



## NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

### Green Square Community Hall

3 Joynton Avenue Zetland

### 7pm Tuesday 11 February 2020

Members to bring in tree for discussion and advice.

### 7pm Tuesday 10 March 2020

To be advised.

## CONTACT DETAILS



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## COMMITTEE

Patron	TBA
President	Chris
Vice President	Neville
Secretary	David
Treasurer	Bryan
Newsletter Editor	Roz
Librarian	Les
Committee	Frank, John, Ed & Lee

## MEMBERSHIP

Full Membership	\$40
Concession	\$25
Family	\$55
Pensioner	\$25

SCBC wishes to thank Sydney City Council for their continued support for our club by providing the hall at a reduced rate.

## February Meeting

- Special Information Sharing Night. Each member to bring in a tree for discussion or advice. It may be that you need ideas about styling or horticulture (what to do when). You might like to show members the results of a bonsai technique such as aerial grafting, thread grafting or leaf size reduction.
- New SALE/SWAP table at each meeting! Just bring in plants and/or pots. 10% for sales; gold coin from each for swap. Chris will explain details at February meeting



One of the bonsai from the 2019 Kofuten (Japan)

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## Your editor is taking leave:

After seven years as SCBC editor, I am taking leave from writing the newsletter due to family reasons. I have had a great time getting the stories together each month. I would like to thank Lee for the many story contributions she has made over the years – very much appreciated.

The job has given me a magnificent opportunity to learn about bonsai searching books and websites and it has made me make the effort to go to many conferences to learn first hand from the experts and make new friends. With only 2 months experience when I started I would encourage anyone new to bonsai to take the challenge of editor as it would be one of the quickest ways to turn yourself into a relatively competent bonsai artist. I am more than happy to give time to support anyone in the club who chooses to take on the task. - Roz

# DECIDUOUS STYLING & WOUND HEALING

## Styling and Wound Healing in Deciduous Trees

SOURCE: RYAN NEIL – MIRAI WEBSITE VIDEO LIBRARY

Using a ground developed Corky Bark Chinese Elm, Ryan Neil explains how you structurally style a deciduous tree and the skills of eliminating branches without dieback and healing big wounds. This type of work should be done in late winter.



Ground developed Corky Bark Chinese Elm

When you cut deciduous tree branches the branch will die back to the nearest node or shoulder. The living tissue at the node or shoulder will compartmentalise and redirect the water to other branches. If you cut too close or damage the cut line of a large branch you can cause dieback of the whole branch back to the next node or further down the trunk.

This means that you need to initially leave a stub and allow time for the branch to compartmentalise. Also you need to make the cut very clean. The simplest way to remove a large branch is to use a saw the cut cleanly across the branch and then clean the edges with as razor.



Clean cut with a saw above the collar leaving a stub



Clean the cut area with a sharp razor



Ryan demonstrated how even very sharp branch cutters damage the edge of the cut on a large branch and hence he advises not to use branch cutters on large branches of deciduous trees.

Once the compartmentalisation has occurred you can cut the stub back later. Ryan advocates the use of solid cut paste on these large cuts to reduce water loss and microbial attack.

When choosing branches in the initial deciduous styling, you need to be careful about choosing healthy branches, even if they are thin, and look at their position and orientation. You may have to choose a much smaller branch compared to a lovely developed one whose orientation is at odds with the overall shape of the tree and will cross over the trunk line or other branches unnaturally. Work with the tree rather than forcing the positions of the branches by wiring.

Chinese Elms will always have too many shoots and will naturally form “lumps” at node points due to multiple shoots coming from the one node point.



This node point has too many shoots

## DECIDUOUS STYLING & WOUND HEALING *CONT*

You have to clean these up and remove all unwanted shoots and trim ugly lumps so you can start the development of the branch structure. At these node sites, where cuts have been made it is a good idea to use liquid cut paste.



*This branch has been cleaned at the node points and wired.*

It takes about 3 years to get the little branches to thicken on a deciduous tree. Ryan advises not to cut these branches back at all until they reach the desired diameter. As some of the branches are thicker than others, then at the next season you can cut back those that have thickened sufficiently and start working on the secondary structure for those, but leave the rest.

After you apply the wire to the remaining branches, because deciduous branches are brittle, you need support the fulcrum and bend over a large area and roll the wire as you bend. You have to watch very carefully as you bend and stop when you see the bark opening up. This takes practice and inevitably if you push it too far you will break some branches.



*Ryan supported the fulcrum and rolled the wire as he bent to the point where small cracks sometimes appeared. He covered any minor cracks with liquid cut paste.*

At those points where there is a slight opening up of the bark, you should generously cover with cut paste so that you protect this weakened area.



*Oops! Branch Broken*



*Close down the broken tissue, cover with liquid cut paste and bind with stretch grafting tape.*

If you break a branch which still has one side of the cambium still attached, you have about a 50% chance of saving that branch if you close down the broken tissue and immediately apply liquid cut paste and wrap it tightly with stretch grafting tape. This weakened area can never be bent further. (Some people have successfully fixed these partial breaks using super glue).

Unlike conifers, wiring will cut in quite quickly with deciduous trees so regularly check and where necessary remove and rewire if required. It takes a long time to develop a deciduous tree. Healed wounds take a long time to recover and the steps of allowing growth and cutting back and rewiring regularly means that a highly refined deciduous bonsai tree will take a minimum of 10 years to be formed. Conifers like Junipers take about 3-4 years and Japanese Black Pines take about 5-7 years.

# WOUNDS WHICH STOP ROLLING OVER

## When Large Scars Stop Healing

SOURCE: RYAN NEIL - MIRAI WEBSITE VIDEO LIBRARY

This technique applies to deciduous trees and broad-leaf evergreens, not junipers and pines. Generally it is applied in late winter for deciduous trees and whenever the broad-leaf is "resting" (i.e. not spring).

The quest for a smooth, scarless deciduous trunk has always been a difficult one. Scars begin to heal, but healing may stop abruptly.

So what are some techniques for re-initiating the tree's ability to heal and get the callous to start rolling again and fully close.

When you cut off a branch from a deciduous tree you should always leave a collar so that the tree can compartmentalise. You then cleanly cut just above the collar and top with cut paste. With large wounds you very often get good callous rollover but after a couple of years you might find that the wound healing process has stopped.



*Chinese Quince half healed but cambium rollover has stopped. Centre has dried out and started decaying*

If you look at the half healed wound you will generally find that the inner wood surface of the wound has dried, split a little and begun rotting away. You can check this by scraping with your fingernail – where you will find that the wood is pithy and soft here.

The reason the callous stops rolling over is that the wood in the centre draws the water from the live cambium within the rollover area as it dries and starts to decay.

In order to rejuvenate the callous rollover you have to:

1. Remove the pithy soft wood so that you re-establish a solid wood surface.

2. Refine the wound "hole" so there is a smooth concave transition from the live callous area. (With the partial healing generally a convex transition would have formed).



*Removing the soft "pithy wood" and developing concave surface from rollover line*



*Spoon bit chisel being used to refine the surface. Great care is needed so you do not damage the cambium area.*

3. Using a razor blade, carefully expose a clean circle of green cambium tissue so that it can begin to roll again



4. Use a special filler (e.g. a two part epoxy filler such as "Knead It" or "Milliput"-it needs to be a putty or filler that will not draw water over time – sets fast and hard.) to reform the transition between the rollover to the "solid" surface so as to restart the rollover process.

You may wish to slightly colour the epoxy filler to better match the trunk colour using a drop of sumi ink (japanese ink). Be careful not to put any filler over the live cambium area.

*Continued column 2 page 5*

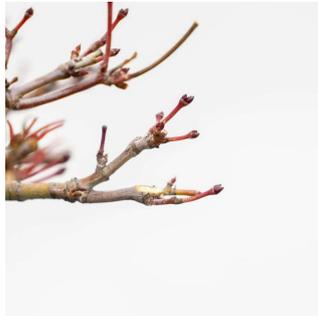
# REFINING SHOHIN JAPANESE MAPLE

## Jonas Dupuich refines Shohin Japanese Maple

Jonas's website Bonsai Tonight has regular posts which are very informative. Members are encouraged to regularly visit the site. Here are some excerpts from an early winter post:



*After 3 years of producing short internodes this shohin Japanese Maple is ready for cut back.*



*Thinning crowded branches- Left-before; Right -after*

The cutback is straightforward. When there are more than two branches growing from a single location, I cut back to two. Beyond that, I reduced a few larger branches to make the tree more compact.



*The cutback is complete*

The goal for the next few years is to encourage the tree to produce even shorter internodes. In time – maybe three-to-four years – I expect the tree to have something closer to the silhouette I have in mind for it.

## When Large Scars Stop Healing *continued*



*Two part epoxy filler coloured with sumi ink smoothed out to create base for rollover to recommence.*

5. Cover the newly exposed cambium only with cut paste to stop the living area from drying out.



*Cut paste (not epoxy) to cover live cambium area only to protect it from living area drying out.*

It will still take several years for the wound to completely close up.

If you cut too deeply into the hole you run the risk of opening up the wound and wreck the compartmentalisation. If you don't make a smooth concave transition when using the filler, you will get a lumpy wound heal. If you put filler on the green callous area, that part won't roll over.

All these problems can be fixed, but you may have to grind out the filler (a hard job) and start again several years later.

# HANDY HINTS & EVENTS CALENDAR

## Handy Hint! Using Side Cutters

BY LEE

Using side cutters or branch cutters, whatever you want to call them. For the newcomers there's a trick to using side cutters when cutting larger branches. Side cutters should normally point out and up as you cut. With smaller branches it doesn't matter but when you are trying to remove larger branches and need 2 or more cuts it is easy to split the branch. When you are cutting off large branches ALWAYS have the side cutters pointed up from the tree. The action will tend to crack the branch and if you are cutting with the direction upwards the split will be upwards through the branch you are removing. If you cut down the split will be into the trunk or branch you wanted to keep.

It's a small hint but it works and it's important. Note the start of the split just above the tip of the side cutters.



*When using side cutters to clean up a stub make sure you have them pointing upwards so that the split starts just above the tip of the side cutter.*

## Handy Hint! Bread Bag Closures

BY LEE

Are we missing a cheap bonsai aid by throwing out the plastic tabs that seal the bread bags?

They are easy to clip around a small branch and can help keep track of certain tasks without having a plastic marker in the soil.

*Examples:*

*R-10/19 Repotted October 2019*

*W-10/19 Wired October 2019*

*S- 10/19 Sprayed October 2019*



If you are doing a group planting you can sort the trees into the positions you want and then put tags on each tree, 1, 2, 3, 4 etc so you can put them in the correct order. They can also be used to mark the back of a tree. That sounds silly but sometimes, in the early stages, the front and back aren't clearly defined.

The tags can be cleaned with methylated spirits and reused or cross out one side and use the other when updating. If you don't eat bread and think this is a good idea have neighbours or friends save the tags for you.

**A good way way to recycle or at the very least, get more use from a disposable item.**

## Bonsai Events Calendar

Date	Event	Details
29 Feb-1 Mar 2020	8 <sup>th</sup> Symposium on Australian Plants as Bonsai	Australian National Botanic Gardens, Canberra.(See brochure in newsletter email for program details and more information.
23-29 Mar 2020	National Arboretum Bonsai Week	National Arboretum, Canberra
15-18 May 2020	AABC National Convention	Hosted by Illawarra Bonsai Society. Bankstown Sports Club, Sydney