Making NZ Native Fern Trees
By
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The fern tree, a common site throughout the bush landscape of NZ so it's only fitting to also have these wonderful plants on your layout in scale of course. In the past it was either to hard or very time consuming in hand making the fronds for the fern. Today with technology and the abundance of plastic flowers on the market it was only a matter of the before they made a small fern plant. So off down to the 'The Warehouse' and in the plastic plant section look for a small potted fern, if you're lucky to find one it will cost you around $14. One of these plants will yield about 30 ferns, pretty cool for that price.

Material

   a. Small trunk (wood stick)
   b. Soldering iron (25 watt)
   c. Glue stick
   d. Matt Black paint (thinned) & fine #2 paint brush
   e. Scissors & saw blade

Apart from the plant fronds we also need some small straight/bent round shaped sticks, I used small twigs about 4" long and striped the bark off them then let dry out. When dry, with a small saw blade score the whole length right round this tend to roughen the sides up and make them a bit furry. Next we need a small soldering iron - 40 watt (DSE or The Warehouse) will be fine and a clue stick from your electric glue gun. With the scissors cut a fern stem from the plant then cut all the fronds off that stem into a box. With the matt black paint and fine (00 brush), paint each frond down the top side centre stem (I use Floquil paint) and also all your fern trunks (03 brush).

After all is dry we are ready to start, grab a piece of spare board or card at your work area, with hot soldering iron we melt the glue and apply just like we are normally soldering a part together in this case we use the glue stick, make a puddle of hot glue, grab a frond and dip it in then apply to the top of the trunk, do this four time to form a cross. Depending on how hot the glue gets – cure quickly you may have to hold the frond for a few seconds. Next we start adding between these then with some smaller ones apply to the under side hanging down - old fronds and then again to the top side, pointing up to represent new growth – finished.

Another way on painting which I found just as easy is make the whole fern up then paint the black last, also a dab of brown on the dead fronds hanging down.