



Bonsai Notebook

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

July 2009

July Programs by Mike Watson

Wow it's HOT! I've lived in Texas all of my life and I'll never get used to the summer heat. After we get my trees watered and protected from the sun, what a pleasure it is to come inside and enjoy our nice, cool suiseki.



Peter Aradi gave June's program on Suiseki

Calendar of Events

- July 8 ABS Monthly Meeting Reception**
Hosts: Deborah Van Cleef and Becki Drozd
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 pm
(Hosts for August's reception: Carl Quisenberry and Charlotte Cranberg)
- July 21 ABS Monthly Meeting**
Suiseki Diaza with Jim Trahan
Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm
- July 21 ABS Board Meeting**
Zilker Garden Center 7:00 - 7:30 pm
- July 21 ABS Members Workshop**
Tropical Repotting with Elaine White
Zilker Garden Center 7:30 - 9:00 pm

For this month's **Wednesday monthly meeting on July 8th**, we will welcome our own esteemed Austin Bonsai Society member, Jim Trahan, who will pass on his skills at making daiza for our suiseki. Jim studied with Sean Smith, who is an absolute master of daiza crafting. Through this relationship and a bit of literal "wood shedding", Jim has produced some of the most beautiful and tastefully understated daiza I have seen. I will certainly be front and center for his program.

Probably the only tree's that are loving this heat are our tropicals. Now is definitely the time for repotting these summer loving guys. For our **Tuesday member's workshop on July 21st**, Elaine White will show us how. Be sure and bring soil, tools along with your tree and pot. It's a good idea to bring a container of some sort (bus tubs or kitty litter boxes work great) to catch your old soil and cut down on the mess. As always, if you want to work on something else, please come anyway and share in the camaraderie. See you then!

Austin Bonsai Society Board of Directors

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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.

Collin Murphy is the editor of "Bonsai Notebook". He may be contacted at ckmurphy2000@yahoo.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 Joey McCoy

As I write this we are experiencing the hottest day of the year (so far!) at 105 degrees. I hope everyone is taking extra precautions with their Bonsai at this time. It's mostly water, water and more water. But when the growth slows down or stops for summer, the water intake by the plant slows too and this is where proper watering becomes critical. We don't want the roots sitting in soupy soil at the bottom if you water every time the top dries out, especially if a plant isn't yet planted in a Bonsai mix. Regular nursery mix with lots of fines and organics can deceptively stay wet at the bottom of the pot when the top looks dry. Keep the water on the plants, but do it smart! Oh and if the pot is sitting in the sun and too hot to touch, just imagine what it's doing to those fine feeder roots. Even cacti don't like their roots cooked.

Our LSBF visiting artist this year is Puerto Rico native Robert Martinez. If you check your directory you'll find that we'll be having an extra Tuesday meeting in August for a Visiting Artist Workshop. These workshops are a great opportunity to have another talented pair of eyes on your tree. I can tell you from experience that they'll sometimes see a design solution you had never considered, and give you more possibilities on the style. We should be looking over our Bonsai and pre-bonsai at this time, choosing a plant to bring. Since Mr. Martinez is from Puerto Rico, any of the Tropicals would be great to work with, however he'll give advice and help work on any tree brought. I'd recommend taking a workshop even if you first need to purchase a tree. By supporting the visiting artist program we're insuring that it'll continue for years to come.

Stay cool and hydrated, everyone!

JADE GARDENS

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(512) 847-2514

ABS June General Meeting Minutes
by Collin Murphy, Secretary

Joey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and thanked hostesses Sunny Huang and Sheila Ward.

Joey thanked Mike Watson for the outstanding show during May.

Deborah Van Cleaf then introduced guests Celia Garrett, Ken Schroeder, Carol Blanchard, and Harry Meilink.

Joey then called for other reports or announcements. Joey reported that the club is looking for a webmaster. The responsibilities include making monthly updates to the web site. Contact Joey if interested in this position. There were no more reports or announcements.

Joey then introduced Mike Watson who thanked everyone who participated in the annual show. Mike then introduced Peter Aradi who gave an excellent presentation on Suiseki.

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(call for directions)

TTSBE CALL FOR DONATIONS

TTSBE will be vending at this year's annual show this month. The annual show provides a great opportunity for fundraising.

TTSBE is asking for bonsai-related donations that will be sold during this year's show. If you have an item you wish to donate, please contact Alisan Clarke or any other TTSBE board member.

Bonsai Calendar

World Bonsai Convention
SSOT Quarterly Meeting
California Shohin Seminar

San Juan, Puerto Rico
Persimmon Hill Bonsai
Santa Nella, CA

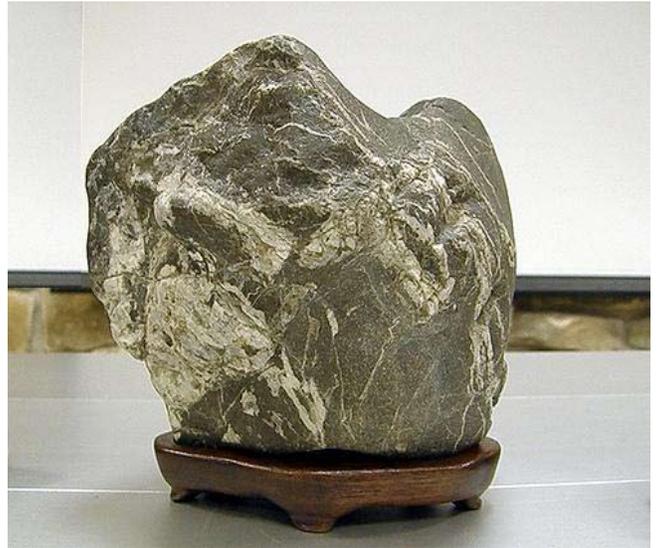
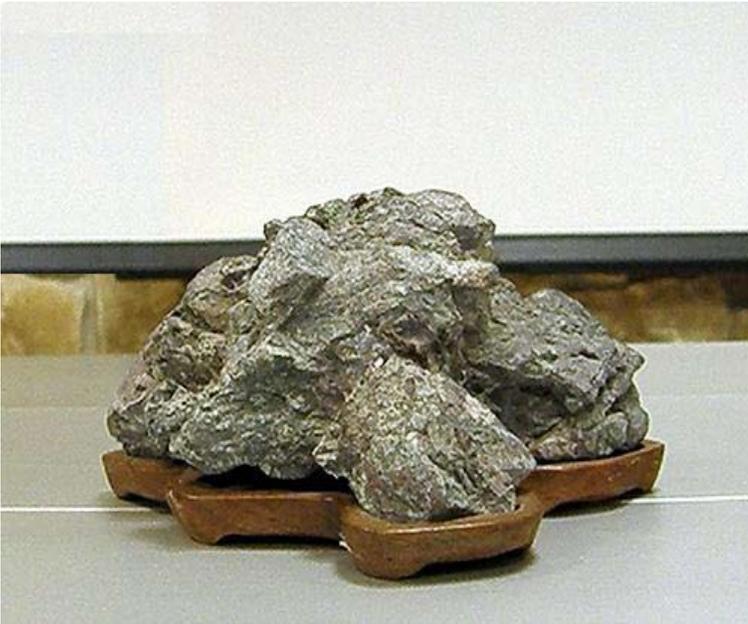
July 7 - 13, 2009

September 19, 2009

February 5 - 7, 2010

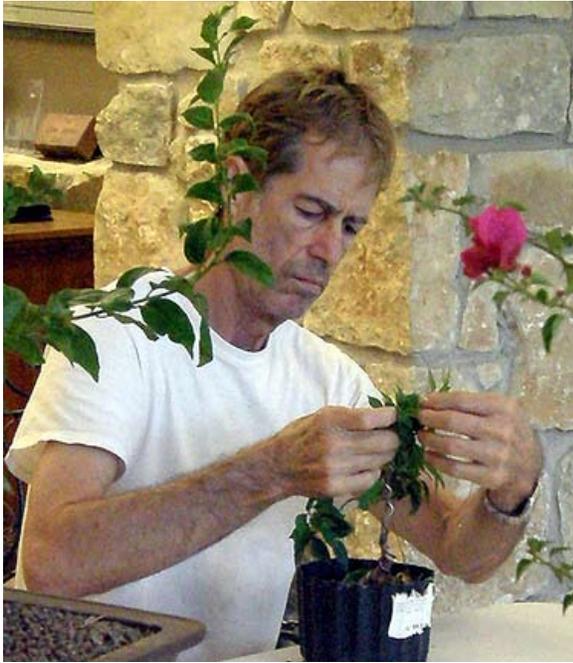
Know of an upcoming Bonsai event of interest to club members? Send the details to ckmurphy2000@yahoo.com and it will be posted here.

Suiseki with Peter Aradi
Photos by Joey McCoy



Different Suiseki brought in by Peter and other members

Bougainvillea with Els Ulug
Photos by Joey McCoy



Els gave advice on bougainvilleas brought in by members during June's workshop

July 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.

July and August are the two most stressful months for bonsai in our neck of the woods. Most healthy trees can take the full sun on their foliage. But the high ambient temperatures and the heating effect of the sun on the pots and soil create temperatures on the roots that they are not designed to cope with. Trees with thin leaves like the Japanese maple, Acer Palmatum, will probably scorch in full sun. They can also suffer from chemical burn from some fertilizers and insecticides which can be more damaging in the heat.

I cannot give you a precise to-do list since your backyard is different from mine but you should be sure that the sun does not hit the pots directly. If you use a cover of any kind be sure that the side of the pot is protected also. A loose weave cover that allows air flow is preferable to solid paper or foil. A solid cover or box over the pot would create an oven type enclosure. There should be room for air flow around the pot. A 30-40% shade cloth over pines, junipers, and elms and maybe 50% over maples would be ideal. And don't forget to provide protection on the west side from that mean afternoon sun.

Check your 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 so that the dry soil particles will get moistened and then after a few minutes water again so that they will soak up fully.

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. 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

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. There is no damage from this leftover evidence but it prevents you from seeing ny new infestation that may occur.

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. Black spot will show up if the foliage stays wet very long. Foliage watering 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.

As a rule we do not feed our trees enough. Since the mix we use has very little nutrient value, we must make up with our fertilizer practice.

Water soluble fertilizers will be quickly washed out. The best "rule" I have heard was given by Matt Ouwinga who primarily grows trident maples.

Matt's rule:

- A. Apply organic fertilizer balls each 6 weeks. Discard old balls.
- B. Apply fish emulsion every two weeks.
- C. Apply liquid plant food on alternate weeks.

Many spring flowering plants will be setting buds for next years flowers. Azaleas will set theirs toward the end of July. If you prune tips after that you remove the new buds.

continued...

ABS Board June Meeting Minutes

by Collin Murphy, Secretary

If you use the Boon technique for growing pines, now is the time for removing the candles, late June on bigger trees later on smaller ones.

Now that night temperatures are staying above 60 degrees you should think about repotting some of the tropicals. Most tropicals do well with an annual repotting. I would emphasize to check the wires on your trees and also see that the drains are not blocked in any way. Especially check them after a rain to be sure that your pots have drained properly. Keep the tropicals trimmed as they will be growing like crazy. However, if you want flowers on those that produce on the end of the twigs, bougianvilla-pomegranate-crape myrtle, you will have to forgo the bonsai shape to let them flower. These species should be pruned more drastically before the growing season starts so they can still be in a pretty good shape.

Some more words on protecting from the sun. Dappled shade would do nicely because the sun will not shine on one spot very long but partial shade (such as morning sun and afternoon shade) will not suffice when the morning sun is as hot as it is here in Texas. When you put some kind of sun screen on remember to shade the sides of the pot as well as the soil. A light mulch on top of the soil will work great. Covering the pot with foil or putting it in a box made to fit is of doubtful help but if used there should be room for air to flow around it. Old rags work fine also if they do not blow off. Try to find a cover that will let you monitor your watering easily.

When the humidity is low I mist my junipers in the evening. I believe the story that in the wild junipers open their stomata in the cool of the evening absorbing any dew that may occur and close in the heat of the day to conserve moisture. The other species may get a foliage spray in the morning.

Your trees too keep growing and need their periodic beauty treatment. Keep the ends trimmed and the stray shoots cut out. Its not that bad when you can sit in the shade with a big lemonade and really enjoy being with your bonsai. That way you will have your tree ready for the fall show or you will be ready to enjoy it when the change of seasons give it pretty colors.

Joey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present board members were Joey McCoy, Mike Watson, Collin Murphy, and Pat Ware.

Pat reported our income over expenses for the year is \$34.72. The yearly storage fee was recently paid. After the May show the lease was renewed for a smaller storage room at a much lower cost. Some tableclothes had to be cleaned after the show. The net income from the show was \$362.41.

Future state events were discussed. Next year's state convention will be held in Ft Worth.

Several years ago the ABS board voted to approve purchasing a bench and donating it to Zilker Garden. However, the bench was never purchased. Reaffirming the vote to approve the purchase was discussed but no resolution was reached.

Joey adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.



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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 \$25.00 for an individual and \$30.00 for a family membership.

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

