

Bonsai Notebook

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

April 2015 vol 52

April 2015 Program

by Jimbo Baumann

As many of you are aware Bonsai becomes a part of one's life in the process of growing, developing, and experimenting with various tree species. Member Joey McCoy involved with Austin Bonsai Society since 2003 will be leading the group in a discussion and show of his approach from the collection of tree material to a final show of a bonsai. We call this special monthly program, "From Collection to Show Ready Bonsai". Many of you may already be familiar with Joey's methods of documenting his bonsai collecting trips and his styling and ongoing development plans with his trees. He will expand and show his trees and their various stories.

Joey maintains a blog of his approach via "Heart of Texas Bonsai". This can be followed via <http://hotbonsai.blogspot.com/>. In addition, Joey maintains an ongoing photo library of his trees and prebonsai via a photo journal. Photographing trees gives him a way to see the ongoing process with his trees and plan adjustments in styling over time.

Joey McCoy has always been called to nature and art. He has lived in Hawaii and saw many beautiful gardens as well as bonsai. He has been interested in bonsai since the mid 80's, reading books and trying to recreate some of the artistry in the plants/trees he would collect/dig. He graduated from the University of Texas with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Studio Art. While he focused on painting, sculpture and photography, he also has many talents in jewelry creation. He joined the family business of McCoy Jewelcraft as a bench jeweler (both silver and gold) creating and repairing jewelry.

So join Joey and us in a journey of storytelling in bonsai. Later in the month on Tuesday, April 21 the Members Workshop will focus on helping members to get their trees show ready. And the board meeting is open to all.

Happy styling in the nicer weather !

Calendar of Events

April 8, 7pm: ABS Meeting Bonsai Tree from Collection to Show Ready

Hosts: Elaine White and Zerita Rogers

April 9: San Antonio 9th Annual Auction

7pm-9pm: www.sanantoniobonsai.org

April 21: 7:00pm Members Only Workshop and Board Meeting

April 18: Shohin Society of Texas Squashed Juniper Technique texasshohin@sbcglobal.net

May 15: ABS Annual Show and Sale 5pm SETUP

May 16-17: Annual ABS Show and Sale 10am-5pm

May 17: Annual ABS Show Tear Down 5pm



Zilker Garden Festival

(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

Spring has sprung! It's so exciting to see maples coming to life and boxwoods putting out vibrant growth. This is the busy season for us deciduous bonsai folks and I'm enjoying it immensely.

Working on trees with others nearby can make the practice of the art more enjoyable. Being able to bounce ideas of others and share in their insight makes for a fulfilling pruning session. Also, seeing transformations of style take place in real time gives me encouragement that my project trees are moving along in their development. Our 3rd Tuesday workshops are a great time to work on project trees with advanced members of the club.

I really want to thank Jimbo for all the effort he put into the March program. It was great to see folks come up to the front and get into action with root over rock. Also, to all of our surprise, Jimbo let us take an inspiring Central Texas stone of our choice home to use in our collections or to give as a gift to friends. Kindness and sharing go a long way to make fond memories. I'm calling my rock: "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" (a movie name). Thank you, Jimbo!

Zilker Garden Festival was a big success again this year... volunteers came out for many hours this past weekend to build awareness that Bonsai is alive and well in Austin, Texas. So many questions fielded: "How old is this tree?... You can make a bonsai out of any tree?... How do I keep one alive this time?". Volunteers also cordially invited attendees to join us for our upcoming general meetings and we have quite the list of interested folks. Be on the lookout for visitors and new members--- help them feel welcome when they visit in the coming months. Special thanks to Alisan Clarke for helping coordinate the volunteer efforts and educational aspects of the event-- we had a lovely progression of trees in various stages of development for the public to ponder.

Also, please email me at Jonathan.WoodJS@gmail.com if you think you have a little extra time for set-up and take down at some of our monthly events. We have a spirit of volunteer rotation and can always use your help :-)

Sincerely,
Jonathan Wood, ABS President

Bonsai quote:

"Daniel-san, this bonsai have strong root. Same same you".

--- Mr. Miyagi, Karate Kid - Part 2 (1986)

NEWS CORNER

Shohin Society of Texas SAT 18 April—"Hands on, How-To Followup Workshop"

The Shohin Society of Texas April 18th meeting and hands-on workshop is all about 'Squashed Junipers'.....a bonsai technique to develop a gnarled and ancient looking shohin bonsai. Complete program/workshop details, including what to bring, will be in the Society's April newsletter. To receive a copy send your e-mail address to texshohin@sbcglobal.net. Meetings start at 10:30 a.m. and are usually over by around 2:00 p.m. There are no membership dues.

The Shohin Society meets four times a year for programs and workshops at Terry and Sheila Wards home in southwest Austin. Meetings are open to everyone interested in shohin size, 8" and under in height, bonsai from just beginning to bonsai veterans. It's a very informal 'hands-on' group of shohin bonsai enthusiasts from throughout Texas.

Planning Your Bonsai Schedule

Two big events are coming up in your bonsai schedule, the first is our Annual Bonsai Show and Sale, see enclosed flyer. Please plan to show some of your trees, suiseki, or accent plants. Setup for the show will be Friday, May 15th with the show Saturday and Sunday, May 16th and 17th. Tear down at show conclusion, Sunday at 5 pm. Please plan to spend some time with us at Zilker Garden Center, working as a docent at the show. Thank you in advance for your time.

As many of you are aware the Visiting Artist Series from Lone Star Bonsai Federation (LSBF) is always a fun and good learning experience. This year we are excited to share that Owen Reich of <http://bonsaiunearthed.com/about/> will be joining us July 7th and 8th for a workshop and also a lecture/demo at our July club meeting. So plan some special time for July 7th to join a workshop (bring your own tree) and then a lecture /demo. Owen has a degree in Horticulture from the University of Georgia and special certificates in irrigation, growing management, and experience in green industry. In addition, he completed an internship in Japan at Kouka-en, <http://www.bonsaiempire.com/origin/bonsai-japan/fujikawa-koukaen>. More on Owen later but keep these dates open.

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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douglas762011@gmail.com

Bob & Lynn Charpentier
804-305-2571
candcbob@msm.com

Nick Mock
512-820-1738
nick@austingateoperators.com

ABS Board Meeting
Date: 17 March 2015

Location: Austin Area Garden Center, Zilker Park

Board Members Present: Jonathan Wood, Jim Baumann, Pat Ware, Zerita Rogers, Deborah Van Cleaf

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: \$ 1135.93 Income over expenses YTD 17 MAR 2015. The Treasurer's Report was moved to acceptance and voted by Board in acceptance.
4. Preparation for the next club meeting: A) The next club meeting will occur on WED 9 APR with a presentation by Joey McCoy. This presentation is a focused discussion/demo the collection of a tree to show bonsai. The membership is encouraged to bring their photo or project example of collection to a "show ready" tree. (B) The membership workshop 21 APR will also focus on prepping and evaluating your show trees for our May show at Zilker Park. (C) Board Mtg to be held same night.
5. Acknowledgement of Pat Ware for a well done club directory, program and guide. Thank you.
6. Additional Reports/ Announcements
 - a. LSBF Delegate: J. Wood provided input as backup delegate that July 7 & 8th will be Workshop and Club Demo for the LSBF Bonsai Artist Texas Tour of Owen Reich. SEP 2015 Seminar Information is pending. 2016 APR Texas Tour is still under discussion.
 - b. TTSBE Delegate: no report
 - c. AAGC Delegate: Preparation for Zilker Festival is under way and volunteers have been give parking passes and gate entry. The Board wishes to thank all member volunteers, Alisan Clarke and Joey McCoy.
7. 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.
8. New Business
 - a. Schedule of 2015 / early 2016 was discussed for 2015 timeframe. Ongoing confirmation and work with presentors. Pending finalization of SEP program, auctioneer for fall.
 - b. Finalize costing of member workshop for Tx Ebony and Ficus at \$40.00. This includes a well established pre-bonsai tropical and pot/soil. Member will be required to have their tools, wire, and repotting/styling materials. The TX Ebony will be done by Chuck Ware in June and the Ficus done by Elaine White in August. Six slots are available for each workshop.
 - c. May Annual Show and Auction flyer distributed to board members for posting at various nurseries. Will be distributed via blast to Yahoo Groups and Webmaster.
9. Board Meeting adjourned 8:15 pm.

Austin Bonsai Society (ABS) General Club Meeting Minutes

Club Meeting Date: WED 11 MAR 2015

Number of Attendees: 21 members

Number of Guests: 4 ---Cesar Montero, Douglas Tallant, Charles Lankford, and Nick Moch

1. Meeting of ABS called to order by President at 7:30 pm

2. Thank you to the host's for tonight's refreshments—Nan Jenkins, Deborah Van Cleaf

3. Welcome to our guests for the first quarter of 2015, many of our guests have become members.

And we appreciate your interest in bonsai and the bonsai community. Welcome to new members: Nick Mock, Cesar A. M. Orozco, Vanessa Landeros, Douglas Tallant, and returning renewal members Catherine Robertson and Bob & Lynn Charpentier.

4. Thank you to our Treasurer, Pat Ware for the publication of our 2015 Directory. Directories are published yearly and include program information for 2015 /early 2016, ByLaws of the Austin Bonsai Society, Brief History of the The Austin Bonsai Society, Membership, and our Library Listings. Please see Pat for your Directory.

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. We thank in advance all the members volunteering with Alisan for work that weekend and to Joey for publicity for the event. Entrance and parking passes were distributed.

b. TTSBE—Delegate Joey McCoy. Joey stated a private homeowner dig is open for signup/contact, 2 trees, Boxwood variety. On Sunday, March 15th a survey will be conducted of the garden area near the Taniguchi section of Zilker Park for location of a new “Bonsai Garden” for TTSBE. Members are encouraged to attend and assist the survey party.

c. Member Elaine White announced the passing of longtime member, John Pittenger's wife Marilyn. John and Marilyn had been involved in bonsai for over 30 years both here in Texas and earlier in California. Our sympathy to the Pittenger family.

d. No other reports were given this evening.

6. Old Business—none

7. The Program Chair, Jim Baumann introduced program of Root Over Rock and Appreciation of Native Stone. Jimbo had brought many of his ongoing project trees with root over rock technique along with other members. Significant root growth and repotting was demonstrated on a cedar elm. This technique was further demonstrated and discussed with raffia and/or wire tie down for the tree roots and stabilization to the rock. Most members shared their experiences as two years for the minimum timeframe for root adhesion to the first repotting time. Elaine White, Joey McCoy and others shared root over rock techniques and various tree species shown were Ficus, Trident Maple, Chinese Elm, Cedar Elm, Portulacaria, and South African Fig Ficus.

The evening was capped off with an excellent discussion and show of many examples of the private collection of suiseki and stands made by Jimbo from native Texas stone. Jimbo also offered stone to members for their personal use in the upcoming Members Workshop. Many thanks Jimbo for an excellent program and demo on Root Over Rock Technique and Appreciation for the Local Stone.

April Bonsai by John Miller

Although the average last freeze in Dallas-Ft Worth is in the last part of March, you should remember that it is an average--half the time it will occur later. And a frost can occur at temperatures well above 32, especially on a calm clear pre-dawn. A light cover will usually protect them from frost.

Repotting of deciduous trees should be pretty much over. Some slow species like oaks may be slow in coming out and could be repotted. Broad leaved evergreens, such as the hollies and dwarf yaupon, usually start growth a little later and may still be repotted when their buds swell. Conifers and other evergreens should be in active growth and therefore not repotted. Newly repotted trees should not be wired until they show they have recovered.

Any trees that have wire on them should be watched very closely during the spring flush of growth. Branches and twigs can expand pretty rapidly and result in the wire cutting into the branch. Watch especially the junction of the branch with the trunk or with a larger branch. Remove the wire if it is cutting into the branch and rewire if needed.

Be sure to check your soils each day for proper water content. It is easy to assume that the soil has plenty of water when the days are cool or there has been some rain. Its too easy for a tree with full leaves to shed water outside of the pot or a good sun and low humidity after a front to dry the soil. I suggest that you remove most of the moss so that you can see and feel the soil in order to determine how dry it is. (Moss growing on the trunk or roots will cause the bark to rot also) An automatic watering system will be an aid but you should not rely on it to replace hand watering. Hand watering allows you to adjust the watering for each tree individually.

Most trees will do good in the full sun at this time of year. However, if you have had them in partial shade be careful about taking them directly to full sun. They should be acclimated gradually.

General care for all species is pretty much the same at this time. Feed, prune, and look out for insects and other pathogens.

What kind of fertilizer you use is not as important as that you use it right. Plants would like a small amount of nourishment to be available all the time. For bonsai, the best way to supply it is by using organic fertilizer cakes on the surface. They release nutrients each time you water and are held by the particles such as pumice to be used all day.

Water soluble fertilizers are fairly good but the next watering will wash the remaining nutrients out. You would have to water with it daily using a very dilute solution. Some organic fertilizers like bat guano or chicken manure release too much nutrients at once (are too hot). Many lawn and garden fertilizers are the same. Whichever you use be sure to follow directions.

Feeding needs to be done judiciously. A lot of nitrogen will push the new flush of growth too much but with no fertilizer you will get foliage with poor color that lasts all year. The organic fertilizer balls are the best solution. You can add a few at the start and increase them as the foliage matures. If you use chemicals be sure to follow directions and too use them lightly at first. Also be sure to get a brand with the minor elements listed. Commercial water soluble fertilizers wash out with the next watering and result in poorly fed pale bonsai.

Whether you use the organic or chemical spray, the trick is to be sure to thoroughly cover the plant including all the leaf axils. Use a hand or pump up sprayer to get a fine mist spray to cover all surfaces, a hose end sprayer does not cover good enough. You need to apply when the insects are moving. Those like scale and bagworm are very impervious to sprays when the adult has formed their protection, the scale covering or the bag. This may mean you have to use the spray on a regular schedule.

Fungal diseases develop during warm humid weather. Too much foliage misting can do it also if the leaves stay damp very long. One of the most prevalent fungus is leaf spot which will hit several kinds of plants especially elms, hollies, and roses. Organic control consists of spraying with baking soda. A 1% solution of Hydrogen Peroxide can be used except on very young foliage which may be sensitive to it.

Remember when pruning that there is no one-size-fits-all, even on the same species. First of all, formation pruning is when you are doing the initial styling of the tree. In most cases you are trying to grow new branches requiring you to have the branches grow long. After the tree has been styled, you then need to do ramification pruning to develop twiginess and a patina of old age. To properly prune you need to know how they grow and to remember that new twigs, even in the far future, break from the internodes so keep them short.

On elms and other trees with leaves appearing alternately down the shoot, the first leaves are smaller and internodes short. As the shoot grows, leaves get larger and the internodes get wider. For developmental you can let these branches grow long to get thick and then cut back, leaving a few short internodes to sprout future branches, and regrow. For ramification let grow to 4-5 leaves and trim the last two. Repeat on the new twigs.

On maples and others with leaves coming in pairs on opposite sides of the twig, the bud send out a stalk with two leaves on the end. The length of this stalk will be the first internode. As the leaves open a new growing tip emerges and this process continues. As the new tip elongates the first stalk keeps elongating also until the third new tip breaks. This creates long internodes on the developing branch. If the second tip is removed as soon as it emerges the first stalk stops growing and two new twigs will develop from the first set of leaves.

For formation pruning on opposite leaved species, you must work to get short internodes near the trunk then later let the branch grow for thickening. After the first set of leaves emerges, pinch the tip of the next set of leaves before they actually become leaves. Pointed tweezers are the best tool for this job as you want to get the growth when it just starts to emerge. Use this same technique through three sets of leaves, after which you can let the newly created branches grow to thicken. Each pinch results in two new leaf sets, creating shorter nodes to generate future branches. When the desired primary and secondary branches have been grown, the ramification is achieved by pinching the tip from each set of leaves as it grows thereby doubling the number of twigs each time. This can be a big job on a large maple, but is necessary to get the desired result.

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)