



Bonsai Notebook

www.austinbonsaisociety.com

A Publication of the Austin Bonsai Society

September 2026 vol 192

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Calendar of Events

September 9, 2026 (Venue Change for Upcoming Meeting)

- ◆ Topic: Ashe juniper
- ◆ Location: First English Lutheran Church
(Please consult page 2 for additional details.)
- ◆ Time: 6:30pm (Mingling/Setup) 7:00pm (Meeting)

September 19, 2026

- ◆ Topic: Annual Auction
- ◆ Time: 9:30am (setup) 10:30am (auction)
- ◆ Volunteers needed
- ◆ Location: Anderson Mill Garden Club

September 26, 2026 (Saturday)

- ◆ Shohin Society of Texas (SSOT)
- ◆ Topic: Sea hibiscus & Premna
- ◆ Time: 1pm - 4pm
- ◆ Location: Spicewood Springs Library

2026 Board of Directors

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Sachin A.
Vice President

Simon T.
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Fred W.
Member-At-Large

Ross C.
Member-At-Large

Abby B.
Member-At-Large

Volunteers

Refreshments
Lyons O.
Shawn W.

Tree Hosts

Urgent Update: Meeting Venue Impacted

From ZBGC Manager:

“We’ve received unfortunate news from the City: the ceiling in the auditorium requires extensive repairs, and the space is now closed until further notice.

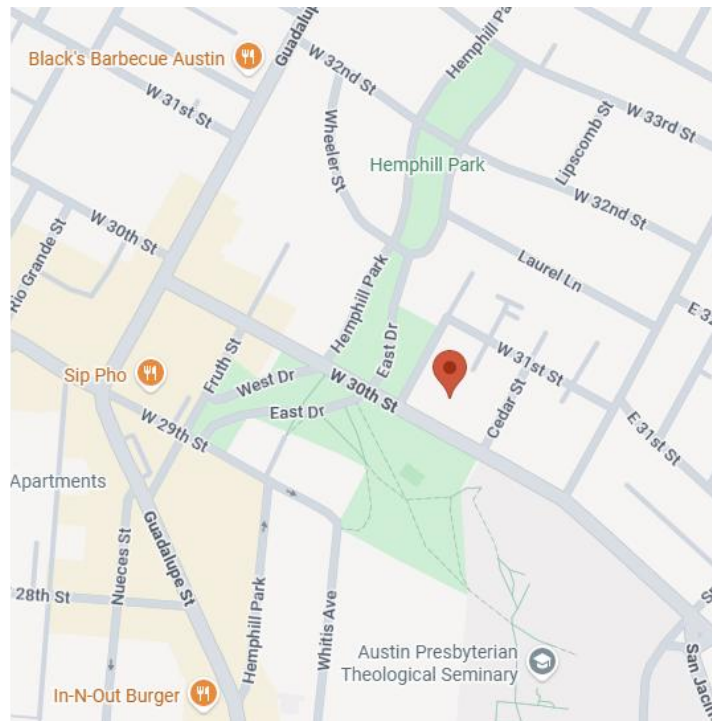
This means the Austin Bonsai Society meeting scheduled for August 12, 5:30–9:30 PM will need to be canceled or relocated. We are actively working with APR and AAGC to identify alternative options; however, some city facilities may involve additional costs, so we encourage clubs to explore other meeting locations as well.

ZBGC will share updates as soon as more information becomes available.”

The Austin Bonsai Society board has secured a new meeting venue at [First English Lutheran Church, 3001 Whitis Ave., Austin, TX 78705](#) ensuring our gatherings continue without interruption. If any members have access to—or connections with—other suitable meeting spaces, please reach out for future planning. We look forward to welcoming all bonsai enthusiasts at our new location.

ABS Board

First English Lutheran Church



President's Message

By Eric B.

Greetings, everyone! It's getting into late August and as you might have noticed, it is hoT, hOT, HOT! The advice I gave in an earlier newsletter goes double now: shade your trees' pots, try to provide shade in the afternoon after 2-3 pm or so (shadecloth works well), water trees in smaller pots multiple times daily if needed, misting in the afternoon if you can for some evaporative cooling. Keeping the pot shaded can make the difference between a tree struggling or thriving during the heat, just be sure that air can flow around the pot to prevent mold and such. It's only going to get hotter for the next several weeks, so buckle up and make sure your watering wand is in regulation order, your hat provides adequate shade, and don't forget that you need water too, so stay hydrated! Good luck!

Our August meeting, with guest artist Roland Lopez, was a great success! There was a bit of confusion about the location change, but attendance was still about the usual. On that topic, ABS owes a huge thank you to First English Lutheran Church, for graciously hosting our meeting on such short notice. The space proved ideal for our meeting format and the welcome we received was heartwarming. FELC is actually thrilled to have us using the space, so we have it available for September, October, and November should the need arise. Which seems likely, at least for the September meeting.

Roland Lopez's presentation was one of the better ones I've seen at an ABS meeting, and that's saying something! I really want to try some of the cutting techniques he displayed, especially the one where you split the bark at the bottom of the cutting, peel it from the trunk and spread it out radially to start a nice nebari. The grafting work Roland did was also pretty cool, I want to try that now, too. Tropicals are so cool! Thanks for showing us even more cool things about them, Roland!

The September meeting features Sylvia Smith, who will be working on an Ashe Juniper. Sylvia has 30 years of bonsai experience, and has served as the resident bonsai instructor for the Bonsai Society of Dallas (2015-2023) and Ft. Worth Bonsai Society (2017-2025). Her awards include: "Best in Show", "Honorable Mention" and "People's Choice Award" at the LSBF 2017 Convention; "Best Deciduous Tree" at the LSBF 2019 Convention; "Best Small Shohin Display" at the LSBF 2023 Convention; and "Best in Show" and "Best Conifer" at BCI 2024. I'm very excited to have Sylvia visit us again, and hope to see a good turnout to welcome her to Austin. And, as usual, the Ashe juniper will be available in the raffle at the end of the night.

The week after the September meeting, on Saturday, Sept. 19, we have our annual auction. Please think hard about any trees, pots, tools, old convention swag...anything you might be willing to donate to the auction. This is one of our major fundraising events, so the more items and better quality items we have, the better it will be for ABS. Every item in the auction helps keep the Austin Bonsai Society going, and are very much appreciated by all.

The auction is also an opportunity to be a volunteer, to help set up the day before the show, to help out during, and clean up after the show. Only a few volunteers are needed: 3 or 4 to set up the Friday before the auction, and another 3 or 4 to run the event on Saturday and clean up afterward.

The auction is also a great way to pick up trees and such, so be thinking about that as well. Be like me and donate a bunch of stuff and then end up taking home almost as much as I brought, just different trees. Crop rotation! It's fun!

President's Message

By Eric B.

Take care everyone and seriously, watch the heat, it can sneak up on you. Drink lots of water if you have to be active outside. Consider that a Presidential Executive Order!

Eric

New Meeting Venue



Vice President's Message

By Sachin A.

September is shaping up to be a busy and exciting month for the Austin Bonsai Society, with plenty of opportunities to learn, participate, and enjoy bonsai with fellow enthusiasts.

First up is the **U.S. National Tropical Bonsai Exhibition in Houston on September 5–6**. This is a great opportunity to see outstanding tropical bonsai, meet fellow bonsai enthusiasts, and get inspired. If you can make the trip, it should be well worth the drive. More information is available at the US National Tropical Bonsai Exhibition.

Our **September 9 club meeting** will feature bonsai artist **Sylvia Smith from Dallas**. Sylvia will be giving a presentation and working with an **Ashe juniper**, providing us with an opportunity to see her approach to developing this native Texas species.

Please note that **we have a venue change for this meeting**:

First English Lutheran Church

6:30 PM – Mingling and setup

7:00 PM – Meeting

On **September 19**, we will hold our **Annual Club Auction** at Anderson Mill Garden Club.

9:30 AM – Setup

10:30 AM – Auction

Location: Anderson Mill Garden Club

Volunteers are needed!

Now is a great time to look through your bonsai collection and find trees, pots, tools, or other items that you are ready to pass along. The auction is a fun way to renew and refresh your collection while supporting the Austin Bonsai Society. Proceeds help fund our club programs and activities, so please consider bringing something to sell and volunteering to help make the auction a success.

Finally, on **Saturday, September 26**, the **Shohin Society of Texas (SSOT)** will meet from **1:00–4:00 PM** at **Spicewood Springs Library**, located at **8637 Spicewood Springs Rd, Austin, TX 78750**. The topic will be **Sea Hibiscus & Premna**. If you enjoy shohin bonsai or are interested in learning more about these species, this is another great opportunity to spend an afternoon with fellow bonsai enthusiasts.

There is a lot happening in September, and I encourage everyone to get involved. Whether you attend a meeting, visit the tropical exhibition, participate in the auction, or join the Shohin Society, these events are a great way to continue learning and growing in bonsai.

I look forward to seeing you throughout the month!

Happy bonsai,
Sachin

August Meeting



August Meeting (Refreshment and Raffles)



Get Connected!

Join our online
discussion



Official Website

Visit our website at
austinbonsaisociety.com

Facebook



Like our Facebook page
AustinBonsaiSociety

Twitter



Follow us on Twitter
@ATXBonsai

Instagram



Follow us on Instagram
@austinbonsaisociety

ABS Board Meeting Minutes

Date: August 18, 2026

Location: Virtual

Meeting Attendees:

- ◆ Eric (President)
- ◆ Sachin (Vice President)
- ◆ Simon (Secretary)
- ◆ Jonathan (Treasurer)
- ◆ Abby
- ◆ Ross
- ◆ Fred

President:

- ◆ Preparations are underway for the upcoming year's events and activities, with particular attention given to annual auction and holiday gathering.

Annual Auction:

- ◆ Our Annual Bonsai Auction is just around the corner, and we'd love your participation. Your donated trees, pots, tools, and materials help support the Society and keep our programs thriving. Join us, contribute if you can, and enjoy a day of community and great finds

Vice President:

- ◆ Artists planning for the upcoming year.

Secretary:

- ◆ The meeting commenced at **7:33 pm**.
- ◆ The latest report was approved as submitted, with no amendments necessary.

Treasurer:

The latest meeting tally has been provided.

Meeting adjourned at **8:24 pm**

AUSTIN BONSAI SOCIETY PRESENTS

Bonsai Auction

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Bonsai trees
- Pre-bonsai & other plants
- Bonsai pots & tools

WHEN & WHERE

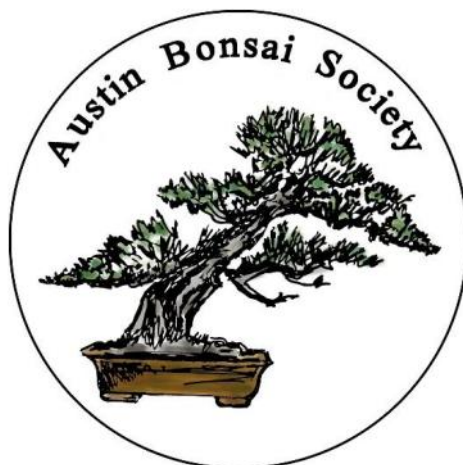
Saturday, September 19th
9:30 am - 2:00 pm

Anderson Mill Garden Club
13974 FM 2769
Volente, TX 78641

Cash, Check, or Credit Card accepted
(credit cards subject to processing fee)

austinbonsaisociety.com





ANNUAL ABS AUCTION!
ANDERSON MILL GARDEN CLUB
13974 FM2769, Volente, TX
Saturday, SEPTEMBER 19
Arrive 9:30 AM; Auction 10:30 AM

**Please donate bonsai, pre-bonsai, tools, supplies, &
bonsai-related items for auction**

Plan to BID and BUY!!
Consider it “crop rotation”!!

If your item is worth $\geq$ \$100, enter it into the “Not-so-Silent” Auction and be refunded 50% of sales price.

PROCEDURE FOR THE ABS NOT-SO-SILENT AUCTION SEPTEMBER 19, 2026

1. The seller/donor must fill out the form below for each item to be offered and submit the completed form to the Treasurer by **Sept. 19 (Day of Auction)**. The Treasurer will mark the below form as to the date and time received. Up to 6 or 8 (depending on size) items will be accepted. **It is understood that 50% of the winning bid goes to the Club and 50% to the seller/donor** unless the seller/donor states on the form that it is a 100% donation to the club.
2. **Items must be worth \$100.00 or more and the donor is allowed to set a reserve price on this sheet below;** consequently, the beginning bid must be the reserve price or \$100. The reason for a not-so-silent auction is to save time and ensure the item is sold at a price that is acceptable to the donor. If the reserve is NOT met, the Treasurer will so announce and the item will be returned to the seller/donor.
3. There will be short breaks throughout the morning so that bids can be checked or added to.
4. At about 12:30 PM, the Treasurer will pick up the sheets and after the tallying, announce the winners. The winners can then pay, or add the amount to the total for whatever else they have won that day.
5. The completed form can also be emailed to jonathan.woodjs@gmail.com.

FOR THE ABS NOT-SO-SILENT AUCTION – SEPTEMBER 19, 2026

SELLER/DONOR NAME _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

PHONE # _____

DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: _____

CHECK ONE: _____ 50/50 split _____ DONATION TO CLUB

WILL THERE BE A RESERVE? _____ YES _____ NO RESERVED PRICE: _____

Auction Item Tag

Item_____

Donor_____

Approx. Cost_____

Item_____

Buyer #_____

Final Bid_____

Auction Item Tag

Item_____

Donor_____

Approx. Cost_____

Item_____

Buyer #_____

Final Bid_____

Auction Item Tag

Item_____

Donor_____

Approx. Cost_____

Item_____

Buyer #_____

Final Bid_____

**Auction Item Tag**

Item_____

Donor_____

Approx. Cost_____

Item_____

Buyer #_____

Final Bid_____

Auction Item Tag

Item_____

Donor_____

Approx. Cost_____

Item_____

Buyer #_____

Final Bid_____

Auction Item Tag

Item_____

Donor_____

Approx. Cost_____

Item_____

Buyer #_____

Final Bid_____

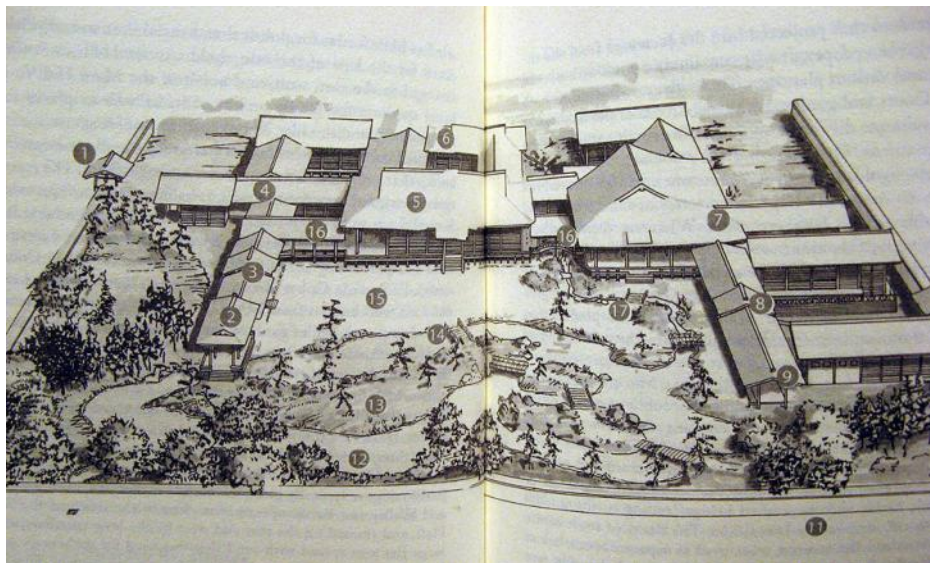
Sakuteiki—1,000 Year Old Gardening Text

by Michael Hagedorn (Permission to repost)

Always fun to plumb historical texts for modern-day relevance or just plain curiosity, but it's not so common to have something this old to read.

The Sakuteiki is a text from the Heian period and is a guide to designing a garden. The taboos are particularly entertaining, underlined with the warning, 'To make a garden by studying nature exclusively, without any knowledge of various taboos, is reckless.' There are problems with building it a certain way that would block the passage of the White Tiger, for example. A bit of texture, perhaps, but not very illuminating for those who grow plants today. More interesting is that they used grasses and flowering perennials more often than is now seen in modern Japanese gardens.

Kyoto stands on the site of the ancient Heian city, so there are layers of history here that go back a long way. The Heian city was master planned on a grid, like the Chinese Tang capital of AD 700. One of the most arresting images of the book I have, published in 2008 by Jiro Takei and Marc Keane, is of a Heian period residence of a regent family:



Heian period residence, circa AD 1000

The organic relationship between the rectilinear house and the fluid garden is remarkable; it reminded me of a rectangular pot and a flowing tree rising from it. Residences of this type were carefully designed to afford many views of the garden. They were integrated in a sophisticated way that suggests a central relationship with nature. Granted, these were the residences of government officials and not the bunkhouses of Joe Schmo, but still...

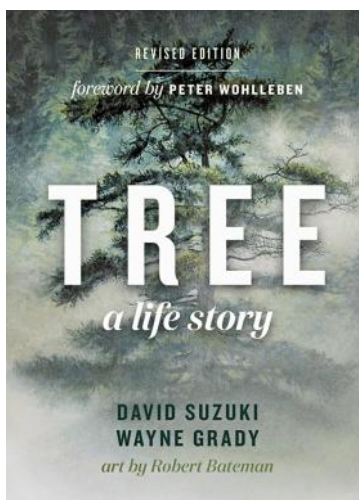
Not sure there is any clear link here to what we do with bonsai. One thing is noteworthy, though: Like the eastern United States in the early settlement days, the old woods around the Heian city were demolished to support the growth of the city. There was nothing that was 'wild nature' for a great distance. Organically planned gardens re-created the feeling of nature inside the walls of their residences. I wonder if that is not a rare urge for those who live on city grids, and perhaps there is the link to our attraction to bonsai. It's just remarkable how clearly the Japanese elite expressed that yearning in their lives. There are a lot of examples around the world of gardens designed around homes, but not many where the house is designed around the garden. I'd take my beret off to anyone who designs a house while thinking of a garden.

Suggested Books For Bonsai Enthusiasts

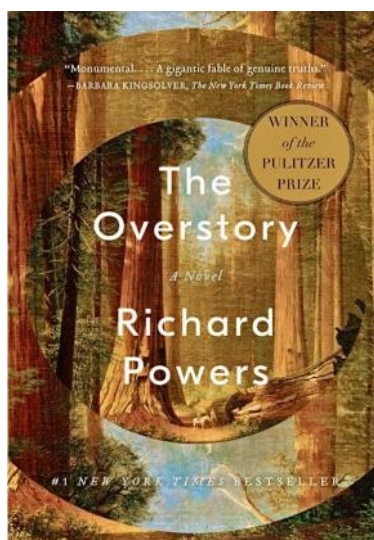
by Michael Hagedorn (Permission to repost)

For those who can't get enough words about trees, here are a selection of books you might enjoy.

These books cover a wide arc of tree storytelling, from their lives in nature to how we interact with them. They are not about bonsai, but rather might illuminate why bonsai captivate us.



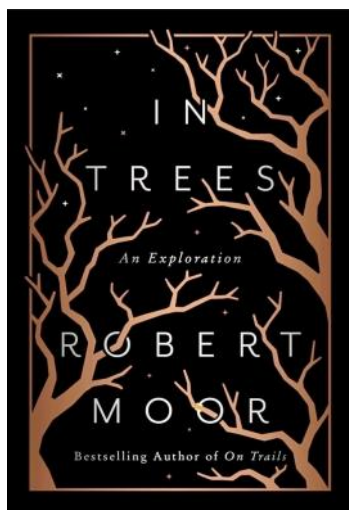
Tree: A Life Story— A penetrating view through the lens and experience of an ecologist, David Suzuki, this tree biography takes a Douglas Fir from seedling to toppling over at great age. Suzuki leads us on a macro and micro journey through the Fir's lifespan and how it changes and is changed by the biotic life around it. You learn as much about the nitrogen cycle, carpenter ants, and the haunting similarity of chlorophyll and blood as about the tree. A small treasure.



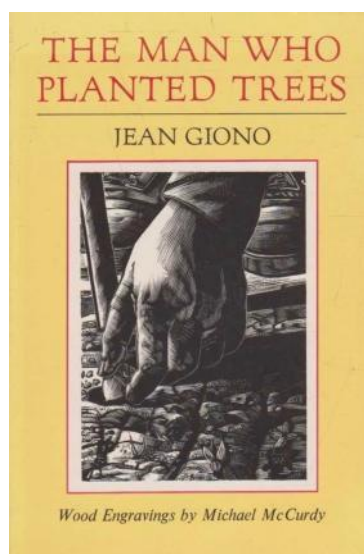
The Overstory: A Novel— No fewer than five people have gifted or suggested this book to me, and I've done about the same for others. A reviewer wrote, "...trees...are both the stealth protagonists and the beating, fine-grained heart of this strange, marvelous book." It's a Pulitzer Prize winner, a generational effort, and, if you have the emotional bandwidth for a deep dive of several generations of people and their lives with trees, worth it. A delicious set of stories.

Suggested Books For Bonsai Enthusiasts

by Michael Hagedorn (Permission to repost)



In Trees: An Exploration— Due to be released on April 7, 2026, Robert Moor’s book has already received strong reviews from *Kirkus*, *Publisher’s Weekly*, and dignitaries from natural history circles. From the top of a sequoia filming a documentary with David Attenborough to a tree full of chimpanzees, this investigative romp wonders what a tree is from the vantage of science, history, and philosophy. Moor interviewed me for an article in *The New Yorker* about bonsai, and I’m personally looking forward to this one.



The Man Who Planted Trees— A tree fantasy by novelist Jean Giono. A young man travels through a barren land in France in search of restoration, and meets a shepherd who has been planting acorns. No one asked him to do this, but he plants in the hills anyway. Decades later the man returns and finds a landscape he doesn’t recognize. The shepherd has been busy. Giono had been commissioned to write a story about a remarkable person, but when the publisher received it, they complained that the shepherd was fictional. Giono replied that they hadn’t requested a *real* person, so he gave the story away. It’s short, and it’s a gem.

Reminder: 2026 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 2026 Directory.

New/Renewed Members for 2026

May & Simon	Jonathan	Alisan & Lynn (honorary)	Elaine (honorary)
Hani & Jane T.	John P.	Nilda G.	Andrew I.
David G.	Mike G.	Eric B.	Shawn W.
Jorge V.	Dana L.	Susan C.	Hunter J.
Roalnd L.	Jay N.	Dash C.	Reid F.
Jared M.	Diego M.	Jacob & Catherine C.	Barbara R.
Maddison K.	Chris F.	Jared M. & Kendra D.	William "Bill" M.
Randall R.	Bill M.	Cole J.	Audre & Zetta H
Robert P.	Salik & Khadya M.	Nikki & Kenneth G.	Jordan & Crystal 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!

Reminder for club membership and advertisement

2026 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

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601 Kay Lane
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(call for directions)

Bonsai Notebook

Austin Bonsai Society
P.O. Box 340474
Austin, Texas 78734



Austin Bonsai Society

P.O. Box 340474
Austin, TX 78734



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