

ANPSA AUSTRALIAN PLANTS AS BONSAI STUDY GROUP

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Financial Year 1 July 2011 - 30 June 2012

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If enough people indicate this is best, it will save time and money (which can be put to the publication fund).



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Experiments and results with natives: banksias and other species

By Neil Padbury

Banksia integrifolia was used this summer to check suitable repotting times and response to hard pruning. This info is probably already available from other sources but I wanted to confirm it for the Wodonga area, Vic., and my conditions.

These integrifolias are about 2 year old seedlings in plastic 11 cm squat pots in my basic mix – Australian Native Landscapes bulk potting mix with ‘native’ Osmocote[®]. They were potted into 15 cm squat pots in the same mix.

Response to hard pruning. The first hard pruning was in November 2010 (Fig. 1). Leaf



Fig. 1: *Banksia integrifolia* after pruning, 11 Nov 2010.

buds were emerging by mid December (Fig. 2). By March 2011, they had produced copious buds from bare wood and continued to grow from the new shoots produced (Fig. 3).

Shoots from lower on the trunk have grown more strongly than higher buds. No shoots appeared from the upper 3 cm of the trunk even though there are nodes present.



Fig. 2. *Banksia integrifolia*, Dec 15 with buds emerging.

Repotting/ root-pruning trials.

I repotted several young banksias each month, except December, to check response to root disturbance. Until March 2011, integrifolias repotted in Jan and Feb have recovered and continued to grow after repotting.

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I also potted up some seedlings that had been left in a seed tray for more than a year. These were quite crowded and were still small and



Fig. 3. Same plant, as in Fig. 2, March 2011 showing regrowth.

spindly due to the crowded conditions and lack of attention. Some were potted up in Jan as a test and they survived. The rest were done in Feb. The majority have survived despite some



Fig. 4. *Banksia integrifolia* before root-pruning.

quite hard root pruning and top reduction (Figs 4 and 5).

A number of trees were dug from the growing beds in spring and potted into black plastic pots in standard mix. The results are:

Melaleuca 'claret Tops': All 3 have grown strongly. 100% transplant survival.

Melaleuca lateritia: 2 out of 3 have survived and flowered but little top growth so far.

Leptospermum laevigatum: 2 plants, both died quickly after transplanting. 100% transplant loss. Has anyone reported a

successful time of year to transplant/ dig up this or other *Leptospermum* species?



Fig. 5. *Banksia integrifolia* after root-pruning.

A number of banksias, which have been in the growing beds for 2 years, will be dug next summer on the strength of the banksia repotting trials above.

Lone then gone: suburban acacia

Roger Hnatiuk's web trawling

When reading the Australian Geographic's e-newsletter of 12 April 2011, I saw a 'flickr picture of the week' that was a striking image of a tree with a history. I contacted the photographer, Bob Trlin, who sent me an edited copy of the picture.

The story of the tree is it that was a boxleaf wattle (*Acacia buxifolia*) that had been living at the Golden Jubilee Oval, Wahroonga, Sydney. While it is no longer there, its splendid form was captured by Bob who was attracted to it because of its growing by itself on a windswept hilltop. It was in full bloom, with storms in the background. He said it was the 'bonsai-like attractiveness' that impressed him. The shattered main trunk with a strong new branch is the classic material of bonsai thought, culture and display.

Bob has a website with many beautiful pictures from the Kur-ring-gai Chase National Park. For those in the area, it would be a great resource (<http://www.bobtrlin.com/Flora/Bush-Blooms-of-Ku-ring-gai>).

Thank you Bob for permission to use the picture, and to Australian Geographic for publishing such wonderful photos of Australia.



Acacia buxifolia, Golden Jubilee Oval, Wahroonga, by Bob Trlin.

There were three prizes within each category, and the prizes were well worth the effort to get trees ready and submit a photo for judging.

Again there were three excellent bonsaiists who poured through each of the pics, assessing them against a set of criteria that covered technique as well as aesthetics.

The top winners in each category can be seen in the 'Gallery' page included with this newsletter.

Congratulations to PeterH, for taking out the

The 2011 AusBonsai.com annual native bonsai competition winners

By Roger Hnatiuk

Once again that wonderful, still quite new, bonsai forum has run a competition for the best bonsai with Australian species. There were the usual three categories: 1: Australian Native Bonsai Award for mature trees in a bonsai pot; 2: New Stock Award for trees with less than 12 months of work; and 3: Newcomer Encouragement Award for bonsaiists with less than 1 year's experience.

Competition was probably even tighter this year than last. More people are focussing on the details of what makes a miniature tree 'good'. The 'styles' ranged from classical Japanese forms to those without real 'style' names except that some call them 'naturalistic'. What ever name you give them, the latter are those that often aim to look like miniature versions of what you would see in the wild in Australia.

prize in category one for his *Banksia integrifolia*; to 'Alpineart' for winning the top prize in Category 2 for an Australian Native Landscape; and to Izzykay for the first prize in Category 3. Well done everyone, winners, contributors, and Ausbonsai for making it happen! The winning entries are displayed in the 'Gallery' with this newsletter.

Email from Hazel from Curry

Well Roger, I followed your advice and firstly got into those ruddy ants' nests... Then came some heavy rain which helped. Then I constantly sprayed the bush, rubbing as much scale as I could off with 'Morning Fresh' washing-up liquid and water with a little metho in it. I do have some new shoots coming on... some still infected but I believe this will take some time to get rid of it.

Some of the trees around the ridges are getting a few scraggly blooms on, but in spring here, they are just alight with colour.

This Thursday if all goes to plan, Blue Care are bringing some of their Respite folks over for morning tea as well as do a bonsai for themselves... I have painted some of the starter pots with a little design and have a few out of control, root-bound plants for them to cut into too... How this will go, will be an experience to watch.

Two have dementia, one with a muscle problem and it will be hard for this young lass to manage I think plus 2 who have had strokes.

Roger, I have seen the gardens they used to have yonks back and they were beautiful. Won't it be a miracle if this little exercise helps them to have heaps of fun. I would love to see gardening days as an activity for folks with dementia. My Mum was in a home for dementia people and she loved to keep her few pot plants watered and when her gerberas got flowers on, she was so excited even though she didn't know her daughter who she was showing it too. This was when she was in the early stages of dementia. I have always been of the belief that if you get your hands in the dirt your body benefits from it.

My Garden looks pretty, so at least they will enjoy themselves and I will have plants everywhere... lol...

Thanks again for your help...

Cheers

Hazel

(From the Curry)....

29 March 2011

Eucalyptus journey

By Ambrose Canning

Roger, it was great to meet you twice this year, and it has prompted me to write something I have been meaning to do for a long time. The issue is bonsai and eucalypts.

I have developed a fascination for Australian natives and more particularly Tasmanian natives. We share many natives including many eucalypt species with mainland Australia, but we have many natives endemic to Tasmania.

I can only speculate why I like eucalypts, because they are such an iconic Australian tree, "...under the old gum tree ...", because they originate from our Australasian region, because it is rare to see them as bonsai, or perhaps I have some essential oil in my veins. I was brought up on a mountain-side just outside Hobart, in the bush and wet eucalypts. We spent our holidays at an uncle's farm in the Tasmanian Midlands, backing onto the Great Western Tiers, amongst dry eucalypts. For some reason eucalypts just tickle my fancy.

After attending the recent bonsai conference in Western Australia and spending a week touring around I have seen many more similar and different eucalypts. From the majestic karri forests down near Pemberton to the ancient Meelup Mallee overlooking Geographe Bay, and of course plenty of coloured gum flowers in WA.

My limited knowledge of eucalypts has come mostly from trial and error, a well-known but slow technique. I have read the Koreshoff natives book and the odd article after that, but I don't make the time for prolonged internet trawling or other literature research. But despite all warnings about working with eucalypts as bonsai I consider that I have had remarkable success. It is slow progress though. Although I have many eucalypts in plastic training pots, I have only progressed three to bonsai pots, and only one I consider as presentable so far.

My first pot-grown eucalypt originated about twenty years ago. It was grown from seed I collected in gum nuts from a tree on top of a hill behind our house in Hobart. It was very neglected for many years, as I cut my bonsai teeth on more popular tree species and it sat at the back. Later I identified it as a white gum, *Eucalyptus viminalis*.

It grew a nice lignotuber. In recent years, in summer, I root pruned it and cut off all branches, and repotted it with the lignotuber

raised in level, as I was warned not to. It reshot and has grown well and after a few years developed three trunks. But it is still immature and is cursed with juvenile leaves.

Table 1. Trees in Ambrose's collection

Scientific name	Common name	Distribution	Notes
<i>Eucalyptus amygdalina</i>	Black peppermint	TAS endemic	1. Germinated from seed 2006. 2. Collected summer 2010 & 2011, East Coast TAS
<i>Eucalyptus barbari</i>	Barbers gum	TAS endemic	Purchased tube stock from nursery June 2010
<i>Eucalyptus coccifera</i>	Tasmanian snow gum	TAS endemic	From seedlings collected 2008
<i>Eucalyptus delegatensis</i> ssp <i>tasmaniensis</i>	Gum-topped stringybark	TAS endemic subspecies	Larger tree and seedlings collected 2011, south TAS
<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i> var <i>compacta</i>	Dwarf Tasmanian blue gum		Purchased tube stock from nursery June 2010
<i>Eucalyptus gunnii</i> ssp <i>gunnii</i>	Cider gum	TAS endemic	Purchased tube stock
<i>Eucalyptus nitida</i>	Western peppermint	TAS endemic	Purchased tube stock from nursery 2009
<i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i>	Stringybark	TAS, VIC, NSW, QLD, SA	Collected 2011, south TAS.
<i>Eucalyptus pauciflora</i> ssp <i>pauciflora</i>	Weeping cabbage gum	TAS, VIC, NSW	Purchased tube stock from nursery 2009
<i>Eucalyptus pulchella</i>	White peppermint	TAS endemic	1. Collected tree 2. From seed 2007
<i>Eucalyptus regnans</i>	Giant ash	TAS and VIC	Collected 2011, south TAS
<i>Eucalyptus rodwayi</i>	Swamp peppermint	TAS endemic	Purchased tube stock from nursery June 2010
<i>Eucalyptus rubida</i>	Candlebark	TAS, VIC, NSW	Purchased tube stock from nursery 2009
<i>Eucalyptus subcrenulata</i>	Alpine yellow gum	TAS endemic	Purchased tube stock from nursery 2009
<i>Eucalyptus vernicosa</i>	Varnished gum,	TAS endemic	Purchased nursery stock 2009
<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i> ssp <i>viminalis</i>	White gum	TAS, VIC, NSW, SA	Originally collected (as seed) from Mt Nelson 1992.

Juvenile eucalypt leaves are something I don't yet know the answer to. That is, how to progress to mature leaves. Is it related to age, to height, to foliage mass, to what? If I discover an answer or stumble across someone else with an answer then I will share it. Some eucalypts have juvenile leaves similar to adult leaves, for example the Tasmanian peppermints, which also have

small narrow leaves, so these show a lot of promise. There was a beautiful large and mature willow-leaf peppermint (*E. nicholii*) on display at the National Exhibition in Canberra this March [2011].

Some eucalypts always retain their juvenile leaves, and I have had success with a Tasmanian endemic, the varnished gum,

Eucalyptus vernicosa. I had a photo of it at the National Exhibition in Canberra this March. This species is one of the smallest of the eucalypts and in nature grows only to between 0.5 to 2 metres high, endemic to western Tasmania where it grows as a prostrate shrub in exposed alpine heath. This tree was purchased as nursery stock in 2008 in a 10 cm plastic pot and is being trained to resemble a stunted alpine gum with its top killed by either fire, drought or exceptional cold. In January 2010, it had its trunk cut back by two-thirds, and was 50% root pruned. It was first planted into a Mudlark pot in winter 2010. A slightly oversized pot was used and no root pruning was done at the time. The bonsai height is about 10cm.

My collection consists of the trees listed in Table 1. All may have potential as bonsai, but only time will tell.

I cannot go into a detailed description of the collection and work I have done on each tree. But in general the following paragraphs cover groups of the eucalypts and some more interesting facts about them.

I collected several black peppermints and two white gums in summer 2009 and 2010, from the Tasmanian east coast, from a hot dry gravel road side bank previously cleared under power lines. All were roughly collected, all foliage trimmed off, tap roots cut. They were all small and all had lignotubers. I have had 100% success rate. With one peppermint I collected, I left on 50% of its foliage and it took 3 months before reshooting from the lignotuber, much slower than the others which all shot within 1 to 1.5 months. One white gum looked like a golf ball with a pencil stuck through it, no fine roots at all.

One white peppermint I collected in late summer 2011, was from a north facing hillside underneath a transmission line so it had no future anyway. It was of medium size and had lignotuber. All foliage was trimmed off and cut back to three small-finger-diameter trunks and tap roots were cut. This treatment was successful and the tree is now covered with new shoots.

Several largish eucalypts were collected in late summer to early autumn 2011, in Tasmania's southern forests on a Club dig. No signs yet of re-shooting after 1.5 months, but I will wait as it may take till spring's warmer weather. All were species with no obvious lignotuber, so that is new for me. All 100% were defoliated and cut back to trunks. The large stringybark was on the edge of forestry operations and had been damaged by machinery, breaking its tap root and breaking its top off. It had previously re-shot with healthy 2 or 3 year old foliage. Time will tell whether they survive.

I have numerous black peppermints (*E. amygdalina*) grown from collected seed from a tree near where I live. They were sown in spring, seedlings lifted in summer with first leaves only, root pruned with some having up to 80% of little roots removed. They have develop very fibrous root systems. They have all had two more summer root prunings (about 50%), with partial defoliation and top trim at the same time. I have found that just cutting off leaves is better than the hit and miss method of drying them out to simulate drought.

I have many eucalypts purchased as tube stock. Some are from a native plant nursery and some from a nursery's stall at a festival at our Royal Botanical Gardens. In early spring they have been re-potted into 10 cm plastic pots with about a 10% root trim, and some top trimming depending on size and form. Most have survived.

I have now set the scene and I should have no excuse not to follow up in the future with more particular details about my eucalypts, and more plants I will probably accumulate along the journey. In many ways the journey is the fun bit, although reaching a destination of presentable eucalypt bonsai is the attractor.

Australian Plants as Bonsai – AusBonsai.com Joint Project

By Roger Hnatiuk

A major step has been taken in our goal to publish the Study Group's information on 'which species' and 'how to' with bonsai using Australian plants. Steven Hantos, of AusBonsai.com (ABc) and I have been discussing our similar goals to gather and publish this kind of information. Now we have embarked on a joint project to combine our two sets of data.

The APAB database was summarised a few years ago and only needs updating with the relatively small amount of information received since then. I will get this done in the next few months.

At the same time, Steven has agreed to my organising a group of volunteers on the ABc forum to search for and extract information on the horticulture and aesthetics of Australian native species. The team has begun and is making good progress. If any APAB members want to join in, just join ABc, if you are not already a member, sign up, and let me know. I'll get you started.

We aim to get the two data sets aligned, combined and then get text written for individual species, groups of species or genera, depending on how much is known. Then we will pass these drafts around to people who have experience with the particular group. We'll be on the lookout for unusual records to confirm and, where justified, put some myths about native species to rest!

Steve W and Georgina K have offered to help in the past. I'll be contacting both of you with text when it is ready, but do sign up for other tasks too, if you are interested. All other members, do take the opportunity to help move the Study Group onto its next major stage of meeting our goals.

If you have information about what you are growing, or when you repot and prune, please use this opportunity to send that information in. **NOW IS THE TIME.** It is the eleventh hour and your contribution is still most valuable, but the data gathering and text preparation are reaching critical points. Please put pen to paper, fingers to keyboards, and let us know your experiences. All are valuable no matter how short or long a time period, no matter if they cover one species or many. **DO IT NOW.**

If you belong to a bonsai club, see if you can get records from your members. Organise a special session where members can come and see you and you can write down the names of the species they grow, and when the prune and repot etc.

The joint project will also be collecting pictures of mature Australian trees/shrubs that are inspirational and informative of what they look like. A competition may be run on ABc, but you are still welcome to contribute directly to the Study Group. Those images already sent to me will be added to those that the publishing group will look at.

If you have a good-looking bonsai of a native species and would like to have it considered for publishing, then send it in too. We plan to illustrate the publications with such images wherever possible.

The form of publication is most likely to be both a paper book as well as a web-based product on the ABc website. Steven and I believe that there is a need for both types of publications.

So, use the next few months to get your information in order and sent in.



Australian Plants as Bonsai

If not delivered, please return to PO Box 450, Jamison Post Office, Macquarie ACT 2614.

Study Group Information

The Australian Plants as Bonsai Study Group was formed in mid 2001. Its aims are:

- to determine which species of native Australian plants are grown as bonsai;
- to determine the horticultural characteristics and requirements of each species;
- to determine the artistic and aesthetic qualities of species; and
- to publish information to help people grow and enjoy Australian plants as bonsai.

To become a member, please send a cheque for \$13 (Aus.\$17 overseas) or postal money order to: 'Australian Plants as Bonsai', PO Box 450, Jamison Post Office, Macquarie ACT 2614, Australia.

Direct credit transfers can be made to Community CPS, **BSB 805-022, account no. 03276718; account name: ASGAP.**

The Study Group Leader is Roger Hnatiuk. Contact him at the above postal address or at

Email: rjhnatiuk@yahoo.com.au

APAB-N GALLERY no. 5

First prize winners of the AusBonsai.com photo competition 2011.



Category 1: mature bonsai: PeterH, ACT.



Category 3: artist with less than 12 months experience: Izzykay, WA.



Category 2: work for less than one year: Alpineart, Vic.

APAB-N GALLERY no. 5

A selection of trees from the AABC/WA Bonsai Society Conference,
Fremantle may 2011



Melaleuca alternifolia



Leptospermum polygalifolium



Baeckea sp.



Melaleuca raphiophylla