

## **Bonsai Notebook**

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

April 2024 vol 163

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### **Calendar of Events**

#### April 10, 2024

- Topic: Turning young seedlings into Bonsai
- ♦ Artist: Dash C.
- ◆ Time: 6:30pm (Social) 7:00pm (Meeting)
- ♦ Location: Zilker Botanical Garden

#### April 20, 2024

- ♦ Topic:: Workshop with seedlings
- ♦ Artist: Dash C.
- ♦ Time: 6:30pm 9:00pm
- ♦ Location: MBP at Pflugerville
- Fees: \$10

#### April 25 - 28, 2024

- ♦ Bonsai on the Bayou (Houston)
- ♦ LSBF Convention 2024

### 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

**Ever V.** Member-At-Large

## **Volunteers**

Refreshments Julia D. Brandon R.

Tree Hosts Eric B. Jonathan W.

## President's Message

By Jonathan W.

Our annual Bonsai show is just a few months from now... it is time to begin thinking about trees we may want to have ready for display this May 18th and May 19th in the Zilker Botanical Garden Auditorium. We will need lots of volunteers for that weekend so please consider setting aside a day or a half day to help us monitor and answer questions from the public. We will be asking for commitments for how many trees members plan to bring into the show in 3 size categories: Small, Medium, Large. (not wanting to be too technical, just needing an idea for how many tables we can fill in the auditorium this year!

Long (Long Long Ago I'm told...), lore has it that the Austin bonsai club had beginner member trees on display in various stages of refinement... the public loved seeing the progress and everyone learned so much from the variety of trees on display. Let's bring that tradition back! I think we sometimes put too much pressure on ourselves, waiting for the perfect year (or perfect decade) to enter our first tree in a local bonsai show. I myself, was hesitant to enter a tree into the Austin show because I was worried it didn't look like a 25-50 year masterpiece.

As a fellow club member, I'd like to give you the confidence to go ahead and take the leap! In just a few short years, many of us transform nursery stock into artistic tree-like silhouettes, and this is captivating to the public at various stages of development, not just the ultra-refined trees. Bonsai is never finished and is an evolving sculpture over time... our club show is a time to dress up your tree and show fellow members and visitors how far it has come along — not necessarily to show that it is completed and finished. It's just a snapshot in time of it's development. Interestingly, I have grown an increasing amount of fondness and care for trees once I have finally displayed them... and I get a kick out of nurturing them year after year. Traditionally, the Austin club does not offer awards, rankings or judging of Austin show trees, so newer members can have confidence in putting a 1st tree on display.

We are here for the love and joy of tiny trees and welcome all of our members to participate in the Annual Show! Take us up on the challenge of entering your 1st show tree in May 2024 — We will walk you through suggestions for preparing it at our May Club meeting if you bring it in on club night. We can have an assortment of extra mosses and top dressings available to help you put the finishing touches on

## President's Message

By Jonathan W.

our 1st tree so we can display it at the show! Last year we had room for about 30 more trees! As such, I'd like to encourage newer members to participate in a "My 1st Show Tree Challenge" in 2024.

Thanks so much to Evan Pardue for driving all the way to Austin to share his knowledge, styling and artistic skills with us during his Water Elm demo. His in depth presentation gave us lots of practical knowledge and confidence in both how to care for and develop water elm as an option for bonsai.

Thank you to the Austin Bonsai Team who helped share our love and knowledge of the bonsai art with a group of retirees at the Maravilla at The Domain - Austin Senior Community in March 2024. It really felt like we were getting to the heart of bonsai and sharing the beauty of our unique art while making connections with new friends! Tropical Bonsai like Fukien tea and ficus can make a great hobby bonsai tree for apartment living, and it was a joy to share the afternoon with such a great group! Including a few photos of our time together in this newsletter and more photos can be found on Austin Bonsai Society Facebook page..

Sincerely, Jonathan Wood, ABS President 2024

#### **BONSAI QUOTE:**

"My work consists in taking whatever tree I can get my hand on and bring it further step by step. Further means towards the aim of getting it from a stick in a pot to a piece of art, a tree that speaks, a tree with character, a tree with soul.... My inspiration comes form nature, from real trees in my beloved mountains, the Alps. I try to NOT make my tree look like a bonsai, but rather the bonsai like a tree. While form is important it is soul which makes all the difference. I try to concentrate on the soul." – Walter Pall

http://walterpallbonsaiarticles.blogspot.com/2012/03/interview-with-magazine-in-hong-kong.html

## President's Message

By Jonathan W.

# ANNOUNCING ONE (1) FREE APRIL 2024 BONSAI CONVENTION SCHOLARSHIP FOR A NEW CLUB MEMBER WHO JOINED ABS IN YEAR 2023!! - SCHOLARSHIP APP DEADLINE: April 9th, 2024!

(BY SIMPLE APPLICATION): (1) Must have become a NEW Austin Bonsai Club member for the first time in the year 2023. (2) Must be relatively new to the bonsai art. (3) Must be willing to prepay for the APRIL 25-28 2024 Convention in Houston, TX and then be reimbursed by Austin Bonsai Society for the approximate \$295.00 cost of event Registration (paid workshops and hotel lodging are not eligible for reimbursement with the \$295.00 Scholarship). (4) Must apply by sending a simple email application of interest to the Bonsai Society Board/Scholarship Committee via JONATHAN.WOODJS@GMAIL.COM outlining some reasons Austin Bonsai Society should consider you for the scholarship, how long you have been studying bonsai, whether or not you have registered yet for the Bonsai on The Bayou Convention in Houston, which workshops or special convention events you plan to participate in, and what day you plan to arrive and depart from the Convention (it is approx 3 and ½ days in Houston, TX ... April 25 thru 28th, 2024). NOTE: This scholarship is part of Austin Bonsai Society's non-profit commitment to support and promote both bonsai education and to help provide educational opportunities to emerging bonsai artists in the Central Texas / Greater Austin area.



# President's Message By Jonathan W.





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## Vice President's Message

By Eric B.

#### Greetings everyone!

How about that demo by Evan Pardue at the March meeting! Evan is a great teacher, and it really showed during his work on that nice Water Elm he brought. The workshop & tree sale was also a huge success. Several club members showed up to buy trees, and Evan led a workshop with 7 members, working on trees they had just picked up. Watching Evan carve a bald cypress is always fun!

In April we have a demonstration on Making Bonsai with Saplings, led by our own Dashiell Collins. Dash conceived of this program, and garnered a generous donation of 30 seedlings from Treefolks. The donated seedlings are 10 bald cypress, 10 box elders, and 10 lacey oaks. Dash will use 10 of them in the meeting demonstration. The other 20 trees will be used in April's workshop, on Saturday the 20th, 1-4 pm, at MBP Bonsai Studio. The \$10 fee covers the cost for the space, and you get to keep the tree(s) you work on! Be sure to sign up at the next meeting!

Also in April, from the 25th to the 28th, is the Lone Star Bonsai Federation annual convention. This year's theme is Bonsai on the Bayou, and it is being hosted by the Houston Bonsai Society. It's not too late to register and attend this opportunity to see some amazing trees, and attend lectures, demos, and workshops by some world-class bonsai artists. Head to https://houstonbonsaisociety.com/bonsaionthebayou to check out the schedule, and register. I hope to see you there!

In May, back by popular demand, we are having another member-led Bring Your Own Tree mini-workshop night! There will be three or four "stations" where you can work on a certain aspect of your tree (such as, refinement, wiring, etc.), with an experienced club member's guidance. The main focus of this event will be readying trees for display in the ABS annual show later in the month, May 17-19. Of course, you can bring in any tree you want; it doesn't have to be for the show, but bringing a tree in for the show is encouraged. This is a great chance to get advice and guidance on a tree or two.

As I already mentioned, May 17-19 is the annual show, and that means we need volunteers! We will have a sign-up sheet available, and need people to help set up, act as docents during the show, man the front door, sell raffle tickets, perform demos, tear down and clean up afterwards, and a whole host of other things I'm not thinking of right now. It's definitely a group effort, and the larger the group the easier it will go, so please consider donating time to make the show a success.

For the June meeting we have our very own Brandon Baldauf, working on an olive Be sure to attend this meeting. The tree will be raffled off to a lucky winner at the end of the evening.

Later in June, on Saturday the 15th from 1 to 4 pm, we have a workshop on Basic Air Layering. If you've never done an air layer before, this is your chance to learn a method for obtaining more advanced bonsai material by making a branch grow roots while it's still attached to the tree. I know, it sounds like magic, but that's only because it totally is magic. The subject of the air layering will be some young cedar elms growing up from the roots of a large stump in my backyard. They're not anything special, but they are great material for learning - or improving - this skill. More details will be in future letters.

I appreciate your reading this. Take care and I'll see you on the 10th!

#### **Get Connected!**

Join our online discussion



#### **Official Website**

Visit our website at

austinbonsaisociety.com

### **Facebook**



Like our Facebook page
AustinBonsaiSociety

#### **Twitter**



Follow us on Twitter
@ATXBonsai

## Instagram



Follow us on Instagram
@austinbonsaisociety

#### YouTube



https://www.youtube.com/channel/

UCLSknKbNLd3EOYwjkjNlneA

## **ABS Board Meeting Minutes**

Date: March 19, 2024

**Location: Virtual** 

#### **Meeting Attendees:**

- ♦ Jonathan (President)
- ♦ Eric (Vice President)
- ♦ Simon (Secretary)
- ♦ Gloria (Treasurer)
- Members-At-Large

Dash

Ever

Judith

#### President:

- Jonathan kicks off the meeting at 7:00pm
- ◆ Talked about many aspects of the program, visit from Evan, presentation by Dash. survey, rooms for improvement and more
- ♦ Detailed discussions on club show in May

#### **Vice President:**

- ♦ Finalized schedule for the year
- ♦ ABS needs to provide a \$100 value item for the Houston/LSBF/BCI convention
- ♦ Explore QR codes for upcoming workshop

#### Secretary:

♦ Last report was accepted without edits

#### Treasurer:

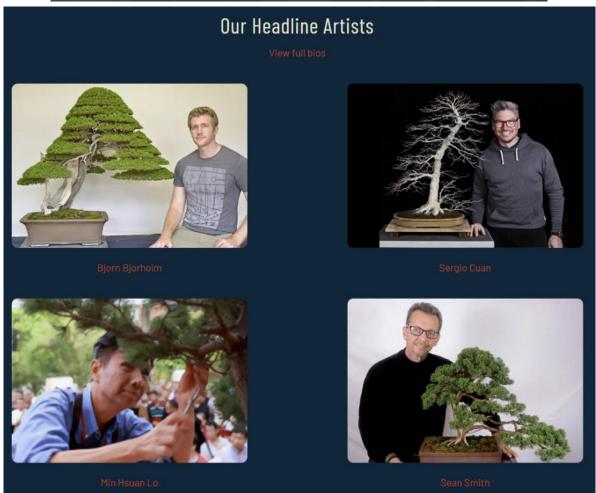
- Provide financial updates and balances
- The treasurer would like to remind the announcer at the podium to utilize the microphone to project clear communication to the audience at the back of the room

Meeting adjourned at 9:02pm

### Bonsai on the Bayou (Houston Convention 2024)

Register link: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bonsai-on-the-bayou-2024-tickets-684270350037?







#### THE 2024 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION – AVAILABILITY UPDATE

#### **OUR HEADLINE ARTISTS --**



Bjorn Bjorholm Bring Your Own Tree SOLD Small Group Demo Ashe Juniper SOLD Exhibit Critique Literati Loropetalum SOLD



Sergio Cuan
Specimen Cedar Elm SOLD
Bring Your Own Tree
Sweet Gum SOLD
Trident Maple
Exhibit Critique
Serissa Clump



Min Hsuan Lo
Japanese Boxwood
Tiger Bark Ficus SOLD
Exhibit Critique
Small Group Demonstration
Bring Your Own Tree Workshop
Hong Kong Kumquat SOLD



Sean Smith
Exhibit Critique
Suiseki Collection,
Selection & Evaluation
Seminar

#### **MORE OUTSTANDING EXPERT PRESENTERS --**



Scott Barboza Science of Bonsai Soil Seminar



Randy Bennett Bald Cypress Workshop Styling Bald Cypress Seminar



Enrique Castaño Portulacaria Afra (Dwarf Jade) Workshop SOLD



Angela Chandler Organic Bonsai Care Methods Seminar



Sooncheng Cheah Creating Kusamono Workshop



David Kreutz Satsuki Azalea Workshop SOLD



Mike Lane Grafting Sea Hibiscus Workshop



Alex Leong Loblolly Pine Workshop SOLD



Joey Mc Coy Texas Native Species For Bonsai Seminar



Frank Mihalik Wax Pendant Workshop Bonsai For Kids Workshop



Pedro Morales Gmelina "Parrot's Beak" Workshop



Evan Pardue Collected Water Elm Workshop



Alan Raymond Air Layering Seminar



Carlos Santiago Root Over Rock Trident Maple Workshop

## Bonsai Calendar – Looking Ahead

Date	Event	Artist / Presenter	Торіс	Location	Approx Member
WED 4/10/24	Club Night - Demo / Lecture	Dashiell Collins (ABS club member), Seedlings donat- ed by TreeFolks https:// www.treefolks.org/ready- set-plant/#overview	Demonstration: Turning young seedlings into amazing bonsai projects – various species and a variety of special techniques	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd Austin, TX	donation table items welcome
SAT 4/20/24	Workshop	<b>Dashiell Collins</b> (ABS club member)	Workshop: Working with seed- lings Create your own bonsai project with seedlings RSVP to: dashiellcollins@gmail.com	MBP BONSAI STUDIO 601 Kay Ln Pflugerville, TX 78660	\$10
THURS to SUN 4/25/24 4/26/24 4/27/24 4/28/24	Convention- Bonsai Work- shops, Demos, Sales, Vendors, Banquet, Public Display	Bjorn Bjorholm, Sergio Cuan, Min Hsuan Lo **Registration underway! First-class, exciting, international bonsai week- end**	Bonsai On the Bayou 2024 Convention - LSBF + Bonsai Clubs International Houston Bonsai Society <a href="https://www.facebook.com/">https://www.facebook.com/</a> HoustonBonsai	Houston Marriott Westchase (800) 452-5110 2900 Briarpark Dr, Houston, TX 77042	RSVP room reservations, workshops, and registration EARLY before it sells out!
WED 5/8/24	CLUB Night / Demo/ Presenta- tion	3 ABS Club Members Lead this educational event:	BYOT (Bring Your Own Tree) For Pre-Show Refinement and Display Help — Stations around the room to get help working on your bonsai **1st Show Tree Challenge! — Time to bring a tree you think may be on the path to public display! Mosses, top dressing of soil, leaf cutting, bonsai pot preparation, refine- ment and more!)	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd Austin, TX	donation table items welcome
FRI 5/17/24	Volunteers Set- up Show	ABS Club Members: Show Chair: Joey McCoy	Volunteer Afternoon/Evening:  - Volunteers Set-up room for Austin Bonsai Society Annual Show, and drop off bonsai for display, pizza w/ volunteers	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd Austin, TX	N/A
SAT 5/18/24	Public Bonsai Show	ABS Club Members - trees on public display	Austin Bonsai Society Annual ShowVolunteers needed ap- prox 9:00AM to 5:30PM	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd Austin, TX	donation table items welcome
SUN 5/19/24	Public Bonsai Show	ABS Club Members - trees on public display	Austin Bonsai Society Annual ShowVolunteers needed ap- prox 9:00AM to 5:30PM	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd Austin, TX	donation table items welcome

## Bonsai Calendar – Looking Ahead

Date	Event Type	Artist / Presenter	Торіс	Location	Approx Member Cost
WED 6/12/24	CLUB MEETING - Demo/ Presenta- tion	Brandon Baldauf (ABS Club Member), Hawkeye Bonsai https:// www.hawkeyebonsai.com/	about a tree species perfect for bonsai that often looks ancient	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd Austin, TX	donation table items welcome
SAT 6/22/24	WORKSHOP	<b>Eric Benson</b> (ABS Club Member)	Air-layering: a way to make fantastic pre-bonsai material! Explore and practice this special skill at Eric B.'s home  RSVP for materials and head-count to:  Jebenson99@gmail.com	11807 North Oaks Dr., Austin (Please RSVP by email for headcount)	None
WED 7/10/24	CLUB MEETING - Lecture	Guest Artist :  Mike Lane, Florida https:// mikelanesshohinstu- dio.wordpress.com/  https:// www.kitsunebonsai.com/	Bonsai Pro Mike Lane is sure to bring a wealth of expert knowledge as he demonstrates bonsai techniques on a special tree.	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd Austin, TX	donation table items welcome
SAT 7/27/24	WORKSHOP	ABS Club members lead this workshop event	BYOT Tropical Work, Styling and Repot help available for paid club members	MBP BONSAI STUDIO 601 Kay Ln Pflugerville, TX 78660	\$10

## **March Meeting**





















## **Refreshments, Trees and Raffles**

























#### **April Bonsai**

by John Miller

Rotate, rotate, rotate. Feed, feed. These two things we usually don't do enough or properly, prob ably because we don't see any result immediately.

In order for your trees to grow equally on all sides, they must receive equal light energy from all sides. Therefore they must be rotated on a regular and consistent basis. The best solution I have heard is from Mark Bynum. He gives each and every plant a 1/4 turn clockwise every Monday.

Most of our bonsai soil is pretty sterile and we water so thoroughly that we leach any small amount there out. If you use commercial chemical fertilizers, you should probably cut the strength of the mixture and apply more often. The same would be true for liquid organic feeds. The best fertilization is to use a solid organic fertilizer. Solid organics break down slowly therefore having a small bit of nutrients available for watering to carry them into the soil. Porous components like pumice sill absorb some nutrient filled water and make it available to the plant as needed. There are many solid organic feeds out there and most are good. Just watch for components like chicken manure that will release nutrients too fast and burn the roots. Using mycorrhiza, at least the first time you pot up the tree, should aid the tree.

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 moving them directly to full sun. They should be acclimated gradually. Too much wind will cause the leaves to burn. Some damage may not show up until hot weather. Repotting for most hardy bonsai has ended. Very late budding species like oaks may still be done, depending on your local climate. I also do dwarf yaupon and olive then. Its still too early for the tropicals, They should usually be held until the night temps are in no danger of going below 60.

There are two things to consider when doing the spring trimming. Are you still in the styling stage or are you ready to do the refinement and develop the twiginess that a mature bonsai needs.

If you are still styling, you will need to develop size and movement in your branches by letting those branches grow vigorously, then cut back to a good node and repeat the process on the new shoot. At the same time you must not let the other branches get too powerful. Keep the foliage there trimmed so the energy goes primarily to the developing branch.

If your tree is a mature bonsai or is ready for refine ment, Do not let the new growth get large. On elms and other trees with leaves appearing alternately down the shoot, do not let more than 5 new leaves appear. Cut back to 2 or 3 leaves, leaving the last leaf on the side that you want the new growth to appear. On maples and others with leaves coming in pairs on opposite sides of the twig, cut the center shoot as soon as you can determine it. You must get behind the new internode that is emerging. Tweezers work best for this operation. Since the shoots do not all open at the same time this could be a daily chore for the best results. Sometimes it is easier to grasp the new leaves and bend the tip sharply backward breaking the shoot off.

A good organic program takes care of both the feeding and the insect problems. I recommend the mixture of 1 tablespoon each of fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses and 5% apple cider vinegar to a gallon of water. I use the mixture both as a foliar spray and as a soil drench fertilizer. As a weekly foliar spray it keeps

aphids and mites under control as well as any other insect I've had. The prime requirement is to cover the entire plant, top and bottom of the leaves with a fine mist sprayer (no hose end stuff). I try to drench soil twice a month partly because I don't think the plant can absorb all the minor elements it needs thru the foliage.

Fungal diseases can show up with damp weather. Leaf spot can be serious on Catlin and Chinese elms and on hollies. Mildew shows up later with warmer weather. There are organic fungicides available, potassium bicarbonate or baking soda (sodium bicarbonate). Check an organics nursery or publications. A 1% solution of hydrogen peroxide (dilute the standard 3% store bought stuff 2 parts water to each part peroxide) is also recommended but it can injure very new foliage.

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. It is also 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, kill it with isopropyl alcohol) 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. Also most automatic systems use a drip system which only waters a small spot in shallow containers.

If you have early blooming azaleas, you should remove some of the buds. Most azalea have way too many buds to look good when they do not have room to open fully. Later flowering plants usually bloom on new growth so most may be pruned now with no loss of flowers. Pruning after flowering may result in new growth and a rebloom. My wisteria frutescens (Am. native) has bloomed 4 times into late July.

#### Reminder for club membership and advertisement

#### 2024 membership fee

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

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

#### 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

Shawn & Chris W.

## **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!

## **Advertisements**



## MBP Bonsai Studio Importers, Retail & Wholesale

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Your source for:
High quality Yagimitsu & Ryukoh tools
Organic Bonsai Fertilizers
Imported and Domestic Trees
Bonsai Pottery, Soils and supplies
Classes & Seminars
Open Tuesday Through Sunday



ph: 512-202-3403 -mail: mbpbonsai@ suddenlink.net 601 Kay Lane Pflugerville, TX 78660 (call for directions)

## **Bonsai Notebook**

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



## Austin Bonsai Society

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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.

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

Email: webmaster.austinbonsaisociety@gmail.com