

RED DRAGON BONSAI



GOOD BONSAI TAKES TIME!

WELCOME TO THE JULY NEWSLETTER, AND A WARM WELCOME TO ALL THE NEW READERS!
WHAT AN INCREDIBLE PLACE TO LIVE (FOR THOSE ON THE GOLD COAST) I KNOW THE NIGHTS GET COLD (HERE WE GET DOWN TO) BUT THE DAYS ARE GLORIOUS!
I HOPE YOU GOT PLENTY OF COLOUR THIS YEAR. IF NOT PREPARE EARLY NEXT YEAR FOR COLOUR AND RAMIFICATION AND HAVE GREAT LOOKING TREES ALL YEAR.
THE PICTURE ABOVE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THIS, YEARS HAVE GONE INTO CREATING FINE RAMIFICATION, ALLOWING YOUR TREES TO LOOK GOOD ALL YEAR ROUND.
ITS EASY TO JUST TRIM OR PRUNE A TREE DURING THE GROWING SEASON AND IT WILL LOOK GOOD. BUT TRUE BONSAI WILL TEACH YOU THAT IT'S THE TIME SPENT ON DETAIL SUCH AS DEVELOPING RAMIFICATION THAT WILL DEVELOP YOUR TREE TO AN ALL YEAR ROUND SPECTACLE.
DON'T CUT CORNERS FOR SHORT TERM GAIN. BELIEVE ME, PENDING THE TIME NOW AND YOU WILL BE MORE THAN REWARDED IN THE YEARS TO COME!

Pruning

Now is a really good time to do some pruning and refining. Trees such as elms, and maples will respond really well to hard pruning now before leaf bud. By pruning back hard now you will create greater ramifications on your branches. There is nothing better than an elm or a maple that has hundreds of tiny twigs all exposed in winter, so now is the time to cut them back while you can see them. Keep cutting back to 2 leaves on each branchlet and over spring and summer you will get fantastic growth. It is easy to just let them grow as they will look good, but winter will find you out with long stringy branchlets.

Take some time to assess your trees whilst they are defoliated, see what changes need to be made. Maybe its time to thin it out and remove some major branches! You may decide to reshape the whole tree, this is all part of the journey!

NEW POTS!

WE HAVE A CONTAINER LANDING IN ABOUT 3 WEEKS TIME WITH SOME EXCEPTIONAL POTS COMING. AS YOU MAY KNOW WE WHOLESALE INTO AUSTRALIA AND ALREADY A FEW OTHER NURSERIES ARE WANTING THE COMPLETE AMOUNT OF SOME STYLES. WHILST WE TRY TO SUPPLY EVERYONE WE CAN, THIS IS NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE AS WE HAVE WORKED HARD TO JUST BRING IN 10 OF EACH KIND OR COLOUR. THIS HAS TAKEN QUITE A FEW YEARS AS USUALLY ORDERS MUST BE 50 OF EACH STYLE, SIZE AND COLOUR. THE REASON WE HAVE DONE THIS IS, IS SO THAT PEOPLE HAVE MORE UNIQUE POTS. ALSO THERE ARE POTS COMING WHICH ARE 'COLLECTION POTS' WHICH CAN EITHER BE USED TO POT TREES INTO, OR EVEN JUST USE AS DISPLAYS. THESE WILL ONLY BE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE NURSERY HERE AS THEY WILL NOT BE WHOLESALED TO OTHER NURSERIES AS THEY ARE EXPENSIVE AND LIMITED SOME OF THEM ARE IN VERY LIMITED NUMBERS SO IT WOULD BE ADVISABLE TO GET IN QUICKLY (see pics at bottom of newsletters)

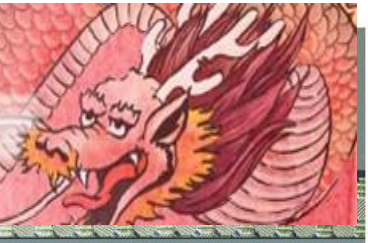


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Repotting.

Well we are almost at that time, time to repot and be ready as your trees awaken from a well earned rest. Just like you when you wake up, you are going to be hungry. Your tree is currently starting to use the sugars that were stored during autumn, hopefully from the fertilizing you were doing then. A lot of bonsai is common sense. Where do you think all this new growth is coming from? What nourishment is it using?

Temperature plays a big part in growth. Your roots will stop growing once the evening temperatures drop below 12 deg. The reason for this is to protect itself from frosts. If it were to continue to produce new tender roots, the cold temps would kill these of. Now if this were to happen, all nourishment would be stopped from flowing to the tree. That is why we avoid repotting in winter. So once the weather starts to warm, we are safe to repot.

Now depending where you live will have a large control over when. People reading this newsletter are as far apart as the N.T. to Victoria. The safest way is to go by your night temperatures. Although things are warming up, we may still have a frost or two.

Make sure if you do repot, to keep your tree warm, and not exposed. Don't just repot it and whack it back outside. Keep it somewhere warm, with morning sun perhaps under a awning, so if you do have a frost, it wont be effected. A frost is just moisture in the air forming on your leaves/needles, and the temperature dropping to freeze that moisture, which will "burn" the foliage..

So once you decide to repot, take the time to make sure you have all the materials you need, potting mix, hole mesh, slow release fertilizer, chopstick for working out the air in the soil, root shears, and a piece of material that can be wet and used to cover the roots should an emergency arise and you have to leave your tree half repotted.

Take this time to remove any excess foliage from the tree, do some basic shaping and refining, as this will also reduce the stress on the tree and place less demand on the roots. It is also a good time to refine the structure of the tree as usually there will be less foliage allowing a better view of the tree. This is also a time to decide whether we are going to treat ourselves to a new pot. Maybe the tree has changed its shape and now no longer suits the pot that it is in. It is amazing what a new pot can do to a tree!

The roots that you want to remove from the rootball are the thicker roots. It is the fine hair like roots that you want to keep, and encourage. The more fine feeder roots your are able to establish the healthier the tree is going to be. They are able to supply more nutrient to the tree. (cont.)

You want to remove about one third of the rootball.

Start by combing out the rootmass, trying not to tear to much of it. You should be able to tease them out enabling you to cut them of. Use proper tools, sharp bonsai scissors will give a neat cut, ragged cuts are more likely to introduce rotting. .

Look for any old black or dead roots and cut these out.

Always cover the bottom of the pot with a good layer of potting mix. Never allow the roots to be laid on the bare pot bottom, they will just get cooked and die.

Ensure you have got all the air pockets out by using a chopstick or similar instrument to pack the soil down. Down pack it so tight that water is unable to penetrate it. If your tree is a little wobbly in the pot, wire it in using the drain holes.

Add some slow release fertilizer to the mix as you go. Water in well, submerging it for its first drink will ensure that you have saturated the rootball.

Just remember that you wont need to water again for quite a few days as the roots are unable to take up as much moisture.

Keep the tree in a warm place for 7-10 days and then introduce it back to its new position.

Keep your eye on it and make sure it is not wilting.

We have just got another delivery of 'diatomite' which we are selling in both small and larger bags. This has proven to be an incredible additive to your bonsai mix. It will increase root ramification, hold water and nutrients releasing them at the same time, and is very high in silica which is brilliant for plant growth.

OPENING HOURS MON – SAT 9.0 – 4.0

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BONSAI SAYING:

If you just want to be in the backyard with your plants, try growing tomatoes. They're cheaper and you can eat your disappointments. - Al Keppler

Fertilising

We want our trees to grow as best we can. This is done by fertilizing regularly. By regularly I mean once a fortnight through the growing season.

The best way to do this is to submerge your tree in water with fertilizer added above the trunk line. This will allow the tree to expel all the old carbon dioxide (produced by the roots in the soil) this is seen by all the bubbles coming to the top. Wait for the bubbles to stop, this can take up to an hour, then remove the tree and let it drain. As the water is draining it will draw down oxygen into the soil, this is vital to good root growth. The fertilizer will then mix with the water, oxygen and is converted into a gas, which is then absorbed by the roots through the cell walls.

There are many different fertilizers on the market. It is important you use a balanced fertilizer, so as to not push growth in just one area.

This is often seen in chemical fertilisers that are high in nitrogen. Nitrogen is what feeds the “green” part of the tree. Now if this is all we do, and the roots are not growing at the same rate, we put the tree under tremendous pressure. This often leads to problems such as die back, or long internodes, a big no-no for bonsai. A long internode means a long distance between the leaves, which will never give you nice compact growth. Now this was a long way round to explain why we need to be careful of what fertiliser we use. I use, sell and recommend “Healthy life” fertiliser, and find it to be a good well balanced fertiliser. It has no chemicals in it which I think is crucial to keeping good bacteria alive in your soil..



These dragon pots are the last available (4 sets of 3) the largest is 1mtr! Many older potters are retiring so we will not see these again.



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As you may know the Red Dragon Bonsai business is for sale. It is being offered for sale freehold, or just the business with the house to rent as part of the business.

We wanted to let people know as some have asked if we will still be here. The business would not be moving, Red Dragon Bonsai will just continue under a new owner.

Also to allay any fears, we will be wholesaling but NOT open to the public from our new property, and are willing to sign an agreement with the new owners.

This is a unique opportunity so if this interests you please contact us here at the nursery. P.O.A.