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## TAUNTON & SOMERSET BONSAI CLUB

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Bonsai Newsletter October 2021 – Meeting Report



After missing our busy first “post lockdown” meeting in September, I was expecting to see another good turn out for our October workshop meeting. Did we scare you all away or are the darkening evenings putting you off? Attendance was a bit down at 9 members but it was great to meet old friends again and to finally meet our newest member Nigel, who joined us during several lockdown Zoom meetings and has proved to be a great asset to the club in setting up our new website. Nigel admits to being a novice so I hope he will find help and advice from within the club to assist him on his bonsai journey.

Being a workshop, members had brought in trees to work on or gain advice and so I'll start with Nigel. He had a little Scotts pine that will need styling and a Norway maple that he wants to develop further. I chatted to Nigel about these two trees but stupidly forgot to take any photos of the trees!

Anyway, the Scotts pine will need a little wiring to place small branches and though we trimmed back the long leader on the maple, Nigel will let it grow tall again next year to thicken the trunk and get more taper. While I omitted to get photos of Nigel's trees I did catch Michael chatting and giving him a few useful tips. Welcome aboard Nigel!!



Much attention centred on Richard P's very "interesting but challenging" Juniper with just about everyone present giving him differing advice on how to style it! The trunk was excellent with some nice deadwood but the foliage pads were very large and flat without any real coherent style. Certainly the branches and foliage needed reducing and placing by wiring to get a nice image. The flat top was too dominant and seemed to go in the wrong direction; severe wiring could correct that! My advice was to take off several branches down one side to expose the lovely trunk and give a windswept style that would look good in a crescent pot. Once again I was focussed on getting shots of members working and forgot to get a decent photo of the tree itself. So perhaps when Richard has styled the tree he can bring it back and we can at least get an "after" photo!





OK, I'm improving now! We can at least see the tree that Sara is working on here. *Acer palmatum* "Butterfly" is a beautiful acer variety that is not often seen as bonsai, but perhaps should be.

Most years in the spring they can be bought very cheaply from many supermarkets, which is where I got a couple from. They tend to develop a rather flat crown and so Sara here is reducing some of the crown to give an more rounded tree; this will also push more growth into the lower branches which tend to struggle a bit against the dominant crown.

I think this is the "after" photo.....I failed to get a "before".

Richard M needed to sort out some dead roots on his Cypress in order to improve the base of the tree.

Here he is...or at least here are his hands doing just that.





Here we are looking at Paul's Chinese Elm which was looking very sorry for itself.

Most of the branches had suffered very severe die back, though here and there some new shoots were emerging so it is alive and hopefully all is not lost.

The view of the club elders was that it had either got too dry...or too wet! Paul will keep the tree outside over winter but under cover to ensure that it doesn't sit in wet soil.



Spring will be the time to take the tree out of the pot and inspect the roots and possibly repot. Fingers crossed!

Incidentally, Nigel's newly trimmed Norway maple can be seen in the foreground!

### Members' trees

Although we are not doing our usual Tree of the Month until next year, we are encouraging members to bring in something to display.



Brian's lovely *Acer palmatum* brought some beautiful colour to the show table. A dinky little tree with lovely rootbase and trunk movement.

Brian, where have you been hiding this little gem?

Not wishing to be outdone by her dad, Sara had this rather unusual *Acer palmatum dissectum* in its full autumn glory.

The blue pot gives a nice contrast to show off the foliage.



One of Michael's pretty blue Atlas Cedars. A very elegant little tree and looks so vibrant and healthy. I'm sure Michael will be amused by me saying that the pot is too big!

And finally, another *Acer palmatum*, this one from Ade. This tree featured in the UK Bonsai Association Virtual Show for Spring/Summer 2021 and took second place. Here it is in its autumn finery.



Many thanks to those who brought trees along to show. Although we didn't do the full Tree of the Month I have done a critique of the trees just to get us/me back into this in preparation for many fine trees next year. The critique can be seen by clicking [here](#)

That's all until next month – we meet on 10 November for another workshop. If you have Pines that need wiring and styling this will be a good time to do it and you will have help on hand if needed.

Also, immediately after leaf fall is a good time to tidy and trim Acers and other deciduous trees before winter sets in, so bring them along too.