



Bonsai Notebook

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

January 2025 vol 172

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Calendar of Events

January 8, 2025

- ◆ Topic: Yamadori collection and care
- ◆ Presenter: Joey M.
- ◆ Location: Zilker Botanical Garden
- ◆ Time: 6:30pm (Mingling), 7:00pm (Meeting)

January 31 to February 2, 2025

- ◆ Topic: Club dig organized by The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit (TTSBE)
- ◆ Location: Private Ranch in South Texas
- ◆ Time: January 31 to February 2
- ◆ RSVP at January meeting

2024 Board of Directors

Eric B.
President

Sachin M.
Vice President

Simon T.
Secretary

Jonathan W.
Treasurer

Jorge M.
Member-At-Large

Ross C.
Member-At-Large

Ben M.
Member-At-Large

Volunteers

Refreshments
Eric B.

Tree Hosts
Sachin M.

President's Message

By Eric B.

Hello everyone, I hope you all had a good holiday season! I don't know about you, but I'm looking forward to continuing our bonsai journey together in 2025. This artform can be very solitary a lot of the time, so I think it's great that we have this community of people who share a love of bonsai. It's good to get together each month and talk about trees, look at trees, watch people work on trees, and socialize. I know I've learned far more at meetings and workshops, in person, than I've ever learned from online videos and such. Not that there's anything wrong with those, far from it, but it's just not the same as in person.

That's why I encourage all of you to renew your membership at the next meeting on Weds., Jan. 8. Renew (or start!) your membership and pay the fee by mid-February to have your contact information included in the 2025 Membership Directory, if you wish. The Membership Directory is a great resource for finding someone to water your trees, ask questions, etc. Plus, membership makes you eligible for club workshops, so please get your membership squared away soon!

Again, I would like to extend my thanks to the board members departing this year: Gloria Norburg, Judith Gandelone and Ever Valdovinos. We all appreciate your dedication to ABS. Also, a hearty welcome to our incoming board members for 2025: Sachin Attavar as VP, and Ross Canalas, Ben Mueck, and Jorge Villanueva as members at large.

For our next meeting on Wednesday, January 8th, 2025, we have a presentation on Yamadori Collection by Joey McCoy, and in February, Brandon will provide a demonstration of root grafting on an elm or maple. This is a good time of year for root grafting on deciduous trees, so be sure to be there in February.

Our new Vice President, Sachin Attavar, is working diligently to fill out our 2025 schedule. He has some good ideas for visiting artists and workshops, but I won't steal his thunder by saying more, plus it's all still in the works. I will say that given what I've heard so far, I think you will all be excited about this year's schedule. One other thing to keep in mind throughout the year, is that ABS is hosting the 2026 Lone Star Bonsai Federation Convention, in April 2026. That seems like a long way off, but I have a feeling it's going to sneak up on us faster than we think. If you can, please consider blocking off some time in April 2026, and volunteering to help out with running the convention. Or just be available to help set up, tear down, and help out where needed with any of the many jobs that need to happen for the show to go on. This convention won't work without people to run it, and those people us.

I have a good feeling about 2025 for ABS.

Thanks for reading, and keep your trees snug and safe!

Eric

Vice President's Message

By Sachin M.

Hello Austin Area Bonsai Enthusiasts!

I hope your holiday season was filled with joy and that your 2025 is off to a fantastic start!

We're kicking off the year at ABS with a special presentation by our own local yamadori expert, **Joey M.**, on **January 8th** at **Zilker Botanical Garden**. Joey will delve into the fascinating world of yamadori collection and care, sharing his expertise on these remarkable trees. Yamadori bonsai offers a unique opportunity to connect with nature, and the trees themselves stand as powerful testaments to resilience and natural beauty. The process of collecting and nurturing yamadori into mature bonsai requires patience, skill, and dedication, making them an incredibly rewarding challenge for bonsai enthusiasts.

Then, in **February**, we'll have another exciting presentation by **Brandon B** on **February 12th**. Brandon will share his knowledge and techniques, adding another great opportunity for learning and growth in the art of bonsai.

We are also in the process of finalizing our line-up for the rest of the year and will provide more details as we solidify the schedule. It promises to be an exciting year of workshops, demos, and opportunities to expand our bonsai knowledge and skills.

I'm looking forward to an inspiring year of learning, growing, and further developing our bonsai collections. I can't wait to see you all at our meetings and workshops throughout the year!

Let's make 2025 a great year for bonsai!

Sachin

Reminder for club membership and advertisement

2025 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).

Gift certificate for memberships is also available, please send inquiry to payments.austinbonsaisociety@gmail.com

ABS Board Meeting Minutes

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discussion



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Date: December 10, 2024

Location: Virtual

Meeting Attendees:

- ◆ Jonathan (President)
- ◆ Eric (Vice President)
- ◆ Simon (Secretary)
- ◆ Gloria (Treasurer)
- ◆ Ever
- ◆ Judy
- ◆ Sachin

President:

- ◆ Touched on name tags, artists, materials, auction, slack, raffles and other topics
- ◆ Aligned speakers/artists for first quarter of 2025
- ◆ Talked about building reservation, officers announcement
- ◆ Discussed Convention 2026

Vice President:

- ◆ Talked about programs and preparation for the rest of the year
- ◆ Holiday party table/banquet/volunteer setup was a success

Secretary:

- ◆ Meeting starts at **7:33pm**
- ◆ Last report was accepted without edits
- ◆ Provided Convention updates
- ◆ Club dig - TTSBE will continue the tradition to organize the event in Feb
 - ◆ RSVP required for ABS members
 - ◆ Sign up in January meeting

Treasurer:

- ◆ Provide financial updates and balances
- ◆ Talked about raffles at the holiday party
- ◆ Transition of Treasurer in progress

Meeting adjourned at **8:55 pm**

Bonsai Calendar – Looking Ahead

**** Calendar subject to change in 2025- Please review dates in each future Newsletter ****

Date	Event Type	Artist / Presenter	Topic	Location	Approx Member Cost
WED 1/8/2025	Club Night / Meeting	Joseph McCoy, ABS club member	Presentation: Yamadori Collection	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX	Donation table items welcome :-)
FRI - Sun (1/31/2025 - 2/2/2025)	Club Dig sponsored by TTSBE	Sign up at our January meeting	Club dig at a South Texas Ranch	The precise location will be provided in a detailed packet.	AirBnB rooms and camping options are available, please contact Simon asap
WED 2/12/2025	Club Night / Meeting	Brandon B.	Root grafting	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX	Donation table items welcome :-)
SUN 2/23/2025 1pm - 4pm	Shohin Society of Texas	May L. and Joey M.	TBD	Spicewood Springs Library 8637 Spicewood Springs Rd, Austin, TX 78759	Free to attend
WED 3/5/2025	*** 1st WED of March *** Club Night / Meeting	TBD	TBD	Zilker Botanical Garden Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX	Donation table items welcome :-)

Holiday Celebrations



January Bonsai

by John Miller

The big thing this month is to make sure that the bonsai do not dry out and to protect the roots from freezing. Do not leave them up on their benches. Know which species should be left outdoors. They may be set on the ground. Add a dense mulch to the pot rim and then add a looser mulch on top. Water in a minute crack or chip can freeze and bust the pot.

Evergreen types especially and deciduous to a lesser extent should not have the root ball subjected to alternate freezing and thawing. That process tends to tear and damage the roots. Placing the trees on the ground and using a mulch will minimize this problem.

Deciduous trees should not be placed where they receive winter sun. After a period of dormancy, the heating of the tree could possibly cause it to break dormancy prematurely. If that happened you would need to keep it above freezing the rest of the winter. After they go dormant they have no need for any sunshine.

While they are dormant examine the twigs, branches, and trunks carefully for scale insects, Scale are sucking insects that usually cover themselves with a hard impervious shell that is very resistant to insecticides. Some are pretty small and look like specks. You might want to search online for something like 'scale insect bonsai' and get some pictures. Horticultural oils (available at garden stores) work good by filling their pores and smothering them. Oils can be applied now and you get a more thorough coverage while the trees are dormant. The only other way is to use a systemic insecticide (make sure it is labeled for scale) during the growing season.

Since the trees are not using as much water during dormancy it is easy to overlook checking on them. The low humidity usually found during winter helps dry the soil. Winter sun can be pretty hot and if it shines directly on the pot it will hasten the drying process. Winter will usually also be more windy. Therefore, however you bed down the trees, you need to check the dryness often. The same trees that needed more water last summer will also need to be checked more often during the winter. I think that more trees are lost during the winter by having the soil dry out than from the actual cold.

Especially watch the plants that will need repotting next spring. Pots full of circling roots do not have much soil to hold water but those that had a lot of organic matter in the soil mix may be soggy. Organic matter that has composted during the summer will be very fine textured and hold on to the water a long time and may also interfere with drainage.

Plants have different degrees of hardiness for their top growth and their roots. The reason being that the ground acts a large reservoir of heat and here in Texas seldom freezes more than an inch or two down. Therefore, plants like the pomegranate and crepe myrtle which are at the northern extent of their range outside will only be hardy to 32 degrees in pots.

Any plant that you are unsure of should be protected from freezing. This can be a problem because if they are not kept cool after they go dormant they will break dormancy and start to grow too soon. Growing without sufficient light causes long spindly growth which you cannot control. My best solution for this when I lived in town was to have a long platform with two wheels that I pulled into the garage on nights where freezing was forecast and kept outside at all other times.

The cold weather will keep any insect problems under control outside. You should use a dormant oil spray to kill over-wintering insects and eggs. A dilute spray of lime-sulfur can be used on deciduous trees if they have no green at all which will also control fungal spores but be sure to follow label directions carefully. You should watch for damage from rodent types, rabbits, squirrel, and rats. They will seriously prune branches and strip bark in short order.

A caution on lime sulfur--the same stuff we use on jin and shari. The liquid lime sulfur is pretty caustic so should be used with caution. If used as a dormant spray application should only be made to fully dormant plants, deciduous trees with tight winter buds, not on very warm days, and only when diluted as directed on the bottle.

Bonsai in greenhouses or indoor bonsai will need to be watched for the normal indoor problems. Low humidity, spider mites and scales are the biggest problems here. Trying to keep the humidity up by placing your trees on a humidity tray can possibly give you some soil problems, root rot or some other fungal disease. I basically use the same controls in the greenhouse that I use outside all year.

You can take advantage of the winter slowdown by getting pots ready for spring, clean and sharpen your tools, study what changes you would like to make on your trees and so forth. Making notes about what needs to be done on an individual tree is great but if you are like me the notes and trees are usually a long way apart. If you place a colored stake or ribbon on the tree you will see instantly which one needs what done. For example, I am using red for needs repotting, purple-needs a new pot, yellow-serious pruning, orange-should be restyled, etc. These can be put on during the year if you make that kind of decision as you are doing general routine work.

Try to find some good material for enhancing your collection. It is hard to find decent material in a landscape nursery. If the club has a dig scheduled, be a part of it. There are many places where you can find one or two specimens to dig, in town as well as in the country. The problem is in finding a place with enough material to warrant taking the whole club. If you know of a possible location or have a friend with some land (it doesn't have to be very close) tell one of the officers about it. This comes under the heading of 'be an active member'. The rest of the group especially your program chairman will appreciate it.

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 for 2025

May and Simon T.

Matt S.

Phina & Marlon C.

Lizzle and Nathan G.

Jonathan W.

John M. and Blake S.

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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-mail: mbpbonsai@suddenlink.net
601 Kay Lane
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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 6:30 pm, followed by our program at 7:00 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