



March 2026

# The Bent Twig

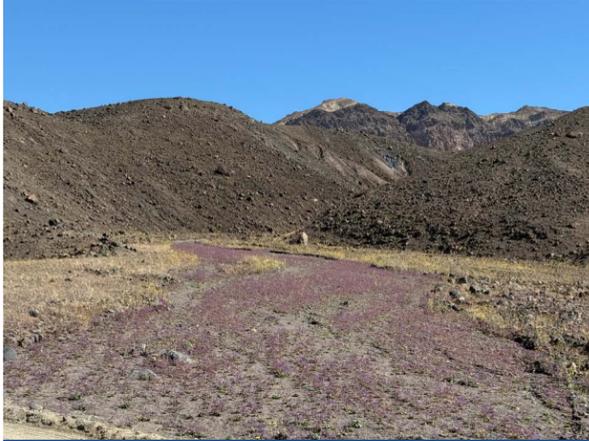
A monthly newsletter of the American Bonsai Association of Sacramento  
<https://www.abasbonsai.org/>

## Arboreal Abstractions

Ian Baker

Moving is always stressful. I can say that confidently because I seem to do it annually. If anyone finds it to be anything else, I'll take what they're having. But out of the turmoil comes an opportunity to take a fresh look at the material objects in your life. For me, many of those objects are fussy, expensive trees in pots. If you are looking for a reliable way to right-size your collection, try relocating. Like the strengthening of a tree branch from wind by developing more lignin, moving is an opportunity to break a tree collection down and start anew, but stronger.

Now I find myself better able to let go of many of the trees I clung too for so long. The collected and propagated ones are the hardest to part with, but the sheer constraint of relocating them and finding new homes for them means I needed to drastically change my parameters for who is a keeper. Choosing to find a good home for a tree doesn't reduce its sentimental value and it is more than okay to love a tree and let it move on to a new lover.



Above: 2026 Super bloom in Death Valley mid March

## Membership Renewal

Membership Renewal - This is your last chance to renew before the end of March! 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.

## Next Meeting

Tree Evaluation w/ Peter Tea

This coming Tuesday March 24 we welcome Peter Tea back to present on Tree Evaluation. This will be a great meeting and a chance to learn some of the design elements that make excellent bonsai trees and how to evaluate them. Training your eye is as important as training your pruning skills. Peter is a highly accomplished and talented bonsai artist and the specimens in his nursery are proof.

Peter Tea is not only a renowned bonsai artist, but an excellent teacher. He brings many years of experience starting with his apprenticeship with Junichiro Tanaka at Aichien Bonsai Garden to his students and his practice. He manages a world-class nursery in Auburn including multiple award winning trees.



Above: The man, the legend, Peter Tea



## Wire Recycling

Reminder that ABAS has a wire recycling program every month, so remember to bring in your sorted and debris-free aluminum and copper wire to be collected by Debbie and Steve Ballanti. The wire is recycling and all money earned goes back to the club.

**BRING YOUR USED, CLEAN, SEPARATED ALUMINUM & COPPER WIRE TO THE MONTHLY GENERAL MEETING. THERE WILL BE LABELED COLLECTION BOXES AVAILABLE.**

Email Debbie Ballanti at [juno@pacbell.net](mailto:juno@pacbell.net) with questions.





## What to Work on March

Most repotting should be complete for the season but there is still time for last minute potting, especially conifers. Keep in mind that repotting will weaken the tree and should be performed based on vigor, stage, root mass, and goals. There's no way around it; it takes experience, so learn from a pro.

The primary work for early spring is beginning fertilization of conifers and pinching new growth on species that require control of elongating foliage, such as Japanese Maples. Refer to the 'Yearly Care Calendars' on our website [Member Resources page](#). As foliage emerges, it is also time to begin diligently scouting for pests and to be prepared for spraying. Dust off your sprayer and check your pesticide inventory.

New growth is very tender and easily damaged, so this is not a good time for intensive wiring. Stay on top of weeding; it can get out of control very quickly (looking at you oxalis!) and weeds harbor pests and disease, while competing for nutrients and water. As always, be proactive in seeking out knowledge. This is such a beautiful time of year! The varied textures and colors of new foliage on deciduous species are as exciting as the blossoms on flowering species. Take time to enjoy.



## Social Media

Our passion to share our knowledge and love of bonsai with each other is what makes ABAS such a wonderful and welcoming community. To reach out into the Sacramento area more we are establishing a stronger presence on social media. This includes our Facebook page, Instagram, and Twitter accounts. If you are on any of these platforms, please follow ABAS and use these hashtags to connect all of our posts together as one big community. This can include photos of ABAS workshops, meetings, events, and even your own bonsai as members! If you have photos to share of work in progress, please feel free to post and tag or send to Gina directly to share online. #AmericanBonsai #ABASbonsai #Sac-Bonsai Our accounts: Instagram : @american\_bonsai\_sacramento Twitter: @BonsaiAmerican Facebook Group: American Bonsai Association, Sacramento

## Last Meeting: Root Over Rock w/ Roger Steel

At our February meeting, ABAS' own Roger Steel gave a practical and enjoyable hands-on demo on creating root over rock bonsai. He brought various examples of previously made root over rock trees to illustrate the results of the technique. Using a nice example of a beauty berry, he demonstrated how to arrange roots on the rock, place a small amount of sphagnum on the roots, and wrap with plastic. The bottom portion of the roots were then buried in the soil with the rock. This method forces the main roots to grow along the rock while any that stray from the desired area are air pruned.

After the demo, the packed house was eager to start on their own plantings. A lottery was used to assign the limited number of seedlings and the room was abuzz with activity as folks got busy making their own root over rock plantings. Congratulations to the key raffle prize winner of the demo tree!



Above: Scenes Roger's February demo

## 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.



## Welcome New Members: Elizabeth Herbert

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 - April 4

The next member workshop is Saturday, April 4 as the rest of the month will be busy with the spring show. Repotting is completed for the season.

Contact Renee Seely, [breadcrumb@comcast.net](mailto:breadcrumb@comcast.net) to reserve a spot for the April 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 like tools for grafting, wood carving, and heavier bending.

### 2026 Spring Garden Tour - April 18

The ABAS Garden Tour is coming up Saturday, April 18. This year the tour will feature the gardens of Bill Burns, Pat Flynn, and Paul Holtzen. Paul will host lunch and is providing bbq while the board is providing the sides. We will meet at the 50th and Sunrise **light rail station** (eastbound), at which point a complete itinerary will be provided. Be sure to email Carol Greenfield [cngmft@gmail.com](mailto:cngmft@gmail.com) to sign up or sign up at the next meeting, so we have a head count. Also specify if you prefer the early shift at 8:05-8:20 or the late shift 8:25-8:40.

### 2026 ABAS Bus Trip - May 30

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. The sign up sheet will be available at the March meeting. An upfront payment of \$50 is required to reserve your seat on the bus.



## Contribute to the Snack Table!

Club members are encouraged, as always, to bring snacks or drinks for each monthly meeting. The selection of available food depends on the generosity of each of us, so please step up and bring your favorite snack. You may also provide larger quantities of longer-lasting snacks to store at the garden center. Home made items are always deeply appreciated by all, but please consider portability and food safety. You may leave your food items on the back table with Carol Greenfield at the meeting start. Thank you Carol for coordinating snacks and drinks and thank YOU for contributing!

Right: Manly Lake in Badwater Basin @ Death Valley. Only full every 10-20 years on average.



## 2025 Events Calendar

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 Merritt Oakland** [In-person](#)

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

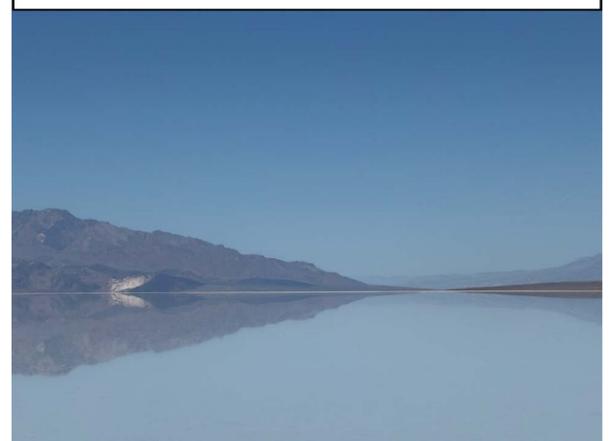
Tuesday, June 23, Azalea Care w/ Timm Johnson [In-person & Zoom](#)

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](#)





## 2026 ABAS Spring Show

The ABAS Spring Show is just around the corner on April 11 & 12. We welcome back Jennifer Price as our headliner. She will hold a morning critique of the show as well as demos at 1:30 PM on both days. Beginners workshop will be held both days at 10 AM. The show will feature the usual consignment sale and raffle, as well as a great selection of vendors.

Now is the time to pick out trees or stones to enter in the show. Email stone entries to Paul Holtzen- paulholtzen@gmail.com and tree submissions to Carmen Scott - cjscott1954@gmail.com, with a clear photo, species, common name, variety, and tree & stand heights and widths. Multiple entries are welcome, although occasionally not all will be needed. Also, some stands will be available if you do not have a suitable one.

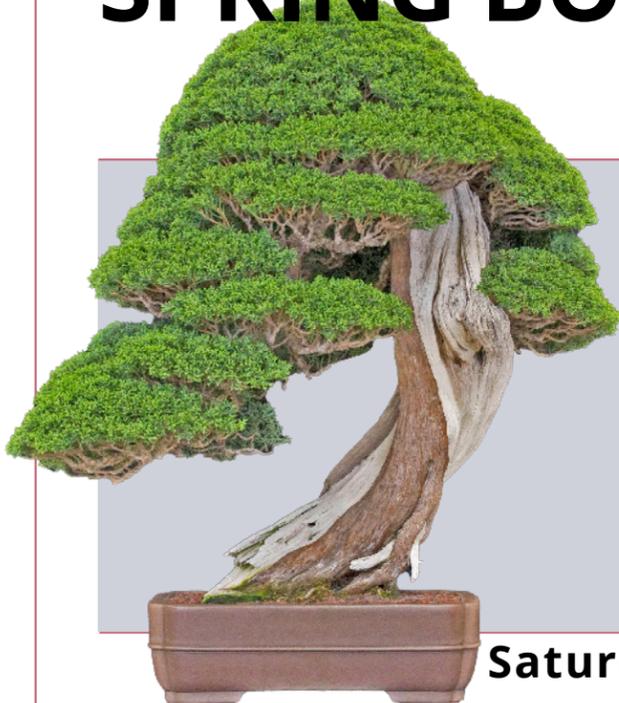
The board and key volunteers have been busy coordinating everything that goes into this show for some time now, so please consider volunteering your time. There are many different areas we need help with including monitors, the raffle, checking-in and setup, and more. Sign-up sheets will be out at the March meeting or email Renee, breadcrust@comcast.net to sign up now. Renee will send a follow up email with more details.

Members are strongly encouraged to contribute to the annual potluck for the Spring Show that keeps all the volunteers happy and fed. Mention the word potluck for a chance for a free raffle ticket. If time doesn't allow you to bring an item to the potluck each day, please contribute \$20 or more to help offset foods items to be purchased. It doesn't work unless everyone contributes!

Be sure to attend and volunteer if you can to help ABAS present another excellent show to the community.

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](mailto: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