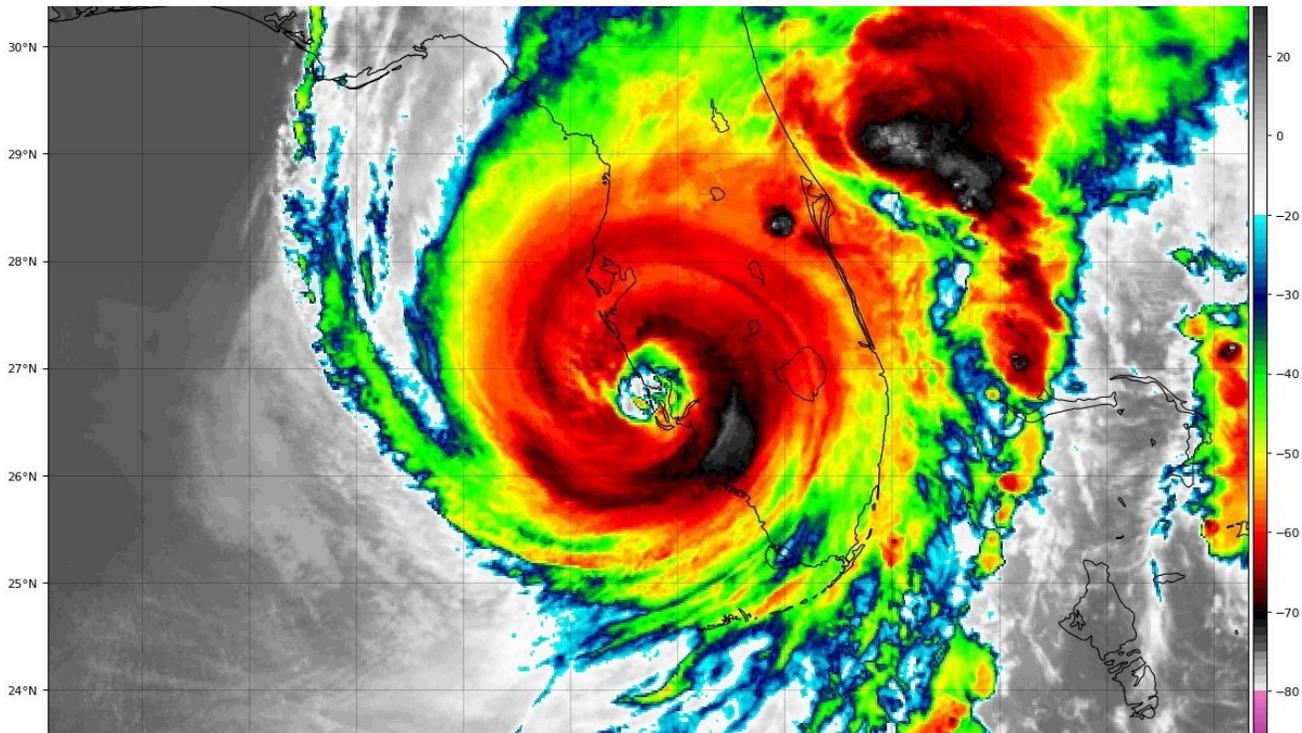


# THE BONSAI SOCIETY OF SW FL, INC.

THE CLIPPER DECEMBER 2022



**Hurricane Ian** was one of the largest storms to hit Southwest Florida, and it caused massive damage to many areas. Particularly hard hit was Sanibel, Fort Myers Beach and Pine Island. Many of our members suffered great damage to their homes, and many lost most, if not all, of their Bonsai trees. Many people had five feet of water in their homes. The water was not just the normal brackish water, but was filled with mud, sewage, and debris. On top of that, the water in homes and backyards was violent and fast moving. Some people were unable to leave their homes on such short notice and paid the ultimate price.

For that reason we cancelled our November Annual Bonsai Show.

Now that life is getting back to "normal", except for the two-story piles of debris that used to be houses and the acres of "mulch" that used to be trees, we will soon resume our regular meetings, starting with the first one on January 21, 2023.

## RETURNING IN JANUARY

- For those who are interested, we will continue our study groups with Adam Lavigne and Mike Lane in the new year. If you are interested in signing up, please contact Sam Wollard who is in charge of the study groups. We are requiring that those who sign up also pay in advance. This insures the necessary attendance ahead of time. Please note Sam article about the study groups.



- Pottery making. I have had several ask if we are continuing. As long as the interest holds, so will the pottery. We have some special plans. Watch for this sign up in January.
- Beginner Classes and Wiring classes. These classes are done by demand. When we have enough sign ups, we will have classes. Watch for this sign up in January.

## **STUDY GROUPS ARE BACK!!**

**Good news to the Club. Hi everyone, Mike Lane has decided to continue offering his Shohin workshops. We (the Club) have secured the 2nd Monday of every month at the Garden Council for this next year 2023. First session is January 9th. Sessions will be 3 hours long beginning at 9 a.m. to 12 noon. A maximum of 10 participants per session. The cost will be \$75 for 3 sessions and paid in advance. If demand exceeds 10 participants, we will strive to create a second session for 3 hours 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Currently I have 10 to begin first session and 5 additional wishing to continue or begin classes. So do not miss this opportunity to continue your studies. We still have room for 5 more.**

**Again, all participants will pay by December 30th \$75 for the first 3 months. This is necessary to cover cost and guarantee Mike's involvement. Yet to be determined by Mike Lane, will be length of scheduled sessions. For example, 3 months' will be \$75, if Mike should decide to go 6 months then you will have to pay another \$75 at for the next 3 months at a to be determined deadline date to secure your position in class. There is a minimum of 8 people to make a class. The number is only determined once payment is made.**

**My current participants list are as follows:**

**Martha Goff, Dave Bovio, Peter Galipeau, Ileana Flores, Mickey Major, Rick Simon, Karen Cogswell, Jaye Saarinen, Becky Troop, Wellesley Legier, AJ Dove, Paul Nolan, Nilda Garcia-Douglas, Bill Smith, Bruce Riggins.**

**If you wish not to participate in this year's (2023) workshop, please let me know immediately by email or text.**

**The signup sheet will be at the December 17th party for any additional participants. You may also pay the \$75 at that time.**

**Thanking you in advance, Sam Wollard [sswollard4@aol.com](mailto:sswollard4@aol.com)  
or 239-209-3162.**

# A LITTLE BUSINESS

According to our by-laws if there are no nominations from the club for offices and all present officers are willing to return for the next year, we can present the slate for officers and take a vote by show of hands. If any club member would like to run for an office or would like to nominate someone for an office, please email Martha Goff at [marthagoff50@comcast.net](mailto:marthagoff50@comcast.net) to submit your nominations. If we receive nominations, a ballot will be prepared for the December 17th meeting for vote. If no nominations are submitted, we will vote at the December meeting to accept the slate as-is by a show of hands.

## PRESENT SLATE:

President: Martha Goff

Vice-president: David Bovio

Treasurer: Hamilton Agnew

Secretary: Mike Carter

Past President: Sam Wollard

Board: Linda Rodriguez

Wellesley Legier

William Smith

Jim Gehring

Richard Owens

## CHECK IT OUT!

The very talented Mike Lane has put up a new website @ [www.kitsunibonsai.com](http://www.kitsunibonsai.com)

This is an exciting venture. Mike is available for private sessions, club programs, shohin study groups and on and on. Also, don't miss out on the wonderful t-shirts and coffee cups on his site.

By the way, be watching for our club's signup for Mike's 2023 shohin study group. This should prove to be a wonderful learning experience.

## CAN I REPOT THIS TIME OF YEAR?

An experienced bonsai grower can repot any number of species all year because they know the precautions and care to take.

It is always best to err on the side of caution. Because of that I recommend only a few species for the coming months.

**In January, the Bald Cypress, the Grape, and the Wild Blueberry are generally dormant. This is the time to repot these species.**

**As February approaches, Black Pine, Juniper, and Podocarpus can be repotted.**

Remember that southern Florida does not really have a winter. Our temperatures can drop to the 40's at night with an occasional although rare night or two below that temperature. We usually only have a few weeks of this type of cold weather before we move back to night temperatures in the 50's. When this happens, usually late February and March, the repotting list grows longer.

Remember to move your plants to a protected area when temps go below 40 for more than one night.

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## **BUGS! BUGS! BUGS!**

### **HOW DO I SAFELY KILL BUGS THAT ARE KILLING MY BONSAI!!!**

If you are not already familiar with the following pest names, you soon will be mites, aphids, thrips, whiteflies, scales, caterpillar larvae, and leafhoppers. While these pests diminish somewhat during our dry (winter) season, you will still see them occasionally.

During growing season, it is a good practice, every few days or once a week, to vigorously spray the foliage of each tree with your hose. This will dislodge most of these pests before they can take root laying eggs.

A good systemic can stop those pests that lay their eggs in the soil and that eat the leaves or drink the sap from the leaves.

The best insecticide that I can recommend for all the mentioned pests, is to dilute 1 tablespoon of liquid dish soap (I use Dawn) to 1 gallon of water. Mix the solution well and put in a plastic spray bottle and spray on all infested plants, saturating both the upper and under sides of the leaves and stems.

Because of the life cycle of most of these pests by the time you see them, there are probably more on the way. Once you see any of these pests, spray every 3 days for 2 weeks. This should take care of all the pests.

While there are a number of chemical types of pesticides, this solution soap works just as well and will not harm beneficial bugs such as ladybugs and bees.

Another natural pesticide is neem oil which is a vegetable oil from the Neem tree. You can add a tsp. to the soapy mix if needed.

There are also several plants that will repel thrips and white fly and can easily be planted near your trees. These plants are garlic, basil, oregano, thyme, lavender, peppermint, limonene, marigolds, and nasturtiums.

## DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH SLUGS?

Everyone should consider Epsom Salt for their trees. Epsom salt is magnesium sulfate which helps seeds germinate, makes plants grow bushier, produces more flowers, increases chlorophyll production and **DETERS PESTS** such as slugs. It also provides vital nutrients to supplement regular fertilizing.

Epsom Salt formula for fertilizing your trees: 2 tablespoons to a gallon of water. Best results if done monthly.

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# BONSAI WINTER CARE

- This is a process that I was taught many years ago and it seems to work well. I do this process for every tree in my collection. This has little to do with styling but rather it deals with health of the tree.
- Take a good look at your tree to see exactly what needs to be done. Make a list.



## BONSAI WINTER CARE

- Remove up growth and down growth (leaves included).
- Do not defoliate but do thin.
- Remove unnecessary pieces.
- Good time to wire. It can stay on longer.
- Clean trunk.
- Use wood hardener on soft wood deadwood.
- Remove all weeds.
- Remove top 1" of old soil
- Add slow release fertilizer, systemic, organic fertilizer.
- Add a new layer of soil.
- Add a layer of shredded sphagnum. This is not essential. It is just my method.
- Clean pot.
- Make notes as to work needed in the spring when vigorous growth returns such as replot, change front, etc. etc.

- Gather needed tools for all work listed above.



1. Soap spray
2. Brushes
3. Jin-shari whitener
4. Pot oil
5. Neem oil



TOOLS



1. Systemic
2. Organic Fertilizer
3. Fresh bonsai soil
4. Pine Bark (my water is very alkaline in winter.)
5. Shredded sphagnum.

- I clean the trunk of the tree with a soap mixture (see my soap recipe.) Use a soft bristle brush for heavy bark trees. You do not want to remove any bark. You can use a stiffer brush, even a metal one, for smoother bark that have too much lichen which will block pores and prevent bud back. While a little lichen adds to the aged look of a tree, too much is not healthy.
- If you have deadwood in shari or jins, clean those thoroughly. You must decide if you want the shari and jin to have a white, bleached look or natural.
- If the wood is a soft wood, to slow down and sometimes stop rot, treat the deadwood with a mixture of water and wood glue. Paint several coats on the deadwood.
- If the wood is a hard wood and you choose to have the sun-bleached look, make sure the wood is clean and wet. Slowly and carefully paint the deadwood with a small brush and lime sulfur. Lime sulfur may appear yellow when new. The sun will slowly turn it white, or you may carefully lightly spray a little rubbing alcohol on the lime sulfur. Be careful with run off. Once that is dry, move on to the next step.
- If you have not trimmed or wired your tree, winter is a great time for wiring. Since the tree's growth has slowed down, the wire can remain on longer. I RECOMMEND no defoliation during this slow growth time.
- If you have hard water, wipe down the outside of your pot and oil generously to protect against hard water stain.
- Remove the top one inch of soil from the tree. This will remove any weeds, broken down fertilizer residue, algae, etc. Add your slow-release fertilizer and systemic, if that is what you use. I use a slow-release fertilizer and systemic on plants that are often plagued by bugs. Follow directions carefully. With slow growth and milder sun, the products should last. I also add organic fertilizer. You cannot over-fertilize with organic as the tree will use only what it needs. Replace the topsoil with fresh soil.



**THERE YOU ARE. WINTER READY.**

