



BONSAI SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

JANUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER

Our November Bonsai Annual Show went very well with over 200 visitors. Although we recently went through almost back-to-back hurricanes, there were some outstanding exhibits. Our vendors were happy with the attendance. [See Photos here.](#)

The Christmas Party was also well attended...about thirty people brought gifts for the “Yankee Swap” during which you are given a playing card and then have a choice of selecting an unwrapped present or “stealing” one that someone else had previously opened. There were no fights! It was a very funny event, topped off by great weather and superb food.

We are introducing a New Special Feature to all upcoming Newsletters. As most of you know, several years ago, Martha Goff wrote a voluminous work called Tropical Green Sheets. In this two-volume set, Martha goes to great length to detail everything about hundreds of trees.... Type, Species, Soil, pH, watering and much, much more. Please note that you can read the full description by clicking on the Read More button.

Each month we will feature one species. It is selected based on the month that it needs your attention the most. January features the Bald Cypress.

Here is the first issue of: **“Martha’s Corner”**

CYPRESS (Swamp Cypress, Bald Cypress, Pond Cypress)



History: The Bald Cypress is a truly magnificent tree growing from Texas to Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Florida, and north to Massachusetts. This is a tree that is easily collected, but make sure you have obtained permission. In Florida, the fines are heavy for illegal collection of the Bald Cypress. It is the state tree of Louisiana. It grows between 100-150 ft. and can live to well over 1,000 years. It can gain a diameter of 14 feet. Depending on the species, the bark can range from reddish, shredding into strips in bald cypress, to grayish and furrowed in pond cypress. It is a deciduous tree that goes dormant in the tropics as late as January, losing its leaves and tiny branchlets. [Read More.](#)

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At our regular meeting on January 18th, we will have two events. The first one will be the “Black Thumb Award”. This is when you can show off your skills at trying to keep a tree alive but failed. It is really a learning experience because everyone who ever worked with Bonsai trees knows that, once in a while, no matter what you did, the tree didn’t make it. We talk about reasons and remedies...and the winner gets the coveted “Black Thumb Award” to keep until next year.

We will also have a guest speaker, Ron Kempinski. Living in central Florida, USA, his collection is a mix of tropical and temperate trees that can take the heat of our summers and very mild winters. He especially likes Buttonwood, Japanese Black Pine and Willow Leaf Ficus trees. While his collection has many large trees, he has developed an affinity for Shohin trees and has well over 100. Over the years he has displayed trees at many regional and national shows and has participated for nearly ten years in one of the most-viewed Bonsai displays at the annual Walt Disney World EPCOT Flower and Garden show. In 2002 he won the inaugural North American New Talent Competition along with other awards such as twice having a tree selected for the JAL top 100 tree. [Read More.](#)

Tips and Tidbits by Rick Owens

Windswept Bonsai style ([Fukinagashi](#))



A special quality of Windswept is that it offers an extremely all-natural view and one that we can see in nature. Anyone who has walked a coastal shoreline or possibly a rocky mountain ridge has observed windswept trees; this really is the precise image we're looking to replicate. In the art of “implied-style”, a line is really a crucial tool in producing a piece of artwork that draws the viewer into adverse space, opening the presentation. If we produce windswept bonsai with this concept in thought, viewers will believe and think the tree was grown in prevailing winds under harsh conditions. But, in reality, it has been grown and maintained with intent. [Read More](#)

Here is a [short video](#) of Eric Wigert at Wigert's Bonsai Nursery working with a [Bald Cypress](#). Watch him dig it up, take it out of the ground, and then put it into a large growing pot.

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Bonsai Generosity

Two members of the Bonsai Society of SWFL made contact as both individuals are in the process of downsizing their collections and bonsai items. Victor G. donated several pots, ceramic and mica, in a wide assortment of shapes and sizes.

Tony C. provided the club with many trees, some pre-bonsai and some in bonsai soil. His intent is to make trees available, at a modest price, to beginners new to bonsai as he knows getting started can be pricey. Additional trees will be used for the raffle table at meetings.

Victor's and Tony's generosity is greatly appreciated.

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POTTERY

Joe Mayhew

Email: jmpotteryllc@gmail.com 941-650-7635

STANDS

Bill Smith

smittysmit23@aol.com, 410-869-6650

WIGERT'S

**For all your Bonsai Needs: Trees, Tools, Pots
Wigert's Bonsai Nursery, 2930 South Road, N. Ft. Myers, FL 33917
239-543-2234 www.wigertsbonsai.com**

TOOL SHARPENING

Check me out on Facebook @

**[Bruce's Bonsai Tool sharpening, repair and cleaning](#)
Bruce Riggins, 239-297-7361, grybrd77@gmail.com**

ABOUT THE BONSAI SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

We meet the third Saturday of each month at the Berne Davis Botanical Garden building located just north of the Edison-Ford Winter Estates at 2166 Virginia Avenue. Parking is located on Larchmont Street, one block south of Virginia off McGregor Boulevard.

Doors open at 9 AM. A friendly member will make you feel welcome. Coffee will be fresh.

We welcome everyone interested in this Ancient Art form to take advantage of our many experienced artists and teachers. Enjoy the camaraderie of those who work to keep this art alive. Please join us.

The Bonsai Society of Southwest Florida, Inc.

www.bonsaiswfl.org 239 935-5860

Go [Here](#) to see the “Tree Lady”