

# Iowa Bonsai Association Newsletter

[www.iabonsai.org](http://www.iabonsai.org)

<https://sites.google.com/site/cedarrapidsbonsai/>



November 2021

Volume 87, Issue 11

## From the Editor



AND IT'S GOODBYE!!  
But only until February of 2022. This is your last club Newsletter for the year. Look for your next issue the first week of February 2022. If the clubs need to communicate with the membership beforehand, they'll send you an email.

In this issue we have an interesting article by Cat Nelson regarding water pH and its relevance to our bonsai practice. Our big event in October was the Reiman Gardens show. It was great! See Dave Richmond's wonderful photo essay. It's the next best thing to being there. I've also included a little piece on the Reiman Garden's event and Todd Schlafer's workshop.

Remember, if you have something great going on in your yard – anything you're excited about – send me a picture and a little explanation so I can share it with the club!

*Susan Daufeldt*

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Remember that prior Newsletters are available on the Iowa Bonsai Association website ([www.iabonsai.org](http://www.iabonsai.org)). There's a lot of good information there.

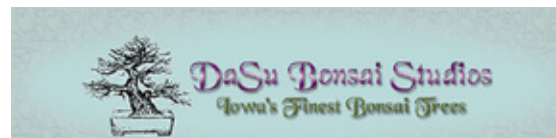
Note: Deadline for submission of letters to the editor, articles, and classified ads is the 15th of the month prior to publication. Please send your submissions to me! We love to publish them!!

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**DaSu Bonsai Studios**



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## From the IBA President

IBA members and friends,

With lows in the lower 20's last night it's evident that Winter isn't far off, and the bonsai shuffle is in full swing. I moved all of my cold intolerant trees into the shed where they'll stay for a few days until overnight temps raise about freezing. This time of year, is bitter sweet for me as I love to wander around the garden and look at my trees, however, I do look forward to the break.

The Fall Show was a big hit and we had more participants than ever. The bazaar table was full and there was something there for everyone. David Lowman was also there vending and had table upon table of bonsai related merch. At next month's meeting we'll have another round table discussion on winter storage as I was unable to attend the Oct meeting and according to those in attendance it was another great turnout.

The October 29th workshop with Todd Schlafer was great as are all Todd's workshops. We had 5 participants working on a variety of trees. Looking forward to seeing those trees at an IBA Bonsai show in the future.

Speaking of the future. The IBA BOD is working on a schedule of programs for 2022 and we want your input. Please look at the list included in this newsletter and reply back with your selections. We will use the information to schedule the 2022 programs.

The next IBA meeting will be Saturday Nov 20th from 9-1 at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. In the past the November meeting has been our annual auction of items donated to the club by its members followed by a luncheon at Trellis. However, with this year being a little off due to the past 18 months of unknowns we haven't had time to ask for donations, so we'll just have a discussion on winter storage or whatever comes up followed by lunch at Trellis. We all pay for our own lunch, but we'll need to give Trellis a head count an hour or so before we head in. The meeting locations within the GDMBG change by month so please check with the front desk for meeting location.

We still have plenty of the new T-Shirts as well as some of the old ones so if you're looking for stocking stuffers let me know. See attached pictures. If you want one contact Scott Allen as there are a limited number of each size M - 3XL. New shirts are \$25, the second generation shirts are \$20 and first generation shirts are \$15. All proceeds will help grow bonsai right here in Central Iowa.

Hope to see you all soon!

*Scott*

## EIBA Report

Once again, it's goodbye. It has been a privilege to serve the membership of the EIBA over the course of the last year. My presidency ended on October 21, 2021. On that day, the EIBA board decided that the EIBA would like to be an independent organization. This means that it is no longer legally a part of the IBA. This does NOT mean that the IBA and EIBA will not continue to collaborate. We will continue to share this



Newsletter and other resources. In fact, as a practical matter, things will go on as they always have. No worries. I know that the EIBA board has big plans for 2022 and I hope the membership will be active and involved.

If you don't know who your Board Members are, here are their names and email addresses.

John Clemens	clemensj2@yahoo.com
Bill Englert	bandrenglert@mchsi.com
Gary Gnade	garyhgnade@gmail.com
Jeff Flansburg	jeff.flansburg@act.org
Denny Molumby	dcmolumby@msn.com
Jim Rajtora (Treasurer)	ojhawkeye@mchsi.com
Dave Spicknall	photo430@aol.com
Buck Stark (Secretary)	buck.stark@homeinstead.com

AND DON'T FORGET THE HOLIDAY PARTY AT LEONARDO'S!!! (See the Calendar of Events)

Note that EIBA board meetings are OPEN meetings. This means that you do NOT need to be a board member in order to attend. Please feel free to attend.

If you haven't had the opportunity to pay your dues yet, you can send dues or donations to our club Treasurer: Jim Rajtora, 3512 Sue Lane NW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52405. Checks should be made out to "EIBA." Dues without soil: \$15.00. Dues with one bucket of Soil: \$30.00

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## Calendar of Events

**November 13, 2021 (Saturday)**

**Workshop with Jennifer Price at Susan Daufeldt's home in Conroy, Iowa. Contact Susan Daufeldt if interested. This is a privately sponsored activity.**

**November 18, 2021, 6:30 pm**

**EIBA HOLIDAY PARTY!!!! Location: Leonardo's, www8 16th Ave SW, Cedar Rapids – Please RSVP to Jim Rajtora: [ojhawkeye@mchsi.com](mailto:ojhawkeye@mchsi.com) by Monday, November 15, 2021, so that he can confirm the reservation with the restaurant.**

**November 20, 2021, 9:00am to 1:00pm (Saturday)**

**IBA Meeting and Open Study Group at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, (Check with the front desk for location within the Garden).**

**American Bonsai Society**

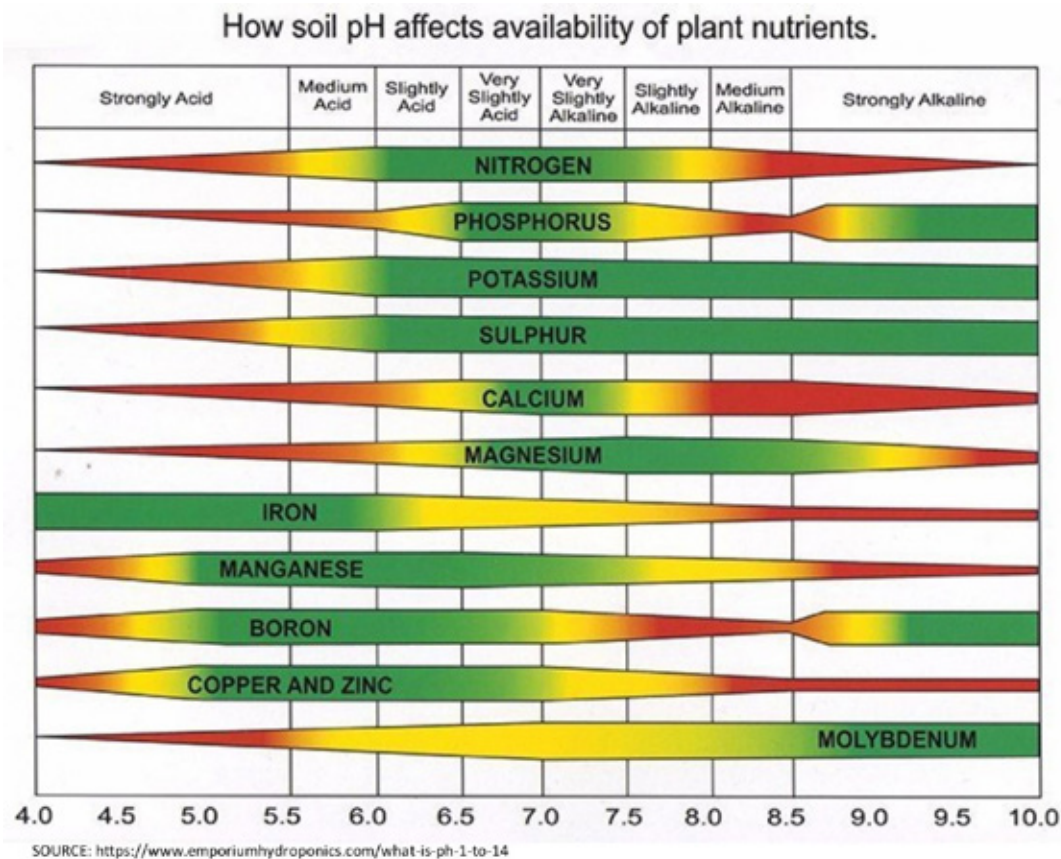
**Learning Seminars resume May 26-29, 2022, Olive Branch, MS. Forms and details available on the ABS website**

## Water pH in Bonsai

by Cat Nelson

For most growers of bonsai, water pH is not something that necessarily needs to stay at the top of your mind every day, but it is something of which we need to be generally aware. In the Midwest, in particular, most of the water supply is fairly hard and falls into the alkaline range. Hardness is usually defined by the amount of dissolved calcium and magnesium that's present in the water. Alkalinity is measured as the water's pH level. Each municipality uses different aquifers, has different ways that they are treating their water, and there are differences in the pipes use in transporting the water after treatment.

Many of the municipal and individual well water supplies in the Midwest fall around a pH of 8, while rain water tends to be closer to a 5.6 pH. The EPA range for drinking water ranges from 6.5 to 8.5 on the pH scale, where 7 is neutral. When we consider pH in the bonsai context, it is also affected by the components of the soil that the tree is planted in and what types of fertilizers are used in the pot. So all these elements taken together create the pH level in the pots in which our trees are growing.



Plants, in general, tend to do best in a soil pH range of 6-7, with some deviations for specific species – like pines, which like pH ranges of 4.5 – 5.5. In most growing situations, all the elements mixed together: water source, rain, soil mix & fertilizer often balance each other out and trees are fine. A lot of the common trees used in bonsai are also flexible enough to tolerate the wide range and changing conditions. I'm not aware of any easy tests for soil pH levels. The hand testers sold in garden centers

have a reputation for being unreliable and I've never tried to use one. I've based my current practices on observance of my tree's health, acknowledgement that I have problematic water, and trial & error.

Sometimes, though, pH can be looked at if there are problems with trees that you're trying to diagnose or if you habitually have issues with certain species. If you only water with collected rain water and have a tree that likes more alkaline conditions, switching the water source for that species might be an option. On the other end of the scale, if you have problems with yellowing pines the issue might be a lack of acidity and adding a soil acidifier might be beneficial.

If you look at the two pictures, it's the same Japanese white pine but in two different soils. The green needled picture is in a soil that has an acidifying organic component added, the yellow needle picture is 10 years later after being repotted into soil that has no additive. The soil itself might not be the entire issue in how sickly the tree looks now; it's rare for that to be the only problem when trees are struggling, but it could be one part of the problem. The picture does show what nutrient deficiency looks like.



The pH level of water and soil affect how nutrients are available to a tree. If you look at the chart, you can see at what pH ranges different nutrients are available to the plant. It is rarely a good idea to overdose on a particular nutrient if a deficiency is suspected, it's usually better to try to work out why that nutrient is not being absorbed if it's being provided through your normal fertilizer regime.

If you know that you have problematic water, you can take some steps to help your trees remain healthy. For example, I water my tropicals with rain water for as long as I can after they're taken inside in the fall to help shorten the time they'll be watered with the nearly pure liquid calcium that masquerades as my tap water (I'm being sarcastic, but my tap water is extremely hard). I will also on occasion add a little MirAcid fertilizer to the mix when feeding over the winter. For my other trees, I add acidic organic matter or soil acidifiers to conifers, and do some of my fertilizing with collected rain water to help maximize the range of nutrient uptake throughout the summer. So, if you have a problem you have been unable to diagnose, you might want to consider taking a look at your water pH.

## Member Activities

by Susan Daufeldt

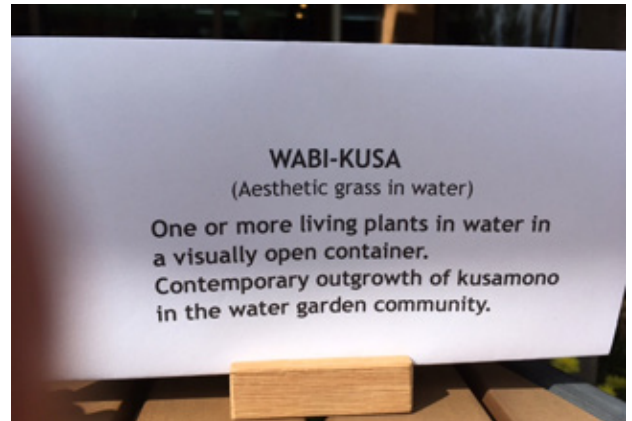
Photos by Susan Daufeldt

### REIMAN GARDENS

WOW, What a Good Show! I learned so much just being there - looking at trees and talking with other artists. I can't possibly give you a full rundown. Every time I walked around the show, I saw another tree, another accent, that I hadn't noticed on the last times around that was so very worthy of notice. See Dave's photo essay! Here are a few things that I absolutely HAVE to share with you!



*Wabi-kusa*



Ivan Hanthorn, well known in our clubs for his wonderful Kusamono, did a program on Wabi-kusa. Never heard of it? Neither had I.

Ron Heinen brought his wonderful and very old *Ficus Nerifolia* to the show. On Sunday, Dan Morton showed up with some old photographs. Look at this -



*Ron's Ficus Nerifolia in 1998*



*Ron's Ficus Nerifolia in 2021 at Reiman Gardens*

Thanks, Dan, for bringing that picture, and Ron, for bringing that tree!



We all got a kick out of Zoe Nady's Root-Over-Rock Dandelion! So much fun!

Fall Show at Reiman Gardens  
A Photo Essay by David Richmond



























## Member Activities

by Susan Daufeldt

Photos by Susan Daufeldt

### TODD SCHLAFER WORKSHOP

IBA Members had a great time working with Todd Schlafer on October 29, 2021. Scott Allen was an excellent host, as usual! Thank you, Todd and Scott!



Brian and Donna work on Shimpaku Junipers at the workshop. Dave Lowman (in back) was there to observe



Todd Schlafer Wiring an Engleman Spruce at the Workshop  
October 29, 2021



Jared Wall wiring a Ponderosa Pine.



Bob West and Todd Schlafer discuss the biggest juniper I've ever seen in a pot.



Jared Wall wiring a Ponderosa Pine.

### WORK-STUDY GROUP WITH TODD SCHLAFER

Since quite possibly forever, a certain group of IBA Members and EIBA Member John Denny have been gathering at the Magruders for work-study group. Every now and then someone can't make it and others are invited to take their place. This time around, Scott Allen was rushing to get his greenhouse finished before winter and I was privileged to be included. I deeply regret that I didn't remember to take pictures! It was great to see John and Gail Denny. Gail was working on a large number of very charming little Zelkovas. We all hope that she gets the bonsai bug! Tim Peterson was working on a marvelous Black Pine from Telperion Farms – very special since the tragic fire that destroyed Telperion last year. The Magruders were wonderful hosts, as always! Thank you, Todd, Alan and Helene!



On the morning of October 20th, I was driving from Pella on my way back to Indianola. At 8:08 AM Central Standard Time (DLS). I drove into the parking lot next to Red Rock lake, 41.418824, -93.051583 (See location indicated on the satellite photograph).

The radio was tuned to, 96.3 Iowa Public Radio out of Pleasantville, Iowa. I was listening to, The Overture from, *The Bartered Bride*, by Smetana. (See the URL Below)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9eWXqxKX0KI>

On the evening of October 20 there will be a full Moon. In parts of the world that have a clear night sky, the moon's surface will show off it's craters, mountains and valleys. The moon's surface will create patterns of light and shadow that we can see from Earth. These patterns have been part of our collective imagination forever. The western culture sees the markings on the moon as the Man in the Moon.

(See URL below)

<https://www.rmg.co.uk/stories/topics/what-man-moon>

The eastern culture sees a rabbit on the moon.

(See two different URL's below)

<https://www.bokksu.com/blogs/news/japanese-folktale-rabbit-on-the-moon>

<https://www.waiyeehong.com/oriental-culture/jade-rabbit-yutu/>

The image of a man's face on moon has been a part of many of my childhood memory's. For example as a young adolescent I saw the silent movie by George Melies made in 1902, *A Trip to the Moon* or in French, *Le Voyage dans la Lune*. I will never forget the disturbing scene when the space craft, that was shot from a cannon, hurled through space and plunged deeply into the Man in the Moon's left eye.

(See URL below)

<https://www.filmsite.org/voya.html>

Man, Woman, Rabbit or Toad, makes little difference to me. I can see them all.



## Bonsai Classifieds

**FOR SALE:** IBA T-Shirts – \$25.00 each. Unisex sizes m l xl xxl xxxl. A limited offer. First come, first served.



**FOR SALE:** At our greenhouse DaSu Bonsai Studio, 27887 Timber Rd., Kelley, Iowa we have sixteen varieties of companion plants stock coming in!! Should arrive this Wednesday or Thursday. Ten percent off to Bonsai Assn. members with a \$100 purchase. Come get some crushed lava for your planting needs and take some very cool miniatures home!

**FOR SALE:** Seedlings will be available at the farm/greenhouse. I have ordered: 100 Washington Hawthorn for sale \$2.50 each, 50 Malus Baccata Crabapple for sale \$2.56 each, 50 Nanking Cherry for sale \$2.80 each. I will also be offering grow bags (one and 2 gallon size) for growing out in the ground and developing your seedlings. \$2.00 and \$2.50 each per bag. As an incentive free lime sulfur will be given away with a seedling or other item purchase. BRING YOUR OWN CONTAINER TO BE TOPPED OFF or bring a four ounce dark colored bottle with tight fitting lid. Washington hawthorns immediately make great little forests. The other two items are probably best grown out in the ground or a larger container. Bring buckets to fill or waterproof bags for any of our 22 tons of bonsai lava, \$9 per five gallon bucket. Call 515-769-2446 if you have questions or need directions, and/or requests that you would want ready/reserved for pickup. Dave at DaSu Bonsai Studio.

**FOR SALE:** Pumice \$30 for five gallons. Akadama (Out of Stock) \$32 per bag, \$30 for members. We have Akadama on order. Bio Gold fertilizer from Japan, \$92.50 per 5kg bag. Contact Scott Allen or Tim Peterson.

**FOR SALE:** I have a variety of Yamadori for sale. Ponderosa Pines, Englemen Spruce and Douglas Fir. I also have some 2-4 year Trident's, a couple of Japanese, Maples, a Garden Spruce, some 3-5 year Japanese Black Pine, and a couple Shimpaku juniper. Call if you're interested in seeing what I have. Anything that doesn't sell before the fall show will be sold there. Scott Allen 515-480-4437

**WANTED:** (1) Autumn Olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata* a/k/a Autumn Berry); (2) Box Elder (*Acer negundo*); (3) any variety of native Hawthorn; and (4) any variety of Oak. Susan Daufeldt, [sdaufeldt@icloud.com](mailto:sdaufeldt@icloud.com), [sdaufeldt@daufeldtlawfirm.com](mailto:sdaufeldt@daufeldtlawfirm.com), (319) 430-3822

**FOR SALE:** I do have trees for sale. If you want to have a look, give me a call. I'd love to have you visit. Susan Daufeldt, 1896 P Ave, Conroy, IA 52220, [sdaufeldt@icloud.com](mailto:sdaufeldt@icloud.com), [sdaufeldt@daufeldtlawfirm.com](mailto:sdaufeldt@daufeldtlawfirm.com), (319) 430-3822.

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