



Bonsai Notebook

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

August 2024 vol 167

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Calendar of Events

August 14, 2024

- ◆ Topic: Cascade Styling
- ◆ Presenter: David Whitaker
- ◆ Time: 6:30pm (Social) 7:00pm (Meeting)
- ◆ Location: Zilker Botanical Garden

August 20, 2024

- ◆ Board Meeting

August 24, 2024

- ◆ Topic: Air Layering, Part II
- ◆ Time: TBD
- ◆ Location: Eric's residence
- ◆ Fees: \$5.00

2024 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
Ian G.

Tree Hosts
Zerita R.

President's Message

By Jonathan W.

Hi Bonsai Folks,

Our Annual ABS Auction is just around the corner September 21st, 2024 at 10:00AM at the Anderson Mill Garden Center off of HWY 620 in Northwest Austin. We need Donations and and folks to bid on our donated items! 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.

Special word of thanks to our fantastic board members, Gloria, Dash, Simon, Judi, Ever and Eric (our awesome VP) for your generous contributions to our club. Thank you Simon, for putting together our newsletter each month! Also, Alisan Clarke for continuing to help with the Austin Area Garden Council. Our club is so grateful!

Sincerely,

Jonathan Wood, ABS President 2024

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



Jorge, our lucky winner for the demo tree!

Vice President's Message

By Eric B.

Happy August, my tree people! I wrote last month about ways to keep your trees cooler during the heat, but then the temperature for the last few weeks has been in the 80s. Don't worry though, it will get hot again, so just pretend everything I wrote last month is here.

Mike Lane's visit was, as always, a delight. The Texas Ebony he worked on was a beautiful tree.

The Tropical Repotting and Wiring workshop was not well-attended, but those who were there got a lot of repotting, pruning and styling work done.

This month we have Texas artist David Whittaker, who will be potting and styling 3 different cascade bonsai! He will do 2 larger trees (a Green Island ficus and a Dwarf Jade), and a shohin-sized Pink Pixie bougainvillea. One of the trees will be put into the raffle at the end of the meeting, while the other two will be offered in the club's annual auction in September. We will take an informal vote at the August meeting to determine which tree will be placed in the raffle that night. David will also have a tree sale earlier in the day, on August 14, around 2 to 4 pm. David will be bringing a variety of trees, such as bald cypress, pink pixies, ficus, dwarf jade, and others. He will have material at a variety of prices, and only takes cash. The sale will be held at Eric Benson's house, 11807 North Oaks Dr., Austin.

August's workshop is Part II of the air layering workshop. If you attended Part I, you are already signed up for Part II. The fee for Part II is \$5. Please bring tools, pots, soil, and other supplies to pot your air layers, if they are ready.

In September we have LSBF visiting artist Julian Tsai, who will work on a Contorted Philbert supplied by Jonathan Wood. Julian is a young artist based in Los Angeles. In 2018 traveled to Japan, for an apprenticeship under Keiichi Fujikawa of Fujikawa Kouka-en located in Osaka, Japan. From his website, Julian's philosophy on bonsai is, "Trees, like us, are living and thus constantly changing and growing. Just as we strive to continuously learn and improve our own lives, we can adopt similar principles to bring the best out of our trees."

There is no workshop for September, because we have the ABS annual auction later that month. Watch for more information, and reserve Saturday, Sept. 21 in your calendar to volunteer to help with running the event.

Thanks, everyone, and I'll see you on the 14th!

ABS Board Meeting Minutes

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discussion



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Date: July 16, 2024

Location: Virtual

Meeting Attendees:

- ◆ Jonathan (President)
- ◆ Eric (Vice President)
- ◆ Simon (Secretary)
- ◆ Members-At-Large
 - Ever
 - Judith
 - Dash

President:

- ◆ Touched on name tags, artists, materials, auction, slack, raffles and other topics
- ◆ Aligned speakers/artists for first quarter of 2025
- ◆ Volunteer hours
- ◆ Blues on the Green traffic/venue restrictions and solutions for 2025

Vice President:

- ◆ Discussed Whitaker's visit
- ◆ Talked about programs and preparation for the rest of the year

Secretary:

- ◆ Meeting starts at **7:33pm**
- ◆ Last report was accepted without edits

Treasurer:

- ◆ Provide financial updates and balances

Meeting adjourned at **8:40 pm**

Bonsai Calendar – Looking Ahead

Date	Event Type	Artist / Presenter	Topic	Location	Approx Member Cost
WED 8/14/24	CLUB MEETING - Presentation/ Demo	Guest Artist : David Whittaker	Guest Artist program - Styling of 3 different cascade bonsai: Jade with wide trunk, Green Island Ficus, Shohin Pink Pixie Bougainvillea	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd Austin, TX	donation table items welcome
WED 8/24/24	WORKSHOP	Eric Benson (ABS Club Member)	Air-layering Part 2 - See the results! Air-layer removal, potting, aftercare TIME: TBD RSVP for materials and headcount to: Jebenson99@gmail.com	11807 North Oaks Dr., Austin (Please RSVP by email for headcount)	Bring Your Own Soil, pot, etc. for air layer transplanting.
WED 9/11/24	CLUB MEETING - Presentation/ Demo	Special Event – Guest Artist Julian Tsai	Program Details – Guest Artist Julian Tsai Live Demonstration	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd Austin, TX	donation table items welcome
SAT 9/21/24	BONSAI AUCTION EVENT	Members donate bonsai, tools, supplies, pots, stands, books etc	Fundraiser Auction for Austin Bonsai Society - funds for Guest Artists / Lectures/Demos etc Approx Time: 10:00AM , see future schedule for details	Anderson Mill Garden Club Center Approx 10:00AM 13974 FM2769, Volente, TX 78641	Auction items needed – Generous Bidding Appreciated! Thank you!!
WED 10/9/24	CLUB MEETING - WORKSHOP	Member Guided	BYO Tree - 3 stations around the room. Major styling, Refinement, and Wiring assistance	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd Austin, TX	donation table items welcome

August Bonsai

by John Miller

You have only two main jobs in August: (1) keep your bonsai alive and (2) keep them healthy. Regardless of where you live in Texas you can expect 90+ temperatures and the direct sun will be merciless. The sun on the pots raises the temperature of the soil high enough to kill the roots. It also speeds up the drying of the soil. Many pathogens (e.g. spider mites) thrive in higher temperatures and the stressed plants cannot cope with added problems.

Two things can be done to cope with the sun. You can supply partial shade and you may provide a cover over the pots. The shade, whether from a natural source (tree cover) or a shade cloth material, should provide greater protection from the afternoon sun. Late afternoon sun can be a problem because the temperature is highest and the soil is usually drier at that time. A cover over the pot should not touch the pot. A non-porous cover may create an oven. There should be good air flow around the pot for cooling. Ideally watering should be done at 2pm or so. That would lower the soil temp to around 70 and would provide for some evaporative cooling the rest of the afternoon.

Keeping the plants healthy means taking care of insects and diseases promptly, keeping them out of water stress, and feeding properly. A good many species could take full sun (on the tops) if they are healthy. A 30% shade cloth over them during this time would be better. Japanese maples and others with thin leaves would need more shade.

During these extremely hot periods take care when using chemicals. This is true whether you are using organic chemicals or the other kind. I do not use my organic spray unless it can have a few hours before it gets to 90. Heat makes chemicals more active and they can damage your plants. Be sure to read the fine print on the label re temperature use. You may need to use them early in the morning or very late evening. Most commercial chemicals are sold in an oil based mixture which can damage some like buttonwood at any temperature.

When checking the results on your plants after spraying remember that the spray usually will not remove the 'evidence' of problems. The webs will still be there after the mites are killed, the shells of the scale will be attached to the leaf or stem. These will have to be removed by hand, by a jet of water, or some other way. A soft toothbrush works good on the scale shells.

Good fertilizer techniques will help you maintain healthy bonsai. The best technique is to use organic fertilizer balls on the surface. They will supply a very low dose of nutrients every time you water. Time release fertilizer will work but you do not have much control, it releases a lot when you first put it on and you do not know when it peters out. Water soluble fertilizers are concentrated chemicals that may be too active for high temp use. They also quickly wash out of the soil as you water and you are doing that more often now. Check to see that your fertilizer supplies the many micronutrients that plants need.

Azaleas set their buds in July. Other spring flowering plants also set buds in the fall. They should not be pruned after bud set if you desire the blooms. If you are in a developmental stage you can still prune them. Other flowering plants should have the dead blooms and seed pods removed. That may encourage more

flowering. Some tropicals like the bougainvillea flower after a dry period which is their natural dormancy. Check growth habits for your species.

Check your trees for moss growing on trunks. Bark seems to hold moisture pretty good and the extra watering may cause moss to grow. Kill it with 90% isopropyl alcohol. Let it die before picking off gently with tweezers. Too much moss on the soil interferes with proper watering.

More on water practices. I prefer to water heavily in the evening (in normal weather). That gives the plant all night to renew itself without losing most of its water to evaporation. Then in the early morning, they get a quick foliage spray and wetting the surface of the soil which may have dried out overnight. Very porous soil may need more morning water. This was what I did while working since the morning task only took 10 minutes or so. Now I still prefer to water heavily in the evening but the morning watering is more done more slowly and trees given a little more individual attention as some of them will not need water in the soil. Be sure to do the double watering bit--water thoroughly and then after a few minutes water again so that the dry soil particles will get moistened.

Also watch for signs of insect problems. The spider mite will always be near. Others to look for are scale of various forms, aphids, and mealy bugs. Preventative medicine is best. By the time you see signs, the damage is already done, especially spider mites. I use the organic foliar feed (1 Tablespoon each of fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses and 5% apple cider vinegar per gallon water) to control all these. You can use some of the other organic controls or a chemical according to label directions. Read the label directions carefully. Do not apply oil based chemicals to buttonwoods or other sensitive species. A hose end sprayer does not work very well, its droplets are too large and you have little control over where it goes. Use a pump sprayer with a fine spray and cover both top and bottom of leaves.

The humidity in summer varies quite a bit but when it sticks around for a few days look for fungal problems to appear, mildew being the most prevalent. Foliage spraying in the morning will usually not be a problem because it dries pretty quickly. Treat with potassium carbonate which you can find at any nursery with a decent organic section. There are several chemical sprays available too.

Reminder for club membership and advertisement

2024 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).

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

Ross C.

Jeanette W.

Johnny Y.

Toby (TJ) N.

Luke B.

Morgan B.

Emma A.

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!

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(call for directions)

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



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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