



Australian Government

Australian National Botanic Gardens

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MEDIA RELEASE

A tree in the palm of your hand... Showcasing Australian Native Trees as Bonsai

Australian plant species have been grown as bonsai since the early 20th century, but the exhibition that opens today at the Australian National Botanic Gardens today is only the third national display of solely native species.

For the first time, this year's national exhibition will feature a Huon pine as bonsai by a Hobart bonsaiist. It is also the first time a tree, grown in Tasmania, will be on display. The number of entries from Sydney has doubled over last year's event. Miniature trees from the New South Wales South Coast and Southern Tablelands and the Canberra region will also be on display.

There will be demonstrations at 11.00am and 2.00pm each day on how to work with bonsai, and a lecture today at 12.30pm on how to achieve all-year colour with native bonsai.

"Bonsai is an ancient horticultural art form that originated in China 2000 years ago, before extending to Japan, and in the last 100 years throughout much of the world," said Dr Roger Hnatiuk, a member of the Canberra Bonsai Society. "Despite its great historical tradition, bonsai today still both excites and challenges. It teaches respect for life, awareness of the world beyond the city, and a sense of achievement when a long nurtured plant evokes memories of wilderness or simple pleasure in living beauty."

Many superb, young and old specimens will be displayed, including species of *Eucalyptus*, *Callistemon*, *Acacia*, *Backhousia* and *Melaleuca*. The exhibition also includes a catalogue that provides fascinating insights into the backgrounds of the plants displayed.

The exhibition is open in the Crosbie Morrison Building from Friday 18 through Sunday 20 November, from 9.30am until 4.30 pm each day.

For more information contact the Visitor Centre on 02 6250 9540.

Dr Roger Hnatiuk, Canberra Bonsai Society, is available for interview at the Botanic Gardens every day of the exhibition.

Bonsai demonstrations are scheduled for 11.00am and 2.00pm each day – Media welcome!

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