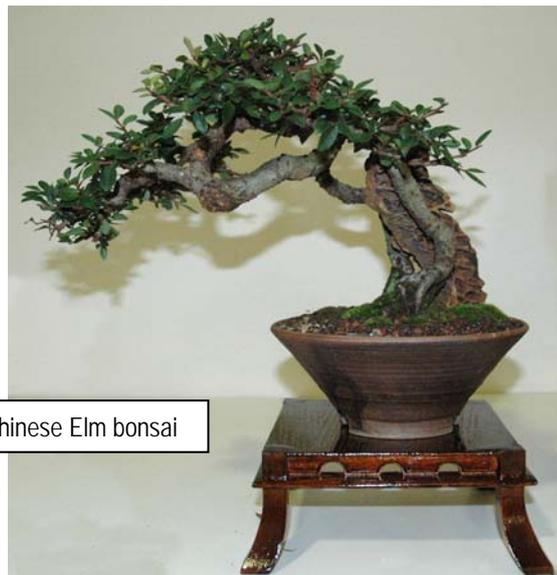
March Meeting

- Preparing your tree for a bonsai display part 2
- Bring a bonsai and talk about it – this is now a monthly event
 - Share your bonsai's history; tell us about how you got it, what made you choose the style, how it has changed or how it came to be as it is today.
 - Get feedback and suggestions on improving your trees
- Workshop - Bring a tree to work on
- Discussion botanical queries, pests and care - your chance to ask your questions
- Monthly bonsai display - show your bonsai
- Club mail and news

New location for this month's Club Meeting

Sydney Park Community Room

Sydney Park Road (The entrance to the car park is opposite Mitchell Rd)
St Peters NSW 2044



A beautiful Chinese Elm bonsai

In this month's newsletter:

- For pictures taken at the February meeting see pages 2 & 3
- For a great article on using Pyracantha as bonsai, see pages 4 - 5
- Events Calendar page 5

BONSAI IN TRAINING ON SHOW AT THE FEBRUARY MEETING



Hector's Juniper bonsai



Bryan's Tea Tree bonsai



Peter's Privet before Pruning



The February meeting fell on St Valentine's Day
To celebrate Les brought in this beautiful companion stone with a natural crystalline formation in the shape of a heart



Peter's Privet after pruning

BONSAI IN TRAINING ON SHOW AT THE FEBRUARY MEETING



Sue's Moreton Bay Fig bonsai



Les's Olive bonsai before pruning



Philip's Dawn Redwood bonsai forest



Les's Olive bonsai before pruning

PYRACANTHA – An All Expertise Tree

Pyracantha angustifolia is a robust, rapidly developing plant that is fantastic stock for beginners to advanced. Nicknamed 'Firethorn', the *Pyracantha* grows in a range of climatic conditions from freezing Canberra to sweaty Sydney and comes up trumps every time. The typical plant has red berries but a bit of nursery crawling and you can find red, red/orange, orange & yellow and I have been told there are others colours tho I haven't seen them.

The *Pyracantha* is often confused with the *Cotoneaster* but there is a world of difference between the two. First and foremost, the *Pyracantha* sports a host of stout thorns that are to be respected but can be nipped back without harming the plant to ensure they don't harm the enthusiast. The thorns of a ground grown *Pyracantha* are amazingly larger than pot grown *Pyras*.



Cotoneasters have no thorns, soft slightly fuzzy rounder leaves and a softer, more weeping growth habit.

Pyracantha typically grows from seed and you can find a great deal of variation in the leaf shape and size and the texture from large to smaller, wider or more slender, flat or fuzzy. But regardless of size or surface characteristics, the leaf size diminishes reasonably; the plant produces beautiful cream flowers in the spring that turn into colourful berries in the autumn.

In the wild *pyracantha* can be a pest, in a bonsai pot they can be a wonderful training plant for beginners and a satisfying bonsai for the more experienced person. You can kill a *pyracantha* but it isn't as easy as with a lot of other trees. They shoot back readily on old wood, you can seriously crack a branch and as long as part is still connected the branch will normally continue to flourish, you can restyle drastically and get a new bonsai in a year or so. What more can you want in a plant?

As for growing conditions, they like a lot of water and when you are creating a bonsai it is important to keep the water up but not a water tray. They don't like wet feet. If the tree dries out it will wilt badly but a good soak in the nick of time and soon the branches are upright again. Naturally it is not good practice to allow this to happen but if you have a rapidly developing tree in a pot that suits it in clipped conditions it can need water more quickly than you would think. I have seen many *Pyracanthas* in nurseries happily growing in extremely dry soil and you can get them used to this. However, if you are working on developing a tree you need to keep the water up and once you have a nicely styled bonsai you don't want to risk its demise from drying out too much.

With reasonable care you can get a stock plant to a bonsai in under two years. When you are looking for a *pyracantha* be sure the trunk looks natural. Too often they have been given an odd bend that doesn't always work.

Development of a Shohin Pyra Bonsai



Shohin June 2008 Stock Plant



Shohin July 2008 after initial styling



Shohin October 2009

In March 2010 the tree took First at the Sydney Royal in Fruit and Flower.

PYRACANTHA – An All Expertise Tree



In 2011 the thickening trunk started to get too prominent in the upper structure and the bonsai was out growing its preferred size so the sidecutters were flashed.

Drastic, yes. Necessary, Yes. Recovery time.... about 9 months to a year. The large scar at the apex will be gently and lightly carved to simulate some disaster but foliage will be grown around it to diminish its importance. It is not a great idea to have deadwood on a pyracantha as the wood is soft and rots easily so regular treatments with wood hardener and lime sulphur are necessary.

The branch on the left will be reduced as it is now too thick for the size of the tree. If you are working with a larger plant this thickening is not such a problem but on smaller trees it is necessary to keep them in scale. Because of the pyracantha's rapid growth habits this is not as extreme as it might be with another species. This tree flowers prolifically so in spring when the flowers are spent I will remove them all so the tree can put all its energy into developing body and not fruit. Maintaining fruit or flower takes a lot of energy and will slow foliage growth.

Development of a Mini Pyra Bonsai



Mini February 2010

This tree is terribly hungry as evidenced by the yellow leaves. It was a bonsai but didn't receive sufficient attention so its style has gone and it is not healthy. But it is a pyracantha.



Mini March 2011

Check out the thickening of the lower right branch in a year. This is a tree that grows with a will.



The beauty of Pyracantha berries

Development of a Cascade Pyra Bonsai



> Pyracantha cascade May 2009 - not a lot of anything with this freebie a friend gave me rather than throw it out.

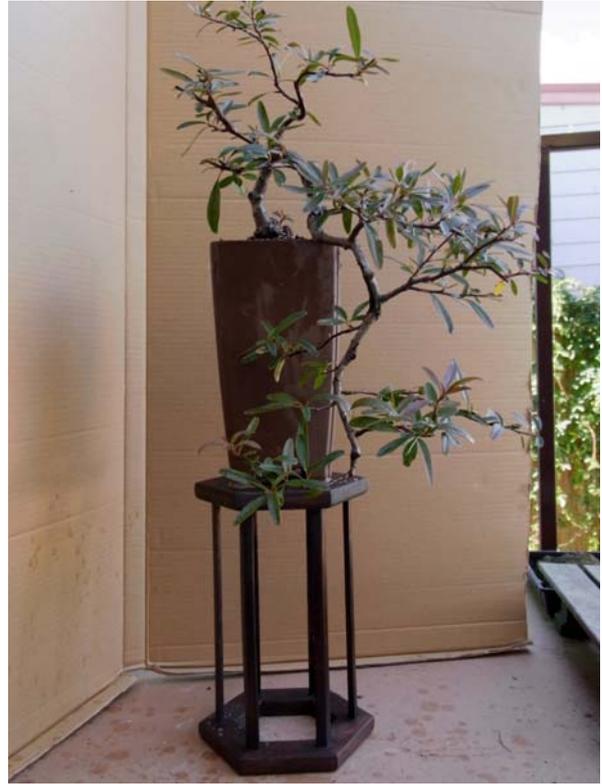
PYRACANTHA – An All Expertise Tree



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- > Cascade May 2009 The trunk has been wrapped in raffia and then wire and bent to breaking point and left to heal and grow. It's a pyracantha.... no worries.



Cascade August 2010. The tree was allowed to flower but all spent flowers were removed so energy would go to developing the tree



Cascade December 2010 and the strategy has worked well with the growth coming along nicely.



Cascade January 2012 Because the tree was developing well and produced a lavish display of flowers that turned into a lavish display of berries I stupidly left the berries on. The tree is robustly healthy but has added very little to its growth of the previous year. This has been a good lesson for me with the need to do without flowers or fruit when you are developing a tree. There's plenty of time for a vibrant display when the tree has achieved bonsai status.

PYRACANTHA – An All Expertise Tree & EVENTS CALENDAR



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There's a foliage break between the top and bottom sections and you can just see a broken branch at the base of the upper branch.

This is a close up. It happened when I was originally shaping the trunk. The raffia held it together and the tree did not drop a leaf. Why would it, it's a Pyracantha.

May 2009 a crappy stock plant overly long and no character. January 2012, 2.5 years later and the tree is developing into an impressive bonsai. In that time there has been plenty of opportunities for styling improvements, pruning, general care... all things that are good experience for beginners and fun for more advanced enthusiasts. Again, had I removed the berries the tree would be far more advanced.

Nice pyracantha stock plants can be had from \$5 to \$25. Really hefty stock is available for a great deal more but worth it if you want to develop a large, stout tree that already has the trunk and just needs styling and refinement. I have a yellow pyracantha that I have planted in the garden. It was a \$10 starter and I wanted the yellow berries so I will ground grow it for a couple of years, lifting each year and regularly monitoring the growth and development so I get the branching in the right position from the beginning.

Give Pyracantha a go.... they are an amazing tree and quickly make a lovely bonsai.

Date	Event	Details
17 - 18 March 2012.	Australian Native Plants as Bonsai Exhibition, 9th National Exhibition and Symposium	Australian National Botanic Gardens Canberra, Clunies Ross Street, Acton ACT www.cbs.org.au
14 April 2012.	Nepean Bonsai Society Exhibition	Police & Community Youth Club, Station Street, Penrith NSW www.nepeanbonsaisociety.org
4 - 5 May 2012.	Mid North Coast Regional Bonsai Exhibition	Coffs Harbour Botanical Gardens, Hardacre Street, Coffs Harbour NSW Held in conjunction with Coffs Harbour Tokonoma Bonsai Society 30th Anniversary celebrations. For more information contact - raroredge@optusnet.com.au
18 - 22 May 2012.	AABC 2012 National Bonsai Convention, Melbourne	<i>'Be Inspired'</i> 25th National Bonsai Convention, Rydges Hotel, Bell City, Preston VIC www.bonsainorthwest.com.au