



Bonsai Notebook

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

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Calendar of Events

- **March 10**
David Rizwan

2021 Board of Directors

Roland Lopez
President

Summer Lee
Vice President

Ruwan Perera
Secretary

Gloria Norberg
Treasurer

Morgan Bean
Member-At-Large

Jakob Clark
Member-At-Large

Mike Garza
Member-At-Large

Volunteers

N/A

President's Message

By Roland Lopez

Hello Austin Bonsai Society,

I hope y'all are safe and are keeping warm after this crazy winter storm we had! I never thought I would see this much ice and snow in my life here in Texas. I had to bring all my trees inside for nearly a week and find shelter elsewhere because our power was out for three days. Thank goodness for people in our lives that are there for us when we need them. I found Slack especially helpful during the few days of uncertainty. I felt a sense of solidarity with the rest of our community. That can be helpful, especially at times when one feels like they have it the worst. I also noticed how supportive we were to one another during a time of hardship. Thank you all for being there for each other. March is here now and it's time to press onward with life resuming all around us.

I found Andrew Robson's presentation very illuminating on how I approach repotting yamadori and established trees! It was great having him back and I'm confident that our success will only climb higher with the information he bestowed to ABS!

This month, we have the opportunity to welcome a fresh face to ABS! David Rizwan will be educating us on bonsai design. This lesson will be great for any beginner looking to understand how we approach material and construct aesthetics based on bonsai design principles. The presentation will also be valuable for all other experience levels as a reinforcement for knowledge already gained and to also learn something new about design from David's perspective. I'm excited to introduce David to ABS!

Just a friendly reminder to everyone - when entering Zoom for our monthly meetings, please use your first name and the initial of your last name. This makes it easier for us to permit you into the meeting and it helps reduce unwanted visitors from gaining entrance. Thank you!

Take care everyone and I hope to join you soon at our next gathering!

With a warm smile,

Roland

Reminder for club membership

2021 membership fee

Individual	\$32.50
Family	\$37.50
Newsletter monthly advertisements:	\$37.50
Directory advertisement:	\$11

You may contact payments.austinbonsaisociety@gmail.com for convenient electronic payments options (processing fee included).

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<https://abslibrary.libib.com/>

YouTube



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLSkNkBNld3EOYwjkjNIneA>

Vice President's Message

By Summer Lee

Aloha Bonsai Family!

Wowza! What a crazy start to our year!!! I hope everyone made it through the ice storm unscathed. Hopefully, we don't have another one of those for some time. I was so glad to see that Slack came in handy for opening conversations on how to protect trees. I want to thank all the members that provided information and answered questions. While the weather impacted the events we had scheduled, we decided to delay rather than cancel them.

At the time of this writing, we are just setting up for the slab workshop with Brandon Baldauf. Brandon has worked hard to collect materials for the slab kit and personally delivered them to attendees. These slab kits are fantastic! The slabs are beautiful, moss was collected locally, and muck was mixed with love from Brandon. We will be raffling off a slab kit soon, so be on the lookout for that!

Since we cannot have in-person workshops, Ruwan has been kind enough to share his filmmaking skills to offer virtual workshops. There's a ton of work and gear that goes into making this happen. I've shared some photos here to give you an idea of our "studio" setup. We have learned a ton about setting up lights, background, and multiple cameras to ensure that attendees can see what Brandon is doing. Also, provide him an easy way to see attendees' trees for questions that may come up. Each time, we make more tweaks to improve your experience, so please feel free to send us feedback.

We, as a board, have been brainstorming on making your membership an enjoyable experience this year. I am excited to announce that we are launching a mentorship program. This added benefit will match skilled members with members who would like to level up their skills. If you would like to participate in the mentorship program as a mentor or mentee, please join the #abs-program-mentorship channel in Slack. I want to thank Jakob Clark for volunteering to oversee the program. We would not have made the mentorship program become a reality without him stepping up to help out.
fistbump Jakob

We plan on rolling out more programs throughout the year so stay tuned fam! Also, Roland has been working hard on selling ads for this publication and our members' directory. Cold calls can be a chore, and he is rocking it! These funds go into bringing in artists for upcoming presentations, events, and workshops. I'd also like to thank Simon for setting up Google Teams for our board to conduct board duties virtually and as efficiently as possible. Simon is a beast! Thank you for all your hard work and hours of volunteer time you provide every month.

Vice President's Message

By Summer Lee

Slack updates:

We have an awesome presentation program set up for this year, and I'm currently working on the 2022 schedule. Please feel free to join the #abs-request-artist channel in Slack to provide suggestions on an artist that you would like to see. If you would like to host a club workshop, join #abs-request-workshop, and we can start collaborating to make it happen.

Zoom updates:

We will be having David Riwan from the San Antonio Bonsai Society presenting via Zoom this month. The format will be a little different because it's going to be an open discussion. I'm stoked about this format and hope that everyone participates. Here are some ground rules for Zoom:

- In order to avoid crosstalk, we have everyone muted upon entry.
- Since we record these sessions, we ask that you make sure there isn't any background noise before unmuting yourself.
- We want to give everyone a chance to talk, so please mute your mic after you speak.
- Please use the name you used when you paid your membership dues so that we can identify you in the lobby and provide access quickly.

Thank you for being patient with us as we navigate our way through providing club activities during the pandemic. We hope that everyone is enjoying the show so far! We are having a blast learning the ropes of our new roles and coming up with creative ways to keep things rolling.

Cheers,
Summer





*David Rizwan
ABS 2021 March Meeting Presenter*



Slab Kit for ABS 2021 February Workshop



*ABS workshop studio setup:
Roland Lopez - Our current ABS President*

ABS Board Minutes

February 2021

Start time: 12:11pm

Attendees: Roland, Summer, Mike Garza, Jakob, Ruwan

1. Feedback about Andrew. Good job
2. Schedule finalized Mike Lane in September and Eric Lane in June
3. Find out if Mike Lane can do presentation and workshop same day
4. Talk to artists about private or public links
5. Roland will be voice for ABS when getting vendors and advertisers
6. Roland will take the lead on sponsorship – Monday sales training with Summer
7. Vote to trade One Seed Juniper for 8 Boxwood slab kits
8. Make Facebook Group
9. Need a lead on mentorship program
 - a. Portland Bonsai Society has a program. Podcast Asymmetry podcast
 - b. Onboarding process for slack.
 - c. Mike and Jakob will work together
 - d. Mentorship and Mentor form to fill
 - e. By March 3rd have an announcement and rough outline of program
 - f. Combine with the Marketing effort and put out a call
 - i. Have some ads ready for mid march
 - ii. Ruwan volunteers for some 15 second clips

Meeting End: 1:35 PM

March Bonsai

By John Miller

Bonsai will start growing in late February or March in this area depending on your wintering techniques and on the species. After growth starts some species can take a couple degrees of frost but unless you know what your particular tree can take you should keep it from freezing. Also, newly growing roots are more tender. In this area you should keep the new foliage out of the strong winds however they should have some breeze to help harden the new foliage and to help keep insects and fungal diseases at bay.

You may continue repotting on deciduous species until you see a tiny bit of green on the tips of the swelling leaf bud. Be sure to keep the newly repotted tree out of the wind and late morning or after-noon sun. Broadleaf evergreen species will generally be okay to repot later on. Yaupon do better if you wait until it warms a bit more. Even though it gets quite warm now, we can expect a freeze in March so you may have to protect trees that have started growth and those that have been repotted this winter. Don't repot tropicals until the night temps stay above 60.

There are two different approaches to branch and tree care. The first is the development stage of the tree where you are growing and developing branches, doing root work and generally developing the style of the tree. During this time you will cut and wire and then let it grow for a good period of time developing taper and interesting bends and twists. Timing of these functions is not as critical.

The other approach comes after the development stage and results in the refinement of the bonsai. This gives it the twiginess, small leaves and patina of age which takes it from a commercial bonsai to a piece of art. It is quite time consuming especially in the flush growth period after dormancy breaks. If not done carefully, the new growth will thicken the twigs and cause long internodes which will ruin all the previous work and may even send you back to the development stage.

Now you should get your tweezers and shears ready for the real job ahead. In order to develop the ramification and fine twigs you want you must be pruning the new growth as it develops. Waiting until

the shoots are three or four inches or longer results in coarse twigs with long internodes. These will have to be cut off and new ones developed.

Junipers in development should be trimmed with shears. Styled juniper may be done with the fingers. As the new growth develops grasp the twigs with one hand spreading the foliage in a fan shape. Then with the other hand grasp the tips between the fleshy part of your thumb and finger and pull it off. Using fingernails or scissors will result in brown tips on the cut foliage.

As the weather warms up the insects will surely make their appearance. Use the foliar spray (1 tablespoon each of fish emulsion, liquid kelp, molasses, and apple cider vinegar per gallon of water weekly to control aphid, mites, caterpillars etc. Commercial sprays may be used but follow directions closely. Be sure to spray with a fine mist sprayer to cover thoroughly.

Fertilizing is necessary once the trees start to grow. Too many trees exhibited do not have a good dark green foliage. Since we are using soilless mixes for the most part, a different technique is required than used for most potted plants. Water soluble chemical fertilizers should be used at half strength and more often than given since they will wash out with the next watering. The same is more or less true with liquid organic fertilizers. The best technique is to use solid organic fertilizers. Fertilizer cakes on the surface is the best way. They break down slowly and a small amount is carried into the root zone each time you water. Pelletized organic material can be spread on the surface also but they tend to crumble and create an undesirable surface. Be sure that the material you use has a balanced formula and not high in nitrogen.

Hydrogen Peroxide as fungicide. It is suggested to use a 1% solution sprayed on top and bottom leaves to control fungi (leaf spot, powdery mildew, etc). The normal medical solution as purchased is a 3% solution so dilute that with 2 parts water to 1 part peroxide. One article cited TA&M studies which showed that a strength greater than 1.7% produced some leaf burning on tender test foliage. A 0.1% solution aided in rooting cuttings and in controlling Botrytis. Can be

March Bonsai

By John Miller

added to drip systems and foliar feeds. The peroxide degenerates into water and oxygen fairly rapidly so is no threat to the environment. Personally, I have used 1% peroxide on elms and yaupons later on in the season spraying once a week. It got rid of the black spot with no damage. However, when I sprayed tender new foliage with it I cause considerable burn. Therefore anytime I use peroxide it will be on mature foliage and at a 0.5% solution.

RAMIFICATION PRUNING by John Miller

In order to develop the ramification and fine twigs you want you must be pruning the new growth as it develops. Waiting until the shoots are three or four inches or longer results in coarse twigs with long internodes. These will have to be cut off and new ones developed if you are to have a good bonsai and you have wasted a lot of growing time.

Essentially there are two kinds of growing habits, those with leaves growing alternately on the twigs, e.g. elms, oak, and hawthorn, and those with opposite growing leaves, e.g. maple.

The alternate growing leaves start out with small leaves and each succeeding leaf will be larger and the internodes longer. Also each leaf will have a latent bud in each leaf axial. Therefore if you let the shoot grow to 4 or 5 new leaves and cut it back to 2 or 3, you will be keeping smaller leaves and also getting twice as many growing tips on each branch and each will be a finer twig. Keep this up and you will soon have nice development on the branches of your bonsai, after only 4 cuts your one original twig is now sixteen twigs and your leaf reduction is tremendous. In determining whether to cut to two or three, note the direction that you wish the end of the branch to take and cut to the leaf which has the bud on that side of the branch.

Note: If last years twig has been let grow long it should be cut back to the first 2-3 buds and start over.

On plants that have opposite growing leaves the new bud produces a growing tip with two leaves clasping a new growing tip. If left to its normal development the twig behind the new leaves will continue to lengthen until the new tip opens up. This causes long internodes and no new buds will break between the internodes. The long

internodes would need to be cut off and wait for new buds to break from to old node.

To prevent this, you need to use tweezers to spread the new leaves and snip the new growing tip before it lengthens. The twig then stops getting longer and new buds will develop at the base of each of the two leaves. When these start growing repeat the process. On a well developed maple this can be quite a chore.

Tweezers are almost a necessity in working on maples. The opposite growing leaves clasp the new growing tip and will be extending from the old bud but on a lengthening stem. If the new tip is taken off as soon as the leaves separate, the result is that the leaves will be smaller and the stem will stop lengthening. Then two new tips will pop from the new leaf axials and you will repeat the tip plucking. Tweezers work much better for this job. I will sometimes separate the new pair of leaves from the new tip with tweezers but be careful not to bruise them.

New Members

John B

Steven C

Another Thought Inc

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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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.

The cost of membership is presently only \$30.00 for an individual and \$35.00 for a family membership. For additional information, contact the Austin Bonsai Society at P.O. Box 340474, Austin, TX 78734.