



Bonsai Notebook

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

August 2015 vol 56

August 2015 Program

by Jimbo Baumann

All of the small-leaved fig-tree species are popular for indoor purposes, especially in colder climates. They have fine strong trunks, nice spread of branches, and shiny, evergreen, leathery leaves. Although they have a tendency to lose some of their leaves when moved abruptly from indoors to outdoor and visa versa, they do re-foliate so do not despair.

It is recommended that Ficus grown exclusively indoors be provided with as much light as possible. The trees can be acclimatized to most ranges of light, from full sun in the tropics to indoors under artificial light. This tropical must be protected from frost and freezing temperatures, as exposure to such will cause severe die-back of twigs and branches.

Moderate moisture is optimum for this tree, and a well-draining soil mix will ensure that its roots do not rot. Full sun conditions require more water and fertilizer. The first indication that the tree is suffering dehydration is wilt, then leaf drop. If given water within a reasonable length of time after defoliation, it will reassert itself with new leaves. Although this tree is not categorized as a heavy feeder, it responds well to regular applications of balanced fertilizer, usually half strength. Leaf color may be lighter in full sun, a signal that more nitrogen is needed. Water sparingly in winter, allowing to dry out slightly before watering.

Repot approximately every two years in Summer months.

Calendar of Events

August 12: Ficus Workshop with Elaine White
7:30pm//Please arrive early due to heavy traffic
Hosts: Ruby Chiang & Russell Kohlert

August 18: Monthly Board Meeting
7:00pm

August 18: Members Only Workshop
7:30pm, Ebony and Ficus will be potted, soil and pots provided for participants

Sept. 9: ANNUAL AUCTION-come prepared to bid high

Oct 9/10: LSBF Bunjin Seminar in Kingwood, TX



Owen Reich, ABS guest speaker last month.

(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

Hi BonsaiFolks,

Please travel around 30 minutes EARLY to the Wednesday, August 12th Club meeting: a concert is happening across from the Botanical Garden around 7:00PM. Wednesday August 12th at 7:00PM is the General Meeting for all members to attend during which we will have a presentation by Elaine White about Ficus care and training, along with a beginner's hands-on session on styling. Elaine has decades of bonsai experience to share with us! Repotting workshop for both Ficus and Texas Ebony on Tuesday August 18th at 7:30PM.

What a joy to have Owen Reich tour Central Texas in July. His workshop for ABS was insightful and his lecture demo on boxwood, styled to resemble an ancient oak's low-sweeping branch structure, was enjoyed by many. Beyond stellar technique, Owen encouraged being patient with our trees. Allow them recovery time and postpone significant changes for a suitable season. Owen autographed a few potting-sized chopsticks which were a nice addition to the evening's raffle. I was so surprised to win the boxwood raffle and am finding it difficult, though not impossible, to leave the tree alone for now, allowing it to recover vigor. Owen also mentioned a couple must read books: *The Four Seasons of Bonsai* (Kyuzo Murata) and *Bonsai: It's Art, Science, History, and Philosophy* (Deborah Koreshoff). Many of us also enjoyed Mr. Reich's suggestion to add "subtle features" that encourage some "mystery" in the finished bonsai work.

Our Annual ABS Auction is just around the corner September 9th, 2015 at 7:00PM at Zilker. Be on the lookout for finished bonsai, pre-bonsai, and bonsai accessories to donate to this year's show. Word is that this year's auction is going to be spectacular thanks to generous donations and great opportunities to acquire material.

Welcome new members! Keep coming to 2nd Wednesday meetings and monthly workshops to get to know future friends and mentors in the bonsai art. Reach out and say hi! Maybe even bring a friend or two who takes interest in bonsai to Wednesday meetings from time to time.

Thank you fantastic board members, Pat, Jimbo, May, Zerita, Angie, and Nan as LSBF Delegate for your generous contributions to our club. Special thanks this month to Simon for helping behind the scenes with our technology as webmaster extraordinaire! Thank you Also, Lizzie Chen, for putting together our newsletter each month! Also, Alisan Clarke for continuing to help with Zilker Garden Council. Our club is so grateful!

Sincerely,
Jonathan Wood, ABS President

Bonsai quote:

"There are no borders in bonsai. The dove of peace flies to palace as to humble house, to young as to old, to rich and poor. So does the spirit of bonsai." — John Yoshio Naka

NEWS CORNER

2015 Kathy Shaner Seminar
October 16-18th
Buda TX

- *Seminar*
- *Home-cooked Dinner*
- *Bring your own tree Workshop*

Registration available in July. To be notified when registration is open, email:
ckmurphy2000@gmail.com



Photos by Joey McCoy

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Charles Lankfor

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**ABS Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday July 21, 2015**

ABS Board Meeting Date: July 21, 2015

Location: IHOP Restaurant at 2244 and Mopac

Names of Board members present: 5 Board Members Present: Jonathan, May, Pat, Jimbo, Zerita. Guests: Simon and Chuck.

Meeting of Austin Bonsai Society Board is called to order by (Jonathan) President at 7:02 PM.

Are there any amendments to the Secretary's Report as they appear in the current newsletter? No Minutes as there was not a board meeting in June 2015 due to Zilker cancelling the meeting location (inclement weather).

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

Income over expenses of \$1,615.12. Estimate Show profit of \$349 (TBD). Investment CD expiration on July 20, 2015. Treasurer's recommendation on where to invest CD funds for a return is being evaluated. VOTE: The Treasurer's Report was moved to acceptance by May L. and voted by Board into acceptance by a unanimous vote.

PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT Wednesday CLUB MEETING:

1. Elaine White presents overview of Ficus care and training. Then Registrants work on Ficus trees with assistance from members. 2. Next meeting's host(s) Ruby Chang and Russell Kohler.

PREPARATION FOR NEXT CLUB Tuesday WORKSHOP:

Pat and Chuck to bring pots and soil for up to 12 trees that will need repotting. Also the size and cost of some pots may have increased for the ficus trees. Elaine White will be donating some ficus pots.

ADDITIONAL REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Jonathan will be drafting a quarterly report for the Zilker Garden Council Newsletter "Down the Garden Path", which highlights the past 3 months and future 3 months of ABS activities.

OLD BUSINESS (None)

6. NEW BUSINESS (listed ahead of time if possible)

Suggestions for filling board member position? The idea of creating mentor/shadow board positions was discussed as a way to orient future board members to the service roles.

President to appoint Quoc Hoang and Simon Tse to guest and Membership and Visitor Welcoming Committee. The Greeter, Nan, can work alongside the committee to welcome guests and support new members.

2016 Budget Drafting Discussion Ideas- President Budget Ideas were presented, focusing on increasing budget for program material, member education, guest artists and raffle items. The Treasurer will be drafting a proposed budget for 2016 in the near future. Regarding budgeted continued storage: A decision was made to evaluate storage garage temperatures during this summer along with verifying moisture is at an acceptable level for storage items.

DTGP (Down the Garden Path) Newsletter submission from ABS due by August 1st. (Jonathan and review by Alisan and TTSBE)

VOTE was passed: To Loan TTSBE some display cloths, mats, stands and backdrops for the Oita Sister City Visit to Zilker November 14th, 2015.

OCTOBER 2015 Program Planning will be continued by email.

MATT OUWINGA 2016 -- March 9 thru 12th 2016 - MBP will house him. Discussed Matt O. as possible March 2016 guest artist.

A VOTE was passed to purchase Trident Maples and bonsai pot from MBP Bonsai for group planting and raffle at February or March 2016 ABS Meeting. Approx Cost of \$150 for plants and container. Jonathan will make the purchase and send bill to Treasurer.

ABS Welcome Packet/Orientation Update was given by Zerita and Jonathan. Some of the ideas of a New Member Welcome packet will be worked out alongside the newly established Membership Committee.

LSBF Symposium donations/raffle items from ABS for October 2015. ABS has approved donating a bonsai item of \$100 to LSBF Symposium Auction in October 2015.

Discussion about possible partnering with San Antonio for the next convention took place. It will be a few months before the two clubs decide.

President closes the meeting by motion from the Board at 8:30PM .



August Bonsai by John Miller

During August the temperature will make your job harder. The prime effort is toward keeping the roots cooler and not drying out. The main culprit is the late afternoon sun. It sneaks in at the hottest part of the day when there is no humidity in the air to buffer some of the heat and is at an angle that gets it under any foliage or awning you may have.

Normally you will need to watch for changing water needs. Porous soil dries faster than one that is dense or has a high organic content. Wind dries the soil both directly and by taking moisture from the foliage. Heat from the high temps or from the sun heating the pots evaporates the water.

Shade should be provided. Tridents maples, most elms, oaks as well as junipers and pines do good with 30% to 40% shade cloth. Thin leaf trees like Japanese maples are understory species and work with 50% cloth. 60% and higher should be avoided. It might be used on the western exposure to protect from the extremely hot late afternoon rays. Local sources (Home Depot, Lowes) are high percentage not really useful for plant protection. I order shade cloth from the internet, cheaper that way too.

Chopped long fiber sphagnum moss should be used on the soil to help retain moisture. New Zealand moss is the highest quality, South American is almost as good, North American usually is poor quality, lots of debris and breaks down fast. Again order from the internet. Lowes had Miracle-Gro which is Chilean and also Mosser-Lee American from Wisconsin. Old cloth, shop towels, or such may be substituted or used to hold the moss if you have a windy location.

Fertilizer should be used sparingly during August. Organic fertilizer cakes are the safest to use however they should not have any 'hot' ingredient like rabbit or chicken droppings. After Labor Day switch to a winterizing type of fertilizer that is high in the third number--potassium. However for tropicals keep your regular schedule going, just be sure the soil is cool enough that the chemicals do not burn the roots.

This is a good time to remember to water twice. Dry soil particles, especially clay and organic particles tend to resist absorbing water. This is due to the surface tension of the water. Wait a few minutes after the first watering for the dry soil particles to absorb some of the water on their surface. Then the second watering gets the whole particle

wet. During this period especially you should consider foliage spraying. The humidity is usually very low in the afternoon and many junipers close the stoma during the day and open at night to absorb the dew. The foliage spray cools the plant and the environment so it can recover a bit overnight.

Deciduous bonsai may be pruned, wired, or styled during this period. Any trees wired in the spring (or earlier) should be carefully checked. If the wire is snug it should be removed and the tree rewired.

Tropicals are in their glory as long as you keep their roots reasonably cool. Defoliate, wire, and prune to your hearts content. Repotting should have been done earlier.

Summer flowering plants should be fertilized carefully so as to not burn the roots. Remove any seed or fruit that may form, they rob the plant of needed energy. Crape myrtle need to be deadheaded. Cut them back so the new shoots that form will not be too long. They should bear flowers each time. If you have the American wisteria (*wisteria frutescens*) they should rebloom each time you prune them.

Do not prune azaleas any more this year if you want flowers next spring. Buds have been set by now. If you are still developing your azalea, go ahead and prune. Some varieties will set a few buds anyway. In general, when pruning look for the cluster of twigs at the site of last spring's bloom. Cut out all and leave two, usually the ones growing horizontally. Be sure to cut back strong growing shoots to a couple of leaves.

The combination of heat and dry conditions are optimum for the growth of the spider mites. Scale will be extremely dangerous sucking the sap from the plant. Cedar elm is subject to a very small white scale hard to see. Controls for these will generally take care of any other you may have. Be sure you read and follow the manufacturers directions for any control you use. Organic controls have no residual action and need to be used on a regular basis. Used regularly they get scale when it is in the reproductive stage outside of the shell. The only way to get scale under the shell is by a systemic poison. For example, Bayer systemic granules are applied to the surface of the soil, watered in, absorbed by the roots and transported by the sap throughout the plant. The bug gets it when he sucks the sap or eats the leaf.

My organic control is one tablespoon of each of liquid seaweed, fish emulsion, 5% apple cider vinegar, and molasses, in one gallon of water. Spray with fine mist sprayer covering top and bottom surface of leaves and

Extreme dry conditions will keep fungal problems in check but watch out if we happen to get a few days of rain. Warm and wet mean an eruption of leaf spot and mildew. Control them with the 1% hydrogen peroxide spray. I like that because it does not leave a white residue like the baking soda or potassium peroxide.

How much sun should your tree have. That depends on a bunch of things but mostly on the species of tree. Understory trees (e.g. Acer palmatum) can use a lot of shade, good strong light but only dappled sun. However, again there are no absolutes. For four years I had been growing 70 old-fashioned green cultivar maples in full sun to 1 or 2 pm with no problem. I find that the ashe juniper and cedar elm will also take full sun but do better if the pots are covered and they get some afternoon shade. However full sun will bleach the leaves on some of on my tridents but others are very happy and healthy in the same general area. I think you need to try to follow the general guidelines but watch your trees and move them if necessary. I have had problems with Fukien tea in the past but this year I have them under 60% shade cloth, watering copiously, and they are staying green. I would like to see some articles from local people on their experiences with the different tropicals in this area, covering both their summer and winter care so how about writing one.

In the real world, plan your soil mix for your average conditions and then tilt the pots if you have a long wet spell and give an extra watering when hot and dry. Use some loose covering on the pot to shade it from the sun. A windbreak could help with tender leaved trees.

Make preparations to protect your trees and pots from the heat that is coming. Be sure to remember that the most critical time of day is late afternoon. Usually that is when the temp is highest and the air is driest (the relative humidity is low) and lets all the suns energy through to your backyard. The bonsai must be protected from the sun coming in at a low angle getting under your shade cloth or trees. Use chopped sphagnum moss on the surface of your soil to help retain moisture in the soil and it also helps keeping it cool. I like to water after sundown to cool the roots so the plant can recover overnight. Water other times as needed.

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)