



Bonsai Notebook

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A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

November 2024 vol 170

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Calendar of Events

November 13, 2024

- ◆ Topic: Holiday Celebrations
 - ◆ Bring a dish to share
 - ◆ Raffles
 - ◆ White elephant gift exchange
- ◆ Time: 6:30pm (Social) 7:00pm (Meeting)
- ◆ Location: Zilker Botanical Garden

November 19, 2024

- ◆ Board Meeting

December, 2024

- ◆ No meeting - Happy Holidays!!

2024 Board of Directors

Jonathan W.
President

Eric B.
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Simon T.
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Gloria N.
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Judy G.
Member-At-Large

Ever V.
Member-At-Large

Sachin
Member-At-Large

Volunteers

Refreshments
Everyone

Tree Hosts
Everyone

President's Message

By Jonathan W.

Our Holiday Party is happening November 13th, 2024 ... It will be so nice to spend time with our bonsai friends and family, enjoying food and making memories. Reminder that foods should arrive pre-warmed or pre-chilled as there is not much time to prepare potluck food items on-site (due to limitations of kitchen and microwaves etc ;-).

Thank you to our volunteers Eric and Taha for setting up an educational bonsai display at the Austin Public Library on Steck Ave this past weekend. This was the 2nd weekend of the "Roots and Wings" festival and an opportunity for the community to learn about trees and pollinating insects like bees, butterflies and more. Also was an opportunity for the community to learn about the bonsai Society club activities and the TTSBE Bonsai Display installation at Zilker Botanical Garden here in Austin.



Can't believe our year is coming to a close! Thank you to all of our volunteers and bonsai educators! Looking forward to a wonderful holiday party and getting ready for the cooler temps of winter time in Central Texas. The main thing to watch for is unexpected sudden drops in temperatures that can damage Tropical trees.

Several club members and visitors from out of town had a spectacular time with the Texas State Bonsai Exhibit's hosting of an intensive educational seminar with renowned bonsai master, Suthin Sukosolvisit. More to come on this exciting event — encourage club members to plan on attending a future TTSBE Weekend Seminar in Nov 2025.

President's Message

By Jonathan W.

Happy Styling!

Jonathan Wood

BONSAI QUOTE:

"Bonsai is horticulture, first and foremost. No matter how beautifully formed, a dead stick in a glob of mud is not bonsai. After the requirements for the living organism have been set, it is time to look to expression." --

Cheever, "The Tableau of Bonsai," *Bonsai Journal of The American Bonsai Society* (Summer 1992)

Vice President's Message

By Eric B.

Happy November! We've just come out of the hottest October on record, so I hope everyone's trees are doing ok. My watering didn't change much from September, maybe a little bit less. I did get suckered in by the cooler temps at the beginning of the month, and some of my trees got a bit dry when it warmed back up, but it wasn't too bad. Let's hope November brings us cooler temperatures and more rain, we really need both!

Last month's **BYOT Event** went well. Big thanks to **Chuck Ware, Pat Ware, and Joey McCoy** for sharing their bonsai wisdom with the rest of us! I hope everyone who brought in material got to make some good progress on the tree's bonsai journey.

This month, we have our **Fall Holiday Party and White Elephant Gift Exchange, Weds. November 13, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.** It will be a potluck, so please plan to bring a dish of some sort if you attend. We will need tons of volunteers for this, to help set up, to bring side dishes, to bring plates, cups and cutlery, to clean up afterward, and a host of other things. If you want to help set up, please arrive at Zilker around 5:00 p.m. Here is a link to the Evite: [Fall Party Evite](#). On the Evite, please scroll down to the **What To Bring List** and sign up, and/or sign up for the optional **White Elephant Gift Exchange** (via the **Poll**), which is always loads of fun. You don't have to sign up to participate in the gift exchange, just bring a gift of around \$20 value and you're in!

There is no meeting in December, but in **January 2025** we have **Joey McCoy**, providing a lecture/presentation on yamadori collection. Joey is a monster when it comes to yamadori, so if you want to know more about it and ask questions of a master, be sure to show up for this meeting. January is a great time for this program, as this is right around the best time of year to collect material. We hope to have a combination workshop/club dig later in the month; stay tuned for more info.

Thanks for reading, and I'll see you at the party!

Eric

ABS Board Meeting Minutes

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discussion



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[https://www.youtube.com/
channel/
UCLSknKbNld3EOYwjkjNlneA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLSknKbNld3EOYwjkjNlneA)

Date: October 15, 2024

Location: Virtual

Meeting Attendees:

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

President:

- ◆ Touched on name tags, artists, materials, auction, slack, raffles and other topics
- ◆ Aligned speakers/artists for first quarter of 2025
- ◆ Volunteer hours submitted
- ◆ Talked about collaboration with Zilker on 10/26 and 11/2
- ◆ Looking for AAGC representative
- ◆ Propose to lower the cost of one artist
- ◆ Talked about building reservation, officers announcement

Vice President:

- ◆ Discussed Julian's visit
- ◆ Talked about programs and preparation for the rest of the year
- ◆ Holiday party table/banquet/volunteer setup

Secretary:

- ◆ Meeting starts at **7:33pm**
- ◆ Last report was accepted without edits
- ◆ Sachin accepts the Member-At-Large role vacated by Dash
 - ◆ Board voted and approved

Treasurer:

- ◆ Provide financial updates and balances
- ◆ Need more raffles items, discussed tiers of raffles and implementation
- ◆ Mentioned auction logistics and items solicitation
- ◆ Voted to compensate additional \$2 per person to AAGC
- ◆ Motioned by Eric, seconded by Judy to approve the upcoming budget
- ◆ Raffles at the holiday party

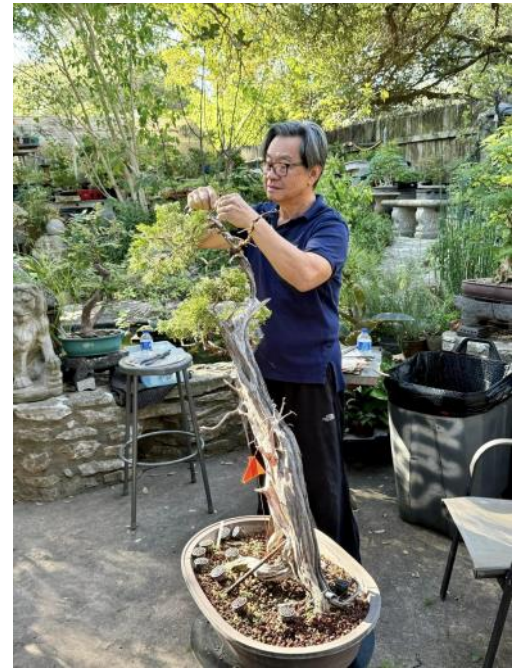
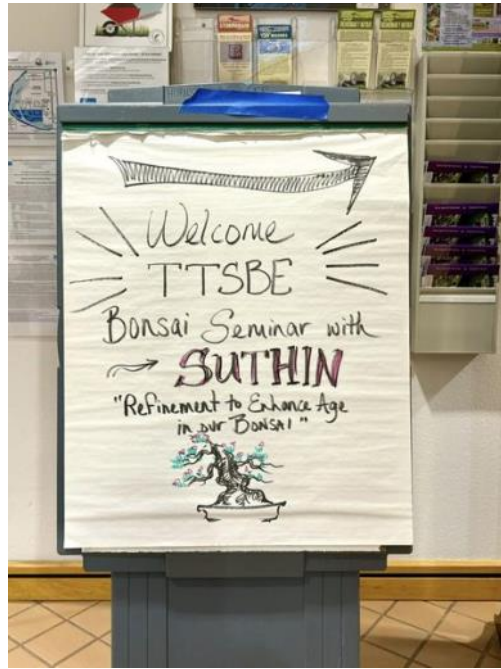
Meeting adjourned at **8:58 pm**

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 11/13/24	Club Night - Party / So- cial	Holiday Party	For Club Members and Guests– Potluck, Gift Ex- change Game, Decorated Bonsai Displays, Social Time and Memories!	Zilker Botanical Gar- den Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX	Sign up for Pot- luck items and Please RSVP Attendance thru “Evite” email so we have enough tables and chairs
WED	***	***	*** NO MEETING in Decem- ber ***	***	***
WED 1/8/2025	Club Night / Meeting	Joseph McCoy, ABS club member	Presentation: Yamadori Collec- tion	Zilker Botanical Gar- den Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX	Donation table items welcome :-)
WED 2/12/2025	Club Night / Meeting	TBD	TBD	Zilker Botanical Gar- den Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX	Donation table items welcome :-)
WED 3/5/2025	***1st WED of March *** Club Night / Meeting	TBD	TBD	Zilker Botanical Gar- den Center 2220 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX	Donation table items welcome :-)

TTSBE weekend with Suthin Sukosolvisit



TTSBE weekend with Suthin Sukosolvisit



November Bonsai

by John Miller

Learn to think in terms related to plant characteristics instead of calendar periods (i.e. use 'when dormant' instead of October, 'candle growth' instead of April, etc). That will enable you to read bonsai articles correctly whether written in Japan Florida or wherever. Note that some tree cultivars (like the cork bark black pine) are notably weaker than the standards of the species and require different pruning and care. Generalized articles will not be able to cover many details like this, you must learn the foibles of your particular variety.

All of this means that you should have your winter quarters ready. Select one for deciduous trees that will be out of the sun. Evergreens will need some sun but some protection from the hotter winter days, a bit of a problem. Air circulation is good but too much wind will desiccate them especially during freezing temps. Be sure you can check their individual watering. Clean up all debris.

Winter is also a crucial time in control of many insects. Killing them now means the tree will be able to get started in the spring before they develop sufficient numbers to do much damage. Before putting the trees into winter storage treat them for over-wintering insects and eggs. Dormant oil spray is good on trees with no green. A dilute solution of lime sulfur is an old gardeners' dormant spray for insect and fungus control. Use it on very cool days and dilute it per directions, probably 1 part lime sulfur to 20 parts water. Be sure to read the label on your bottle in case there are different strengths available. This solution should also be applied to bench tops, posts and the soil surrounding them (if you have gravel instead of grass) to eliminate hiding eggs and spores. If you have a greenhouse treat it also before the weather gets too cold to put your plants outside or move them to one end while you treat the other end.

At this time of the year deciduous plants do not need fertilizer. Evergreens will continue a slow growth and will benefit for a very light fertilizer feeding. Use one with a lower nitrogen (first number) like 8-8-8 and apply at 1/3 the recommended feeding rate.

Most important in winter is to keep the soil moisture at a proper level. This sometimes is hard to do because the trees do not use as much water as when they are growing. However the cold winds will dry out the tops quickly. I believe that most winter damage in Texas is due to lack of water rather than to low temperatures. Mulch helps keep the roots warm and retards evaporation but it makes for difficulty in seeing if the soil is damp enough. Most soils with enough organic material to keep the tree happy in the summer will be too wet if watered daily in the winter and wet cold means root rot. This is another place the akadama in the APL mix will help.

BIG NOTE: If you have a tree that is weak and unhealthy you should not attempt to style it in any way, just get it happy by adjusting its soil, feeding, and getting rid of any parasites. Styling just adds to its stress and problems.

Repotting of hardy trees can be done anytime the trees are dormant. However it is safer to do that chore in the spring as the buds are swelling. New roots will start forming immediately upon repotting in order for the tree to absorb enough water. If you do repot in the fall you should protect the new roots from freezing during the winter. Do you need to change the pot? Making notes at this time while getting the trees ready for winter will give you 3-4 months to find the proper pot.

When trees go dormant which indicates a reduced sap flow they may be pruned, that is have major limbs removed. Trimming may also be done while the leaves are off the trees and you can see what you are doing. Evergreen

types will probably still be a bit active. Pruning them should be held until a bit later.

By this time any tropical you have should be under cover. Most do not like the temp below 50 degrees. All tropicals should be checked and treated for any insect problems since any insects will multiply fast when they get into warmer quarters. Spider mites and scale can be especially damaging if the plant is moved in the house where the humidity is low.

The semi-tropical plants like crape myrtle, pomegranate and pyracantha need to go dormant to stay healthy over a long time but they cannot take much cold on the roots. The roots will be killed by temps somewhere between 25 and 30 degrees. These I set down on the ground and mulch for light freezes and then bring into a protected area for the colder winter. Sometimes I will let them go dormant for a month and then take into the greenhouse to start early and I can enjoy their new foliage in January.

Plan your spring repotting tasks so you will have the necessary pots and other supplies. Take advantage of low prices when nurseries are clearing out space for Xmas tree sales. You can sometimes find some bargains there especially if you remember that a tree with broken/dead tops may make nice bonsai starter material.

The dormant season is also a very good time to study your deciduous bonsai. You can see clearly the structure and where improvements should be made. Remove any wire that is tight or where it has done its work and the branch stays in position. Work can be done more leisurely over the winter. Take care not to damage the small buds.

November is when I consider the start of the fiscal year for two needle pines which include the Japanese black pine, Scots pine, and others. This process is needed to develop the twiginess and to get the needles short and keep them that way. Junipers and most other conifers (not the bald cypress) may be included. However I question the desirability of keeping them on the benches over winter because of the possibility of the sun heating the roots too much and causing them to break dormancy or get their roots active. That would cause problem if the temp later falls to 10 degrees.

Your Bonsai and Winter Temperatures: How Low Is Too Low?

by J. R. (Bill) Cody

When the subject of over-wintering our bonsai in Central Texas arises, the primary question is: Just how cold a temperature can our bonsai tolerate. To help the guessers, I compiled the results of three studies that have appeared in the horticultural literature, which are designed to aid commercial nurserymen protect their stock during the winter (table 1).

Some species that are native to our bonsai culture do not appear, but I believe that there is enough information for us to make a more educated guess as to where to “red-line” projected greenhouse/cold-frame low temperatures as we over-winter our bonsai. See Figure 1.

Compare the ambient temperature with that inside the clay root ball near the center of the container—they are essentially equivalent. The slightly lower temperature of the containers sitting on the ground is likely due to their position - four feet lower and colder air sinking to the floor, there being no advantage from ground heat. I believe that this information can be easily extrapolated to fit the weather patterns in other parts of the State.

Table 1 - A compilation of average root killing temperatures (Fahrenheit) for some woody plants. All temperatures are killing temperatures except the third column that lists minimum safe temperatures for that species. The values in columns one and two for “immature” and for “mature” roots are combined from two sources. Note that of the 21 species in which a “minimum safe” vs. a “killing” temperature is known, that the average difference is only 4.71F.

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).

Name of Plant	Type of Roots		Temperature	
	Immature	Mature	Min. Safe	Killing
Acer palmatum 'Atropurpureum'			17	14
Acer pseudoplatanus	4	-5		
Buxus sempervirens	27			15
Cornus florida	21	11	24	20
Cotoneaster horizontalis			22	18
Cotoneaster adpressa var. praecox			20	16
Cotoneaster conjesta	19	-1		
Cotoneaster dammeri	23 to 10	-1		
Cotoneaster dammeri 'Skogholmen'	19			
Cotoneaster microphyllus	25	9		
Crytomeria japonica			20	16
Cystus x praecox			20	15
Daphne cneorum			24	20
Euonymus alata 'Compacta'	19	7		
Euonymus fortunei 'Carrierei'				15
Euonymus fortunei 'Colorata'			10	5
Euonymus fortunei 'Graciles'				15
Euonymus fortunei var. vegetus	23 to 16	12 to 3		
Euonymus kiautschovica	21	16		
Hedra helix 'Baltica'				15
Hypericum spp.	23	18		
Ilex 'Nellie Stevens'	23	14		
Ilex 'San Jose'	21	18		
Ilex cornuta 'Dazzler'	25	18		
Ilex crenata 'Convexa'			24	20
Ilex crenata 'Helleri'	23 to 19	5		
Ilex crenata 'Hertzii'			24	20
Ilex crenata 'Stokesii'			24	20
Ilex glabra				15
Ilex opaca	23	9	24	20
Ilex x meserveae 'Blue Boy'	23	9		
Juniperus conferta				15
Juniperus horizontalis				0
Juniperus horizontalis 'Douglasii'			10	0
Juniperus horizontalis 'Plumosa'	12 to 12	-4 to -2	10	0
Juniperus squamata 'Meyeri'	12	-2		
Kalmia latifolia	16			
Koelreuteria paniculata	16 to 16	-4 to -5		
Leucothoe fontanesiana	19			5
Magnolia stellata	21	9	26	23
Magnolia x soulangeana			26	23
Mahonia bealei	25	12		
Pachysandra terminalis				15
Picea glauca				-10
Picea omorika				-10

Pieris floribunda				5
Pieris japonica	16		15	
Pieris japonica 'Compacta'				15
Potentilla fruticosa				-10
Pyracantha coccinea 'Lalandei'	25	18	22	18
Rhododendron 'Gibraltar'				10
Rhododendron 'Hino-crimson'	19			
Rhododendron 'Hinodegiri'	19			10
Rhododendron 'Purple Gem'	16			
Rhododendron (Exbury Hybrid)	18	3		
Rhododendron (P.J.M.Hybrids)			10	0
Rhododendron carolinianum			15	
Rhododendron catawbiense		3	15	
Rhododendron prunifolium	19			
Rhododendron schlippenbachii	16			
Stephanander incisa 'Crispa'	18	0		
Taxus x media 'Hicksii'	18 to 17	-4 to-5		
Taxus x media 'Nigra'			15	10
Viburnum carlesii			20	15
Viburnum plicatum forma tomentosum	19	7		
Vinca minor				15

**Winter Root Tempatures in Containers
Inside an Enclosure**

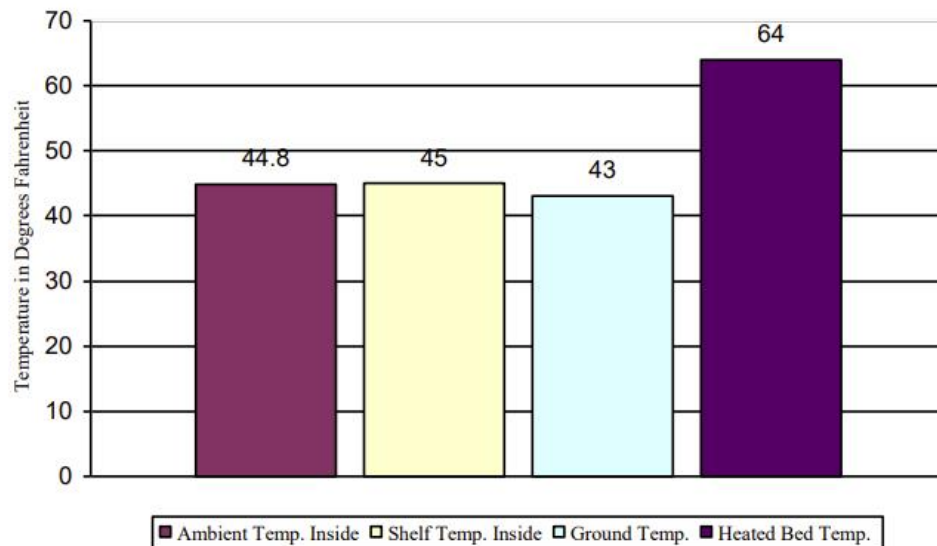


Figure 1. These temperatures were taken during February 2003 within a double-walled room with a woven plastic “insulator blanket” top. The trees were misted using an electronic leaf to activate the misting. The soil thermometer was inserted into the clay root balls of Ashe junipers collected in January and February of 2003. The thermometer was inserted four inches into the growth medium and root ball, making the end of the thermometer about four to five inches from the surface upon which the container was sitting - essentially in the center of the root ball. The “shelf” temps were taken in containers on a shelf four feet from the ground. “Ground” temps were containers sitting on the ground inside the room, and the third group temps were taken in containers buried in a bed of sand, beneath which was an 800 watt system of heating coils. The thermostat was set at 77F.

Since cold hardiness varies among species, between cultivars of a species, and even between various tissues of the same plant (e.g., crown and roots), it is no wonder that there may be confusion as to how to protect our bonsai against the rapidly changing, many faces of Central Texas weather. Temperate zone woody plants develop ‘cold-hardiness’ in response to declining photoperiod (light) and thermoperiod (heat) as the shorter days and longer nights of fall approach. The temperature reduction brought on by cool days and cooler nights contribute to root hardiness by slowing or stopping root growth. However, since temperatures above 60F. tend to slow this hardening process, I’m sure you can appreciate the quandary we face as our plants confront the bouncing-ball daily temperatures of Central Texas. We place our bonsai in enclosed structures to protect them from that surprise blue-norther that is coming through tonight, only to have the enclosure’s ambient temperature reach 70F. the next day even during the dead of winter.

There are two types of cold injury to plants and plant roots: Freezing and chilling. In the case of **freezing**, damage to the roots occurs when ice particles form within the root cells (intracellular water), causing the rupture of cell membranes that is a lethal injury. This type of injury is generally the result of a sudden, rapid fall in the temperature. Ice particles may also form in the water outside the cells (extracellular water). This is a non-lethal and common occurrence in many plants during the winter. However, this phenomenon may result in damage to cells by shifting intracellular water into the extracellular space, causing cell dehydration with resulting cell damage.

Chilling injury occurs when a susceptible plant, especially tropicals, is subjected to temperatures that are actually above freezing. Cooling of the root system and increased viscosity of extracellular water within the plant, as well as changes in the cell membranes between the extracellular and intracellular spaces, interferes with the entry of water into the vascular system. These changes reduce the ability of the plant to move water from the roots to the plant’s tissues at the same rate at which water vapor is being lost into the atmosphere - a desiccation injury ensues much like the wind-chill injury we see during winter windstorms.

Root systems can become acclimated (more resistant) to chilling conditions. Studies show that increased cold hardiness of the root system is related to the degree of unsaturated fatty acids in the membranes of the roots. Increased unsaturated fatty acids result in more rapid water transport through the root tissues at lower temperatures. Phosphorus nutrition seems to be important for root hardiness.

As was mentioned, there is a difference in the cold hardiness of the top of the tree versus the root system. Old roots are hardier than new roots and the latter seem to be unable to acclimate themselves despite the changes in temperature and light of approaching fall. As might be expected, this year’s rooted-cuttings are less able to withstand over-wintering than plants that have spent the previous year in one-gallon containers.

Studies show that similar protection is offered root systems of container plants whether they are over wintered in white or clear plastic enclosures—either single- or double-walled. White plastic sheeting for your winter enclosure is of greater

value in reducing the accumulation of heat during sunny winter days than clear plastic. Temperatures of 40F above outside temperatures have been recorded inside single-wall clear plastic enclosures and the temperatures were higher when there is a double wall. Double-walled white plastic is the most effective in reducing mid-day heat accumulation. The capability for the ventilation of these enclosures is imperative in those regions which have labile winter temperatures.

The temperatures within containers exposed to high or low ambient temperatures for long periods of time, i.e., all day or all night, eventually approach that of ambient. In February 2003 there were two mornings that the temperature was 23F. Each morning the temperature in all four of the containers was 23F. For this reason the time-honored practice of placing bonsai beneath their respective benches for the winter may not be as safe as we are led to believe. Obviously, the hardiness zone in which one resides and species of plant must be taken into account, but Figure 2 should give the reader some idea of the safety of this practice in his/her back yard.

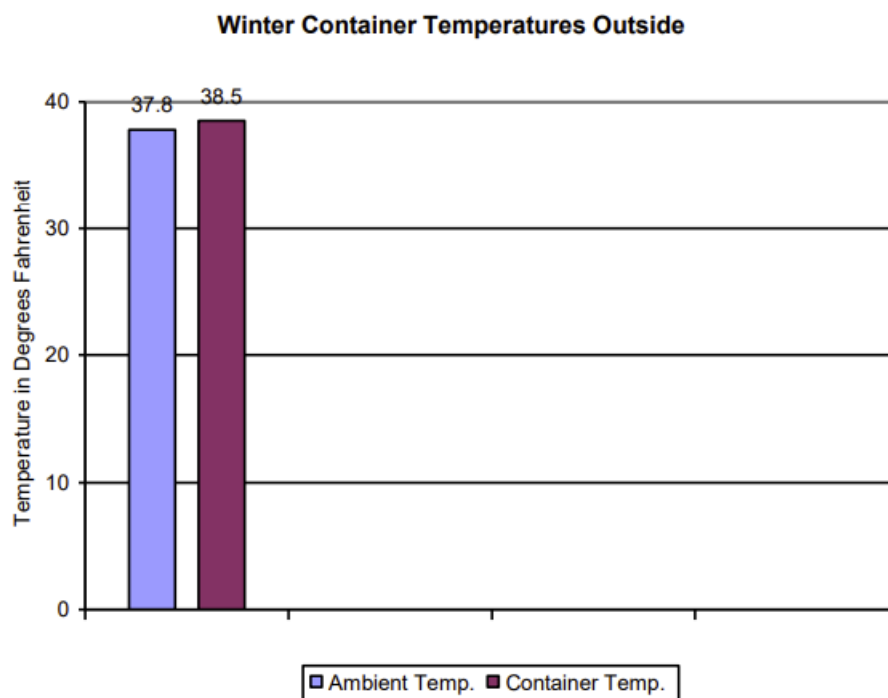


Figure 2. Three large, four inch deep ceramic containers were filled with sharp sand. Two were covered with wind-proof material; the third was not. All had two thermometers inserted two inches deep and two inches from the edge of the container. All were set upon the ground with a northern exposure but without overhead cover. Readings were taken at 0700 CST. On mornings that the wind was 20-30 mph, there would be a 2-3 degree colder temperature in the unprotected container, otherwise all temperatures were equal to or +/- one degree of the ambient reading.

References: Newman, S. E., Root Stress in Containers, Proceedings of the International. Plant Propagation Society, Vol.36:384. 1986.

Good, G. L., et al, Winter Protection of Containerized Ornamental Plants, J. Arboriculture, Vol.2(3):51. 1976.

Ingram, D. L., et al, Effect of Heat Stress On Container-Plants, Proceedings of the International. Plant Propagation Society, Vol. 39:348. 1989.

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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

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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Bonsai Notebook

Austin Bonsai Society
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Austin, Texas 78734



Austin Bonsai Society

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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