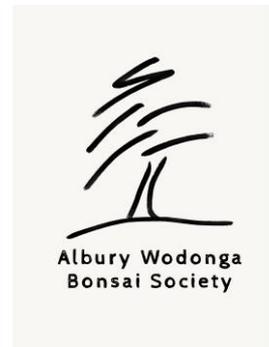


# Albury Wodonga Bonsai Newsletter

May 2018



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## Fees:

Fees have been set at \$25 per member or \$35 per couple for 2018. You can pay Theo at the meeting or make alternative arrangements with him.

## Next Meeting:

Tuesday, May 22, 2018 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.

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.

## Topic for Next Meeting:

**Members bring, buy and swap:** Anyone can bring in bonsai related goods to sell, swap or give away. If you have excess trees, pots, wire, tools, fertilizer, potting mix or anything else you think others might need bring it in.

## Last Month:

Only a few turned up to enjoy a great presentation on Accent plants by Theo. The Japanese use the term 'kusamono' to describe smaller plants that are displayed alongside a bonsai in formal display. The idea is to enhance the bonsai by adding something extra. Accent plants can be used to give the viewer a better idea of the 'theme' of your display - usually a season (spring, summer, etc) or a landscape (mountain, coast, river, etc) so if you want to give your bonsai a spring theme add a small spring flowering accent plant to the display.

We looked at some suitable plants like baby's tears, aquilegia, rhodohypoxis, mondo grass and dwarf bamboos and a number of other plants that are readily available at local nurseries.

Accent plants in really small containers will need special attention when watering. Hardy species are obviously easier to maintain.

## Bonsai Events:

**July 20-23, 2018:** - 31<sup>st</sup> National Bonsai Convention, Melbourne. Bonsai North West has sent us details of next year's bonsai convention to be held at Mantra Bell City. Headline guest artist Bjorn Bjorholm along with a selected group of local bonsai artists doing workshops and demonstrations as well as a quality bonsai display and sales area.

BFA calendar of events: - <https://teamup.com/ks55bf2733e25865a6>

## Business:

Those who attended had a great day when Joe Morgan-Payler visited. 6 of us, including a visitor from Wagga bonsai club brought trees for Joe to help with. Along with design advice, Joe freely gave lots of hints and tips on how to maintain the trees and helped us all with techniques to achieve the desired outcomes.

The afternoon session was in the form of a bonsai critique. Although the word looks a lot like criticise the session was far from critical. Joe was able to supportively comment on the best aspects of all the trees we showed him but also offer suggestions on how to maintain and improve the trees. Lots of very good information and ideas for all those who stayed on. Thanks to the members who helped make this day successful and thanks to Joe for sharing your knowledge and enthusiasm for bonsai.

## Proposed 2018 program:

January 23: Figs and natives.

February 27: General bonsai maintenance - what to do and when?

March 27: Group workshop- small groups work cooperatively on one or more trees - prune, shape, etc (is anyone brave enough to offer one or more trees for this activity?)

April 24: Accent plants

May 22: Swap meet - buy, sell, swap or give away anything plant or bonsai related

June 26: Swamp cypress

July 24: Groups - forest style bonsai

August 28: Club workshop - bring a tree to work on, get advice or show others.

September 25:

October 23:

November 27:

December: No meeting due to proximity to Christmas

January 2018: Figs (and other natives)

You can see we still need something for Sept, Oct and Nov. What would you like to see and hear? What could you offer?

## Seasonal Notes from Shibui Bonsai

Have you noticed how much the need for water has decreased? Even though we have not had much rain yet, the shorter days and cooler nights have substantially reduced both evaporation and transpiration. I've cut back to once each day and can occasionally miss watering for a full day without the trees suffering.

At the start of April I was in Canberra for a couple of days. When I got home on Sunday I discovered there had been a problem with the watering system. While most of the trees had enough water to manage, a couple of spots had missed out to the extent that leaves were scorched. Fortunately, I don't think there has been permanent damage. Many of us will experience a similar event some time so it is worth talking about what to do if you have the misfortune to have a dried out bonsai.

First step is to immediately apply water. Simple watering is good but often does not properly wet a really dry root ball. A better strategy is to dunk the entire pot into a tub of water so that the entire root ball is properly wet. Let the plant soak for up to 24 hours. Leaves will often turn brown and may fall off but don't give up hope. Most plants have survival strategies to cope with temporary drought. Keep the pot slightly damp, even if the top still looks dead. I usually keep scorched plants for several months over summer to allow them time to grow again. If they have dried out closer to autumn I keep them right through until next the December

because one survival strategy is to enter early dormancy and wait until the warm weather to sprout again and that's what I'm expecting with the trees that have been affected this time.

I don't need to remind you that the weather has been unseasonably warm this autumn so we have not had our usual strong autumn colours from the deciduous trees. I have a couple of trident maples with nice colour but most just have a few browning leaves. A few cold nights recently have produced some coloured leaves but we'll have to wait for next year for better conditions.

Trimming continues on native plants but most of the exotics have slowed right down in preparation for the cold weather. After leaf drop is a great time to assess branch structure and prune the summer growth. One of the strategies Joe talked about while he was here is to grow branches so that, as they grow too long, the longest parts are occasionally removed and replaced by shorter side shoots. This is one way of maintaining the size and shape of our bonsai over many years even though they continually grow each year.

Autumn is seed collecting time for those of us who love growing trees from seed. Generally allow the seeds to ripen on the tree - usually a change of colour indicates maturity - or wait until they start to drop naturally. Collect seed and store it in open containers or paper bags to avoid mould. In the last couple of weeks I have collected trident maple seed and some cones from swamp cypress. I should also go and get some cedar cones and have another go at germinating those.

I sow most seed soon after I collect it. Many species actually require a cold period before they will germinate so sow the seed in pots or trays and put them outside where they will get natural rainfall and frost. Seeds will sprout when the weather starts to warm up in spring just as nature intended.

This space

intentionally left

for the stuff you forgot to send in.

We all love to hear from other members about anything bonsai related.

If you can't get to a meeting (or even if you can) why not email [neil@shibuibonsai.com.au](mailto: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.

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**Fees for 2018 were due in March.**

**Please pay Theo at a club meeting. Phone or email him to arrange other payment options if you cannot get to a meeting.**

**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**