

The Satsuki Society of Australasia

Newsletter: September 2008

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Small Satsuki bonsai in Kanuma



The variety Korin in a twin-trunk style at Ueno Park, Tokyo

From the Chairman's Keyboard

Now the busy time begins.

The weather is warming up and the movement in our Satsuki that has been sporadic so far, is showing signs of becoming steady and consistent growth.

This is our busy time. We pot on struck cuttings. And right through till December can re-pot and completely restyle our trees. We can also be taking softwood cuttings.

There is an article inside about re-potting which will help in the successful development of your trees.

As our Satsuki are at their best toward the end of November we now need to groom them by removing over crowded flower buds and shoots if we are going to show them or want to just enjoy them without a re-pot this year.

The SSA will try to help by providing information as and when you want/need it and welcome questions from you which we may answer and publish here and/or on the Satsuki Society's website. You can get into this by typing www.satsukisociety.com in to the top address bar of your Explorer page.

The website details are with the search engines now but it will take a little while before they become fully functional.

Happy growing,

Arthur Robinson

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Some notes on Re-potting Satsuki

Re-potting can be divided into 4 basic categories

1. Potting-on seedlings and cuttings
2. 1 or 2 year potting of young material to promote growth
3. Standard 3 or 4 year interval re-potting of developed bonsai
4. Major restyling and re-potting.

When potting-on seedlings and cuttings there are 2 important factors to take into consideration.

The first is to adhere to the 3 or even 4 layer system using Kanuma ensuring excellent drainage (the Chairman uses 4 grades for this early material as the roots are very fine and very delicate).

Secondly the placement of the roots is of paramount importance as the whole of the future development of the tree depends on a good Nebari. Spread the roots carefully and place them on and in the Super Fine grade. If you are using your own mix make sure there is plenty of River Sand in it.

After the plant has grown for 6 months to 1 year you should pot up to a slightly bigger pot. Don't disturb the roots, just loosen the outside ones and let the plant grow, feeding it regularly. For whip production, remove side growth.

All this work needs to be carried out between September and Mid-December when the plant is actively growing. Items 3 and 4 should be carried out after the best of the flowering is over which means that you will also do some pruning and shaping at the same time.

With the Standard re-pot (item 3), having removed all the flowers and flower buds, you then need to remove the bonsai/meika and trim off the outer layer of roots. If you have used the 3 grades/levels in your previous potting up it will be quite easy to tease the roots out. Re-pot using the same layered system and tie the tree into the pot. When prodding the new mix into the root ball don't be too energetic as you may break down the Kanuma and create a lot of DUST – this you do not want.

A major re-styling requires removal of all Green Growth, Flowers and Flower Buds, carrying out the re-style and where large sections of the plant are being cut away ensuring that you achieve a balance between top and bottom as the apex of an Azalea is weak. After the work is done the subject can be removed from the pot and the roots cut back – particularly underneath as this will help develop good nebari.

In the case of all developing Satsuki it is a good idea to wash and scrub the trunk and branches with water and a tooth brush.

This is a big encouragement to the Satsuki to bud back as is the wiring of all branches and twigs.

Remember to tie in your plant into the pot as the stability will help the new hair roots to develop.

Arthur Robinson

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Introducing **Akemi no Tsuki**

This is the strong sport of a weak variety called *Kifujin* .

Although the flower is of medium size Akemi no Tsuki is mostly used for Shohin (up to 15cm) bonsai.

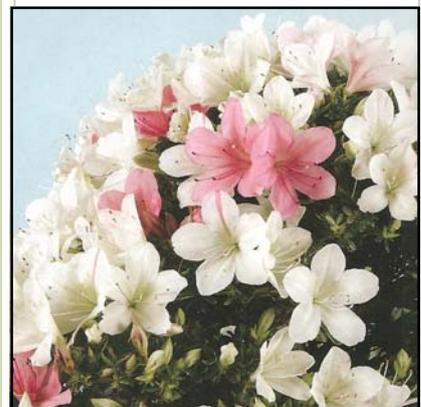
The reasons are that

- 1) The leaf is fine.
- 2) It grows alternate leaves instead of the usual opposite pattern.
- 3) It has *very short* internodal growth.

All the best attributes for Shohin bonsai

Additionally the late 90s introduction of this variety has not allowed enough time for some really large-trunked, older trees to be developed.

We now have Akemi no Tsuki in Australia. It seems to grow quite easily and vigorously.



By the way it is pronounced
Akemi nots'ki



Meika style Satsuki in Kanuma



Busy and happy 'bees' at a Satsuki Society workshop in August.



Sales tables in Kanuma make your mouth water.

Notices

**The next workshop will be held
@ Susie Nolan's residence,**

**6 Banou court,
Ocean Reef.
Tel: 9300 5854**

!2th October –12.00 - 4.00.

**Please let her know if you can't
make it.**

Trials on Growth Technology products

I am about to do trials on some of Growth Technology's products to see how they work with Satsuki. These products are manufactured principally for the Hydroponics Industry but since Kanuma is an inert material, should work well for us.

Already the **Clonex Clone Solution** is proving itself very helpful with recently potted cuttings and plants.

Clonex Clone Solution. Clonex Rooting Hormone

Both these products are used together in propagation.

Clonex Clone Solution is used to dip cuttings into before applying Clonex Rooting hormone as well as regularly watering cuttings and re-potted material.

CCS is super- concentrated; containing minerals, vitamins, wetting agents and root promoting hormones.

It also encourages rapid and profuse root development to protect young plants against fungal disease.

Clonex Rooting Hormone is a high-performance gel, designed to give cuttings the best possible start in life.

Easy to use, its unique formula is a complex blend of hormones, vitamins, nutrients and fungicides to initiate root development.

Clonex Rooting Hormone comes in 3 different coloured gels.

Red - used for hard wood cuttings

Green - for soft wood/tip cuttings.

Purple - used for medium wood cuttings.

The gel ensures consistent results by eliminating the entry of air into the cuttings.

It contains hormones, vitamins, nutrients and fungicides.

The gel instantly seals the cut tissue eliminating the risk of infection or embolism.

CCS can also be used when fertilizing. It can be mixed, with your fertilizer at a rate of 10ml - 1 litre of water, or 5ml - 1 litre of water for foliar feeding.

Other products I am trialling are **Ionic Grow** and **Ionic Bloom**.

Ionic Grow:

Applied regularly during the plants' growth phase, **IonicGrow** contains higher levels of nitrate nitrogen to encourage and stimulate leaf and shoot growth,

It helps the production of amino acids and proteins to stimulate new cell growth. It can be used in all types of growing media.

Ionic Bloom.

The phosphorus and potassium contained within **Ionic Bloom** enhance the flowering capabilities of the plant. It was recommended to me by the makers to commence feeding this product when we see flower buds swelling, about 4 to 6 weeks before November in our case.

Although these products are used for Hydroponics they can be use in soil cultivation as well. I have been using **CCS** on all my young Azaleas with amazing results. I am very happy with these products so far.

Alf Devine

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