



### NEXT CLUB MEETING

Marrickville Community Centre  
Unit 44, 142 Addison Rd., Marrickville

**Basics Classes @ 6.00pm**

**General Meeting @ 7.00pm**

### CONTACT DETAILS



0432 461 025



[info@sydneycitybonsai.org.au](mailto:info@sydneycitybonsai.org.au)



<http://sydneycitybonsai.org.au>



PO Box 486  
Summerhill NSW 2130

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Patron	TBA
President	John
Vice President	Oli
Secretary	David
Treasurer	Bryan
Newsletter Editor	Oli
Committee	Frank + above

### MEMBERSHIP

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

**Note – 2023/24 fees are overdue.**

**Payment can be by cash or electronically  
(see John).**

### NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

• Monthly Meeting Recap	Page 2
• Trip to Bonsai World	Page 5
• Nov Meeting Agenda	Page 7
• Nov Basics Lesson	Page 7
• Club Membership Fees	Page 7
• Swap Table	Page 8
• Facebook Page	Page 8
• Air Layering – revisited by Chris	Page 9
• Time to fill the green bin!	Page 10
• Articles of Interest	Page 10
• Things to do this Month	Page 11
• Weather!	Page 12
• Events Calendar	Page 12

### EDITORIAL MATTERS

We always welcome any contributions from members, so if you have a project underway, have a query, want to sell/swap/buy something, or otherwise have a tale to share, please get in contact via [info@sydneycitybonsai.org.au](mailto:info@sydneycitybonsai.org.au) or one of the Committee members.



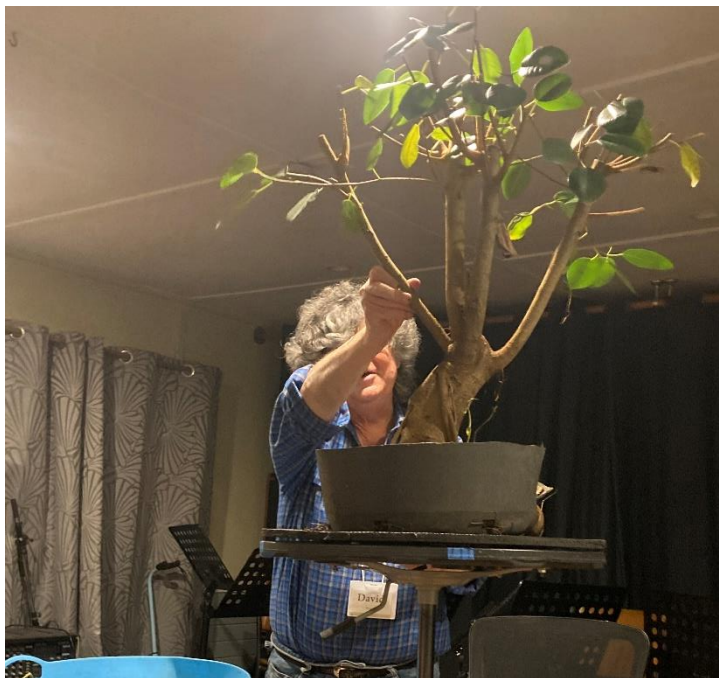


sydney city  
bonsai club inc.

### MONTHLY MEETING RECAP - October

The October club meeting included a range of topics and tree varieties. We kicked things off with a huge turn up to the Basics training, with 15 or so people popping their head in to understand Japanese Black Pines. John brought a favourite from his collection and discussed candles, microbial activity, watering and shaping.

Following this, the main meeting congregated in front of David, who challenged the group to tell him which branches to remove from a significantly overgrown fig. After some different opinions from the group, he ended up removing virtually everything and is leaving the main structure to push new buds and hopefully hide the elephant shape lurking within!



Following this, the club had someone bring a willow leaf fig in, to see why it had suddenly lost all its leaves. This species is renowned for doing this, however on closer inspection it appears the tree might be a little distressed due to its lack of soil and that it hasn't been repotted in over twenty years! We'll look at repotting the tree next meeting. If any friends of family need help on a tree, it's always a great opportunity to bring it into the club.





sydney city  
bonsai club inc.

As bonsai artists, we often have pivotal questions about our trees, so the group allowed members to stand in front of the crowd and get advice from everyone. This also let others see how others are planning the design and life of their plants. We had a great range of trees brought forward such as:

Oli – Trident maple he'd acquired from Shibui Bonsai near Albury NSW.

Nick (visitor) – Japanese black pine, with a gorgeous trunk!

Ty – Sheoak, apparently wiring these trees often cause dieback on the branches.

Alex – Callistemon, general consensus was to remove branches that might swell the main trunk, but let it grow!

Bryan – Japanese black pine, needed some advice about improving its vigor and pad development

Gracy – a small juniper, which James gave her some great advice about pruning and ramifying.

We didn't set a theme for this part of the meeting, which just shows the diversity of trees the group is developing. It's important to remember that we find our own styles and species that we love working with.







sydney city  
bonsai club inc.

The final part of the meeting was the display trees. Whilst some weren't specifically evergreens, there was a wonderful display of trees. We saw some root over rock, informal uprights, tanuki syle and a tree Lee has recently worked on. Thank you to all of those that brought trees along, the editor couldn't fit them all!







sydney city  
bonsai club inc.

**Trip to Bonsai World –  
October 22nd**

The club were warmly welcomed to explore Bonsai World located in Jillyby in the Central Coast NSW. Members arrived late morning, with some even camping up in the national forests the night before!

The stock at this time of year is truly incredible, with almost every species imaginable. A few members had some projects in mind and capitalised on the outstanding selection available. Chris acquired some trees for his voluntary work at a Sydney Jail, Frank got some smaller trees (that are easy to carry) and Oli & Lewis started some Japanese black pine projects.



The members were then treated to a demonstration from the guys at Bonsai World on a eucalyptus forest planting. The original pot had drainage holes which required the constant watering of these thirsty trees. The plan was to add a few trees, upsize the space and use a Suiban pot usually reserved for Penjing projects that have a small river or reservoir in the scape. Whilst water would fill the voids, the rapid uptake of water from these eucalypts, and the open/hot location, meant that drying out would be a thing of the past.

During this demonstration, members were taught some interesting things, a summary is provided below:

**Propagating and Growing Gum trees from the wild**

Make sure to bring water with you if digging trees and get any dug in shade asap. Best to dig high humidity. Wrap roots in a wet cloth or better yet put them in a bucket of water (with Seasol) immediately. Submerge them in water ASAP. Proper immediate care can result in a 90% chance of success. We were shown how quickly these trees wilt once taken out of soil, but they bounce back very quickly if the roots are kept moist after an efficient repot.

Gum can be grown from cuttings but fungus can be an issue. Good airflow around trees can help but monitor cuttings and treat as needed.

Gums and most natives grow great, in Suiban, if not too heavily watered.

If using bark to mulch, you can and a smidgen more fertilizer to compensate for nutrients lost in breakdown. Mulch, like moss helps keep roots cooler.



sydney city  
bonsai club inc.



### Styling

To develop ramification, start by maximizing foliage. Once the tree is growing strongly, constant clipping back will encourage pad development and ramification. For back budding and major cutting it is important to ensure the tree is growing rapidly (feeding up can help), then do you major chop.

When repotting, if working on roots, aftercare vital. Plant should be kept moist, work done as quickly as possible and then they should be well watered and kept in shade for two – three weeks.

Eucalyptus don't like wiring and don't like branches below horizontal. 'Clip and grow' is often the best option for styling.

Gums don't bud in pairs but alternatively. This means you can't ensure you get a branch on the outside of the cut when you chop.

For bark development you need to slow the growth down. Once you have the size you want, drop the fertilizer to slow the growth. This will allow the bark to build up layers to get cracks

and an older look.

### Styling other natives

When banksia gets root bound you get the base flare. After repotting you get height but not growth of base. Can use torch to shape gins. Cover in foil and cook to get pliability.

### Pests

Gum can suffer from mealy bug and less of an issue, gall wasp. Particularly in shade

Myrtle rust is a major issue and needs to be treated if found. Bonsai World guys find, Zaleton (Dual Action Systemic Fungicide) works well on myrtle rust. However, it is very expensive with spraying needed every two weeks. We treat with Mancozeb alternate weeks as a dual control. Under feeding trees also seems to help.



sydney city  
**bonsai club** inc.

### **NOVEMBER MEETING AGENDA – Figs**

The theme for the November meeting will be Ficus (fig) varieties. Bring your heartiest, luscious sub-tropical figs. These trees excel in the Sydney climate and are perfect for beginners, as well as offering refinement challenges for advanced bonsai growers. Feel

free to bring a defoliated tree or one that is fully leafed out, as we understand it's around defoliation time!

For the meeting, we have a few items:

#### **1. Ficus repot demonstration**

For those that attended the October meeting, we were fortunate enough to have a member of the public bring their tree in for some advice. Apparently, the tree has not been re-potted for 20+ years! This just shows how resilient these plants are. This tree poses some challenges, given the wrap around roots that were presented at the base of the tree, so will be an interesting demonstration for all.

#### **2. Japanese Black Pine Shohin Demonstration**

As discussed earlier, Lucas and Oli have a plan to create some JBP shohin trees (probably over the next decade). Oli will quickly demonstrate the basics for starting this process, as well as things to think about in the future.

#### **3. Report on trip to Bonsai World**

Members will discuss the trip and some of the trees they acquired for future projects.

**We encourage people to bring in trees they'd like to work on at the back end of the club meeting.**

### **NOVEMBER BASICS LESSON – Figs and defoliation**

The Basics lesson this month will be a discussion about figs, including a defoliation demonstration. There will also be a discussion about natives. The Basics lessons start at 6.00 p.m. and end at 7.00 p.m. in time for the General Meeting so best be on-

time. NOTE - **financial** members can join in the Basics lessons if they wish, but, as a courtesy, please let John or Bryan know in advance via the Club e-mail.

### **CLUB FEES**

Club Fees are well overdue. Members are requested to settle their membership payments ASAP – time is marching on. Fees can be paid in cash to our Treasurer Bryan or by bank transfer. Electronic payment details are:-

**Sydney City Bonsai Club**

**BSB: 032-152**

**A/C No.: 166305**

Make sure to include your name in the transfer details so it is clear who has paid.

New members can receive a reduced fee if joining halfway through the financial year, so please encourage friends or prospective bonsai artists to join.



sydney city  
bonsai club inc.

### BUY & SWAP TABLE

There will be a Swap Table at the next meeting which will be stocked with whatever is brought along **AND** surplus trees from our street stall. Members are encouraged to contribute to the table so if you have surplus tree(s) or materials bring them along. Having some loose change available may see you with a bargain. The Swap Table was well supported at the August meeting.

To make things easy, owners should attach a price (even if its free) and their name to their offerings. Also, a donation of 10% of the sale price is expected. The donation which should be included in the sale price, goes towards Club activities which all members are a beneficiary of.



### FACEBOOK PAGE

The private Facebook page run by John Brown is still going strong and anyone interested in participating, particularly new members, should contact John for an invitation.

There has been increased activity on the clubs Facebook page of late, so we encourage all members to join in!





**Air Layering - revisited  
by Chris**

After attending Frank's air-layering demonstration at a Club meeting some

time ago, I decided to attempt air-layering a pretty respectable Golden Tea-Tree (Melaleuca Bracteata) I have in the backyard. It has resisted my many attempts at nurturing cuttings from it so I thought I would give air-layering a go. The air-layering was successful, and the tree is still with me.



Next up, during a visit by James to my place, I mentioned the difficulty of transporting some of my taller plants to the club, specifically a privet. James rather crudely suggested I cut the top off it. After recovering from what at I first dismissed as a flippant remark, I re-considered the option. The styling of the tree could support shortening of the centre. But rather than cutting it off, I could air-layer it and get the same result and another much-needed tree! I decided that was the way ahead.

I was about to go on holidays for three weeks so doing it before I left seemed to be a natural fit. While I was at it, I decided to have another go at the Tea Tree, just to prove the first air-layer success was not a fluke.



I used Frank's technique but omitted the "muck" as I had lost the material left over from my last attempt. I did use plenty of sphagnum moss though. The completed air-layers are shown in the attached photos.

It has been nearly two weeks since I returned from my trip and I thought it was time to have a look at progress. This is where I learned that using a lot of sphagnum moss has a limitation. I could not see any roots in either case, but I could see a lot of sphagnum moss. They may have "taken" but if so, the roots were still buried in the moss. I consulted my sage, Frank, and he suggested checking the moisture was Ok and then holding off for another few weeks. And that's where I am at, being patient .... not one of my strong points.

I can report the growth above the air-layer on the Privet is very vigorous which is a positive sign. I am confident this will be a success, after all it is a Privet! The growth above the air-layer on the





sydney city  
bonsai club inc.

Tea Tree is OK and I am quietly confident it will be a success as well **BUT** there is a very good reason you do not see many good bonsai examples of this species. They are not at all co-operative and much more likely to provide disappointment than joy. Still, taking the glass-half-full outlook. I am still in the race.

#### Time to fill the green bin! By Chris

The downside of having too many Figs during the November de-leafing period. Note the three dozen Fig seedlings in the background - the other dozen are out of picture. Talk about a slow learner!"



#### ARTICLES OF INTEREST

##### **Bonsai Society of Sydney**

The BSS provided a newsletter full of photos of all the trees displayed in their annual show. Of note, they also included photos of Megumi and her talented students' Ikebana display in August. Whilst not specifically bonsai, it emphasises many things we endeavour in bonsai – balance, design and structure. A worthy read!

##### **Canberra Bonsai Society**

The Canberra Bonsai Society Newsletter "Wirrabara" has an extensive rundown of their annual show. There was a particularly interesting blue atlas cedar that took out the people's choice award. This tree was described as "a mastery of perfection, restraint and scale throughout all three elements." The best in show was won by a sticky wattle (*Acacia howittii*). The newsletter includes a full progression story from 2020, it's housing system on the rock and its changes since being displayed at the Central Coast Bonsai Open in 2022.

If you become aware of any articles on the web, or elsewhere, that may be of interest to members, you can use this space to pass on the word. Just send an e-mail to the Club's address with the contact details for the article and we can put it in this section.



**THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH by John  
November**

1. Figs can be repotted and actively worked on, including defoliation, from now right through Summer.
2. Similarly, most natives can be repotted through to summer. Watch for bud movement and then repot and root prune.
3. New growth develops fast at this time of year and is very soft with little tolerance to water and heat stress. It is therefore the most dangerous time regarding watering. In addition, the unusual weather we've been experiencing so far this year with excess heat for a few days followed by less than normal temperatures, means that we need to be a bit more observant of soil moisture than normal. Root bound trees will struggle so it will help if the tree has been recently repotted in fresh soil.
4. Watch any wired trees closely to ensure it is not cutting into the bark. On deciduous trees, this will cause irreparable.
5. Heavy pruning, wiring and trimming of Azaleas after flowering. Remove all finished flower remnants.
6. Satsuki Azaleas should be flowering now. Pinch off spent flowers. They can be repotted after flowering.
7. Candle pinching of pines continues.
8. Cut back long shoots on deciduous trees unless you are trying to fatten up the trunk.
9. You should be at the peak of your fertilising schedule. Use complete fertilisers every two weeks at recommended strength with a little seaweed concentrate. Don't use multiple fertilisers together. Remember that Seasol is a soil conditioner, is not a fertiliser.
10. Regular tip pruning of Crepe Myrtles through Spring, however since they flower on terminal tips pruning should cease by the end of November to allow flowering buds to develop.
11. Remember that pests and fungi can be very active at this time of year. Check growth for signs of discolouring, disfiguring or leaf dropping.

Sources:

AusBonsai Wiki

Alex Bennett

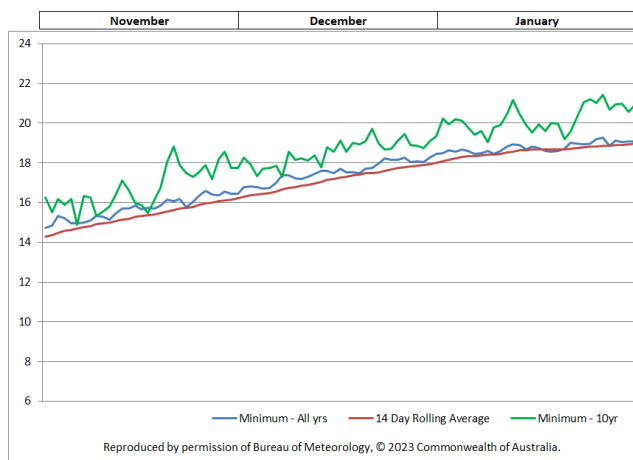
"Bonsai, Its Art, Science, History and Philosophy" by D R Koreshoff



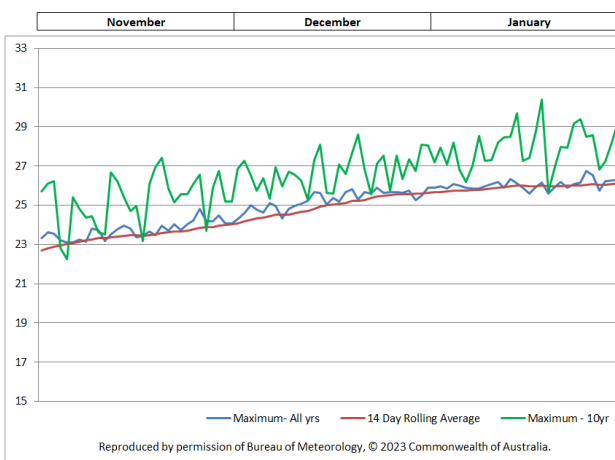


sydney city  
bonsai club inc.

Sydney (Observatory Hill) Average Daily Minimum Temperatures



Sydney (Observatory Hill) Average Daily Maximum Temperatures



It's interesting to note that the 10-year averages are consistently higher than the data for all time (since 1859). At Bonsai by the Harbour in 2019, David asked Japanese master Masayuki Fujikawa whether climate change was an issue in Japan. He replied that all the masters were talking about it and they keep meticulous records, showing something is happening. The 14 day rolling is based off of last years data, hence it is lower.

### BONSAI EVENTS CALENDAR

	Bonsai Society of Australia	Visit their website – <a href="http://www.bonsai.asn.au">www.bonsai.asn.au</a>	
26 <sup>th</sup> Nov - Figs & Fun	Nepean Bonsai Society Newsletter	Visit their website - <a href="http://www.nepeanbonsaisociety.org">www.nepeanbonsaisociety.org</a> -	
	Illawarra Bonsai Society	Visit their website – <a href="http://www.illawarrabonsaisociety.org">www.illawarrabonsaisociety.org</a> - good content in their newsletter	
21 <sup>st</sup> Nov – November workshop!	Bonsai Society of South Australia website	Website is worth a visit – <a href="http://www.bonsaisa.org.au">www.bonsaisa.org.au</a>	Head along if in South Australia!
14 <sup>th</sup> Nov – Scott Martin presenting!	Yarra Valley Bonsai Newsletter	Visit their website - <a href="http://www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au">www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au</a>	
14 <sup>th</sup> Nov – Eucalypts night!	Victorian Native Bonsai Club	Visit their website – <a href="http://www.vicnativebonsai.com.au">www.vicnativebonsai.com.au</a> - well worth a look.	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec – Annual Bonsai Market	School of Bonsai	Visit their website <a href="http://www.schoolofbonsai.com.au">www.schoolofbonsai.com.au</a>	Check website for details.
	Canberra Bonsai Society	Put out a good newsletter - visit their website – <a href="http://www.cbs.org.au">www.cbs.org.au</a>	
	Central Coast Bonsai Club	For more details go to <a href="http://www.centralcoastbonsai.com.au">http://www.centralcoastbonsai.com.au</a>	
	Bonsai Society of Sydney	Go to <a href="http://www.bonsaisocietysydney.org.au">http://www.bonsaisocietysydney.org.au</a>	
Bonsai Show 10 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> November	Newcastle Bonsai Society	Check out <a href="http://newcastlebonsai.org.au/">http://newcastlebonsai.org.au/</a>	