

# Bonsai Notebook

*www.austinbonsaisociety.com*

*A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society*

*April 2013 vol 28*

## April 2013 Programs

by Bill Boytim

### Life in the Soil

Soil is composed of many different components. Generally the ratio of sand, silt and clay will determine how a soil is classified: sandy, clay, sandy loam, loam, etc. We generally know that adding organic matter to a sandy soil will improve water retention. Adding organic matter to clay soil will help improve drainage.

In addition to the non-living mineral soil components, soils will have a differing amount of other life forms. These other life forms create a food web in the soil and provide many benefits to the plants that we grow in this soil. These benefits are critical to both the trees and accent plants we have in our bonsai pots and with the trees we are field growing as pre-bonsai or as a means to revitalize a weakened bonsai tree.

Many of our current agricultural practices negatively impact the soil food web and result in reduced nutrients being available in the root zone for our plants. The **Wednesday April 10th** presentation will explain this soil food web and how we can benefit by encouraging a healthy diverse group of soil dwelling organisms.

Workshop on **Tuesday April 16th** will help members groom their trees for the May ABS show. Methods for cleaning bonsai pots will also be presented

## Calendar of Events

**April 10th ABS Monthly Meeting**  
Reception Hosts: **Candy Hansen**  
and **Connie King**  
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 pm

**April 10th ABS Monthly Meeting**  
**Life in the Soil**  
by **Bill Boytim**  
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 9:00 pm

**April 16th ABS Board Meeting**  
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 7:30 pm

**April 16th ABS Member's Workshop**  
**Workshop - Grooming Trees for May Show**  
Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm



**Wizzie Brown demonstrating - Insects that Attack our Bonsai at the March 2013 General Meeting**

## Austin Bonsai Society Board of Directors

**Nan Jenkins**  
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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 inc

hes. 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.

John Muller is the editor of "Bonsai Notebook". He may be contacted at [jcm2austx@sprintmail.com](mailto:jcm2austx@sprintmail.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](mailto:jvmccoy@sbcglobal.net).

## President's Message by Nan Jenkins

One more meeting and then we are off to the races-- no the convention. It may feel like the races for some of us. I really hope you are all planning to spend some time there. If you have never been to a convention, it will change your thinking and work with your trees. If you have been there, you can learn new processes, new ideas about how to work with trees in a small pot, and you will be re-inspired. With it close to us, we can stay at home and save that money so we can spend it in the vendor area. Believe me, you want to hit the vendors! Hand made, beautiful pots, tons of trees, wire, tools, soil of all sorts or even just the ingredients for soil, and more.

I'll see you at our meeting on Wednesday night, then at the convention. I can still use a couple of people to help out with the monitors so that the others can have some breaks. Let me know if you want to do a little inside work. Southward Ho!

*Nan*



*(Photo by Joey McCoy)*

## Austin Bonsai Society Board Meeting

February 19, 2013,

No minutes available.

## ABS Board Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2013

Zilker Garden Club House

Called to order: 7:17 PM

In attendance: Joey McCoy, Bill Boytim, Nan Jenkins, Russel Kohlert and John Muller

Discussion on Convention decorative items being used for ABS or returned. 125 have registered for the Convention. Walter Pall is being replaced by Dan Robinson. Joe Trochta is sponsoring the Emerging Talent material for the Convention. There may be safety issues regarding the room capacity for the Demonstrations, so observers may be limited. Due to Walter Pall's absence Bill Boytim may provide a change to the originally planned program for the ABS April General Meeting. Additional discussion for the Convention was had. A request is being made for anyone having a cart or wheeled carrier to lend it for use at the Convention.

Adjourned: 7:44 PM

Respectfully submitted by John Muller,  
substitute Secretary

### Directory additions:

Joe Ben Lopez 12800 Center Lake Dr. #128 Austin, Tx. 78753 512-914-3085 no email	Ken & Shari Lakin 1001 Ft. Davis St. Georgetown, Tx. 78633 512-240-4619 kslakin@suddenlink.net
Carl & Noreen Quisenberry 8205 Beaver Brook Lane Austin, Tx. 78748 512-282-1529 cequisenberry@gmail.com	David Miller P.O. Box 4801 Austin, Tx. 78765 512-469-0028 mail@davidbmiller.com

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e-mail: mbpbonsai@suddenlink.net

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(call for directions)

LSBF (Lone Star Bonsai Federation), of which all members of the Austin Bonsai Society are members, has a website which might help members understand the organization better.

Please go to: <http://www.bonsai-lsbf.com>

## JADE GARDENS

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e-mail: [bonsaijg@gmail.com](mailto:bonsaijg@gmail.com)

web page: <http://www.bonsaiexhibittexas.com>

## Bonsai Calendar

- SSOT meeting schedule for 2013: *June 1* - Logstrum Workshop or Tropical with Stone;

*Sept. 28* - Annual business meeting and panel critique.

- The 2013 state LSBF convention will be April 11-13, 2013, at the New Braunfels Convention Center.

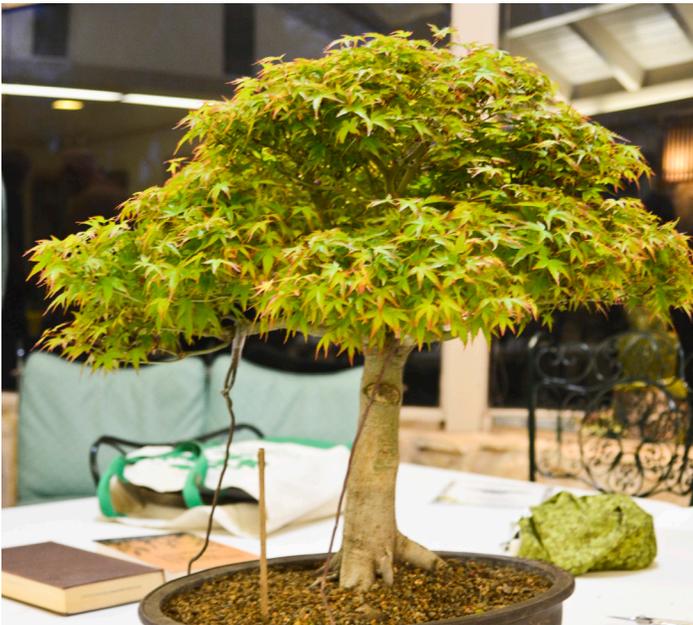
Know of an upcoming Bonsai event of interest to club members? Send the details to [jcm2austx@sprintmail.com](mailto:jcm2austx@sprintmail.com)

**March 2013 ABS Program - Insects that Attack our Bonsai**



*(Photos by Editor)*

**March 2013 ABS Workshop - Insects that Attack our Bonsai**



*(Photos by Editor)*

## April Bonsai by John Miller

*Editor's Note: John Miller, who writes a monthly column for the Bonsai Society of Dallas and the Fort Worth Bonsai Society, has agreed to share his column with us. We need to make adjustments for our warmer, climate, with its early springs, long summers, late falls and erratic winters.*

April is a good time to enjoy your bonsai. The mad season of repotting is over, the new flush of growth has slowed a bit and the weather is not so hot yet (usually).

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

So in April repotting for the hardy bonsai has ended and its still too early for the tropics. So what is left to do? Just pruning, feeding, pruning, check for insects, pruning, shows, pruning. You get the idea.

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 the short.

Basically, on deciduous trees, there are two types of growth. On elms and other trees with leaves appearing alternately down the shoot, the first leaves are smaller and internodes shorter. As the shoot grows, it gets larger (all along it) and the internodes get wider. 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 is the first internode. As the leaves enlarge 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.

On alternate growing species, formation pruning is easy. Since the first internodes do not lengthen, you let the branch grow rampant until it gets to the diameter you want. Then cut it back wherever the design dictates and let a new branch grow and repeat the process. For ramification pruning you do not want to let the twig thicken. After 4 or 5 new leaves

appear. Cut back to 2 or 3 leaves, leaving the last leaf on the side that you want the new shoot to grow toward. Secondary shoots will also appear.

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.

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.

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 apple cider vinegar to a gallon of water. I use the mixture both as a weekly foliar spray and as a soil drench fertilizer. As a weekly foliar spray it keeps aphids and mites under control. I try to drench twice a month partly because I don't think the plant can absorb all the minor elements it needs thru the foliage.

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 spray to cover all, a hose end sprayer does not cover good enough.

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. 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.

**Convention Chronicle #10  
Tree Ring Circus – April 11-14, 2013  
New Braunfels TX  
www.lsbconvention2013.com**

**Hello everyone!**

**What's that old saying about being like the Bamboo, which bends gently in the wind and being flexible to change? An announcement: Walter Pall has undergone an emergency operation so has had to back out of coming to our convention. He seems in good spirits and says he would like to come back as he was looking forward to the visit. We wish him well and will look forward to that visit. We are very lucky and I am thrilled to announce that Walter's long time friend and fellow Bonsai artist Dan Robinson of Washington State has agreed to come in his place. Speaking with Dan, he is excited to come to Texas, saying he has been wanting to visit with us again (it has been a long time), but he remembers us fondly: our great material and our kind and enthusiastic Bonsai members. All workshops and scheduling remain the same. For more information on Dan, see his website: <http://elandangardens.com/>**

**One of the workshops Colin Lewis is teaching will be on creating a Kingsville Boxwood planting on a natural rock slab. The slabs will be prepared with wire to tie the plants down and an assortment of different sized "Kingsilles" will be available for each participant. We will have the soil, muck for the outer walls, moss and accent stones available to complete the scene. This is a great opportunity to work with a much sought-after material under the guidance of a true artist. Buxus microphylla 'Compacta' is a very slow growing variety of Boxwood, known for its tiny leaves and aged looking bark.**

**Be sure to come to Thursday's Early Bird Reception to get a first chance to shop with the**

**Vendors and also to cheer on the Emerging Talent competitors who will be busy styling and shaping their trees. In the vendor room we will have Bonsai, potters, and even a maker of display-stands! Don't miss it!**

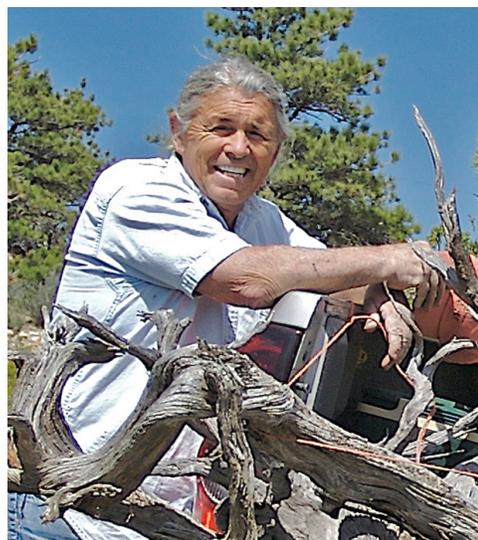
**I hope that we get a good turnout of trees from each club for the Exhibit.. we really want the whole state to be represented. Contact Donna or Mike to let them know what you'd like to bring.**

**Don't forget the Saturday night AUCTION which benefits the convention. This is a fantastic way to support LSBF, to sell trees you would like to pass along (but that are worth \$100 or more) and also to buy some real quality Bonsai. You never know what's going to come each year to this fun event (a signed guitar by Creedence Clearwater!).. so don't miss it!**

**Our team has been working really hard to make this unforgettable: from the goodie bags, to the workshops and artists, the food, raffles, vendors and exhibit. All of this is for us to enjoy and immerse into for the weekend. So if you're on the fence, or think this may not be the right year to come.. please reconsider! We need our state Bonsai community to make this a success. See everyone soon!**

**[www.lsbconvention2013.com](http://www.lsbconvention2013.com)**

**Joey McCoy  
Convention Chair**



**Photo of Dan Robinson provided by Joey McCoy**

# 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 Editor)*