



February 2026

The Bent Twig

A monthly newsletter of the American Bonsai Association of Sacramento
<https://www.abasbonsai.org/>

Arboreal Abstractions

Ian Baker

Arboreal Abstractions is on blizzard-hold for February!



Above: Aftermath of the February storm,
Below: the storm. Never forget the lesson of
the Donner Party; pack extra soup



Above: Freshly minted maple root over rock
Below: Aim for about 1 beer can x 1 beer can
sized stone when selecting for root over rock



Next Meeting

Root Over Rock Planting w/
Roger Steel

At our upcoming Tuesday February 24 meeting, ABAS' own Roger Steel will be giving a hands-on demo on creating root over rock bonsai. The night will open with instruction on the process and then later, members can create their own root over rock planting. Eighteen seedlings and materials will be provided for the DIY portion of the night; interested members are asked to bring their own stone (about one Sierra Nevada can tall as seen below) and tools. The demo root over rock planting will be the key raffle prize.

The photos below will guide you on selecting an appropriately sized stone and also illustrate an initial planting and a hackberry root over rock that is about three years old. Roger is a long time ABAS member, dedicated to welcoming new members into the art. He leads the popular introductory classes Dig-In and Chop-In, so come prepared to learn and get your hands dirty!



Above: Roger at work on a tree, Below: 3 year
hackberry root over rock





What to Work on February

Repotting and silhouette pruning continues in February! Deciduous trees are beginning to leaf out so the priority should be to finish those first and then progress to conifers, which have a larger repotting window. The exact timing of repotting depends on many factors, but for newer folks, it's usually just a general push to get it done before spring. As your skill develops you can begin to optimize by species, stage of development, and outcome. Pot size is primarily selected for the composition, but also has an effect on vigor by the volume of the root zone. A smaller pot will slow growth. Potting media should be sized properly for the size of the tree and the ratio of ingredients is also important; smaller particle size and more akadama retain more water and create finer roots, but slow growth more. Plants generally grow faster in larger media, as long as they are properly watered, due to the increased oxygen in the root zone. Yes, leaves photosynthesize and create oxygen, but roots respire and require oxygen. For a good overview of repotting technique, visit our website under 'Member Resources' to view [this informative slide show](#).

As we move through February to March, our trees begin the spring push of growth. This is a great time to graft pines and junipers. Most trees will be allowed to grow freely until May/June. The exception is Japanese maples, which should be pinched back to one node (2 leaves)/profile unless a branch is weak or you are still thickening it.

As plants begin to bud out, it is too late to spray lime sulfur as a dormant spray, but some insecticidal soaps and oils can still be used with caution (always read the label!). Dormant oils are effective, but have a risk of phytotoxicity on evergreen plants, so always test a new product carefully before applying broadly.



Above: Napa River @ night

Last Meeting: Pest Control in Bonsai

For our last January meeting, ABAS' own Ian Baker gave a presentation on pest and pathogen control in bonsai. The talk covered the theory of integrated pest management in bonsai, pesticide selection, spray techniques, timing, safety, and more. Pest control can be a challenging subject to learn and yet it is a critical practice in maintaining a high quality tree collection. Rather than providing a formula or schedule for spraying, the information provided gave bonsai growers the foundation for critical thinking and decision making in pest control, with an emphasis on safety. Mention the words bug juice for a free raffle ticket. The handout for the presentation can be found on the [ABAS website here](#).



Above: Scenes from Ian's Jan presentation

Membership Renewal

It's time to renew your membership! Dues can be paid by cash, check, or by card at meetings or online. Checks can be mailed payable to ABAS

PO Box 161767

Sacramento, CA 95816-9998.

Be sure to complete the membership info form [here](#) after mailing your check to be sure records are updated. While we happily accept cards, cash or check is preferred so we can avoid card fees. Dues are \$50 for individuals and households or \$25 for students. Members who have not renewed by March 30 2026 will be removed from the roster and mailing list.

ABAS Bus Trip - Saturday May 30

We have what is sure to be a fun outing to the East Bay put together for our 2026 ABAS Bus Trip! We will be stopping by the Lake Merritt Garden Center to see the show put on jointly by Bay Area Satsuki Aikokai and Yamato Bonsai Kai and peruse their vendor area and member consignment sales. While we are in the area, we have been granted the opportunity to receive a 30-45 minute guided tour of the GSBF collection at Bonsai Garden Lake Merritt, including a "behind the scenes" walk through of their trees that are not in the main display area. We will also visit the Bonsai Tonight garden run by Jonas Dupuich, where you can be sure fine trees, pots, wire, tools, and other supplies will be on offer. Ellen is still narrowing down one or two more shopping opportunities which will be announced as soon as they are finalized. Sign ups begin at the February meeting; you need to pay \$50 to reserve your seat on the bus.





☐ **Welcome New Members:** Keith Holdaway, Luis Balderrama, Richard Faenzi, Michael Schussler, Robert Wiest, Elbert Cox, Mike & Shane Parrott

New members are connected with their area liaison and will receive a welcome letter with a free pass to one of our member workshops. Liaisons are listed on our website under '[Member Resources, Club Liaisons](#)'.

Member Workshop

The next member workshop is Saturday, March 21. The March workshop will be the last re-potting focused workshop of the season. However, this is a good time to thread graft branches if you have been letting shoots run for this purpose. Also, if fall silhouette pruning has not been done, this is a good time. The club provides bonsai soil, aluminum wire and screen to cover holes in pots. Members bring trees, pots and tools. In preparation for repotting, here is a link to our ABAS slide show on the basics of re-potting, available on the [Bonsai Resources page of the website](#).

Contact Renee Seely, breadcrust@comcast.net to reserve a spot for the March workshop. Please specify morning, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm or afternoon 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Each workshop session is \$20 payable to ABAS. Reminder that the club owns a set of tools for more advanced work. Don't forget that we have the tools for grafting, wood carving, and heavier bending.

SGAAC Spring Sale March 14 - 15 - The biannual SGAAC Spring Sale is coming soon. Consignment forms are posted on the website [here](#) and will be emailed to club members. Drop off items labeled with tree tags and completed consignment page(s) between 2:30 - 3:45 pm on Friday March 13 or after 9:30 am on Saturday March 15. Volunteers are needed to work in the ABAS booth on the 14 & 15. Sign up to volunteer at the meeting or [email Dodie](#) your availability.

ABAS Spring Show April 11 - 12 - The Spring Show is just around the corner, featuring return presenter Jennifer Price. Volunteer sign up sheets will be at the next meetings. Look for more news about showing your trees in upcoming emails. See attached flyer for details.

2026 Spring Garden Tour

☐ Mark your calendars for the 2026 ABAS garden tour on April 18. Signup sheets will be available at the next meetings. ☐



Support and Stewardship Program

The American Bonsai Association of Sacramento prides itself on its strong and caring community of bonsai enthusiasts. In that spirit, we would like to remind you of our Support and Stewardship Program which offers assistance in times of need to ABAS club members and other bonsai collectors.

The program aims to keep your valuable bonsai collection alive and healthy with support from the club's advanced bonsai artists if you are unable for any reason. We can arrange for short term support like watering or, if necessary, help with the sale of some or all of your collection. The reasonable rates for these services vary on the extent of services required and club membership. In addition, we can provide basic language for estate planning purposes. Now is a great time to discuss your collection, its value, and how to best preserve it with your loved ones. Please reach out to our club president Dodie for inquiries.



2025 Events Calendar

Tuesday, February 24, Root Over Rock w/ Roger Steel [In-person & Zoom](#)

Saturday - Sunday, March 7 - 8, Mammoth Sale Lake Merrit Oakland [In-person](#)

Saturday, March 21, Member Workshop [In-person](#)

Saturday - Sunday, March 14 - 15, SGAAC Spring Sale [In-person](#)

Tuesday, March 24, Tree Evaluation w/ Peter Tea [In-person & Zoom](#)

Saturday, April 4, Member Workshop [In-person](#)

Saturday - Sunday, April 11 - 12, ABAS Spring Show and Sale [In-person](#)

Saturday, April 18, ABAS Garden Tour [In-person](#)

Tuesday, April 28, Kaya Mooney [In-person & Zoom](#)

Saturday, May 9, Member Workshop [In-person](#)

Tuesday, May 26, Wound Care w/ Renee and Carmen [In-person](#)

Saturday - Sunday, May 30 - 31, Bay Area Satsuki Aikokai & Yamato Bonsai Kai Lake Merrit Oakland [In-person](#)

Saturday, June 27, Member Workshop [In-person](#)

Tuesday, June 23, Azalea Care w/ Timm Johnson [In-person & Zoom](#)

Saturday, July 11, Member Workshop [In-person](#)

Tuesday, July 28, Summer Splash [In-person](#)

Saturday, August 15, Member Workshop [In-person](#)

Tuesday, August 25, Native Junipers w/ Sam Tan [In-person & Zoom](#)

AMERICAN BONSAI ASSOCIATION, SACRAMENTO PRESENTS:



66TH ANNUAL

SPRING BONSAI SHOW

AND SALE



- Premier Bonsai Vendors & Club Consignment Sale
- Club Member Bonsai & Suiseki Exhibits
- Daily Demonstration & Raffle @ 1:30 PM

Saturday & Sunday, April 11th & 12th
10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

featuring special guest

Jennifer Price

*Internationally renowned
bonsai artist based in Chicago*



Join our popular
beginners workshop

Choose Saturday or Sunday @ 10AM
\$25, includes: tree, pot, soil and
expert instruction

Email: abasbonsaiclub@gmail.com to
reserve a space

Open To The Public - Free Admission

Shepard Garden and Arts Center
3330 McKinley Blvd, Sacramento, CA
@ McKinley Park



ABAS BUS TRIP

Saturday, May 30, 2026

Check your club email for the address of our Sacramento meet-up location.

Bus departs promptly at 7:30am!!!

Return ~6:30pm



• **Shop:** Bonsai Tonight (Jonas Dupuich, Alameda) + more (TBA)

• **Attend:** Bay Area Satsuki Aikokai and Yamato Bonsai Show (w/ vendor and members sales)

• **Guided Tour:** Bonsai Garden @ Lake Merritt - Collection + "Behind the Scenes"

BYO:

- Lunch (coffee, donuts, beer, soda provided)
- Tags, tape, or return address labels to mark your purchases
- Cash, checkbook, and credit cards (extra cash to tip driver if you wish)



Includes end-of-day raffle on the journey home!

Bus seats are \$50 per person.

Email kde2@comcast.net to sign up, then send check made out to American Bonsai Association of Sacramento to:

ABAS, PO Box 161767, Sacramento, CA 95816.

No day-of payments.

BONSAI SHOW

May 30, 2026, 10 AM - 5 PM
May 31, 2026, 10 AM - 4:00 PM



**Bay Area Satsuki Aikokai
and
Yamato Bonsai Kai**

Lakeside Park Garden Center
666 Bellevue Ave.,
Lake Merritt, Oakland, CA

Join us in the world of miniature Satsuki Azaleas, Pines, Junipers, and other living bonsai art forms.

Public Programs

Round-robin demonstrations on Saturday from 1PM-3PM by members of both Bay Area Satsuki Aikokai and Yamato Bonsai kai.

Club members sale area

Vendors

West America Trading Company
Soh-Ju-En Satsuki Bonsai
Jenelly's Bonsai
Jerry Braswell-Art of the Daiza
David Chimpky - Enchanted Forest
B Street Bonsai



Scan for more information