



Warragul Bonsai Group
wgbonsai@gmail.com

President: Ian ph: 0428 637 766 Sec: Marian ph: 0419 311 921

Newsletter No.17 January-February 2019

Our group is a collection of like-minded members learning and sharing our Bonsai knowledge and experiences in an organized inclusive friendly environment underpinned by a full interesting annual program and administration.

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2019 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: We have had a full and interesting six months culminating with our very successful Bonsai Show. A Show of this standard would not have been possible without unconditional support from the members. For this I am very grateful. I'm delighted seven visitors to our Show have decided to join our group to learn or expand their knowledge and experience with Bonsai. We welcome them to our friendly and inclusive group.

The Executive has considered member suggestions for our future meeting and workshop agenda and activities and have put together a program for the next twelve months. The program includes timely presentations and demonstrations so knowing when and what has to be done for various species will be seasonally relevant. I thank you for being actively involved with your suggestions.

We have recently been given several mature Bonsai and an array of Bonsai pots by the proprietors of Warragul Flower Shoppe. These items will be offered to members on an auction basis when we return from our Christmas New Year recess. I look forward to catching up at our January meeting Cheers, Ian de Bruyne

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DISPLAY TABLE: Don't forget to bring along your precious trees for us to see and hear about, whether completed or still in training.

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SUPPORT FROM DROUIN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY BANK:

Ian, David, Marian & Howard attended the Awards Night to receive a very welcome grant from the Bank to cover the costs of new banners & signage needed for our show. Our thanks to Drouin & District Community Bank.



BONSAI POT SELECTION by Lindsay H.

As with much of bonsai art, there are some rules associated with bonsai pots. However, they should be treated as guidelines only, subject to other considerations (see below) and also to personal preference – it is your tree! In general, the pot should complement the tree, and never overpower it or distract from the tree as the main attraction.

Gender Considerations

Trees are considered masculine or feminine in appearance. Feminine trees are slender with sinuous curves and smooth bark, masculine trees are bulky and rugged with strong fissured bark. Obviously, there may well be overlap between the features, but the overall impression is predominantly one or the other. Similarly,



pots are feminine or masculine (with the possibility of overlapping features again!) It is good practice to try to match the genders of pots and trees to achieve a good balance – feminine pot to feminine tree, and vice versa.

Types of Pot

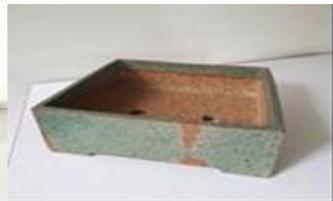
- **Glazed** – shiny appearance, available in many colours. Typically, feminine pots, although masculine features can be added. Typically suits deciduous trees and flowering/fruited trees.
- **Unglazed** – matt finish in shades of brown. Typically, masculine, although feminine features can be added. Typically suits conifers and evergreens.
- **Other** – semi-glazed, rough finishes, mixed colours. Masculine or feminine depending on the design. Typically suits Australian natives and styles like windswept and literati.

Size

Pot width and depth are the most important considerations. The classical bonsai rules say that the depth of the pot should be around the same as the width of the tree trunk just above the soil surface, but in practice $\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ times is generally acceptable. The width of the pot should be around two-thirds of the height of the tree above soil level. This applies to formal and informal upright styles – cascade, literati and group plantings are exceptions to this rule.

Shape

Rectangular and square pots are considered masculine, while oval and round pots are considered feminine. However, they are not hard and fast rules – e.g. rectangular pots can have feminine features added by incorporating curves into the design or by including softer feet. Smaller round or barrel pots are used for literati, and flat pots are used for group plantings. Cascade pots may be round, square, or polygonal and are deep. Crescent pots are for tree compositions reflecting mountain or cliffside conditions, e.g. semi-cascade, slanting, maybe windswept.



Colour

Pot colour should be selected to complement the tree. The more prominent a colour is in a tree, the more strikingly coloured the pot may be. Some combinations that generally work well are:

- **Light browns / oatmeals** – Maple, elm, beech, oak, larch, hawthorn, ash, ginkgo.
- **Off-whites / greys** – Hawthorn, oak, maple, ash.
- **Light greens** – maple, ash, beech.



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- Dark greens – maple, azalea, elm, cotoneaster.
- Medium browns - elm, birch, mountain ash, maples.
- Dark browns / red browns / unglazed – Pine, juniper, cotoneaster, larch, other conifers, azaleas.
- Light Blues – Azaleas, flowering and fruiting species
- Mid blues / greens – Maples, juniper, pines, azaleas

Feet

The main purpose of feet on a pot is to allow for good drainage and airflow, however they can also alter the feel of the pot adding masculine or feminine features. Big, strong, chunky feet add a masculine effect, and delicate, curved or intricate feet can add a feminine feeling.

Tree Position in Pot

The tree should be positioned in the centre of a circular pot. For oval and rectangular pots, the tree should be positioned 1/3 from the end on the long axis, and between the centre and the back on the short axis.

Other Considerations

- Extra depth. Certain species, e.g. prunus, cedars, etc, prefer a deeper pot for healthy root development. Also, a deeper pot holds more water and may be more appropriate for our hot summer conditions.
- Watering conditions. If you can water three times a day on hot summer days, then you can get away with small shallow pots. If not, then consider using larger, deeper pots than you might otherwise prefer.
- Drainage holes. Good bonsai pots provide large holes to ensure good drainage, which should be kept in mind when buying a pot. If you have a pot with small holes, consider (carefully!) drilling additional holes.
- Inward lips. Pot walls which bow inwards or have inward-facing lips tend to make tree removal more difficult.

References

My thanks to Lindsay H & his sources as follows: - "Thanks to Harry Harrington at Bonsai4me.com, Ian Barnes and VNBC, as well as numerous other sources". Also, my thanks to Tracey F, Murrumbung Pottery, for photos of her pots.



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A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE



JANUARY: SUPPER – IAN

- 5/1 Sale mtg
- 8/1 YVBS mtg
- 17/1 **WBG mtg- Basics of tools & wire. Seasonal Calendar. Members' Critique Night!**
- 19/1 **WBG workshop – incl Bonsai Basics session.**
- 28/1 BSV mtg

FEBRUARY: SUPPER – TIM

- 2/2 Sale mtg
- 12/2 YVBS mtg
- 21/2 **WBG mtg – Wiring & DVD**
- 23/2 **WBG wkshp – Wiring for style**
- 25/2 BSV mtg

Bonsai Calendar: JAN-FEB 2019

Watering and Position should be your main focus during the summer months. It's the time of year to play safe when it comes to caring for your trees.

Watering: Water evenly and thoroughly. This will encourage roots to grow at the bottom of the pot improving the health of the tree. Water in the mornings. If this is not possible, water in the evenings but avoid wetting the foliage on species that are susceptible to mildew (Maples, Oaks, Crepe Myrtles)

Bonsai that will require **more** water: Maples, Camellias, Azaleas, Liquid Ambers, Elms, Wisterias, Alders, Taxodiums, Beech, Hornbeams, Pyracantha, Banksias, Melaleucas, other natives

Bonsai that will require **less** water: Pines, Cedars, Corokias. Separate your trees into groups based on their watering needs

Position: Morning sun is best. Avoid the afternoon sun in the summer. Consider the species and pot size when arranging your display. Take extra care with small or shallow pots as they dry out quickly.

When looking for shade, avoid placing bonsai directly under trees, which can be sources of pests & disease.

Summer is a great time to work on your benches, watering systems, shade cloth and maintenance around your display. If you are going away for the holidays, put some serious thought into how your trees will be cared for. Many bonsai are lost at this time of year.

There are no borders in bonsai. The dove of peace flies to palace as to humble house, to young as to old, to rich and poor. So does the spirit of bonsai. JOHN NAKA