

Bonsai Notebook

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

March 2015 vol 51

March 2015 Program

by Jimbo Baumann

Some time ago one of our monthly programs focused on “Root Over Rock Bonsai Technique”. The root over rock or root clinging to rock technique is a well-established bonsai technique and members are encouraged to consult the ABS Library for the books of John Naka or Deborah R. Koreshoff for an excellent primer on these techniques. In Japanese this technique may also be called “Ishizuke”. It is best when considering this technique to select plant material that is sturdy with long roots and low branches. Some plant material may include TX Native Cedar Elm, a conifer, Kingsville Boxwood, or a tropical. Either deciduous or conifer can be selected.

Tonight’s program will feature an update to this technique from trees originally established during our workshop a few years ago. We will be unveiling the tree roots repotting and discussing next steps in this technique. Members are encouraged to bring their trees for a viewing of root progression. If you do not have a tree, please consider bringing a cedar elm or conifer for this presentation or to the members’ workshop. Our workshop utilized the Native TX Cedar Elm with limestone and “karst” stones collected during many of my dig hunts.

In addition to viewing the progression of one of our project trees, we will discuss and show examples of Suiseki utilizing our native Texas limestone. I have collected native stone for many years and built daiza for display or featured the stone in my bonsai work and or display. Suiseki, or viewing stone, is really a complimentary item to the display and featuring of your bonsai. And what better way to display a TX Native Tree than with a collected local stone. There is a distinct relationship between a bonsai and suiseki; with both describing nature. A fun thing for this bonsai person! My actual interest in bonsai started in the early 90’s. I have been a printer, artist, and an adaptable Austin person for many years. I took my first bonsai class in 1995 from the Rehbergs (early Austin Bonsai folks) and I have been digging, reading, and creating ever since. This hobby helps my creative and scientific side and I look forward to seeing each of you for this fun update to one of our project trees.

In addition, later in the month 17th March you can celebrate St Patty’s Day by bringing your green tree to our members’ workshop with a stone and we can start you down a road with a project tree all your own.
Good Luck with more repotting between the rain, sleet, and cold days.

Calendar of Events

March 8, 10am: Champanel Grapevines dig in Victoria TX
Contact Ryan Odegard bonsaiode@gmail.com

Mar 11: ABS Meeting Root Over Rock
Hosts: Nan Jenkins, Timmi Kuykendall and Deb Van Cleaf

Mar 17: 7:30pm Members Only Workshop and Board Meeting

Mar 28/29: Zilker Garden Festival Zilker Park
10am-5pm



Pine Care with Mike Hansen
(Photo by Joey McCoy)

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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.

Lizzie Chen is the editor of "Bonsai Notebook". She may be contacted at lizziechen09@gmail.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 Jonathan Wood

It's fun and exciting to have a number of new members to The Austin Bonsai Society. Those of us who have been a part of the club for a while now want you to feel welcome and a part of learning about fascinating craft while gaining fellowship and new friends along the way. Let us know how we can help you and please join us for our 3rd Tuesday member's only workshops to get help with trees.

For a climate update, we did have a cold spell at the end of February that could have shocked my budding plants into dormancy. As such I have had budding plants with tender leaves out of freezing temperatures. It is not uncommon to have to do this in Central Texas even into mid/late March. For my deciduous species, this allows me to get a longer growing season to help ramify branch structure.

Looking forward to seeing our member volunteers the last weekend of March at the Zilker Garden Festival. This will be an excellent time to meet and converse with ABS members as they host a small bonsai exhibit to educate the public about the art, the training, and the finished results of Bonsai. See some members work on trees and learn about club by signing up for one or more volunteer slots.

Happy Styling,
Jonathan Wood
Austin Bonsai President

REMINDER

*****DUES ARE DUE!!!*****

\$30.00 individual \$35.00 family of 2

**THIS IS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER
IF YOU HAVE NOT PAID YOUR DUES**

Pat Ware
12404 Ranch Road 12
Wimberley, Tx. 78676

NEWS CORNER

Bonsai Study Group—Annual Workshop FEB 28 – MAR 1 Matt Ouwinga MPB Bonsai Study Group

As many of you are aware Mike Hansen hosts a study group meeting at MPB Bonsai. Right at press time for this newsletter, the study group will be in a workshop with Matt Ouwinga of Kaede Bonsai <http://kaedebonsai.com/>. Please check out this web site.

Matt is originally from Chicago, a teacher by profession, and involved in bonsai since his teens. He is a graduate of the International School of Bonsai in Tokyo under the leadership of Kunio Kobayashi and Peter Warren (head apprentice). He is known for his maple seedlings and grows approximately 100,000 each year for sale. We will fill you in next time on this workshop event.

Shohin Society of Texas SAT 21 FEB—“Hands on, How-To Followup Workshop”

The Shohin Society met on Saturday to work various project trees. Nine trusty souls from Dallas/Ft Worth, Houston, San Antonio, and Austin had some fun, great hands on technique improvement and fellowship.

Some of us brought yaupon holly root over rock projects, juniper, non-flowering azaleas, and other species for followup work. We had a great discussion on various techniques specifically clump style –little plate shohin, and our future workshop of squash style juniper.

We usually start around 1030 am at Persimmon Hill Studio in south Austin and finish around 2:30pm. Our next meeting will be SAT APR 18th. If you are interested email Terry or Sheila Ward at texshohin@sbcglobal.net.

Rest In Peace Vito Megna

It is with sadness that we report the death of past president Vito Megna on February 20, 2015 of pulmonary fibrosis and he was preceded in death by his dear wife, Doris, on December 18, 2014. They had been married 62 years. His son, Steve, is selling Vito's large Suieski collection and if you are interested in part of it, call him at 512-267-3319 - you may have to leave a message.

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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nickymercado@gmail.com

Ryan Odegaard
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bonsaiode@gmail.com

ABS Board Meeting
Date: 17 February 2015

Location: Austin Area Garden Center, Zilker Park

Board Members Present: Jonathan Wood, Jim Baumann, Pat Ware, Angelina Hewes, Zerita Rogers, May Chan Lau, Deborah Van Cleaf Others Present: Simon Tse, Webmaster

1. Called to order by President at 7pm.
2. No amendments to the Secretary's Report as they appear in current newsletter. Minutes accepted as written and approved as published.
3. Treasurer's Report: No expenses for the month. \$870.93 Income over expenses YTD 17 FEB 2015. The Treasurer's Report was moved to acceptance by D. Van Cleaf with second by A. Hewes and voted by Board in acceptance.
4. Preparation for the next club meeting: The next club meeting will occur on WED 11 MAR with a presentation by Jim Baumann concerning Followup on Project Trees of 2014—Root over Rock "Cedar Elm and Tx Native Stone". Jimbo will demonstrate the ongoing management of a few "root over rock" ongoing tree projects. Some of his "R o R" project trees are 3 year old projects now and may be capable of showing root adherence/growth. He will further discuss collecting native Texas limestone stones suitable for use as suiseki or root over rock. The membership will be encouraged to bring their project trees from last year or any ongoing root over rock trees for show and tell. Buddy assistant is yet to be identified.
Member Workshop on TUE 17 MAR will feature followup on project trees. All members are encouraged to attend for assistance and guidance on trees. Board Mtg to be held same night.
5. Additional Reports/ Announcements
 - a. LSBF Delegate: no report
 - b. TTSBE Delegate: no report
 - c. AAGC Delegate: council has noted need for additional funds from member clubs to cover some expenses for Zilker Garden Fest. It was noted this would be \$1 to \$2 per clubs' members. The board discussed and felt ABS Treasury could accommodate this additional funding from club funds for 2015; and 2016 funding will be tabled to a later date for further discussion.
6. Old Business:
 - a. Seeking volunteer for librarian and publicity for ABS
 - b. Workshop Trees currently held by N. Jenkins will have a schedule of meeting use of June 2015 for TX Ebony and AUG 2015 for Ficus. These workshops will be hands on limited to members only.
7. New Business
 - a. Draft schedule of 2015 / early 2016 was finalized for 2015 timeframe; some artists/presenters remain to be confirmed by J. Bauman and / or J. Wood. Schedule will be in print for Club Directory for March (responsibility-P. Ware) and will be shared via email with web master for AAGC (responsibility- D. Van Cleaf).
 - b. Pending and Deliverable Items—Contact information for D. Gutman and A. Leong provided to J. Baumann. Pending finalize structure and fees for Member Workshop—Tx Ebony, Ficus, Visiting Artist. Pending Auctioneer for fall. Artist pending for first quarter 2016.
 - c. Blast email needed by webmaster S. Tse for Fest and membership reminder, responsibility D. Van Cleaf.
8. Board Meeting adjourned 8:15 pm.

Austin Bonsai Society (ABS) General Club Meeting Minutes
Club Meeting Date: WED 11 FEB 2015

Number of Attendees: 27 members

Number of Guests: 5 ---Fernando Baz, Erika Nakauma, Zachary Rabalais, Mari Lou Gonzalez, and Nicky Gonzalez

1. Meeting of ABS called to order by President at 7:30 pm
2. Thank you to the host's for tonight's refreshments—Terry and Sheila Ward and Lizzie Chen and Nathan Gaar. A wonderful array of treats for the program this evening.
3. Welcome to our guests for Jan and Feb. It seems that the majority of our guests have joined as members and we wish to send a big Austin Bonsai welcome to Tom Hollingshead, Fernando and Erika, Zachary, Mari Lou, Nicky (mentioned above), and Ryan Odegaard (our San Antonio bonsai colleague to the south). Thank you for joining our Bonsai group.
4. Renewals are ongoing and being received by Pat Ware, treasurer. Former members are encouraged to mail in before March 1 when the new directory goes to print. The program for 2015, Membership, and Library / ByLaws will be updated and published.
5. Reports and Announcements
 - a. Austin Area Garden Council (AAGC) (As a member garden club to Zilker Park, ABS is a member) Delegate Alisan Clarke. A. Clarke reported that the Zilker Garden Festival will be held March 28 and 29th at the Zilker Garden Center from 10 am to 5 pm. The Austin Bonsai Society will hold an educational booth in the Greene Room and answer questions and do casual demonstrations during this time. If you wish to work with Alisan and represent our club please email or call Alisan at alisanclarke@gmail.com or phone at 512-327-3168. You are encouraged to bring project trees that you can work on or demonstrate during the day.

The AAGC will not be giving out free tickets and parking to “worker members” as in the past. You will receive reduced parking and entrance as you enter the park. Parking will be across the street on Barton Springs Road or in the rear of the park off Stratford Drive. Please mention you are a member of Austin Bonsai Society. The question of additional fees by member clubs was tabled by the Board and will be discussed at the board meeting.
 - b. No other reports were given this evening.
6. Old Business—none
7. The Program Chair, Jim Baumann introduced Mike Hansen our featured presenter for the evening. A few of the members showed Black Pine trees.

Mike presented an excellent discussion and slide show on the “Seasonal Care for Japanese Black Pine”. This presentation summarized Mike’s studio workshop on Japanese Black Pine. Mike has developed over several years a focused program on the development and care of Black Pine for bonsai growers in the southern USA. This presentation featured some specific aid to the bonsai enthusiast as to creating the right growing environment and keeping the pine healthy and well fed. In addition, Mike shared his specific key elements to a seasonal pine care and maintenance. These elements are a must with our climate and changing water conditions to success with this species as part of your bonsai collection. Mike featured a monthly approach to care and shared specific formulas for soil, water PH adjustment, pruning, etc. In addition, an excellent method for repotting technique was illustrated via slides and discussed. Many thanks Mike for a wonderful program.

If you are interested in this workshop or textbook please see <http://mbpbonsai.com/> or speak to Mike Hansen directly.

Growing Bonsai from Seed
This is taken from Bonsai Mary, published by Mary Miller

Growing bonsai from seed is one possibility. Our small trees in pots are started with many different kinds of plants and in many different ways.

Growing from “bonsai tree seeds” is just one way and perhaps the very slowest.

The first thing to learn is:

There is no such thing as actual ‘bonsai seeds’.

Seeds of trees “suitable for bonsai” is much better terminology.

The Truth About Bonsai Seeds

Buying bonsai tree seeds is no different than buying the same type of seed in a garden center or collecting them from a tree in your yard.

Being in a pretty package, changes nothing. There is no special effect on the plant. Pictures on seed packages (such as this old pine tree) are often of fabulous old bonsai trees.

This is not what your seedling will look like without many, many years of study, planning, shaping and maintenance. (And - it may not happen in your lifetime.) Some of the trees we use for bonsai are not common in all planting zones.

Many seeds that may grow in one area may not thrive in another. Online sources specialize in plant seeds that will eventually make a bonsai. (If you are looking for rare seeds, they may be a little more costly.)

Shop around, ask questions about what will grow in our climate and select a reliable source. Experiment with seeds from trees where you live. They’re free. Growing bonsai from seed, although slow, can be fun and rewarding

Advantages and Disadvantages of growing bonsai from seed

The big disadvantage is the amount of time it takes to establish a mature bonsai from seed. Timing will also depend upon the species. Some plants are much slower than others. Another disadvantage is the light required.

For those who grow bonsai indoors, be sure to give your seedlings plenty of light so they remain compact and don’t “stretch” trying to reach the sun.

The biggest advantage of seeds is you can manage the shape of your tree from the very beginning.

It’s a good idea to have other bonsai trees in progress, while you wait, work and watch the seedlings grow.

There are many plants that grow quickly from seed, including many tropicals.

Begin with a plant that will eventually meet the desirable attributes of a good bonsai -- small leaves, proportionate flowers and a woody trunk. The tropical *Acacia farnesiana* is one such plant.

The planting of this ‘forest’ began as a scattering of seeds in a long aluminum foil tray. In the beginning, the seedlings were allowed to grow tall to help develop the trunks.

Eventually the small trees were cut in half! Any trees that were too close together or grew crooked were removed.

This is not the traditional method of creating a grouping.

It could, however, be a fun way to encourage a young person’s desire of growing bonsai from seed and at the same time fulfilling their need for instant gratification.

To think a handful of “bonsai seeds” can become a forest is a pretty exciting concept!

March Bonsai by John Miller

The end of '13 and start of '14 illustrate why you cannot just do bonsai tasks on a 'schedule', you need to vary them according to nature. In 13 the temp here was well above average all summer, with 100's into Sept and 90's into Oct. After that the only two temps above 80 were on Oct 23 and Nov 17. Then it was a cold winter. In a way that was good because the plants stayed dormant. But you need to be extra vigilant because some species tend to respond to the lengthening daylight and others to temperature to break dormancy. Last spring my trees were confused. The order of growth was mixed up, some oaks were out before some elms etc.

Bonsai will start growing in late February or March in this area depending on your wintering techniques and on the species. After growth starts some species can take a couple degrees of frost but unless you know what your particular tree can take you should keep it from freezing. Also, newly growing roots are more tender. In this area you should keep the new foliage out of the strong winds however they should have some breeze to help harden the new foliage and to help keep insects and fungal diseases at bay.

You may continue repotting on deciduous species until you see a tiny bit of green on the tips of the swelling leaf bud. Be sure to keep the newly repotted tree out of the wind and late morning or afternoon sun. Broadleaf evergreen species will generally be okay to repot later on. Yaupon do better if you wait until it warms a bit more. Even tho its gets quite warm now, we can expect a freeze in March so you may have to protect trees that have started growth and those that have been repotted this winter. Don't repot tropicals until the night temps stay above 60.

There are two different approaches to branch and tree care. The first is the development stage of the tree where you are growing and developing branches, doing root work and generally developing the style of the tree. During this time you will cut and wire and then let it grow for a good period of time developing taper and interesting bends and twists. Timing of these functions is not as critical.

The other approach comes after the development stage and results in the refinement of the bonsai. This gives it the twiginess, Small leaves and patina of age which takes it from a commercial bonsai to a piece of art. It is quite time consuming especially in the flush growth period after dormancy breaks. If not done carefully, the new growth will thicken the twigs and cause long internodes which will ruin the all the previous work and may even send you back to the development stage.

Now you should get your tweezers and shears ready for the real job ahead. In order to develop the ramification and fine twigs you want you must be pruning the new growth as its develops. Waiting until the shoots are three or four inches or longer results in coarse twigs with long internodes. These will have to be cut off and new ones developed.

Junipers in development should be trimmed with shears. Styled juniper may be done with the fingers. As the new growth develops grasp the twigs with one hand spreading the foliage in a fan shape. Then with the other hand grasp the tips between the fleshy part of you thumb and finger and pull it off. Using fingernails or scissors will result in brown tips on the cut foliage.

AS the weather warms up the insects will surely make their appearance. Use the foliar spray (1 tablespoon each of fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses, and apple cider vinegar per gallon of water) weekly to control aphid, mites, caterpillars etc. Commercial sprays may be used but follow directions closely. Be sure to spray with a fine mist sprayer to cover thoroughly.

Be careful when using a new insecticide or cure. The best advice is to try it first on some lesser plants to see how it behaves in your yard. Hydrogen peroxide is suggested as a control for fungal problems. The peroxide degenerates into water and oxygen fairly rapidly so is no threat to the environment. Personally, I have used 1% peroxide on elms and yaupons later on in the season spraying once a week. It got rid of the black spot with no damage. However, when I sprayed tender new spring foliage with it I caused considerable leaf burn. Therefore anytime I use peroxide it will be on mature foliage and at a 0.5% solution.

Fertilizing is necessary once the trees start to grow. Too many trees exhibited do not have a good dark green foliage. Since we are using soilless mixes for the most part, a different technique is required than used for most potted plants. Water soluble chemical fertilizers should be used at half strength and more often than given since they will wash out with the next watering. The same is more or less true with liquid organic fertilizers. The best technique is to use solid organic fertilizers. Fertilizer cakes on the surface is the best way. They break down slowly and a small amount is carried into the root zone each time you water. Pelletized organic material can be spread on the surface also but they tend to crumble and create an undesirable surface. Be sure that the fertilizer you use has a balanced formula and not high in nitrogen. Be especially careful with chemicals or manure based organic fertilizer on newly potted plants.

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



Spotlight of the Month
(Photo by Joey McCoy)