



BONSAI SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

JULY 2026 NEWSLETTER

During our July Program we will go over the difference between development and refinement with some wiring information thrown in. We have a few people hosting this session - Justin, Jaye, Richard O. and Martha. After the information session you will get an opportunity to work on trees you have brought. It will help you to get ready for our November Show.

JUNE RECAP

A heartfelt thank you to all our convention volunteers - your hard work not only elevated the show but also raised \$1,500 for our club.

We had an excellent turnout from our members at this year's BSF Convention in Orlando, held over Memorial Day weekend. Mark your calendars: next year's theme is Native Trees.

Our club brought home several awards, including Best in Show, won by Troy Randall for his Brazilian Rain Tree. Troy shared the tree at our meeting, walking us through its 30 year history, unique peeling bark, and his fertilizing approach (a slow release 21-6-9 mix, with 15-30-15 for fruit trees). He also discussed future bark development and design considerations. An overview/workshop was given on exposed roots. There were technical difficulties with the original recording, but you can find an overview provided by Richard [here](#).



We were proud to see Karen Cogswell present Ham Agnew with the Volunteer of the Year Award for his outstanding service to the club.

Demarest Award – 2026 BSF Convention

The Demarest Award was created to highlight the essential role of **design** in bonsai—where artistic vision meets horticultural skill. This year, the judging committee evaluated the exhibit from a purely design-focused perspective, looking beyond traditional criteria to appreciate the underlying structure, creativity, and long-term planning behind each tree.



At the 2026 BSF Convention, the award was presented to **Troy's Brazilian Raintree**, recognized for its exceptional artistic vision, refined horticultural technique, and beautifully developed branch structure. Troy's work demonstrates how thoughtful design can elevate a tree's natural character, resulting in a full, balanced, and elegantly shaped canopy. The Demarest Award honors compositions that embody harmony, balance, creativity, and the timeless spirit of bonsai, regardless of tree type, style, or size. Troy's Brazilian Raintree stood out as a remarkable example of what intentional, skillful design can achieve.



Bonsai terms refer to the specialized vocabulary used in the art of growing and styling miniature trees. Many terms come from Japanese (reflecting bonsai's origins), while others are botanical or English descriptions.

Core Meaning

Bonsai (盆栽): Literally “tray planting” or “potted plant”; It involves cultivating trees or shrubs in containers and shaping them to resemble mature, full-sized trees in miniature.

Common Japanese Terms

Here are some of the most frequently used terms:

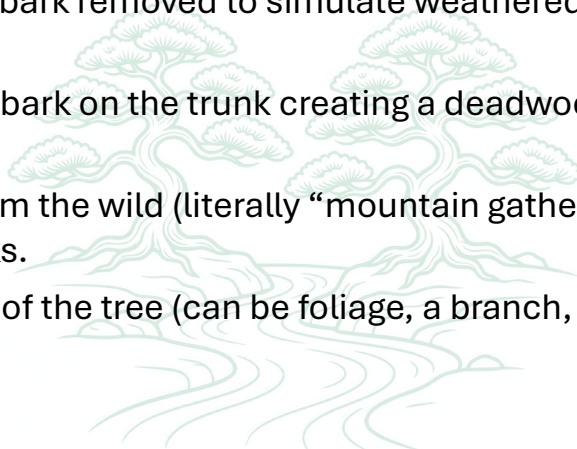
Nebari: The visible surface roots at the base of the trunk. A good nebari is highly valued as it gives the tree stability and age.

Jin: A dead branch or tip with bark removed to simulate weathered, aged wood (driftwood effect).

Shari (or Sharimiki): Stripped bark on the trunk creating a deadwood feature, often to show age or dramatic character.

Yamadori: Trees collected from the wild (literally “mountain gathered”). These often have unique, character-filled trunks.

Apex: The highest point or tip of the tree (can be foliage, a branch, or a jin).



Martha's Corner - CYPRESS

(Swamp Cypress, Bald Cypress, Pond Cypress)

Botanical: *Taxodium* | **Family:** *Taxodiaceae* | **Zone:** 4-10B

Origin: United States and Mexico.

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. The wood of the bald cypress is very resistant to rot because it contains an oil, cypressene, stored in its wood. An interesting characteristic of cypress is its “knees.” Some believe when immersed in water for long periods of time the cypress roots will send up “knees” for added oxygen. A new belief is that these “knees” are for structural support.

Repot: When dormant—whether collecting or repotting it is usually done in the tropics in late January or February. It is important that the tree be dormant showing no signs of green leaves before working on the roots. Because of rapid growth, it may need repotting yearly.

Soil: Water retentive soil is considered best. Many add an organic soil to the bonsai mix when repotting.

pH: 5.5

Fertilize: A balanced 20-20-20 fertilizer during the growing season promotes the best color and invigorates growth. Substitute occasionally with an acid fertilizer such as Fish Emulsion as Bald Cypress prefer an acidic soil.

Prune: Initial pruning can be done at the time the tree is repotted. If branches are long and bare to the end, cut the branch back drastically. It will bud back

and grow quickly. Roots can be moderately pruned. It is best to reduce over time. DO NOT cut roots when the cypress is not dormant. The cypress will “bleed” to death.

[Read more here.](#)



Pictures from Google search

November Show Prep – Meeting Summary

The team met to review assignments, volunteer needs, and preparations for the upcoming Annual Show - to be held Saturday & Sunday - November 21 & 22, with setup being Friday, November 20.

Leadership & Roles

- **Exhibit Chair:** Richard Owens
- **Set-Up & Tear-Down:** Sam Wollard
- **Program Chair:** Currently in discussion; leadership to be confirmed
- **Styling Competition:** Coordinated by Martha and Troy

Trees & Materials

- Twelve green island ficus trees will be available for Saturday's morning seminar. Members may purchase a tree for \$25.
- Martha will provide four trees for the styling competition.

Competition Logistics

- Contestants should deliver their plants to the Garden Center on **Friday, 3–6 PM**. If assistance is needed on **November 21 or 22**, please reach out.

Show Notes

- Richard Owens is seeking a tally assistant to help compile scores during the show.
- **Adam Lavigne** will serve as our guest instructor throughout the event.
- Members interested in volunteering for any role are encouraged to contact a Board Member.

Room Layout & Design Requests - All members are asked to submit their design requests so Richard can finalize the room setup and layout.



Pictures from 2023 Bonsai Show

Looking for something to do?

Take a day trip on July 11!

July 11

9:30 am – 4:00 pm

St. Mark's Church

508 Riviera Street

Venice, FL

Looking for something different,

inspirational, artistic, and

entertaining to do this

summer? Spend the day with Sho

Fu Bonsai Society of Sarasota on

July 11 and enjoy seeing bonsai

displays shown by their

members. Inside the cool air-

conditioned hall of St. Mark's

church in Venice, you can learn

from visiting bonsai artist Sylvia

Smith, coming to Florida from

Dallas. She will offer a morning

and afternoon tour of the exhibit,

then work on two trees which will

later be raffled. Enjoy discussions

about these small living works of

art with the members who grow

and love them. Head up for the day

and support fellow Floridian Bonsai

lovers!

VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED

We still have spaces available for Display and Hospitality and Cleanup Crew. For Display, this is a great way to learn 'how to.' Basically, you need a tree, a stand for the tree, and a complimentary plant or item on a stand. The club will provide the tablecloth and backdrop. For Hospitality, the club provide all paper products and all supplies needed for coffee. You would provide the food. We usually have around 30-40 people. The Cleanup Crew is not responsible for your individual table. You must do that. Hospitality will take care of the kitchen. The Cleanup Crew makes sure the trash is taken out and the floor is clean and all things are put back in order.



SHO FU
Bonsai Society

Annual Show and Exhibit

Saturday, JULY 11 9:30a—4p

ST. MARK'S CHURCH—508 RIVIERA St—VENICE

- ◆ Enjoy the FORMAL TREE DISPLAYS by our members
- ◆ Observe FREE demos by visiting Dallas Artist SYLVIA SMITH
- ◆ RAFFLE ITEMS! ◆ Refreshments

9:30am Exhibit OPENS

9:30-10:15: Exhibit Walk-through with Sylvia

10:15-12:30: DEMO on pre-bonsai by Sylvia

12:30-1:00pm: Lunch break

1:00-1:30pm: Exhibit Walk-through with Sylvia

1:30-3:30: DEMO on pre-bonsai by Sylvia

3:30-3:45pm: RAFFLE 4:00pm: Exhibit closes

QUESTIONS? Contact Kathrin Harris, 941-228-4588 or shofubonsai@gmail.com



OUR LOCAL TALENT

POTTERY

Joe Mayhew
impotteryllc@gmail.com
941-650-7635

POTTERY

Don Rosio
don.rosio@gmail.com
321-890-8353

STANDS

Bill Smith
smittysmit23@aol.com
410-869-6650

BONSAI SOIL

Rick Johnstone
rickj55@verizon.net

TOOL SHARPENING

Bruce's Bonsai Tool sharpening,
repair and cleaning

Bruce Riggins
239-297-7361

grybrd77@gmail.com

Stone Lantern Bonsai

Distributor used by many
of our members:

stonelantern.com

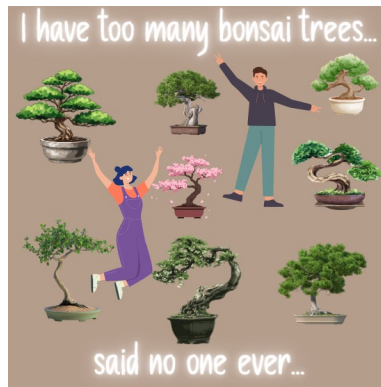
Wigert's Bonsai

For all your Bonsai Needs:
Trees, Tools, Pots

Wigert's Bonsai Nursery,
2930 South Road,
N. Ft. Myers, FL 33917

239-543-2234

wigertsbonsai.com



BONSAI SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

We meet on 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. Doors open at 9 AM. A friendly member will make you feel welcome. Coffee will be fresh. Don't forget to pick up your Member's Booklet on the sign-in table. It has all the information you will need about the club, including contact information.

Membership Dues

2026 Dues are still the same price! \$45 for single membership, \$55 for family membership. Please download and print the [Membership Form](#). If you haven't paid dues for 2026, you won't get this Newsletter or any of the fine publications put out by the BSF.

The Bonsai Society of Southwest Florida, Inc.

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