

JOB FOR SEPTEMBER

I would envisage that everyone has completed their repotting of deciduous trees by now, however, if you haven't and the trees have already burst into new leaf, you should either wait until the new growth hardens or wait until next year before repotting.

Remember that the best time to repot flowering trees is after flowering and Aussie Natives are best repotted prior to a growth spurt, when the tree is dormant.

Spring is a great time to repot most of your collection but it is recommended that figs prefer it a little bit warmer, however, I pot them up at all but mid-winter without losses.

Everyone has their own favourite potting mix and the additives to this mix vary just as much. I use 'Osmocote Plus' (9 month slow release with trace elements) in my pot when I repot. Other people use 'Blood and Bone', 'Alroc', 'Dynamic Lifter', 'Zeolite' etc. in their mix.

The reason I don't put Osmocote directly into my mix prior to potting is that if I happen not to use the full amount straight away, I consider that the Osmocote starts to release its fertilizer into the mix.

Remember that 'Natives' don't like phosphorous so I use 'Osmocote for Natives' instead of 'Osmocote Plus'.

Due to the warmer weather we are probably increasing the regularity of our watering, especially the trees that have not been repotted this year, as they will dry out quicker due to being more root bound.

The more we water, the more we leech out nutrients from the soil, so fertilizing with a liquid fertilizer such as 'Charlie Carp' etc. on a fortnightly basis is a good idea, but there is no need to fertilize your newly potted trees for 6-8 weeks after repotting. I use 'Seasol' or 'Bloom Booster' but the experts use 'Charlie Carp'. I have heard reports recently that Seasol and other seaweed based products have a detrimental effect on Banksias so be warned that tree losses have occurred.

** Never use fertilizer at a stronger rate than recommended or it will burn the roots and kill your tree.

Most varieties of Elms are in full leaf so the need to trim is important to maintain shape, reduce internode length and increase ramification. Use sharp scissors to cut in between pairs of leaves.

The more you trim the better, otherwise new growth gets very leggy and internode length increases enormously.

My Maples are a bit slow as yet but trimming is very important. When two (2) new leaves appear, pinch out the new bud between these leaves for the same reasons as outlined above for elms.

Remember to check any wire on trees, especially on new timber as it grows very quickly at this time.