

Albury Wodonga Bonsai newsletter- February 2016

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Fees have been set at \$20 per member or \$30 per couple for the coming year. You can pay Neil at a meeting or post subs to Neil at P.O. Box 135, Yackandandah, 3749

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 23, 2016 at Harry's Hut, Olive St. South Albury at 7:30 pm. For those who have not been before, Harry's Hut is the meeting room at the Gardens beside Brown's Lagoon. Entry off Olive St., opposite the end of Nurigong St., South Albury.

Topic for next meeting: Developing Bonsai - fast growth V slow.

We westerners tend to be impatient and want instant results so there is lots of emphasis on developing bonsai as fast as possible. Tonight we discuss methods for developing bonsai faster and methods that will take longer to achieve results and the pros and cons of each.

Last Month:

Feb was the fig night. We welcomed back a past member who has been busy for a few years but has had his interest pricked again. Welcome back Theo. We also had 2 people attending their first Albury-Wodonga Bonsai meeting. Great to meet you and hoping you got something out of the night and can keep coming.

We had a good discussion and looked at a range of developing bonsai with members telling how they have got this far and some plans for the future of their trees. There was also time for a brief talk and demo on how to defoliate and prune figs.

Bonsai Events:

Feb 27-28: Native Bonsai symposium and show at the Botanic Gardens, Canberra.

Bonsai week is on the first week in March. Lots of bonsai related activities at the National Bonsai collection in Canberra. <http://www.ausbonsai.com.au/forum/viewtopic.php?f=25&t=21218>

Proposed 2016 program:

Members at the November meeting tossed around lots of possible ideas for meeting topics. Here's what I've come up with. Still time to make changes if you want to propose some alternatives.

January: annual Ficus workshop – figs, natives and other summer species

Feb: Developing a bonsai – slow V fast growth

Mar: Pruning and pinching – What's the difference and when do you do it?

April: Natives as bonsai - Annalea

May: Fusion to create interesting trunks and shapes – Les??

June: Shaping bonsai – wiring V pruning V hook and hold

July: Root pruning and repotting

August: Plums and hawthorns

September: Collecting trees for bonsai – what to look for and when

October: Exotics & growing them out - Annalea

November: Suggestions welcome

December: no meeting due to proximity to Christmas.

Seasonal Notes:

More mild weather for the first part of Feb but I see Perth has been having a heatwave with days above 40C so we are likely to get some hotter days as well. I recently moved a few trees out of the shade so I will need to keep an eye on the forecast and pop them back under shade if it looks like getting too hot again.

Fertilising is a regular routine here. I have noticed a couple of tridents with leaves that appear to be turning autumn colours. It is far too early for that so I suspect these ones have missed some fertiliser applications and are starving. Just shows how easy it is to miss a few.

Trimming is also ongoing. The maples continue to grow in the milder conditions so I have the scissors out regularly to trim off the longer new shoots. You can allow shoots to get longer on developing trees. The extra growth will help thicken trunks and the branches they are growing from but eventually the branches will be thick enough. Allowing too many strong shoots could cause those branches to get too thick and they will look quite ugly so prune more often on your older trees that are closer to finished.

Most of the natives are also still growing. They always like the warmer months and will grow whenever there is enough water so natives also need regular trimming all summer. I re-potted a callistemon and a melaleuca just after the January meeting. It appears to be quite safe to root prune most natives at any time during summer.

Summer and autumn is also time for cuttings. I have taken cuttings from several Leptospermums and Shimpaku juniper over the last few weeks. Most trees will now have some semi hard shoots that make great cuttings if you want to try to propagate. Cuttings will strike readily through till it starts to get cold. They will still strike roots over winter but the process does take a lot longer and success rates can be lower.

My Bonsai Notes:

Ian has obtained a number of advanced Japanese maples grown from seed of 'Sangu Kaku' – Coral bark maple. Most of these seedlings do have the red bark of the parent but, being seedlings, will not be exactly the same. Here's his message and a few photos:

Hi Neil, Here are some pics of these maples if anybody is interested in purchasing any please contact me for more info before the next meeting and I will bring them along to the meeting . All slip potted into 350mm planter bags , no tap root found and good radial root mass , ideal bonsai stock , trunks are about 20mm .

Cheers Ian



You will find Ian's email and phone at the top of your newsletter if you want him to bring any of these to the meeting.



Ian has also sent through some pictures of his latest air layers. You will see that Ian prefers to use the open pot method of layering. I think the pictures show most of what you need to know but feel free to ask questions if you don't understand what's going on in these pictures.





Maybe someone else can give us some words or pictures of their bonsai journey for next month.

Even if you just email me some pictures I'll put them in so we can all enjoy something different. If you want to add some words that would be even better.

If you can't get to a meeting (or even if you can) why not email Neil neil@shibuibonsai.com.au with a question or a comment or even a few photos to go in the newsletter?

Does anyone have anything for next month's

newsletter?

Members and visitors are always welcome to bring a tree (or 2 or even more) to our meetings if you want to show off your successes (or failures!), to work on a tree, or to ask about a problem.

Fees for 2015 are now due. Please forward your payment to Neil ASAP.

We also need to confirm members contact details to keep club records up to date. Please complete this membership details form and lodge it with your payment.

Name:

Postal address:

Telephone:

Email address:

Membership type: family Individual Concession