



Bonsai Notebook

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

July 2012 vol 19

July 2012 Programs by Bill Boytim

Many old trees in nature have dead areas on the trunk or branch, bark missing or even hollow trunks as the result of decay. In Bonsai a dead tip is referred to as a Jin, a section of missing bark on the trunk or exposed root is called a Shari, a hollowed or split trunk is called Saba-Miki. Part of the art of Bonsai is to create in miniature a mature tree like you may observe in nature. To add features of a mature tree to the Bonsai carving techniques are essential.

Donna Dobberfuhr, of Sculptural Designs Atelier, a sculptor and Bonsai Artist from San Antonio will present our **Wednesday July 11th** program. She will demonstrate how to carve these deadwood features on your Bonsai. She will also give tips on coloring this newly created dead wood to present an aged look and methods of preserving this exposed wood to prevent any additional unwanted decay. Some of the necessary tools needed, most non-powered, will be on display.

Donna is a very skilled artist in many different media. She produces larger than life bronze sculpture, bas-relief with brick, tile, and mosaic. She is adept at creating carved objects in wood. She is the author of the National POW Memorial.

Our **Tuesday July 17th Workshop**, Donna will provide advice and hands-on direction on creating Jin, Shari or Saba-Miki on members trees. Please bring your tools and of course your trees to this workshop.

Calendar of Events

July 11th ABS Monthly Meeting Reception

**Hosts: Els Ulug
& Deborah Van Cleaf
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 pm**

**July 11th ABS Monthly Meeting
Carving Trees & Deadwood**

**with Donna Dobberfuhr
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 9:00 pm**

July 17th ABS Board Meeting

Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 7:30 pm

**July 17th ABS Member's Workshop
Workshop - Carving advice**

**with Donna Dobberfuhr
Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm**



Bonsai Basics by Joey McCoy
June 2012 ABS Meeting- Photo by Editor

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The rate of advertising in "Bonsai Notebook" is \$6.00 per month or \$35.00 per year, for two column inches minimum. Additional space must be purchased in increments of two column inches. Two column inches measure approximately 3 1/2 inches wide by 2 inches high. All ads must be camera ready and prepaid. Changes to ads must be received 30 days prior to the month of the desired insertions. Other newsletter content is due on the last day of the month, in order to be published in the next month's newsletter.

John Muller is the editor of "Bonsai Notebook". He may be contacted at jcm2austx@sprintmail.com.

Austin Bonsai on the Internet

Online discussions
Picture and video sharing
Questions and answers
Upcoming events
NO SPAM

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/austinbonsai/>
or
jvmccoy@sbcglobal.net.

President's Message by Mike Watson

July is here and so are the hot days and nights of summer. Highs over 100 will be very common and it becomes a struggle to keep our beloved bonsai happy. I have long since put up my shade cloth and moved my trees to locations that fit their respective light needs or sensitivities. Watering becomes tricky too. It's tempting to overwater our trees to try to keep them cool. Even though it is important to keep our roots from cooking, water is not the best way to achieve this. Shade and insulation are much better tools. Joey McCoy showed us how he uses coconut fiber as a way to add a buffer between the sun and our bonsai roots. This is an excellent material to use and it's a renewable resource as well. Great find Joey!

The summer isn't all bad though. This time of year is just right for repotting our tropical trees. They need the heat to grow new roots so go get your ficus (and any other equator originating species) and get busy!

Don't forget to bring donations for the 2013 convention raffle to the meetings. We need empty coffee cans for raffle tickets as well. Also, keep working on your trees for the display!



Photo by Editor

AUSTIN BONSAI SOCIETY GENERAL MEETING

June 13, 2012

Call to Order by President Mike Watson was at 7:32.
The **announcements** were as follows:

Becki Drozd announced that she is receiving raffle items for the 2013 LSBF Convention that we are planning and hosting with the San Antonio Bonsai Society. She really needs at least 10 items from each member of our club. They do not have to be associated with bonsai or even China or Japan, although all of those are always happily received.

Bill Boytim announced that all of ABS members are also members of The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit. He will be at the land working on the pond work on Friday, Saturday and Monday, June 15, 16, and 18 and could use some help if anyone wants to join him. The property is in Mustang Ridge south of Austin.

Mike Watson announced that the Texas Shohin Society meeting will be Saturday June 23rd at Terry and Sheila Ward's home. The program will be on making diazas for viewing stones.

Mike also said "Thank you" to Candy Hansen and Marvin Chambers for our wonderful refreshments tonight.

Bill Boytim began the program section by welcoming all the new people who are visiting with us tonight, many who found us by coming to our exhibit. He also thanked all the members who worked to set up and take down the exhibit and who brought trees, stones, scrolls, stands and accent plants. Bill then introduced Joey McCoy who gave a program on basic bonsai steps.

There were several people present who either do not yet have a pre-bonsai or bonsai and some who just have purchased one. The program included several steps and issues that we all have to learn about to have beautiful and healthy and long lasting bonsai. It was very interesting and helpful.

Becki held the raffle and all items were given away to happy customers.

Adjournment was at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Nan Jenkins, Secretary

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(call for directions)

LSBF (Lone Star Bonsai Federation), of which all members of the Austin Bonsai Society are members, has a website which might help members understand the organization better.

Please go to: <http://www.bonsai-lsbf.com>

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Bonsai Calendar

- SSOT meeting schedule for 2012:

Sept. 15 Annual business meeting and panel critique.

- The 2013 state LSBF convention will be April 11-13, 2013, at the New Braunfels Convention Center.

Know of an upcoming Bonsai event of interest to club members? Send the details to jcm2austx@sprintmail.com

Convention chronicle

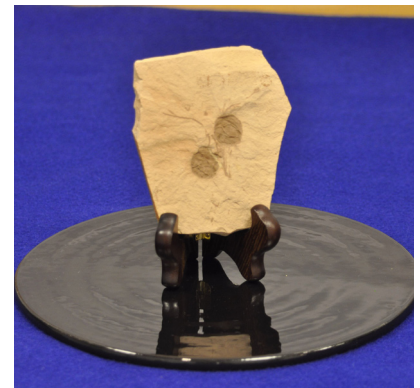
April 11-13, 2013 New Braunfels, TX

The San Antonio and Austin clubs are working really hard right now to put together a fantastic convention experience for next year. The Dallas folks put on such a great show recently and it's our hope to keep the momentum rolling along on 2013. We will be at the New Braunfels Convention Center, located between Austin and San Antonio, which is easy to locate, has plenty of parking and enough space for one of the largest (size wise - 50,000 sq ft) conventions that we've ever had in the state. The "home" hotel is the Faust, located about a block away, easy walking distance. Since it is a smaller hotel (57 rooms), make your reservation early if you want to stay here, otherwise choose a hotel in the price range that suits you best.

As a teaser, I thought I'd talk about one of the workshop trees we're going to have: *Diospyros texana*, the Texas Persimmon. For those who have never worked with this native species, it is found in the Hill Country as an understory tree with a smooth trunk and beautiful flaking bark that reveals white, grey and pink tones. A unique quality of the species is that the deadwood will oxidize a black color, giving the look of having survived a fire. They have tiny leaves and small black marble-sized edible fruit which are scaled to Bonsai proportions! They are semi-deciduous, depending on the winter weather, usually holding onto their leaves from San Antonio, south. I personally think this is the best American fruit tree for Bonsai.. all the qualities are there!

Joey McCoy
Convention Chair

2012 4-27 LSBF Convention Dallas



(Photos by Joey McCoy)

June 2012 ABS General Meeting on Bonsai Basics



(Photos by Editor)

July Bonsai

by John Miller

Editor's Note: John Miller, who writes a monthly column for the Bonsai Society of Dallas and the Fort Worth Bonsai Society, has agreed to share his column with us. We need to make adjustments for our warmer, climate, with its early springs, long summers, late falls and erratic winters.

What happens to bonsai in July? I guess that depends more on the people taking care of them than on the weather. When the temperature gets to 100 degrees they need to be looked after since they cannot get up and move to the shade or go get a drink of water.

You need to take care of three things for your bonsai: (1) the ambient temperature, (2) water in the soil, and (3) the sun load on pots as well as trees. How you do this will depend on your back yard and your schedule. I cannot give you a precise to-do list since your backyard is different from mine. Treating one may help take care of another.

The ambient temperature around you bonsai can be different than the general air temperature in the yard. Evaporation requires energy so a humidity tray or wetting the shelves will lower the ambient temp in that specific locale. Air movement will evaporate a bit of moisture from the leaves, soil, and surroundings reducing the temp a bit. Less moisture on the leaves means less likely to have fungal problems and a healthy bonsai can stand stress better.

Watering can be hard to do right. There are some fixed items such as your work schedule and maybe family considerations that affect your plans. The APL soil recommended works for most. The aka-dama keeps more moisture than the beginner realizes. However, since it is clay, if it dries it will need at least two waterings to get rehydrated. Your schedule may require the addition of some organic moisture holding component. A automatic drip system can help until you can hand water. When I worked, I foliage sprayed each morning (took less than 15 mins).

The sun is a much bigger problem. It will not stay in one place. When you think your shade cloth is working nicely, the sun moves over and shines thru the

open end heating the pots. The late afternoon sun is the worst. It is also when the ambient temperature is the hottest so a shade cloth or awning on the west is imperative. Your job is to keep the pot and soil from being heated. A loose cover, preferably fabric, should be used. Timing of watering helps. My ideal for the hot days is to water at 2pm to cool the pots and soil before the hottest part of the day and then again after sundown to cool the roots so the plant can recuperate at night. Not only is the water cool but the resulting evaporation does a lot too.

Also watch for signs of insect problems. The spider mite will always be near. Others to look for are scale of various forms, aphids, and mealy bugs. Preventative medicine is best. By the time you see signs, the damage is already done, especially spider mites. I use the organic foliar feed (1 Tablespoon each of fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses and 5% apple cider vinegar per gallon water) to control all these. You can use some of the other organic controls or a chemical according to label directions. Read the label directions carefully. Do not apply oil based chemicals to buttonwoods. A hose end sprayer does not work very well, its droplets are too large and you have little control over where it goes. Use a pump sprayer with a fine spray and cover both top and bottom of leaves and get down into the small cracks and joints.

The humidity in summer varies quite a bit but when it sticks around for a few days look for fungal problems to appear, mildew being the most prevalent. Foliage spraying in the morning will usually not be a problem because it dries pretty quickly. Treat with potassium carbonate which you can find at any nursery with a decent organic section. There are several chemical sprays available too.

In the garden section of the June 21 Dallas paper, they recommended using 3% hydrogen peroxide to control a viral disease on roses. I have used a 1% diluted spray of it to control fungal (specifically black spot on elm and yaupon). However it will burn very tender new growth so I hesitate to mention it.

As a rule we do not feed our trees enough. Since

the mix we use has very little nutrient value, we must make up with our fertilizer practice. Some kind of solid organic must be used since water soluble types wash right on thru. The best "rule" I have heard was given by Matt Ouwinga who for his trident maples.

- A. Apply organic fertilizer balls each 6 weeks. Discard old balls.
- B. Apply fish emulsion every two weeks.
- C. Apply liquid plant food on alternate weeks.

Many spring flowering plants will be setting buds for next years flowers. Azaleas will set their but toward the end of July. If you prune tips after that you remove the new buds.

Now that night temperatures are staying above 60 degrees you should think about repotting some of the tropicals. Most tropicals do well with an annual repotting. I would emphasize to check the wires on your trees and also see that the drains are not blocked in any way. Especially check them after a rain to be sure that your pots have drained properly. Keep the tropicals trimmed as they will be growing like crazy. However, if you want flowers on those that produce on the end of the twigs, bougianvilla-pomegranate-crape myrtle, you will have to forgo the bonsai shape to let them flower. These species should be pruned

more drastically before the growing season starts so they can still be in a pretty good shape.

Again, help your trees keep their roots cool. In nature they have a vast heat sink of the earth to maintain a reasonably cool temperature around their roots. In pots, they are subject to being as hot as the air around them and also they get very hot from being in the sun. Dark pots get much hotter. Things you can do to help will be appreciated. I do not like foil, it is applied too close to the pot and there is no air flow. If you have a bunch of old cloth (known at my place as rags) is best. You can use them in lieu of the foil, hold them in place with small rocks. To me they are less noticeable than the foil. A lite covering of mulch (e.g. long sphagnum moss) on the soil will help block the rays and also conserve moisture.

ABS Board Meeting Minutes

June 15, 2012

The regular meeting of the Austin Bonsai Society Board did not meet due to the lack of a quorum. There is one position open on the board as a member-at-large. If you might be interested in learning more about the requirements for board members, please talk with one of us: Mike Watson, Bill Boytim, Nan Jenkins, Pat Ware, Ken Lakin or John Muller.



(Photo by Joey McCoy)

Bonsai Notebook

Austin Bonsai Society
P.O. Box 340474
Austin, Texas 78734



The Austin Bonsai Society is a nonprofit organization which exists to help in providing guidance and education for individuals in their desire to learn and expand their knowledge and skill in the arts of bonsai.

The Society holds regular meetings, twelve months a year, on the second Wednesday of each month. Our social period begins at 7:00 PM, followed by our program at 7:30 PM. Normally, unless announced otherwise, these meetings are held in the Zilker Garden Center building, located on Barton Springs Road in Zilker Park, Austin, Texas. We offer a monthly program of interest to the general membership.

The cost of membership is presently only \$30.00 for an individual and \$35.00 for a family membership.

For additional information, please contact the Austin Bonsai Society at P.O. Box 340474, Austin, Texas 78734

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