



NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

Green Square Community Hall
3 Joynton Avenue
Zetland

7pm Tuesday 10 March 2015

Feature Tree: Junipers.
Timetabling staffing for participation in SCBC Royal Easter Show stand

7pm Tuesday 10 April 2015

Feature Tree: Pines

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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.

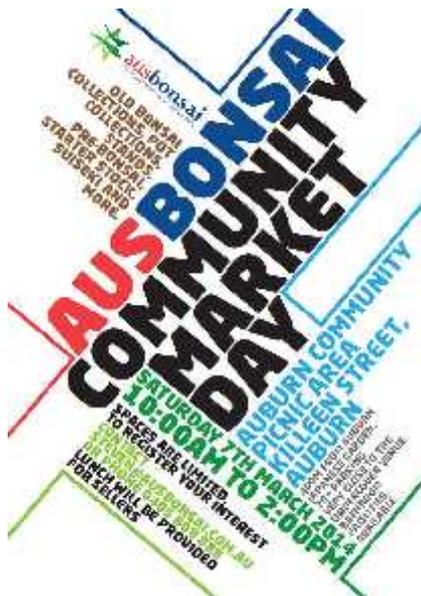
Welcome to the March Newsletter

March Meeting

- Feature Tree: Junipers
- Typical questions from public with answers at Easter Show stand by Sue and Lee will show just how much fun it is to participate.
- 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.
- Member workshop: Bring in your trees.

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Don't forget the AusBonsai Community Market day this Saturday. Great bonsai bargains!

FEBRUARY FEATURE TREE: CHINESE ELM

Feature Tree: Chinese Elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*)
[also includes 'Hokkaido' and 'Seiju' elms]

BY SUE

This month's feature tree is the Chinese elm. The tree is suitable for most styles and can be grown from seed or root cutting easily. I advise not to grow from seed as you will be waiting several years till you can do anything to the tree as it will be too small. Go to a bonsai nursery and buy a stock plant, save yourself 5 or more years growing time.



Chinese Elm (28 years old)

This is my favourite tree for use when teaching bonsai because it is fast growing and has 'normal' foliage. By normal I mean small green leaves, not pine or juniper type foliage. This is essential when beginning bonsai that you have a tree that you can easily see new growth and be able to recognise it from mature growth. It is also helpful that you recognise where new growth is coming from so you can control the direction of the new shoots after a trim.



September 2014

November 2014



February 2015

This Elm was potted in August with only a trunk. By September multiple new shoots developed and the unwanted ones removed. These chosen shoots were allowed to elongate and grow upwards to maximise branch thickening. Only minimal wiring near the trunk was done. After a further three months, elm is beginning to take shape.

If a Chinese elm is in healthy condition it can provide up to 4 growth flushes per season (from spring to autumn). The tree will be dormant during the winter months. How long that dormancy will be in Sydney depends on where you live. The colder the nights the longer dormancy you will get on your Chinese elm. I live in the inner city and get frosts so rarely that I only remember 3 in the last 30 odd years. Sometimes my Chinese elms will be dormant for only a couple of weeks.

I suspect that a Chinese elm needs a night temperature of approx. 10 degrees Celsius for root growth to occur and for the tree to break dormancy. If the roots are not growing the top will not be growing. Because your bonsai pots will heat up during the day in the sun the temperatures may well hold in the soil for some time before the late evening and your bonsai may break dormancy before the trees in the ground. Tree roots grow at night.

The first flush of growth in spring will be the most vigorous and the following 3 flushes less so. These growth spurts should be left until the tree looks like a shaggy dog and the growing tips have reached maturity (i.e. turned dark green like the lower leaves on the shoot). This should take 6 to 8 weeks depending on the correct care of the tree, that is, correct watering.



Corky bark elm (Seiju) ready for pruning

The shoots can then be cut back to the 1st or 2nd leaf of the shoot depending on the direction you want the new growth to grow. Remember you want outward growing branches. Make sure you are always cutting into the hard wood of the shoots not soft green growth that occurs on the tips of the shoot. The tips of the growing shoot are the 'food factory' for that shoot and should never be pinched off. If the tip of the shoot is still growing but it has gone woody at the base where you are going to cut you may cut it safely. Provided you cut into woody areas there are plenty of cells in that area that are mature enough to shoot new leaf. In the soft growing tip of a shoot these cells are not mature enough to regrow and the whole shoot is weakened if just this tip is removed.

Chinese elms have a broad climate range from colder than the Snowy Mountains to subtropical (this would amaze the experts) and the temperature in the soil sometimes during the day in summer can reach 45 degrees Celsius without visible detriment to the tree. Provided the tree has enough water it can cope.

WISTERIA AS BONSAI-GROWING IT AND GETTING FLOWERS

Wisteria (*W. brachybotrys* 'Rosea') as bonsai by Mick Balzary

Late last year, a Japanese Wisteria in bloom was displayed at the National Bonsai & Penjing Collection in Canberra. It drew many comments because of its beauty. The wisteria was grown from a graft done by the late Max Leversha, an Australian bonsai pioneer and previous President of the Bonsai Society of Victoria, during a session I had with him some years ago. Its display prompted me to refer to an article with drawings I had written for 'bonsai world'.



Early bloom of Japanese Wisteria (*W. brachybotrys* 'Rosea') displayed at the National Bonsai & Penjing Collection last year.

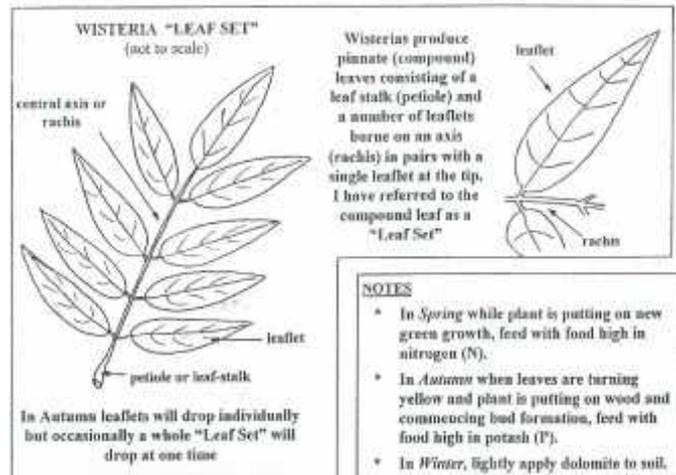
Wisteria is a legume. In a normal garden situation the generally accepted practice is to feed Wisteria with lime in the water, prune it after flowering in the summer and to feed with potash in the autumn.

Wisteria is a gross feeder, likes heavy soil and lots of water. If left un-pruned it will very quickly out of check.

Wisteria only flowers on wood that was produced the previous year [referred to as "new wood" in the line drawings]. It is highly probable that incorrect and heavy pruning is the main reason for lack of flowers as such action removes the wanted flower spurs or buds.

Wisteria in a container needs frequent repotting. I have found I cannot let it go more than two years. Some growers outside of Australia return their Wisteria bonsai to open ground on a regular basis; usually after flowering. As wisteria is grown for its flowers (in a bonsai sense) possibly returning the plant to the ground saves one from all the attention necessary in pot watering, pruning etc. I hold an open mind about this, but it is certainly done.

Max said to let the potted plant grow without pruning following flowering. This meant there would be leaders and tendrils up to three to four feet long all over the place. In autumn just before the leaves turned completely yellow prior to drop the plant had to be fed with super phosphate and potash.



Failure to feed at this time will result in little or no flowers. I think the point Max made is so important and is common sense horticultural practice. With any deciduous material [for example, a plum tree] when the tree is preparing itself for winter and the oncoming spring it rapidly produces starches and sugars and stores these in its system to prepare for its so called dormant stage and at the same time manufactures flowering and fruiting buds for the next spring. To assist it with this flower bud production, one feeds with potash.

To reiterate, feed high in nitrogen [NPK-high N scale] in the spring as the plant is producing new green growth. Feed high in potash [NPK high P scale] in the autumn as the plant is putting on wood and commencing bud formation for the oncoming season. (continued on page 4)

Wisteria brachybotrys (Japanese Wisteria)

W. brachybotrys comes in white, pink and mauve cultivars. The 'Rosea' cultivar is the pink variety. Following the flowering the long pinnate leaves emerge and a graceful lush green tree emerges until in autumn the leaves turn brilliant yellow. Pendulous velvety seed pods up to 15 cm long develop and hang down much like beans.



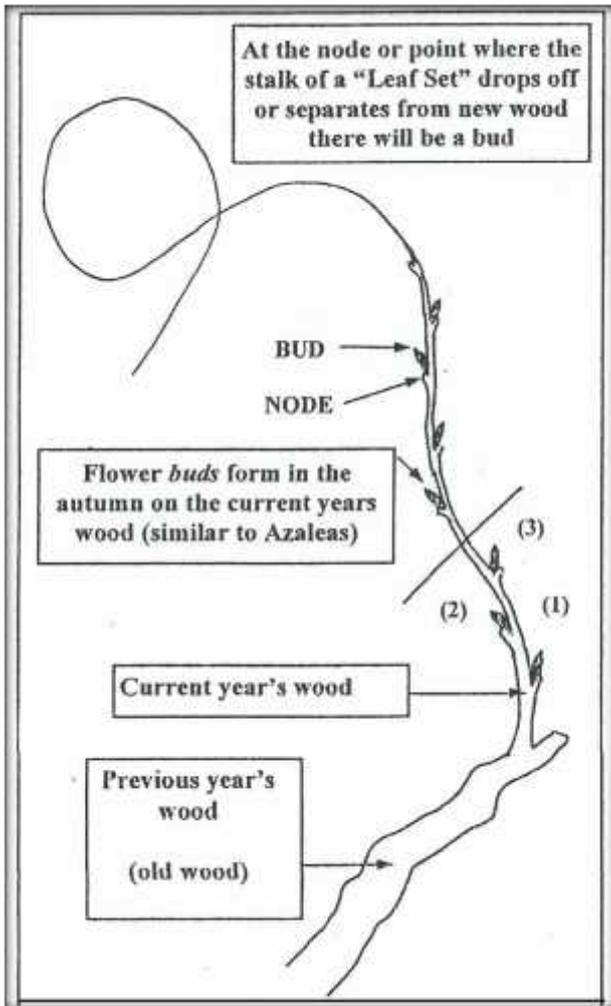
Japanese Wisteria

http://www.absolutebonsai.com/wisteria_bonsai

WISTERIA –AS BONSAI-GROWING IT AND GETTING FLOWERS cont.

Pruning wisteria

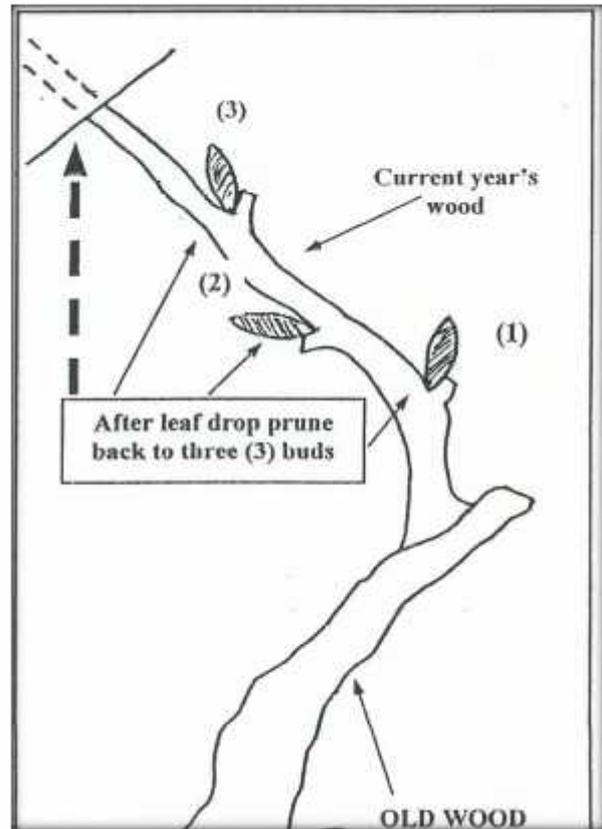
Following leaf drop, the bare vines are pruned back to three nodes, each node having one bud. In doing this you have removed all unwanted growth to allow the cycle to recommence in the coming spring.



Remember when you replot in the late winter do not prune again or you will remove the flower buds! This is a mistake that is easily made so remember to shape during late summer when you prune back the new growth to three buds.



http://www.absolutebonsai.com/wisteria_bonsai



During winter feed lightly with dolomite. Does wonders for legumes!

As for potting mix, wisteria does like a clay-based soil so I have found the mix should not be too open or so free draining as one usually uses with other bonsai. Be aware that in summer this plant demands a lot of moisture in its soil. It is fine to keep the pot in a tray of water.

Since first learning from Max I now lightly prune the plants in the summer after flowering. The first main flowering comes from the flower buds or spurs from last year's wood. Following this, a second lesser flowering can occur when flowers are produced on new terminal growth. I prune all new growth at this time. Do not cut back into last year's wood. In autumn after leaf drop prune back all new growth leaving three buds on the new season's wood.



<http://bonsaibark.com/2012/11/28/three-bonsai-artists-unknown/wisteria/>

How to cut branches from Bonsai Techniques – John Yoshio Naka

Cutting Branches using branch and knob cutters

Bonsai Branch cutters are very useful bonsai tools and are especially shaped to allow you to get in close when pruning and shaping bonsai trees. The blades on branch cutters are angled to give a clean neat cut that helps the trees heal and reduces the risk of infection.

Bonsai Knob cutters are used to give a concave sharp cut when removing and styling bonsai trees. This allows the healed bark to be flatter and more natural.

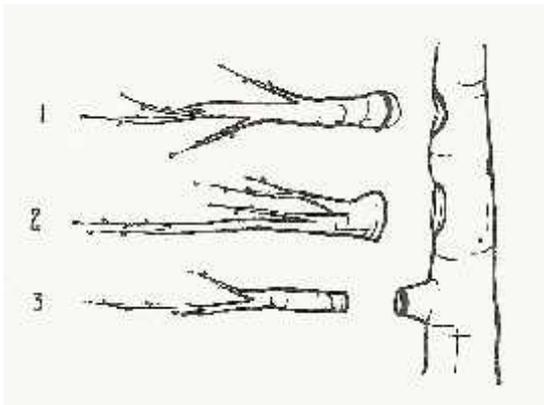


Large and small knob cutters (left and centre)
Side branch cutters (right)

The SCBC library contains a range of bonsai books that can help members learn bonsai techniques. Please see Les or Naomi if you wish to borrow any. One excellent resource is the "Bonsai Techniques" by John Yoshio Naka.

Below are some excerpts from John Naka's book on the correct techniques for cutting branches.

Primary Branch

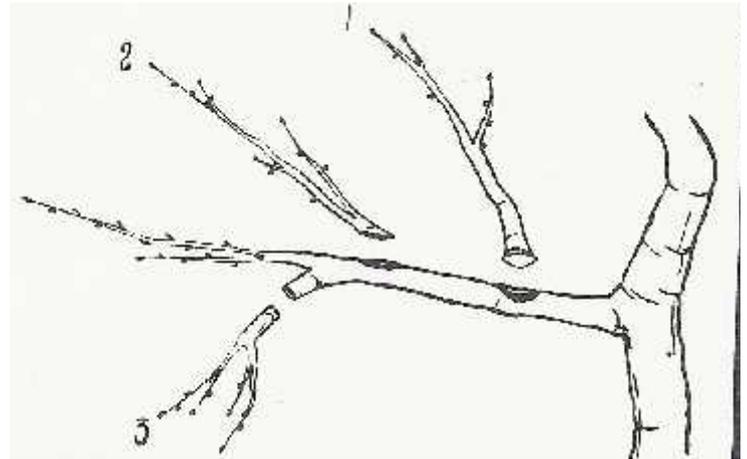


1. Concave is the best method. Heals faster.
2. Flat cut heals slower.
3. Stubby knob is wrong. Looks bad and takes longer to heal.

When using the knob cutters, cut the branch in a "bite" position. Do not use the cutter in a vertical position. It will leave too long of a scar.

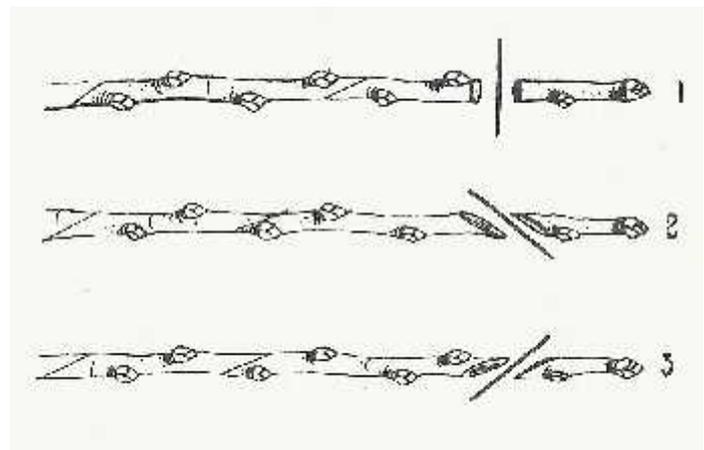
For an extremely large scar, the centre should be left in a cone shape. It will gradually heal towards the cone point and the surface will be even. Other scars after branch removal can be carved so that it will taper down and tail off. This encourages natural healing. Smooth down any rough spots.

Secondary Branches



1. Concave (Best)
2. Flat (Good)
3. Stubby knob (Wrong)

How to shorten branches by cutting



1. Do not cut straight off. Healing process is much slower.
2. Cut off diagonally with cut mark facing upwards. Scar will heal faster.
3. Do not cut with cut mark facing downwards. This is completely wrong.

BONSAI FEATURES IN SUMMER AND EVENTS CALENDAR

Bonsai Features in Summer

Summer is an interesting time in the bonsai calendar, with many unusual trees making an appearance. You can, for example create stunning bonsai from fruiting plants such as kumquats, sandpaper fig, hawthorn and olive trees.



Sandpaper fig in fruit beautifully styled by Lee



Common Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) flowers in Spring. After germination the flower petals fall off and the resulting berries begin to appear through Summer. Finally in late Summer the berries have ripened and take on their familiar red colour.

See Harry Harrington's bonsai4me:

<http://www.bonsai4me.com/AdvTech/AT%20Hawthornfloweringbonsai%203.html>



This kumquat looks very striking placed on a white cube backed with brightly coloured wallpaper.



Pink Silk Tree (*Albizia julibrissin* 'rosea') produces flowers throughout the summer in dense clusters.

If your tree should flower too abundantly or bear a great number of fruit you should thin out the flowers and fruit in order to prevent the tree from getting weak. The flowers and fruit should be evenly distributed on the tree and of the same size. So take off flowers and fruit where too many are in one place and pluck the largest and smallest. On flowering trees that don't bear fruit, take off all the flowers when most of them have wilted.

BONSAI EVENTS CALENDAR

Date	Event	Details
14-15 March, 2015	Canberra Bonsai Society & Australian National Botanical Gardens	Local exhibition of Australian Native plants as bonsai, Crosbie Morrison Building at ANBG, Canberra
11-12 April, 2015	11 th National Australian Plants as Bonsai	Royal Botanical Gardens, Melbourne. Presented by Victorian Native Bonsai Club
2-3 May, 2015	Illawarra Bonsai Annual Show (Autumn)	Sutherland District Trade Union Club (Tradies), Kingsway, Gympie
15-18 May, 2015	Bonsai – A growing Art. 28 th Australian National Bonsai Convention	The Hotel Grand Chancellor Adelaide on Hindley. 65 Hindley St, Adelaide