



NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

Green Square Community Church
182 Victoria Street
(Cnr Collins Street) Beaconsfield

7pm Tuesday 14 November
Lee Wright presents tools for
bonsai + a Fig bonsai workshop

7pm Tuesday 12 December
Christmas party and general
workshop.

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COMMITTEE

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MEMBERSHIP

Full Membership \$25.00

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Welcome to the November Newsletter

The mystery 'leaf burn' on Trident Maple Bonsai solved

A few weeks ago now, Lee Wright brought to my attention a leaf burn / curl problem she has been having on her bonsai Trident Maple. Lee told me that this problem has been showing up on bonsai Trident Maples around Sydney.

While the damage looked like wind burn or the type of leaf burning / curling that occurs if a tree dries out, Lee assured me the tree had not dried out. The lab staff and the plant pathology teachers at the horticulture college where I lecturer could not make an identification. So calling in a favour from a friend who works at the Royal Botanic Gardens she got one of the plant pathologists to agree to take a look. The plant pathologists report is below:

RE: Bonsai *Acer buergeranum* (our ref. E06/267)

We have examined the material sent for disease diagnosis. The leaves are infected with a fungal foliar pathogen causing the dark, round lesions mid-leaf and the tip and edge death. We have not attempted to identify the specific fungus, as treatment is similar for all species. We recommend pruning off as much of the affected foliage as possible and then, if necessary, spraying with Bravo. If well-watered and cared for, the plant should be able to survive the infection.

If you have a Trident Maple and you have been having some leaf damage that is not caused by a lack of water; you might want to try out the Bravo treatment.

The Editor

Check out our special 3 page photo essay of Georgina Kretschmar's fantastic African Olive group planting demonstration.

On page 4 we profile the African Olive with some tips for its cultivation as a bonsai

Turn to page 5 and see what tree you are; based on your birth date, and read the qualities that describe you!

See page 6 for part one of a new series on Chinese Elms by Lee Wilson

Lee Wright gives some sage advice about watering our bonsai and some water conservation tips on page 7.

Georgina Kretschmar's Group Planting Demonstration

Georgina uses African Olives (*Olea europaea* ssp. *africana*) to create a group planting for our October Meeting Demonstration. All the trees were collected by Georgina and cultivated by her prior to their use here. Georgina told us that with collected material we have to accept what we get warts and all, training can only do so much. →



Next job is to root prune the trees, starting with the main tree. All the soil has been removed as Georgina intends to replace the soil with a new mix. The main tree had a good top but a poor root system, Georgina explained to us that groups allowed less than perfect trees to be used and that she planned to disguise the poor root system in this group. →



The first tree has been wired into place, now the second tree is being placed and wired. Georgina then proceeded to place each tree. →

Georgina said "A plan of the planting before you start is a good idea; but she finds that with her experience she now prefers to work directly with the stock." →



← Georgina prepares the pot: first checking which side will make the best 'front'. Georgina then covers the drainage holes with mesh. Finally anchor wires are put through the drainage holes to hold the new trees in place

A close up of the poor root system of the main tree →



← Soil mix is put into the pot next and then the main tree is placed.

Georgina's soil mix: 30L premium debco potting mix / 30L sharp 5mm gravel / 15L zeolite



Georgina Kretschmar's Group Planting Demonstration



More soil is added and the placement of each tree refined. →

Georgina' tip for placing trees: do not to leave even spaces between the trees



← Working the soil between the roots with a chop stick

Settling the soil →



← More trees are added, Georgina said to be sure that all the tree trunks can be seen from the front (in fact they should all be visible from all four sides of the pot) To protect the roots when wiring the trees into the pot, wire under the main roots or protect the roots with some mesh for covering the drain holes



The group planting turned around to show the audience the emerging arrangement ↓



Trying out a tree in the background, the trees must have a rhythm in their arrangement ↓



Georgina Kretschmar's Group Planting Demonstration

Selecting a range of mosses to create a natural looking ground plane in the group planting



Applying ornamental gravel



Some final trimming to relate the different trees to their place in the arrangement. All smiles now, nearly there!



The finished group planting. Fantastic! Georgina says this group planting should not need repotting for at least 3 years.

Thank you Georgina



African Olive facts:

Botanical Name: *Olea europaea ssp. africana*

Common Names: African Olive, Wild Olive

Origin: central & south western districts of South Africa

Average dimensions: 3 – 15m tall x 3 -15m+ wide

Habit: often a multi-stemmed tree, habit varies depending on the amount of exposure the site receives

Weed Potential and Status: in many parts of NSW & Qld the African Olive is a **declared weed**, in its natural state the tree produces large amounts of fruit that age from green to red to black.

These seeds are very attractive to birds that eat the fruits and spread this tree into bushland areas or areas of disturbed soil.

While fruiting is uncommon on African Olive Bonsai, if any does develop it should be removed immediately.

African Olive bonsai cultivation tips:

- while drought hardy best with lots of water in summer
- regular feeding gives quick results, Georgina feeds twice a year
- can survive temperatures from -5°C to 45°C
- African Olives only shoot from where they were cut back, so make all cut to the position where you want a new branch
- foliage pads can be hard to develop.



WHAT TREE DID YOU FALL FROM? Find your birthday and then find your tree, and read all about yourself.

Apple Tree (Love) - quiet and shy at times, lots of charm, appeal, and attraction, pleasant attitude, flirtatious smile, adventurous, sensitive, loyal in love, wants to love and be loved, faithful and tender partner, very generous, many talents, loves children, needs affectionate partner.

Ash Tree (Ambition) - extremely attractive, vivacious, impulsive, demanding, does not care for criticism, ambitious, intelligent, talented, likes to play with fate, can be very egotistic, reliable, restless lover, sometimes money rules over the heart, demands attention, needs love and much emotional support.

Beech Tree (Creative) - has good taste, concerned about its looks, materialistic, good organization of life and career, economical, good leader, takes no unnecessary risks, reasonable, splendid lifetime companion, keen on keeping fit (diets, sports, etc.).

Birch Tree (Inspiration) - vivacious, attractive, elegant, friendly, unpretentious, modest, does not like anything in excess, abhors the vulgar, loves life in nature and in calm, not very passionate, full of imagination, little ambition, creates a calm and content atmosphere.

Cedar Tree (Confidence) - of rare strength, knows how to adapt, likes unexpected presents, of good health, not in the least shy, tends to look down on others, self-confident, a great speaker, determined, often impatient, likes to impress others, has many talents, industrious, healthy optimism, waits for the one true love, able to make quick decisions.

Chestnut Tree (Honesty) - of unusual stature, impressive, well-developed sense of justice, fun to be around, a planner, born diplomat, can be irritated easily, sensitive of others feelings, hard worker, sometimes acts superior, feels not understood at times, fiercely family oriented, very loyal in love, physically fit.

Cypress Tree (Faithfulness) - strong, muscular, adaptable, takes what life has to give but doesn't necessarily like it, strives to be content, optimistic, wants to be financially independent, wants love and affection, hates loneliness, passionate lover which cannot be satisfied, faithful, quick-tempered at times, can be unruly and careless, loves to gain knowledge, needs to be needed.

- Dec 23 to Jan 01 – Apple Tree
- Jan 01 to Jan 11 – Fir Tree
- Jan 12 to Jan 24 – Elm Tree
- Jan 25 to Feb 03 – Cypress Tree
- Feb 04 to Feb 08 – Poplar Tree
- Feb 09 to Feb 18 – Cedar Tree
- Feb 19 to Feb 28 – Pine Tree
- Mar 01 to Mar 10 – Weeping Willow
- Mar 11 to Mar 20 – Lime Tree
- Mar 21 (only) – Oak Tree
- Mar 22 to Mar 31 – Hazelnut Tree
- Apr 01 to Apr 10 – Rowan Tree
- Apr 11 to Apr 20 – Maple Tree
- Apr 21 to Apr 30 – Walnut Tree
- May 01 to May 14 – Poplar Tree
- May 15 to May 24 – Chestnut Tree
- May 25 to Jun 03 – Ash Tree
- Jun 04 to Jun 13 – Hornbeam Tree
- Jun 14 to Jun 23 – Fig Tree
- Jun 24 (only) – Birch Tree
- Jun 25 to Jul 04 – Apple Tree
- Jul 05 to Jul 14 – Fir Tree
- Jul 15 to Jul 25 – Elm Tree
- Jul 26 to Aug 04 – Cypress Tree
- Aug 05 to Aug 13 – Poplar Tree
- Aug 14 to Aug 23 – Cedar Tree
- Aug 24 to Sep 02 – Pine Tree
- Sep 03 to Sep 12 – Weeping Willow
- Sep 13 to Sep 22 – Lime Tree
- Sep 23 (only) – Olive Tree
- Sep 24 to Oct 03 – Hazelnut Tree
- Oct 04 to Oct 13 – Rowan Tree
- Oct 14 to Oct 23 – Maple Tree
- Oct 24 to Nov 11 – Walnut Tree
- Nov 12 to Nov 21 – Chestnut Tree
- Nov 22 to Dec 01 – Ash Tree
- Dec 02 to Dec 11 – Hornbeam Tree
- Dec 12 to Dec 21 – Fig Tree
- Dec 22 (only) – Beech Tree

Elm Tree (Noble-mindedness) - pleasant shape, tasteful clothes, modest demands, tends not to forgive mistakes, cheerful, likes to lead but not to obey, honest and faithful partner, likes making decisions for others, noble-minded, generous, good sense of humor, practical.

Fig Tree (Sensibility) - very strong minded, a bit self-willed, honest, loyal, independent, hates contradiction or arguments, hard worker when wants to be, loves life and friends, enjoys children and animals, few sexual relationships, great sense of humor, has artistic talent and great intelligence.

Fir tree (Mysterious) - extraordinary taste, handles stress well, loves anything beautiful, stubborn, tends to care for those close to them, hard to trust others, yet a social butterfly, likes idleness and laziness after long demanding hours at work, rather modest, talented, unselfish, many friends, very reliable.

Hazelnut Tree (Extraordinary) - charming, sense of humor, very demanding but can also be very understanding, knows how to make a lasting impression, active fighter for social causes and politics, popular, quite moody, sexually oriented, honest, a perfectionist, has a precise sense of judgment and expects complete fairness.

Hornbeam Tree (Good Taste) - of cool beauty, cares for its looks and condition, good taste, is not egoistic, makes life as comfortable as possible, leads a reasonable and disciplined life, looks for kindness and acknowledgment in an emotional partner, dreams of unusual lovers, is seldom happy with its feelings, mistrusts most people, is never sure of its decisions, very conscientious.

Lime Tree (Doubt) - intelligent, hard working, accepts what life dishes out, but not before trying to change bad circumstances into good ones, hates fighting and stress, enjoys getaway vacations, may appear tough, but is actually soft and relenting, always willing to make sacrifices for family and friends, has many talents but not always enough time to use them, great leadership qualities, is jealous at times but extremely loyal.

Maple Tree (Independence of Mind) - no ordinary person, full of imagination and originality, shy and reserved, ambitious, proud, self-confident, hungers for new experiences, sometimes nervous, has many complexities, good memory, learns easily, complicated love life, wants to impress.

Oak Tree (Brave) - robust nature, courageous, strong, unrelenting, independent, sensible, does not like change, keeps its feet on the ground, person of action.

*Bonsai limbs are held
in copper-wrapt attention --
worth their wait in gold.*

Bonsai Haiku - www.01101001.com/index.html

<p>Olive Tree (Wisdom) - loves sun, warmth and kind feelings, reasonable, balanced, avoids aggression and violence, tolerant, cheerful, calm, well-developed sense of justice, sensitive, empathetic, free of jealousy, loves to read and the company of sophisticated people.</p>
<p>Pine Tree (Peacemaker) - loves agreeable company, craves peace and harmony, loves to help others, active imagination, likes to write poetry, not fashion conscious, great compassion, friendly to all, falls strongly in love but will leave if betrayed or lied to, emotionally soft, low self esteem, needs affection and reassurance.</p>
<p>Poplar Tree (Uncertainty) - looks very decorative, talented, not very self-confident, extremely courageous if necessary, needs goodwill and pleasant surroundings, very choosy, often lonely, great animosity, great artistic nature, good organizer, tends to lean toward philosophy, reliable in any situation, takes partnership seriously.</p>
<p>Rowan Tree (Sensitivity) - full of charm, cheerful, gifted without egoism, likes to draw attention, loves life, motion, unrest, and even complications, is both dependent and independent, good taste, artistic, passionate, emotional, good company, does not forgive.</p>
<p>Walnut Tree (Passion) - unrelenting, strange and full of contrasts, often egotistic, aggressive, noble, broad horizon, unexpected reactions, spontaneous, unlimited ambition, no flexibility, difficult and uncommon partner, not always liked but often admired, ingenious strategist, very jealous and passionate, no compromise.</p>
<p>Weeping Willow (Melancholy) - likes to be stress free, loves family life, full of hopes and dreams, attractive, very empathetic, loves anything beautiful, musically inclined, loves to travel to exotic places, restless, capricious, honest, can be influenced but is not easy to live with when pressured, sometimes demanding, good intuition, suffers in love until they find that one loyal, steadfast partner; loves to make others laugh.</p>

Chinese Elms - Part One

(Notes by Jan Briggs on demonstration by Lee Wilson 17/7/06)

How to Get from Start to Finish

- Chinese Elms are easiest to deal with (as opposed to Seiju or Haikado Elms)
- Better to strike from root cuttings (as opposed to top cuttings), as they have already formed thick, gnarled, weird roots
- Lee calls it perpetual bonsai – slice off the bottom of the root ball from existing trees, put the bottom part of the old root ball in a pot and you start over again
- Make sure when you plant it you keep a couple of inches above the soil level to allow roots to shoot
- if using single roots, make sure they are repotted the right way up – going into spring buds will shoot from the top of the cutting
- Trunks get thicker from a root cutting than from a top cutting

- Corky bark elms form corky bark on the exposed roots
- Good to develop into miniature bonsai
- You can achieve most styles from one root (except probably formal upright)
- If you want more rapid results grow in the ground
- Chinese Elms are safe to work on at any time of the year
- You can have root cuttings as thick as you want
- Advantage with root cuttings is that you can make more than just a tree in a pot
- Lee uses mainly Catlin Elms (an American sport discovered in the 40s – stays evergreen, as it drops leaves new ones come out, has very small leaves
- One problem if you don't cut heavy growth back during autumn into spring, the finer shoots die, therefore make sure the trees are well pruned going into autumn / winter – if you prune too early in autumn you will get a new flush of growth. This heavy pruning then keeps the ramification of the branches.
- Lee sticks to Corky Bark or Catlin Elms – not Seiju or Haikado Elms (as they are too brittle, break too easily)
- Leaves of Catlin Elms stay on all winter – therefore the tree is being fed
- Worst thing with Elms is if you don't prune back hard you don't get any taper (ramification) in the branches – to keep the taper in the branches prune really hard at this time of year – doesn't matter if you cut back beyond growth – they will recover
- Wiring – wrap wire around your fingers (to create a little coil) and you don't damage the branch with a large coil of wire.
- What makes the trunk thicker is the more branches you can develop the more food is supplied to the tree
- Don't allow branches to grow large and then cut back (the traditional sacrifice branch method) as you get big scars
- The more leaves the smaller they develop. To get small leaves trim leaves in late summer – the amount of light the tree receives determines how big leaves become
- Very hard to get natural looking bends in trees, using root cuttings they occur naturally
- You need ramification on the branches, particularly with small trees
- Root cuttings are perfect for Mame or miniature trees – you could also use these as soes for display with bigger trees
- Best way to do all wiring first before you take the plant out of the pot - but be wary of snapping, so tends to over wire
- Root cuttings will stay wrapped in damp newspaper and then in a plastic bag for two weeks

Browsing My Benches – November

Lee Wright

There's no more topical word at the moment than **water** now that Australia has been declared to be in the worst drought in history.

I'm glad I have culled my collection down from 85 to 46 over the past two years – but that still reflects a water issue.

When you can hose, be sure to use a trigger nozzle so you are not losing water between each pot. It is not just money you are saving.

Sue Brennan is selling small watering cans with the proper bonsai spray nozzle to give a gentle soaking to pot plants. It's a bit of a pain if you have a lot of trees but your water saving is much better and at least your trees get what they need to survive.

Yes, you can use a conventional watering can or a bottle of water, but you can waste water and/or wash the soil out of the pot.

It is important that you check your trees more than once a day with the high temperatures and the winds Sydney has been experiencing. These conditions can quickly sap the moisture from a pot to the detriment of the plant.

Consider the location of your trees. Can you move them to an area where there is more protection from wind and more shade so they don't use as much water? Can you erect a shade cloth to give a bit more protection and reduce evaporation?

You can put your trees in water trays, leave a little water in the bottom of the tray - enough for the tree/s to soak it up by early afternoon and that should see them through to the next day.

Be sure they are not standing in water constantly as that does not suit many trees.

Soak sugar cane mulch and put on as thick a layer as possible on top of the pot. Not visually pleasing but it will minimise evaporation and the soil can still breathe.

Get some hessian and put a couple of layers around a cascade pots so the long sides are protected from the sun and don't heat up and dry out the soil as much.

As the weather heats up, trim your trees so there are fewer leaves and less water needed.

All these suggestions must be balanced by the necessity to ensure the soil is not waterlogged or constantly damp because that can be as detrimental to many species as too little water.

I am sure none of us will be like one of Sue's clients who could not understand why his very nice olive died just because it had not been watered for two weeks and one of those 14 days was the 45 degree 2006 New Year's burn out.

Make it a habit to check your trees late in the afternoon or early evening just to be sure there is enough moisture in the soil to carry them through the night.

I lost a *Berberis* that looked okay in the afternoon but crossed the Rubicon by the next morning.

A dig around the soil can show you how deep the dry goes and if there is enough moisture around the roots to keep the tree safe.

Know your trees.

Know which ones will survive with drier soil and which ones will flag. I know one enthusiast whose trees are always very dry and survive. But he has trained them by watering sparsely. Their roots tend to be tight under the trunk to conserve what water they get.

It's November and the right time to work on your figs.

They revel in the hot conditions and now is the ideal period to root prune and defoliate.

Keep in mind, you can get smaller leaves by having them a bit root bound but you must balance that with the fact that a root bound pot will not hold as much water.

These days all life revolves around water and the careful usage of it.

Remember: Bring a tree to every meeting.

EVENTS CALENDAR 2006

Date	Event	Details
3-5 Nov	Newcastle Bonsai Society Annual Show	Club Macquarie, Argenton, Newcastle.
17-19 Nov	Australian Plants as Bonsai	Details to be confirmed
18-21 May 2007	20th AABC National Bonsai Convention	Featuring Michale Persiano & Marco Invernizzi. Clocktower Centre, Moonee Ponds, Melbourne, Victoria. For more info visit www.bonsainorthwest.com.au/AABC2007