



Bonsai Notebook

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

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Calendar of Events

- **May 12**
Ficus - Trunk fusion technique

2021 Board of Directors

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Summer Lee
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Ruwan Perera
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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 ABS!

Hope you're doing well! How are your trees? Mine? Pretty good. I'm just barely starting to put my hands on them. But that's okay. They wait patiently for me when I'm ready. I'd like to say, it's been great to see the participation we've had for our virtual meetings this year. We really appreciate your support. Y'all definitely inspire us to keep doing our best and to keep moving forward. Thank you!

It was a great pleasure to introduce Vincent Le to the club. It's always amazing to see how he transforms his trees from an unruly piece of collected material to an elegant bonsai with form and intention all the while keeping it's wild characteristics. I love it! I hope you all enjoyed having him too.

Next month we have our very own, Brandon Baldauf, showing us how to fuse ficus together to create a more powerful and interesting trunk. Brandon's dedication and passion for bonsai is apparent in his knowledge and willingness to share what he is learning. It's wonderful to have him back to teach us some more! Thank you Brandon for all the time you've contributed to ABS! We appreciate you.

See you soon everyone and stay well.

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://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLSkNkBNld3EOYwjikNIneA>

Vice President's Message

By Summer Lee

"Aloha Bonsai Ohana!

I hope everyone is doing well during the pandemic and have found solace in their bonsai gardens. I had a family emergency that took me out of state, and I returned home with my garden popping off. At the very least, it gave my young trees time to grow. I'm really looking forward to meeting in person again, and hopefully, we can start doing that soon.

I'm still looking for ideas for workshops for June and the rest of the year, so please join the slack channel #abs-request-workshop to post any ideas and or suggestions you may have.

We will be hosting another virtual ABS show in May so start getting your trees ready! Announcements will be posted soon on how photos will be done this year.

That's all I have for this update. Everyone, please be safe out there and enjoy this beautiful weather we have!"

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ABS Board Minutes

April 2021

Meeting start 7:08 PM

Attendees: Gloria, Ruwan, Roland, M. Garza, Simon, Summer

- ◆ Virtual Show – Last weekend of May
- ◆ Summer will host a day tentatively May 15th for high quality uniform photos
- ◆ Board will also send a style guide with advice on how to take the best photo to people unable to attend
- ◆ See if there are any other photographers in the group who would be able to help
- ◆ Light blue background is proposed
- ◆ Owner of tree not to be identified
- ◆ We will create a photo book for sale - Only highest quality photos will be printed in photo book
- ◆ Mike Lane – Scheduling conflict
 - ◆ Coming in October for LSBF. Ask to cancel in June
- ◆ Try to reschedule Jonas for June
- ◆ Auction – Will be pushed to October
- ◆ Zilker Meeting – Find out from Zilker if we need a different meeting place
- ◆ YouTube Analytics –
 - ◆ People have watched over 366 hours of our content since channel was started in May of 2020
 - ◆ Most of our external traffic comes from Facebook
 - ◆ Board decides to start a Facebook group. Roland will talk to Joey

Meeting Ends 8:09 PM

May's Bonsai

By John Miller

Does mycorrhiza work? Apparently all plants, not just pines, have a need for some form of mycorrhiza. The topic is too involved to be covered here. Go to the website <https://fungi.com/blogs/articles/mycorrhizal-management> for a good article.

Three new tasks present themselves this month, repotting tropicals, leaf pruning and keeping roots cool.

Leaf pruning is the cutting off of many or all of the leaves in order to induce a new flush of growth similar to the growth after breaking dormancy. This should only be done on very healthy trees and should not do it two years in a row. Sometimes the excuse is made that you get two seasons of growth. However if you do the proper trimming during the growth phase the plant is continuing to produce the division of twigs necessary for ramification and the stress of leaf removal is unnecessary. The only real justification for leaf pruning is to replace old or damaged leaves with a newer set that will be prettier in a show or in the fall. The pruning must be done while there is still a month of good growing weather left meaning before the end of May in the D-FW area. The tree should be fertilized a few days before pruning. When pruning defoliate strong branches fully while leaving some leaves on weak branches. Usually interior branches will benefit by having their foliage kept on. When the leaves are off you can check the branches for undesirable characteristics. Cut vertical growing, hanging, or crossing branches. Leave any major work for next fall. After this work watch your watering, the tree will not use nearly as much water as when in full leaf so do not overwater. When growth starts get you tweezers out and keep up with the trimming. Do not let the new shoots get long internodes.

When the night temperatures are consistently above 60 degrees you can start thinking about repotting those tropicals. The need the warmth for good root growth. Remember that the warmer temperatures and spring winds will cause the roots to dry quickly so have a spray bottle or some damp cloths handy. Keep them shaded until they recover.

The old methods were to repot azaleas after they finished blooming thinking that the tree needed nutrients from the roots for their blossoms. The newer thoughts are that the plant has all the necessary nutrients available in the bud and to repot the azaleas in the spring while they are still dormant. If you repot after blooming, do not remove as much soil and keep them shaded until they recover and are growing well. When the azaleas finish bloom remove all seed pods and do any reshaping that is necessary. You have 2-2 1/2 months (that is mid-July) to work on them. They will start setting buds for next years growth at that time.

The hot sun shining on the pot, especially the dark colored ones, can raise the temperature to the point of killing the roots. Especially sensitive are the nice growing tips at the edge of the root ball next to the pot. If the pot feels hot to your hand think about how the roots feel, after all they are living things too. These temperatures can be kept lower by shading the pot with any porous material. Putting sphagnum on the surface is good. Do not use any solid material like newspaper on the surface of the soil as it will cause you watering problems. And speaking of watering problems do not rely on rainfall to water for you, some plants shed the water to the outside & miss the pot. You must check them yourself.

Insects are waiting for a chance to get hold of some well fed and very tasty snacks. If you give them half a chance they will move into your bonsai almost overnight and are usually hard to spot until damage shows up. The most prevalent ones are aphids, spider mites, and scale. Leaf miners and various caterpillars will sneak in too. I use the organic foliar spray (1 tablespoon each of liquid kelp, fish emulsion, molasses, and apple cider vinegar in one gallon of water) to control all these. Horticultural oil spray can be used the year around. Note that the horticultural oil spray is a more refined and lighter version of the old dormant oil spray that could only be used in the dormant season. Do not use oils on those species such as the buttonwood that have a sensitivity to oil. If in doubt please read the label on the product you wish to use.

May's Bonsai

By John Miller

Treat for fungal problems too. Leaf spot, mildew, and such can be treated by using potassium bicarbonate obtainable from any good nursery. A substitute would be sodium bicarbonate (baking soda). Use one tablespoon per gallon as a spray and be sure to cover both sides of the leaf. I would not use these products together with the foliar spray because they react with the acid vinegar. I would just as soon use them separately because only a few things (elms and hollies) at my place need the fungicide treatment.

If you are not on a regular organic foliar/drench feed schedule be sure to use fertilizer cakes with supplemental feeding with a good liquid fertilizer, one that includes the minor elements. Most bonsai I see are malnourished. The liquid water soluble fertilizer gets washed out with the next watering and the tree starves until the next infrequent feeding. There are a number of organic fertilizers in pellet or cake form on the market or you can make your own. These feed a tiny bit each time you water.

New Members

John Muller

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 \$32.50 for an individual and \$37.50 for a family membership. For additional information, contact the Austin Bonsai Society at P.O. Box 340474, Austin, TX 78734.