



# BADGER BONSAI NEWS

August 2024

## President's Message

By Ron Fortmann

August is a month where we get to relax a little and just let our trees GROW. Some refer to this unusually warm month as the “hands off” month because our main focus should be on watering. In late August we can start to ramp up the fall fertilization application as September and October are the next big growth months for our trees. The deciduous and conifers are bulking up their vascular growth and starting to store energy for next spring's growth. Our tropicals should be growing and storing some energy for their long winter of lower light and less heat than they would like, so we want to help them build up their strength.

August is also a great time to visit the Wisconsin State Fair, especially the bonsai exhibit. See last month's newsletter if you are still thinking of exhibiting or possibly tree sitting for a few hours. It's lots of fun to talk about our hobby to the general public.

August 16-18 is the Midwest Bonsai Society's big bonsai show at the Chicago Botanical Garden. See their website [Midwestbonsai.org](http://Midwestbonsai.org) for times and workshop details. There will be roughly 20 suppliers of all things bonsai at this show, so bring your dreams and a bucket of money because there will be thousands of things for sale. There is also a pretty impressive display of trees on display by the garden and many trees from the surrounding states on display and in competition.

At our August meeting, our treasurer Ken will discuss some of the bonsai he was able to see on his recent trips abroad. We will



The Rotating Bonsai Exhibit will be on display through August 11 at the Wisconsin State Fair in the Grand Champion Building.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### BBS MAY MEETING

Thursday, August 8, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Olbrich Botanical Gardens  
3330 Atwood Ave, Madison

#### AGENDA:

Ken's Presentation on His Trip to China

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also have our member show & tell and discuss plans for our September meeting.

Elections are coming in November, no not the @#&&# we have been listening to for the last four years, but elections for your club board executives. As my term of president ends we are looking for members to step into this group which conducts the club's business and plans the programs and events we have during the year. You do not have to be a bonsai expert, you just have to be interested in making our club successful and fun. It is a great way to help steer the content presented to things you're interested in.

All officers are up for election and many of them may decide to run again or possibly move to another position and there is always room for new viewpoints and directions. So please think about helping make our club a success.

See you Thursday August 8th.



Jonathan's Japanese larch provides the inspiration for our bonsai goals with its excellent examples of shari and jin, fabulous branch placement, lush foliage, and amazing trunk. Thanks for bringing it to the meeting, Jonathan and sharing its progress!

## BBS 2024 CALENDAR

### AUGUST 8, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Ken's presentation on his trip to China

### SEPTEMBER 12, 6:30 - 9:00 pm

Bring your tree for wiring help and advice  
Extended meeting

### OCTOBER 10, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Artificial lighting member presentation

### NOVEMBER 14, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Member silhouette show (naked trees, not stands or accents), Officer elections

### DECEMBER 12, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

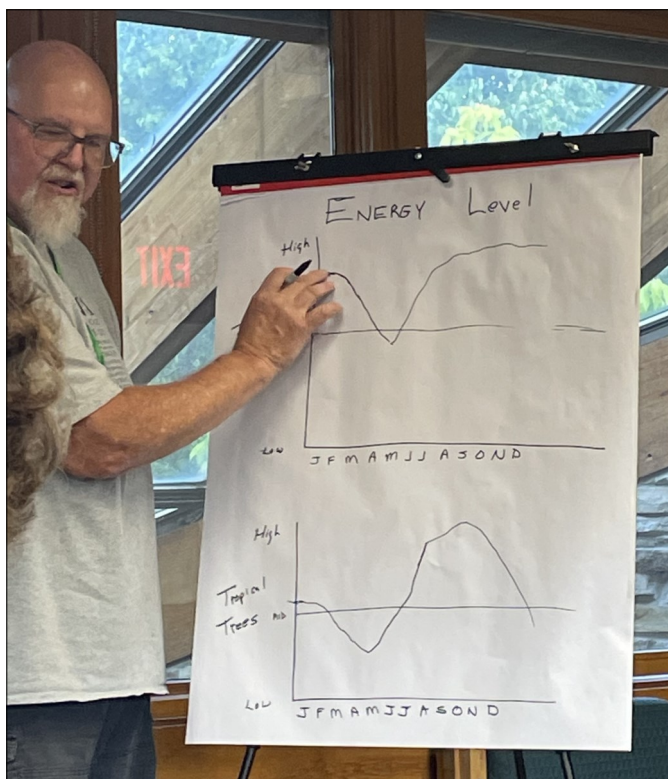
Review May Show Trees, maybe pick top ten voted trees and have owners tell us about them Holiday Treats and social

Monthly meetings are on the second Thursday. All are at Olbrich Botanical Gardens unless otherwise indicated.



# July Meeting

To keep our bonsai healthy and thriving, it's important to understand how they use energy throughout the year. Tropical and temperate trees use energy differently. Ron's Energy Level diagram provides a visual that makes this complex topic easier to understand.



Temperate trees (top graph) go into the winter energy positive after spending the summer taking in resources via the process of photosynthesis. This energy strengthens the tree for winter and prepares it for the spring flush of new growth. In the spring energy continues to be depleted until new leaves harden off and start to do their jobs again, which is to photosynthesize and reaccumulate energy stores.

Tropical trees also build energy through the summer months when they are outside and can take in the highest light possible, that provided by the sun. During this time is when they achieve the most growth. Around October or November when the days become shorter and the temps become colder, tropicals begin to use more energy than they bring in. Because tropicals don't go into a dormancy period like temperate trees do, that energy gets depleted throughout the winter and doesn't begin to reaccumulate again until spring when the bonsai can once again be outside in the sun. Supplemental lighting can help during the winter months, but it will never be as strong as the sun, even in a south facing window.

Understanding the energy cycles of your bonsai tree will help you time activities like repotting, pruning, pinching, propagating, and fertilizing to minimize interference with the tree's natural rhythm. This promotes healthier growth, reduces stress, improves recovery, enhances vitality, and provides a better result overall.



The focus of our July meeting was on propagation and pruning of tropical bonsai. Zach brought in several of the beautiful Ficus he's been cultivating for years. The amazing thing about these trees is that most of them (maybe all of them) came from the cuttings of an original and were propagated by Zach. When Ficus have the right growing conditions, which in this case are full outdoor sun, fertilizer, and pruning, they grow quickly and are a great way to build an impressive collection. Zach demonstrated how he roots actual cuttings and showed us how he prunes. His drawn diagram of cutting back to two leaves to increase ramification was very helpful.



# July Meeting SHOW *and* TELL



Loren with his Ficus after a spring repotting



Alex has done some cool styling on this Fukien tea



Skyler's Hawaiian umbrella is an easy tropical



Phillip's juniper has an interesting trunk bend



Colin's Japanese wisteria was transitioned to inorganic soil from nursery soil this year and is potted in a classic "oribe" glazed pot from Koyo



Sharon recommends Jaboticaba, a tropical from Brazil



Ken shows that any plant with a woody stem can be a bonsai with this Begonia dregei



Loren brought in a sample of rock wool, which he says works great for bonsai propagation



# Of Interest on the Web

## [Badger Bonsai Society Member Group](#)

BBS members-only platform for sharing tips, advice, and inspiration between monthly meetings



A few of our suggestions for further study on what's happening this month in the world of bonsai.

## [Bonsai Calendar](#)

- *Bonsai Empire*

## [Shade Cloth - Parts I - IV](#)

- *Crataegus Bonsai*

## [Plant and Tree Physiology](#)

- *Bonsai 4 Me*

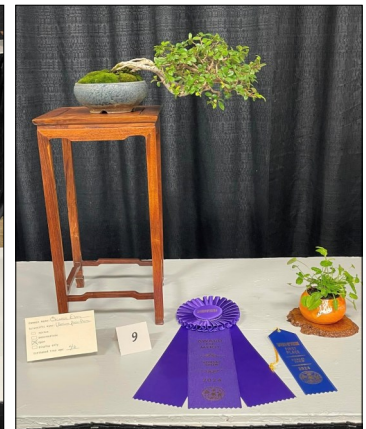
## [New Watering Nozzle Discovery](#)

- *Valavanis Bonsai Blog*



Follow [Badger Bonsai Society on Facebook](#) for the latest news, meeting agendas, upcoming events, and inspiring shares from the world of bonsai.

## Congratulations Ron!



Several of Ron's bonsai earned some important accolades at the Wisconsin State Fair this past week when they were awarded Best of Show, Awards of Merit, and second place ribbons by Chicago Botanical Gardens Bonsai Collection curator Chris Baker.

From top left,

Best of Show - Japanese elm  
Award of Merit - Trident maple  
Award of Merit - Chinese elm  
Second Place - Silverberry




**Bonsai Tree Growing Kit**

- 4 premium seeds - Delonix regia, Picea abies, Pinus aristata, and Jacaranda
- Includes biodegradable bamboo fiber pots and trays, ensuring a sustainable gardening experience 203-1909

**4.0 STARS**  
ONLINE RATING

**IMMEDIATE FREE SHIPPING TO STORE**

ONLINE PRICE ELSEWHERE TODAY	19.87
OUR PRICE	5.61
11% REBATE*	0.62
<b>YOUR PRICE AFTER REBATE*</b>	<b>\$4.99 each</b>

We were all beginners once and we've all been there. The promise offered by this recent Menards ad is too good to pass up. The 4.0 star ratings eliminate any skepticism. And you can't beat the price. A click on the ad on Menards' website revealed many people thought so - the kit was sold out.

But this kit and others seen on sites like Amazon won't deliver on its promises. Buyers might be able to get the seeds to germinate if they research the tree and provide the right conditions (the pine seeds need cold stratification), but they'll have a long wait before the trees begin to resemble the picture if the trees even live that long. A sizable investment in the proper tools, fertilization, growing medium, pots, and other necessities will add up to a many times more than the original money spent.

An investment in a BBS membership is much more rewarding. The knowledge and skills we are building by being members will allow us to grow trees like those pictured successfully many years faster than the time it would take for us to grow the trees in this kit.



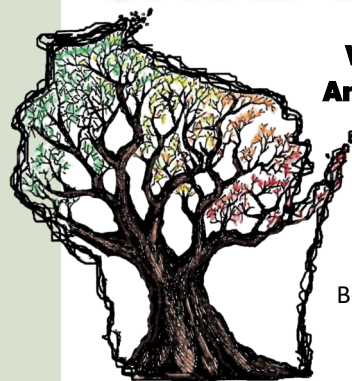
#### CLUB OFFICERS AND ROLES

President .....	Ron
Vice President .....	Mary
Secretary .....	Lisa
Treasurer .....	Ken
Web Manager .....	Paolo
Newsletter.....	Lisa
Librarian.....	Alex
Past-President .....	Wayne
At-Large Board Member .....	Zach
At-Large Board Member .....	Skyler
At-Large Board Member .....	Loren

*Badger Bonsai News is a monthly publication of the Badger Bonsai Society.*

<https://badgerbonsai.net>

## SAVE THE DATE!



### Wisco Bonsai 10-Year Anniversary Celebration!

September 14, 2024  
Noon until early evening

#### PLANNED EVENTS:

- Beginner Conifer Styling Contest
- Intermediate/Advanced with Brian Susler
- Mantis Hunt
- Tree Displays

And finally, to cap off the evening...  
Live Music Featuring Chicago Artist Jack (Captain Jack) Flynn!

<https://wiscobonsai.com>