



Bonsai Notebook

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

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Calendar of Events

January 10, 2024

- ◆ Topic: Itoigawa Juniper
- ◆ Artist: Todd Schlafer
- ◆ Time: 6:30pm (Social) 7:00pm (Meeting)
- ◆ Location: Zilker Botanical Garden

January 11, 2024

- ◆ Topic: Member led workshop
- ◆ Advice on styling, pruning and improvements on pines
- ◆ Other conifers and evergreens are welcome
- ◆ Time: 6:00pm - 9:00pm
- ◆ Location: MBP at Pflugerville
- ◆ Suggested donation: \$10

2023 Board of Directors

Jonathan W.
President

Eric B.
Vice President

Simon T.
Secretary

Gloria N.
Treasurer

Dashiell C.
Member-At-Large

Judy G.
Member-At-Large

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Volunteers

Refreshments
John H.
Debbie H.

Tree Hosts
John H.
Debbie H.

President's Message

By Jonathan W.

Please see the VP Message and the Looking Ahead Calendar to arrange schedules to attend workshops happening each month: Jan, Feb, and Mar 2024.

Let's start this President's message with a heartfelt ThAnK YoU to the outgoing Austin Bonsai Society Board. You kept our club going through times of great change and you helped us adapt during and after a global pandemic!

Reviewing the year, we had top notch talent present at our club nights, a very well attended Bonsai show @ Zilker Botanical Garden in May of 2023 in Austin, a generous bonsai club charity auction event, and we celebrated our friendships and love of bonsai with a festive holiday party in November. It was a joy to see the number of memberships grow as more and more people found out about our club through technology and social media. Let's keep up the momentum as our Austin Club continues to promote the art of bonsai and bring educational awareness of this special form of hobby and high-level artistry.

The new Board and I are looking forward to upholding past ABS traditions while adding-in club member ideas from past surveys to make this a great year! The program calendar and guest artists coming up in 2024 are sure to be engaging and peak the interests of bonsai enthusiasts of all experience levels. It's an exciting time to be a part of the Austin Bonsai Society!

Thanks to our photo contributors like Joey and May L., our greeter, Quoc H., and members like Simon who work so diligently behind the scenes to support our club activities in areas of technology, payment systems and meticulously planned events of The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit!

In the year ahead, we can look forward to the continued sharing of knowledge among members. Those of us in the early years of the bonsai arts have so much wisdom available to us -- just remember to reach out to a few folks at club meetings or workshop workshops and ask! We can get in-person help and guidance from those eager to pass on pointers and their extensive depth of knowledge. If I have missed thanking anyone, please let me do so at the next opportunity. Volunteers, service, and enthusiasm make this a well-oiled machine!

Happy Bonsai Styling!

- Jonathan Wood

Bonsai Quotes:

"Bonsai is not about making a tree look small... it's about making a small tree look big." –unknown

"I have killed more trees than you will ever own" - attributed to Bill Valavanis

"To develop a fine Bonsai collection, make one hundred and keep two or three." - Mr. Toshio Kawamoto

President's Message

By Jonathan W.

Bonsai Quote:

"For the past few years, the subject of 'naturalistic' bonsai has been discussed in bonsai circles... So what is the concept? It comes from something John Naka said: 'Don't make your tree look like a bonsai. Rather, try to make your bonsai look like a tree.' ... look at some natural trees. A traditional bonsai is ideal; it is abstract. A naturalistic bonsai is realistic, but never totally realistic. There is always a certain degree of abstraction. But never going as far as many modern bonsai, which are very groomed, very refined, and often look almost unreal...'Naturalistic' means that the end result, the finished tree in a pot, conveys the feeling of an impressive natural tree that has not been touched by man. It does not matter how this is achieved, but in most cases it is done very artificially - not by nature!... Naturalistic is not an excuse for lazy people. It is not about untidy looking trees. It is not a shortcut. I think it is even more labor intensive than traditional styling.... Try making a decision based on what the material tells you... Naturalistic styling is just another styling option. It is perfectly okay not to like the whole idea or the end result presented here." -- Walter Pall, pgs. 44-45 Bonsai Today #104

Vice President's Message

By Eric B.

Hello fellow tiny tree enthusiasts, I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and that your New Year has started off well!

ABS is starting off the year strong with a demo by Todd Schlafer on Weds., Jan. 10. Todd will be working on an Itoigawa juniper, which will be available to win in the raffle, so buy those tickets!

Also in January we have a workshop on Thursday the 11th, 6 pm - 9 pm at MBP Bonsai Studio in Pflugerville (601 Kay Ln., Pflugerville, TX 78660). The workshop is BYOT with a focus on pines, but any conifer or other evergreen is welcome. There will be a sign-up sheet at the main meeting, so whether you just want to learn more about pines or take a tree to the next level, please join us.

In February we are doing a member-led presentation on Repotting, at the Wednesday meeting. A few club members will repot some of their trees, and demonstrate root cleaning and pruning, wiring roots into a pot, how to add soil, and other repotting basics. So come prepared with all those questions you have about repotting, but have been afraid to ask!

Later in February, on Saturday the 17th from 1-4 pm, we have a workshop on wiring, also at MBP Bonsai Studio. ABS will provide nursery stock trees, and we will use them to learn and practice good wiring techniques. If you want to learn basic wiring techniques, or bump your wiring game up a notch, this workshop is for you. The trees used in the workshop will be offered in the raffle at future club meetings.

In March we have visiting artist Evan Pardue, who will be working on a Water Elm. Evan will also do a workshop the following evening, Thursday, March 14, from 6 pm to 9 pm, at MBP Bonsai Studio. He will have trees (water elms, and others) available for purchase either before the workshop or at the time; we should have some pictures of trees in a few weeks so you can order before time, if you want. The workshop fee is \$55, plus the cost of a tree and other materials. Evan is also offering private study, for \$75 per hour, or \$450 for a full day. Evan is a great artist and teacher, so I strongly encourage you to avail yourself of his private study. Even just 1 hour can help you make great progress on a tree!

Well, that's enough for now. I'm very excited for the upcoming year, and look forward to seeing you all at our meetings and workshops.

BONSAI IS LIFE!

Thanks,
Eric Benson

Reminder for club membership and advertisement

2024 membership fee

Individual	\$35.00
Family	\$40.00
Newsletter monthly advertisements:	\$35.00
Directory advertisement:	\$11.00

You may contact payments.austinbonsaisociety@gmail.com for convenient electronic payment options (processing fee will be added).

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ABS Board Meeting Minutes

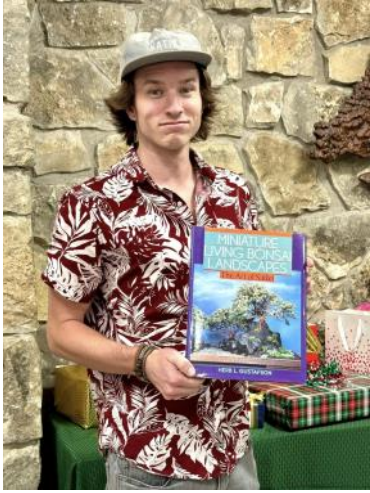
Austin Bonsai Society
Board Meeting Minutes, December 19, 2023

Meeting Attendees:
Not enough for a quorum

Bonsai Calendar – Looking Ahead

Date	Event Type	Artist	Topic	Location	Approx Member Cost
WED 1/10/24	Club Night - Demo / Lecture	Todd Schlafer https://www.firstbranchbonsai.com/about & https://www.podbean.com/w/pb-bsgg5-12960f9	Itoigawa Juniper: Styling and chance to win the demo tree!	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX	Raffle Table Items/Donations Welcome
THURS 1/11/24	Workshop	Club Member Led with Mike Hansen – Join us for guidance, pruning help, and styling improvements on Pines. (Other conifers and evergreens welcome)	Bring your own Tree to Work on: Pine focus, Conifer, Evergreens welcome – Start time: 6:00PM - 9:00PM *	MBP BONSAI STUDIO 601 Kay Ln Pflugerville, TX 78660 (512) 202-3403	\$10 to ABS for venue
WED 2/14/24	Club Night - Demo / Lecture	Club Member Led - Demonstration and discussion of techniques – (not a workshop for member trees)	How to re-pot bonsai! Trimming roots, securing tree in pot, suggested soil types and more	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX	Raffle Table Items/Donations Welcome
SAT 2/17/24	Workshop	Wiring Workshop - Club Member Led Practice wiring techniques on club-provided tree material.	From structural wiring to refinement – great event for beginners to advanced bonsai artists 1:00PM - 4:00PM	MBP BONSAI STUDIO 601 Kay Ln Pflugerville, TX 78660 (512) 202-3403	\$10 to ABS for venue and supplies
WED 3/13/24	Club Night - Demo / Lecture	Evan Pardue https://underhillbonsai.com/evan-pardue/	Yaupon Holly - Bonsai Styling and Demonstration	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Spring	Raffle Table Items/Donations Welcome – chance to win demo tree
THURS 3/14/24	Workshop	Visiting Bonsai Artist: Evan Pardue leads this workshop	Make your own bonsai with material purchased from Artist's bonsai nursery in Louisiana - Approx Start Time: 6:00-9:00PM	MBP BONSAI STUDIO 601 Kay Ln Pflugerville, TX 78660	\$55 workshop fee + \$ cost of tree purchased from Vendor
THURS to SUN 4/25/24 4/26/24 4/27/24 4/28/24	Convention- Bonsai Workshops, Demos, Sales, Vendors, Banquet, Public Display	Bjorn Bjorholm, Sergio Cuan, Min Hsuan Lo **Registration underway! First-class, exciting, international bonsai weekend**	Bonsai On the Bayou 2024 Convention - LSBF + Bonsai Clubs International – Host: Houston Bonsai Society – https://www.facebook.com/HoustonBonsai	Houston Marriott Westchase (800) 452-5110 2900 Briarpark Dr, Houston, TX 77042	RSVP room reservations, workshops, and registration EARLY before it sells out –

Holiday Celebrations!! Happy New Year!!



January Bonsai

by John Miller

Christmas has gone so now you can devote your full time to bonsai again. Well, if you are not working, not married, are a complete loner, etc. Anyhow you cannot just ignore them since they are dormant. Their needs must be met although most needs are not as strict as in the summertime.

My most unforgettable January calamity in recent years was having two catlin elms and a trident cut and stripped by a packrat for his nest. The two elms took some time but they recovered. The trident never did. I now keep outdoor rat poison blocks scattered among the trees. I like blocks rather than pellets since they are easier to pick up come spring.

Other outdoor pest problems will depend upon the temperature. If there are many warm days spider mites, scale, and aphids may show up. Use the same controls you did last summer. Too much water could cause root rot, fungus or other damage.

Indoor plants will have the same pest you had last summer and maybe some more since any eggs will hatch and they usually love the warm indoors. So keep your eyes peeled when you are watering.

Watering tends to be a bonsai grower's biggest problem in winter. It is difficult to determine how dry the soil is when they are put close together in winter storage. That could be another argument for having a porous well-draining bonsai soil which is very difficult to over water. Just remember that the water will evaporate quickly when the warm winter sun hits the pots and more so if there is a little breeze.

January is an excellent time to do styling work. Deciduous trees are bare so you see the real tree and are not confused and misled by foliage. Examine the branch structure and decide if you need to reposition any branches. If the trees have been styled for some time, you may need to reduce the length of some branches by selectively cutting back a larger secondary branch and developing a smaller branch. This also gives you more movement in the branch.

Remove vertically growing twigs and branchlets. Do you need to develop more ramification. If so make a note to go on a rigorous tip pruning when growth starts next spring.

Evergreens may be worked on although the best time would have been last fall. Their sap flow is now at a minimum so they will not bleed too much. Do not do too much work on spring flowering plants like azaleas, their buds were set late last summer or fall and you will be losing some blooms. Most later bloomers (wisteria and crape myrtle) generally have their blooms on new growth so you can style them now.

Greenhouses can be a great source of bonsai enjoyment in January. Of course, there is always the tropics that stay green the year around and will therefore need a bunch of care. I let my small elms and maples get a month of cold, hopefully they get to 25 a couple of times to be really dormant. Then between Christmas and New Years I bring them into the greenhouse and can do their repotting in January and enjoy the flush of new foliage before the bigger trees are needing anything.

The cheapest way to upgrade your collection is to join on the club digs. Most digs are scheduled in the late winter which get them at close to the optimum digging stage. If you have doubts about the care after you get home just ask any of your fellow diggers. They all like to share techniques. Collect trees are faster than the other way that I like, grow your own from cuttings. Cuttings do not take any care at all the first year, just put them under the bench and hit them with water when you do the bonsai on top.

The only way to learn bonsai is to do it. You cannot get the why out of a book. You need to have someone help you with the styling and to point out not only what he is doing but why she is doing it. All clubs work hard on having good programs but the real learning is by taking advantage of any workshops offered, both by local club personnel and by visiting artists that the club brings in. The LSBF state convention or TTSBE seminar each year offers a concentrated weekend of study. I still like to watch a master work and listen to his/her comments. There will always be something slightly new or different or a different approach that will be more clear. Wiring or repotting in itself might be boring but the presentation is never boring.

Reminder: 2023 CLUB MEMBERSHIP FEE AMOUNT INCREASE

Beginning in January 2023, ABS will charge an annual membership fee of \$35 for an individual and \$40/couple pursuant to the vote taken by the ABS Board on May 17, 2022, the discussion by attendees at the June 22 ABS meeting, the newsletter announcement dated June and July, 2022 and the regular meeting vote taken on July 13, 2022. Fees for electronic payments will be added to those amounts.

Memberships are annual and need to be renewed each year by the end of February in order to receive a copy of the 2023 Directory.

New/Renewed Members

Recruiting Authors

With a nod of respect to John Miller, who has been diligently writing monthly columns for our newsletter, we would also like to take this time to invite interested members with knowledge and experiences of local Austin conditions to write articles for beginners and potential aspirants keen on raising bonsai. The Bonsai Notebook is looking for a new voice to author a column providing helpful reminders and tips dedicated to caring for bonsai. Be it a monthly routine or winter procedures, we'd like to welcome new perspectives and experiences to be shared in this newsletter. If interested, please contact: webmaster.austinbonsaisociety@gmail.com.

A warm thank you to John Miller for writing the latest columns. Even I, as the editor, may have taken these last months for granted and have been reminded that life is a charming companion that deserves to be appreciated every day. Thank you for your helpful words!

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(call for directions)



Bonsai Notebook

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



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About Us

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 \$32.50 for an individual and \$37.50 for a family membership. For additional information, contact the Austin Bonsai Society at P.O. Box 340474, Austin, TX 78734.