



Bonsai Notebook

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

May 2026 vol 188

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Calendar of Events

May 13, 2026

- ◆ Topic: Shohin Development and Demonstration
- ◆ Artist: Dawn Koetting
- ◆ Location: Zilker Botanical Garden (Clubhouse)
- ◆ Time: 6:30pm (Mingling/Setup) 7:00pm (Meeting)

May 15 - 17, 2026

- ◆ Annual Show at Zilker (5/16 - 5/17)
- ◆ Pre-show setup begins at 1pm on 5/15 (Friday)
- ◆ Post-show cleanup on 5/17 (Sunday)
- ◆ Join our volunteer team — help with raffles, docent roles, and coordinating snacks

June 28, 2026

- ◆ Shohin Society of Texas (SSOT)
- ◆ Topic: Pine
- ◆ Time: 1pm - 4pm
- ◆ Location: Spicewood Springs Library

2026 Board of Directors

Eric B.
President

Sachin A.
Vice President

Simon T.
Secretary

Jonathan W.
Treasurer

Fred W.
Member-At-Large

Ross C.
Member-At-Large

Abby B.
Member-At-Large

Volunteers

Refreshments
Jorge V.
David G.

Tree Hosts
Joey M.

President's Message

By Eric B.

Hello all, welcome to the May 2026 ABS Newsletter. When I last wrote, I was commenting on the unseasonable warm weather we were having, but now we are having more temperatures in the “normal” range, and have gotten a good bit of rain in the last week or so. Luckily no thunderstorms where I live, but if you have had some I hope your trees made it through with no damage. We’re supposed to have a strong El Nino this year, so we may have heavier than normal weather for the rest of the year. Keep an eye on the forecast.

I was unable to attend the April meeting, but I hear that it went very well. Thanks to all who presented, and all who brought in trees. We like to have trees at different stages of development to spark questions from the public, so please consider putting a tree in this year’s show in late May.

The May meeting is on the 13th, and we have artist Dawn Koetting paying us a visit! Dawn is doing a demonstration with three Shohin-sized trees, which will of course be raffled off at the end of the meeting. Dawn is an award-winning bonsai artist and great teacher, so be sure to be at the meeting to learn a few things. And maybe win a cool tree!

As I mentioned earlier, our annual Show and Sale is coming up soon, and as always we need volunteers to make it all come together. Show setup is just two days after the May meeting, on Friday, May 15. We will need several volunteers to help bring the show supplies to Zilker and set it all up in the auditorium. Any truck or van owners, your assistance would be very appreciated! We will also need people to help run the activities on the days of the show, such as greeters, docents, and staffing the raffle table. There will be a sign-up sheet at the May meeting. Please do consider volunteering, even just a couple of hours. You will help out the club and get to see all the show trees. Win, win!

Thanks for reading, and see you at the next meeting!

Eric

Vice President's Message

By Sachin A.

Hello Austin Bonsai friends,

May is shaping up to be an exciting and busy month for the Austin Bonsai Society!

We're pleased to welcome guest artist Dawn Koetting to our monthly meeting on Wednesday, May 13, at Zilker Botanical Garden. The meeting will begin at 6:30 PM. Dawn will be focusing on shohin development and will be working on four demonstration trees, offering a great opportunity to learn more about creating and refining these smaller-scale bonsai.

Just a few days later, on May 16–17, we'll host our Annual Bonsai Show. This is always a highlight of the year—a chance to share the beauty of bonsai with the public, showcase members' trees, and connect with fellow enthusiasts. Setup will take place on Friday evening, and members who plan to display trees will need to drop them off at that time. Tree pickup will be on Sunday evening following the close of the show.

We will need volunteers to help with both setup on Friday and takedown on Sunday. Even a small amount of time makes a big difference in putting on a smooth and successful show.

We also encourage members to donate bonsai-related items for our raffle during the show. Contributions like tools, pots, pre-bonsai material, or other related items help us raise funds to support future club activities, workshops, and guest artists. Your generosity directly strengthens our society and the opportunities we can offer.

On a seasonal note, Austin has been in a welcome wet pattern recently, giving many of us a bit of a break from frequent watering. Even so, it's a good time to stay attentive to drainage and overall tree health as the growing season continues.

As we move further into the growing season, it's a great time to stay involved, learn from one another, and continue refining our trees. I hope to see many of you at both the meeting and the show.

Thank you for your continued support of the Austin Bonsai Society.

Warm regards,
Sachin

April Meeting



April Meeting



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discussion



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ABS Board Meeting Minutes

Date: April 14, 2026

Location: Virtual

Meeting Attendees:

- ◆ Eric (President)
- ◆ Simon (Secretary)
- ◆ Jonathan (Treasurer)
- ◆ Abby
- ◆ Ross
- ◆ Fred

President:

- ◆ Preparations are underway for the upcoming year's events and activities, with particular attention given to artist engagement and program development.
- ◆ Austin's Day in Bonsai was warmly received, and this year's program continued to strengthen community engagement while highlighting the Texas State Bonsai Exhibit (TTSBE) as it celebrates its 10th anniversary.

Vice President:

- ◆ Alignment of programs and artists, with contributions from the full board..

Secretary:

- ◆ The meeting commenced at **7:32 pm**.
- ◆ The latest report was approved as submitted, with no amendments necessary.

Treasurer:

- Deliberations placed strong emphasis on the May Show, the Annual Auction, club materials and planning for Austin's Day of Bonsai 2027.
- Membership renewals expected to remain steady.
- Revenues and expenditures were reconciled, with all outstanding items closed.
- 2025 Annual Audit Report was formally certified by two ABS members during our January meeting.

Meeting adjourned at **8:43 pm**

The Nebari Of The Kokufu

by Michael Hagedorn (Permission to repost)

The Kokufu show is a goldmine. You can walk through it or flip through a show book and realize you're just looking at the stands. Or the branch setting. Or the pots.

In this year's Kokufu I took some closeups of the nebari. Here's a handful of them.



Japanese Maple with a wide, fused nebari. Hard to create without root grafting. Grafting is usually done by inserting a rooted cutting into a hole in the nebari, which will fuse and grow roots. Do that a LOT of times and you might make something like this. The extent of this root flare is a construct, a stylistic exaggeration that exists in almost any art. Not to knock root grafting, a useful skill for sure.

The Nebari Of The Kokufu
by Michael Hagedorn (Permission to repost)



Camellia with a solid, broad nebari. It's a lot, but not overdone. The tree feels stable.

The Nebari Of The Kokufu
by Michael Hagedorn (Permission to repost)



Another Japanese Maple. To my sensibility, this is near ideal. It has a few holes in it, with minimal or no grafting. It looks natural.

The Nebari Of The Kokufu

by Michael Hagedorn (Permission to repost)



An Azalea with a nice root flare. Like Maples, Azaleas will often create a respectable nebari without much fiddling. Just growing in a pot (rather than the ground) and either trimming the bottom roots hard under the trunk base and / or planting in a shallow pot can make a nebari like this. Although Azaleas prefer deeper pots, so the root trim technique would get the nod here.

The Nebari Of The Kokufu
by Michael Hagedorn (Permission to repost)



You do see non-impressive—or absent—nebari in the Kokufu. This is a Trident Maple .

The Nebari Of The Kokufu
by Michael Hagedorn (Permission to repost)



Another root-over-rock Trident but with a more mature root structure.

The Nebari Of The Kokufu
by Michael Hagedorn (Permission to repost)



A Pine with a respectable nebari. Also a root over rock. Nebari tends to be minimal on root over rock plantings.

The Nebari Of The Kokufu

by Michael Hagedorn (Permission to repost)



A Hornbeam with an average nebari. Or, rather, a good one for a Hornbeam. Elm is another plant often reluctant to fuse roots into a broader nebari. I think rather than forcing it's nice to accept this reality. Root grafts would not disappear as well on a Hornbeam as on a Maple, the wound would last a long time. So you don't see many attempts at it .

The Nebari Of The Kokufu

by Michael Hagedorn (Permission to repost)



Another Japanese Maple with a grafted nebari. It looks like the foot of a snail to me. About ready to slither off to the next stand. Would be wonderful to have in the backyard. But the mollusk vibe might be hard to shake. Hope the creator isn't reading this.

The Nebari Of The Kokufu

by Michael Hagedorn (Permission to repost)



A Chinese Quince. Possibly grown in the ground or a growing bed for a time. Root fingers like this are often the result of that sort of strong growth. Chinese Quince, Hornbeam, and Azalea are examples of plants which have much better nebari if grown in a pot. There's more fine definition in the nebari structure, more in scale with the tree. Not unlike fine twigging versus coarse .

Reminder: 2026 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 2026 Directory.

New/Renewed Members for 2026

May & Simon	Jonathan	Alisan & Lynn (honorary)	Elaine (honorary)
Hani & Jane T.	John P.	Nilda G.	Andrew I.
David G.	Mike G.	Eric B.	Shawn W.
Jorge V.	Dana L.	Susan C.	Hunter J.
Roalnd L.	Jay N.	Dash C.	Reid F.
Jared M.	Diego M.	Jacob & Catherine C.	Barbara R.
Maddison K.	Chris F.	Jared M. & Kendra D.	William "Bill" M.
Randall R.	Bill M.		

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!

Reminder for club membership and advertisement

2026 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).

Gift certificate for memberships is also available, please send inquiry to payments.austinbonsaisociety@gmail.com

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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 6:30 pm, followed by our program at 7:00 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.

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

Email: webmaster.austinbonsaisociety@gmail.com