



BADGER BONSAI NEWS

August 2025

President's Message

By Alex S

Howdy fellow bonsai wranglers -

As you may have heard, I became president a little earlier than planned—proof that sometimes life hands you the pruning shears mid-cut and says, “Here, you finish this.” Our former president left me a healthy collection (of club business, not just trees), and I’ll do my best to keep it trimmed, watered, and WELL fertilized.

With summer’s heat finally easing, we’re in that short window of opportunity: tropicals need repotting now before they give you the cold shoulder, and deciduous and conifers should be wired soon so they can settle before winter tucks them in. Think of it as giving your trees one last pep talk before the long nap.

Last month, we hosted our first special guest artist, Young Choe, who introduced us to the art of kusamono. Her inspiring demo and subsequent workshops showed how accent plants can elevate our show displays—or stand alone as an art form worth pursuing.

I’m excited for more guest artists, more learning, and yes, more moments where we all squint at a branch and debate whether it stays or goes.

Meanwhile, another opportunity to learn and be inspired is happening relatively nearby August 15 through 17 at the Chicago Botanical Garden. The Annual Mid-America Bonsai Exhibit, hosted by Midwest Bonsai Society, is an event Skyler and I try not to miss every year. Details are on Pg 4.

See you at the next meeting.



Morning and afternoon workshop session participants with the Kusamono they created.

UPCOMING
EVENT

August 14, 6:30 to 8:00 pm
Olbrich Botanical Gardens
3330 Atwood Ave, Madison

AGENDA:
Tropical Bonsai

July Meeting - Kusamono Workshop with Young Choe

Our meeting on Thursday, July 10, at Olbrich was dedicated to a demonstration by renowned Washington D.C.-based kusamono artist Young Choe. Young created a beautiful display incorporating penstemon, native grass, heuchera, Christmas fern, and Wisconsin's state flower, the wood violet—while delighting us with stories of her travels around the world teaching the art of kusamono and amusing anecdotes about working with well-known bonsai artists such as Ryan Neil and Boon Manakitivipart. The arrangement—composed of perennials that will bloom through the seasons—was wired in place and planted in a medium of clay soil, fine bonsai substrate, and horticultural charcoal, then topped with live moss on an artist-made slab pot. The finished kusamono was auctioned to members, with proceeds benefiting the club. Ron placed the winning bid and took home this beautiful, living piece of art.

On Saturday, BBS members who had registered for one of Young's two kusamono workshops gathered at Ken's office in Birge Hall at the UW Madison Department of Botany. Participants enjoyed a generous selection of plants, along with substrate, wire, and moss for as many creations as they had brought pots for.

Many thanks to Ken for hosting the workshops at his university office, securing plants in advance, welcoming Young and others to his and Brian's home for a cook-out, and leading Young, Lisa, and Loren on a forest hike to Fern Dell Gully near Mirror Lake to explore the local flora (see photos on Pg 3).



We also extend heartfelt thanks to Loren for coordinating Young's travel and lodging, providing transportation, keeping her company over several days, and ensuring she thoroughly enjoyed her visit to Madison and Badger Bonsai Society.





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*Badger Bonsai News is a monthly
publication of the Badger Bonsai Society.*
<https://badgerbonsai.net>

Of Interest on the Web



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

[Tips for Late Summer](#)

- *Bonsai Tonight*

[Mastering Field Grown Japanese Maple Bonsai](#)

- *Bonsai Mirai*

[Watering Bonsai while on Vacation](#)

- *Bonsai4Me*

[Aluminum and Copper Wire](#)

- *Evergreen Garden Works*



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

[Badger Bonsai Society Member Group](#)

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

Exploring the local flora with Young Choe

Ken kicked off our field trip with an impromptu lec-
ture from the trunk of his vehicle, giving us a crash
course on the Wisconsin biome and setting the stage
for what we were about to see. Fern Dell Gully, he
explained, was carved thousands of years ago by
glacial meltwater, leaving behind sandstone outcrops
and shaded limestone ledges that now cradle a re-
markable variety of ferns. We spotted bulblet, lady,
fragile, Goldie's, interrupted, maidenhair, northern
beech, oak, polypody, and silvery spleenwort thriving
among moss-covered rocks.

To fend off the persistent mosquitoes, we all donned
netting—much to the delight of our guest, who found
our bug-proof at-
tire nearly as en-
tertaining as the
hike itself.



UPCOMING EVENTS

WISCO BONSAI
SEPTEMBER FEST
3 Days of Work-
shops with Special
Artists!!!



WISCO BONSAI
www.WiscoBonsai.com

September 26-28 at
Wisco Bonsai, Sussex, WI
Register at Wiscobonsai@gmail.com

Friday, Sept 26 - beginner/intermediate workshop
(byo) 12pm – 4pm with Kevin Stoeveken (owner
Wisco Bonsai). simply bring a tree, grab a seat and
get some guidance. Fun and loose. \$25 per person.

Saturday, Sept 27 - 2 workshops, both 10am - 4pm (could end earlier) Social time to follow.

Workshop 1 - byo styling workshop with Brian Susler of Night Owl Bonsai. One of the most respected Wisconsin Bonsai Artists will help you take your material to the next level. Brian is in high demand and is difficult to access and never at this price ! Think Conifers at this time of year ! \$75.00 per person. * limit 6 people

Workshop 2 - Material provided. Large Japanese Maple workshop with Houston Sanders. If you don't already know, Houston is widely respected for his growing capabilities, and the varied & unusual species he keeps. You have likely seen his work on display at the Chicago show on behalf of his imaginary friend & mentor Jose Sandoval ! LOL He is providing large Japanese Maples for this workshop. \$200 per person (including material!) * limit 8 people.

Sunday Sept 28 - 2 workshops, both 10am - 4pm (could end earlier) Social time to follow.

Workshop 1 - byo styling workshop with Elle Nieto-Brodnick of Chicago. For those who have paid attention to her Bonsai career, you know that she has travelled the world to study her craft with the best. her eye for design is very well developed & is an excellent teacher. As her star rises, it will be difficult to access her at this price. \$75.00 per person. * limit 6 people

Workshop 2 - Material provided Shohin Itoigawa Junipers with Mark Fields of Indianapolis. Mark needs no introduction as he is a very well known artist and a master of Shohin Bonsai, consistently winning Best Shohin Display across the nation. \$200 per person (Material provided !) * limit 10 People

All workshops are free and open to the public for "silent" observation (silent or not being at the artists discretion)

*NOTE: ALL WORKSHOP PROCEEDS GO DIRECTLY TO THE ARTISTS !!!

The Midwest Bonsai Society Invites you to the 47th Annual Mid-America Bonsai Exhibit

- Free admission to Midwest Bonsai Society Show*
- Vendors
- Bonsai trees
- Suiseki, Pots, Stands, Scrolls, Tools
- Workshops
- Demonstrations
- Banquet + Auction
- Raffle



Guest Judge:
Professional, Jonas Dupuich
©2024 Sierra Juniper by
Timothy Priest
(Professional Class Winner).
Photo by Jeng Fonseca



www.midwestbonsai.org

August 15 • 16 • 17, 2025
9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.



chicago botanic garden
1000 Lake Cook Road
Glencoe, Illinois 60022

*Garden Admissions & Parking
Fees Apply.

