

ISSUE

08

August
2026

A Publication
of The San
Antonio
Bonsai

SA BONSAI NEWS

Upcoming Bonsai Events

August

August 13th
Club Meeting,
Educational Panel
Discussion, Lions
Field, 5:30pm

August 26th
Progressive
Workshop & BYOT
Workshop, Lions
Field, 5:30pm

Additional events
listed on page 5

Meetings held at the
Lions Field Center 2809
Broadway, SATX 78209
unless mentioned
differently



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Monthly Tips **P.4**

President's Message by Richard M., millermillerlaw@aol.com

NEW CLUB MEETING TIMES AT LIONS FIELD
5:30 PM TO 7:45 PM

The month of July saw many club members bringing Bonsai to the meeting for the bring your own tree tropical bonsai repotting event. Members used their skills learned from Brandon Baldauf during his lecture/demonstration the prior month. Repotting is an essential bonsai skill, and I am pleased that June and July were devoted to furthering the knowledge of this skill. I would like to thank Kevin P, Hattie P., and Ryan O. for their time at the Rainbow Gardens-Thousand Oaks lecture/demonstration. It is one of the missions of this club to bring the joy of bonsai to the public. The progressive workshop and bring your own tree workshop are going great. Please keep up the good work.

August is always very hot. Keep up your watering.



Please Welcome our Newest Member(s)

Rosa M., Sara T.,
Darion D., & Alexis
S.

*Those considering
joining SABS may attend
a free meeting.
Membership forms
available at each
meeting and on website.*

Congratulate these Members on their Membership Anniversary in 2026

5 years

Gabe, Karin,
Richard, Kurt, &
Janet

10 years

Diane & Steve

20-30 years

Louie (20), Nancy
(20), Tom (20),
Irene (20), Jay (25),
Kevin (26), Hattie
(26), Donna (27),
Chuck (30), & Pat
(30)

31+ years

Alfred (35), David
(44), Paul (45),
Dawn (45), & Jack
(46)



Vice-President's Message

by Carl D. Richard M.,
mcdixon117@gmail.com

Weather has turned hot and our bonsai friends are feeling it. They dry out in a heartbeat in 100-degree temps. I try to increase shade and closely monitor soil moisture. A couple of weeks in the Colorado mountains would be nice if we could find someone to take over watering responsibilities.

Thursday August 13th

Speaking of hot weather bonsai care, this month's regular club meeting will give everyone an opportunity to discuss hot weather bonsai care and any other bonsai related topic. Have a specific problem with one of your trees - other members may have had similar problems and can provide possible solutions. Ideally, bring the tree in for diagnosis and treatment planning. The doctor is in.

Everyone is also invited to bring in a tree to work on or repot while discussions are taking place. Be sure to also bring in your tools and materials. There will be plenty of opportunities to get advice on specific questions or on what styling options you might consider if you are unsure of what to do next.

In short, this meeting will be a very informal format guided mostly by which direction club members want to go. It will be a good opportunity to interact with your fellow bonsai enthusiasts and get information customized to your specific needs. It is rewarding to watch other members work on their trees, talk about various techniques and get motivated to improve your own trees.

Coming up is the National Tropical Bonsai Show in Houston. Several members are planning to enter trees in the exhibit. If you are interested in attending, talk to Kevin at the meeting.

Wednesday August 26th

The only other event this month will be the regularly scheduled BYOT Workshop so bring your tree in for helpful advice and actual hands-on styling from Ryan O. The Progressive Workshop is also ongoing (26 August at 5:30) These get togethers are a great informal environment to work on any tree, get good advice and enjoy the company of other bonsai fanatics.

Don't let the hot weather get you down - full bonsai speed ahead.

Vice-President's message continued on page 6.

Monthly Food/Bev. Host(s)

August

Carl D., Irene V., &
Louie C.

September

Rob M., Richard M.,
& Penny B.

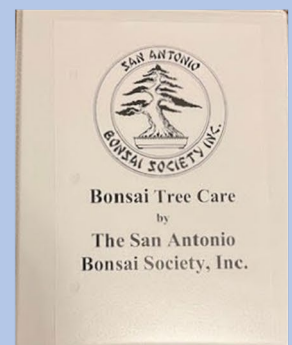
Soil/Book Sale



Club Soil

\$25/6.5 gal.
(Club Members)

\$30/6.5 gal.
(Non-Members)



Care Book \$30

Email Ryan O. at
bonsaiode@gmail.com for
details or delivery to
meetings



Photos/Recognitions

**Rainbow Gardens-Thousand Oaks L/D by Kevin and Ryan (07/18/26) and
Raffle Winners**



Monthly Tips by Addison Galambos of Teeny Tree Science

Why is Water Important?

In Bonsai, we talk about the importance of watering, but we are often mystified by or overlook the characteristics of the water itself that we nurture our plants with. This has been surprising for me coming from a background in saltwater aquariums where we can often obsess over the exact components of the water we put into our ecosystems. In the pursuit of stability, we strip tap water down to its pure form and then build it back up with exactly the nutrients that are required for the species of invertebrate or fish we wish to nurture. An unexpected swing in water parameters or outside influence on the water chemistry can kill thousands of dollars worth of livestock in minutes. The more laissez-faire approach often taken in bonsai of just spraying whatever comes out of the tap onto our trees comes as a surprise to me, when, on the surface at least, it seems like there could be similar impacts of water quality on the wellbeing of organisms under our care.

In this and the following articles in this series, I'll be delving deeper into available research about the impact of water and soil chemistry on plant health as well as doing mini labs that you can replicate at home. My hope is that this research will be able to help us form more data driven hypotheses for elevating bonsai tree care, and lead to some practical tips for bonsai hobbyists in their pursuit of healthy, happy plants.

Foundational Knowledge

Starting at the basics, plants uptake water (H₂O) through the roots where it is used for at least two important functions: 1) As an ingredient in photosynthesis and 2) To move nutrients throughout the plant.

We've established that plants need water, carbon dioxide, and light, but what are these nutrients that water is also helping move throughout the plant? It turns out that what plants need (in general) is pretty well understood and is referred to as the 17 "Essential Elements". I'll be writing more in a future article on how this was determined and doing more in depth research on this, but for now just believe the University of Montana's course on Nutrient Management.

Up to 99.5% of the water absorbed into the plant exits the plant through the leaves via transpiration and is not actually needed for its metabolic processes. [10] Cohesion-Tension theory explains how transpiration (movement of water vapor from the plant into the atmosphere) provides the main force that moves water from the roots to the leaves.

You can think of the process as if there was a vacuum attached to the openings in the leaves (stomata) that sucks water out of the plant. Each water molecule is linked hand in hand with the water molecule behind it in a chain so as the molecule closest to the vacuum gets sucked out, it pulls everything behind it. This force goes all the way down the small tubes within the plant body and helps pull water in through the roots from underground.

This process allows the plant to bring the water it needs for photosynthesis to the leaves where the metaphorical "vacuum" is. As water moves throughout the plant, the nutrients described above hitchhike with the water molecules to where they need to go. The plant needs to open itself up to the atmosphere/our "vacuum" in order to get

Species Highlight

Texas Sage

The Texas Sage (*Leucophyllum frutescens*) is a fairly slow-growing plant & may take up to 2 years to become fully established and bloom reliably. Once established, the Texas Sage is extremely drought tolerant, requires very little supplemental water, & will bloom after a good rainstorm. *(Don't try to trick it into blooming by watering heavily--it won't work.)* After a week or two, the blooms will fall off, but the silver gray-green leaves stay year-round. The older it gets, the more intensely it blooms. Bees really like this plant when it's in bloom.

Texas Sage makes an excellent bonsai specimen due to its naturally woody trunk, small silvery-green leaves, and vibrant purple blooms. It requires full sun, a fast-draining soil mix, and careful watering - allowing it to dry out almost completely between waterings to prevent root rot.

Prune back heavily in late winter or early spring to encourage new growth and more blooms. Wiring can be applied to shape the branches, but do so carefully on older branches as they can be brittle.



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September

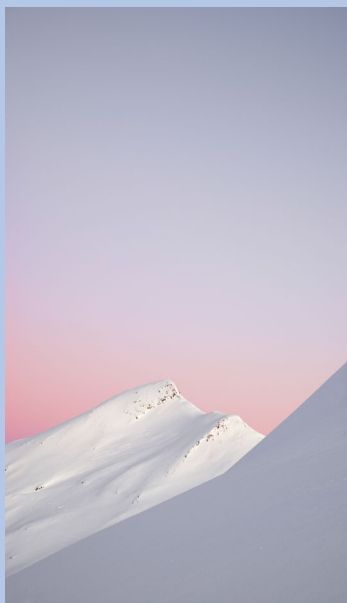
September 10th
Club Auction,
 Lions Field, 5:30pm

September 12th
Day of Bonsai,
 Sales and Exhibit of
 Bonsai, Fannick's
 Nursery

September 19th
Austin Club
Auction, 13974 FM-
 2769, Austin, TX,
 10:00am

September 23rd
Progressive
Workshop & BYOT
Workshop, Lions
 Field, 5:30pm

September 26th
Bonsai Exhibit and
 L/D, Rainbow
 Gardens-Bandera



Monthly Tips cont.

CO₂ and Oxygen for it's metabolic and photosynthetic processes. When the pores in the leaves are open, water vapor transfers back into the environment, starting the great migration.

Isn't water, water?

Now that we've reviewed what water is used for and what plants need besides water, let's move away from mysterious plant equations and tables for a minute and talk about something a little closer to home. As you probably agree, water is also important for another living organism we are all familiar with... Humans! (Sorry to any non-water based organisms reading this.)

Do you prefer the taste of Dasani over Fiji water? (Guilty!) Have you ever noticed the water from your tap tasted a bit off or have you ever been warned against drinking tap water in certain countries you were traveling in? Of course all of these experiences happen because we're very rarely drinking 100% pure water.

What happens to the "not water" in my water?

Ok great, so there's a bunch of stuff in our water, but if it's safe for us to drink it's probably safe for our plants... Right? Not necessarily, remember the laws that govern the quality of our drinking water are based on human needs and might not be indicative of what plants crave. (Lookin' at you Brawndo!) Comparing the common substances found in tap water to the Essential Elements list, we can see that many of the substances are contributing elements that aren't necessarily needed by our plants. Even for the elements plants do need, we don't know if it is in a meaningful concentration.

This is important because each time you water a plant, some of the substances dissolved in your water bind to soil particles or stay dissolved in water trapped in spaces between soil particles where they are then available for the plant. Plants absorb water and minerals in the soil through separate mechanisms, so plants don't "drink" water and all its constituent parts in one big gulp like we do. They are often bringing in individual molecules that they find bound to the soil particles or suspended in water near their roots which we've just discovered is where all the "dissolved stuff" in our water is!

Thinking of it in a human context again, it would be like if every time you drank water it also strengthened or weakened functions of your home like eroding your foundation or adding hearty snacks to your pantry. One example you're all hopefully familiar with of plants benefiting from substances dissolved in water is liquid fertilizers where cations (from salts) like Potassium (K⁺ in "N-P-K") are brought into the soil and then absorbed into the plant to help fuel growth.

In a Bonsai pot, roots can't escape to new soil environments or summon new sources of water, so they have to make do with what we give them. I think it is worth examining what is in our water and fertilizer more closely since it directly influences the soil chemistry which is where the plant is obtaining its essential nutrients from.

Conclusion

We water our Bonsai trees sometimes multiple times a day, and with each watering, we are subtly and not so subtly influencing the chemistry of the soil/water solution where the plant draws its water and nutrients from. Elements can't simply disappear, so when they are added during watering, they have to leave the pot through the drainage hole, get absorbed by the tree, or stick around in the soil. The impacts of this aren't always immediately apparent as plants are extremely adaptable and can even influence the soil chemistry themselves. I'm hoping we can learn more together about how we can ensure the water we drizzle dotingly on our plants is building them and their loamy homes up instead of breaking them down.

<https://teentreescience.wixsite.com/teentrees/post/why-is-water-important>

Vice-President's Message (cont.)

Saturday September 12th

Kevin is working with Mark Fanick of Fanick's Nursery for a **Day of Bonsai** on Saturday, September 12th. SABS will be filling a large area of Fanick's with a large exhibit and vendor booths. Our potential list of vendors includes SABS, High Water Bonsai (Drew and Martin), Little Jade Bonsai (Gilbert Cantu), Hawk Eye Bonsai (Brandon Baldauf), Red Hawk Bonsai (David Whitaker), Austin Bonsai Pots and Japanese Maples (Jonathan Wood), and many more. A sign-up will begin in August for those who want to exhibit. A 10x10 space is \$50.00.

Need help with various techniques, styling ideas, watering, repotting, etc.?

Are you aware our website has an extensive library of resources?

Use the link below to find our library of information!

<https://www.sanantoniobonsai.org/resources>



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Gill P.**

The informal upright style (Moyogi) is considered the most popular shape in all bonsai, especially suited to our native Ashe Juniper.

Our logo, represented by this informal style stands for the informal nature of the San Antonio Bonsai Society, Inc. This popular, interesting style depicts the objectives of the Society - promoting participation and enjoyment of Bonsai.

The emblem was adopted as the official logo in September 1977.

For additional information please visit SABS at

Website: Sanantoniobonsai.org

Facebook: @sanantoniobonsai

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YouTube: [Click Here!!](#)

Annual Membership Dues:

Individual	\$30
Family	\$50
Senior (65+) Individual:	\$25
Senior (65+) Family:	\$40
Individual Nametag:	\$15

The San Antonio Bonsai Society, Inc. is a member of the Lone Star Bonsai Federation, Inc., Bonsai Clubs International, and the American Bonsai Society.

SABS is a non-profit 501c (3) organization.

Newsletter Editor: Ryan O. at bonsaiode@gmail.com

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