

The Lily Pad

The Topeka Area Water Garden Society

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TAWGS members enjoying the Plant Swap at the April meeting.

TAWGS Minutes, April 16, 2003

An old-fashioned plant swap was held before the April TAWGS meeting and plant donors explained how to plant the various water and landscape plants. Most everyone found something that they wanted to take home to try. Becky Coffman offered tips on planting water plants after we finished the plant swap. Thanks to the many people who donated plants.

President Tom Platis welcomed everyone to the meeting and we opened with self-introductions. We had five guests, who later joined the club. The minutes were approved as mailed in the Lily Pad.

Vice President Becky announced that we would have a field trip to Skinners before the meeting in May. We will meet at Skinners at 6:00 p.m. and tour the nursery. Cameron Reese will talk about perennials and yard art that can be used around our ponds. We will then go to Ward Meade Park around 7 for our meeting.

Treasurer Jim Green reported that we have \$2,654.18 in the checking account, \$2,106.70 in the saving account and \$43.34 in petty cash, for a total of \$4,804.22.

Secretary Diane Gruver asked if everyone was getting their newsletter okay. She reminded them to look at the label on their newsletter to see when their dues are due. People who receive their newsletter by e-mail will be reminded by e-mail.

Diane also reported that the pond tour committee had met prior to the TAWGS meeting. We

Monthly Meeting Field Trip to Skinners Meet at Skinners at 6:00 p.m. Wed., May 21st, 2003

Then we will go to Ward Meade Park for our meeting around 7:00 p.m.

are still looking for ponds for the tour which is 9 – 5, Saturday and Sunday, June 21-22. The deadline for submitting applications is May 15 and the applications are available on the website at TAWGS.org. Michael Bradley asked for volunteers to help as pond hosts and passed around a sign up sheet. He said that pond sitting for a 4 hour shift is not only fun but it helps you learn more about ponds and helps you get acquainted with lots of pond people. If you want to sign up as a volunteer you can e-mail Michael at himike@cox.net or call him at 235-5237.

Mary Pat Fischer reported that she has submitted the information for the 8 x 12 inch bronze plaque at Lake Shawnee to Gerald Binkley.

Joe Breitenstein reported that there has been more vandalism at Anna's Pond. Kids spray-painted the rocks and railings around the pond and some of the other buildings on the grounds. Some of the damage has been repaired already. He said that he would like some volunteers at the Plant sale April 26th. Becky needs help that morning with the pond plants.

Becky also announced that she and Dean DeMoss had checked the lilies in Anna's pond and it didn't look like they would need to be repotted this year so the potting part for Saturday, April 19th has been canceled. Dean will try to find out when the fountain will be filled so some of the lilies can be put in it.

Webmaster Jim Haugh reported that he would try to put some instructions on the message board on the web site so that people will know how to use it.

Jim Green said that he has not heard anything from the VA on the pond that we have voted to build on their grounds. He will follow up with them to see if they have decided where they want it and how big they want it to be.

Jeannine Miller presented shirts that she will machine embroider with the TAWGS emblem. The cost

of each shirt will be \$28.50 and they are available in white or khaki. Give her a call if you want to order one, 357-6840.

Mary Pat Fischer will coordinate a Member Pond tour sometime in July. Interest was expressed in a night tour too. Tom Platis will help her. Let them know if you would like to be on either tour, Mary Pat - 272-1274, Tom – 478-9514. Becky Coffman and Mary Bechtold are also working on a special meeting in July.

Bechtolds and Hodges will provide refreshments next month. Meeting adjourned.

Hardy lotus tips

From Lilyponds



- Incredible blossoms and leaves, standing 1-7 feet above the water, permeate the garden with their heavy perfume. After the third day of bloom, the petals fall, revealing another development, the strong and distinctive maturing seed pod.
- Colors - white, yellow, pink, rose, red and changeable.
- Blossom for 6 – 8 weeks during mid-summer.
- Winter hardy perennials in USDA Zones 4 – 11. Lotus grow during the summer in all zones, except the Pacific Northwest and Alaska.
- Prefer 5 hours of direct sunlight, minimum and require still water 2 – 4 inches above the soil. Once mature (usually 1 – 2 seasons after planting the tuber), they can be placed in up to 18 inches of water (above the soil line.)
- Plant in containers and fertilizer twice monthly during the growing season.
- Plant in 30 quarts of heavy top soil and fertilize. Small and dwarf Chinese lotus varieties require at least 17.5 quarts of heavy top soil. Once planted, allow one to two years to become established and bloom.
- Lotus are invasive in earth bottom ponds, up to 4 feet in depth.
- Spread is based on height above soil:
Small = 1.5' – 2'
Medium = 2.5' – 5'
Large = 5' – 7'
- Height and spread vary according to conditions such as soil, sunlight, fertilizer, temperature and container size.

How to re-pot a lotus

Reprinted from 4-26-01 Splash

You need to have a container with water ready to hold the Lotus. DO NOT allow the Lotus to dry out. Have all your containers, planting medium, etc. ready. Lotus need a wide, large container!

Your Lotus will have "runners" and "tubers". The tubers look somewhat like sweet potatoes with coarse, beard like roots and a leaf or two sticking up.

The most viable to re-pot are tubers, they contain food for the new plant. Be careful when untangling your tuber that the growing tips are not damaged. The tuber will die with the least amount of damage to the growing tip. Do not break off the tubers, it is better to cut cleanly with a sharp knife.

Lotus bloom on new growth, this area of the lotus is usually in the center of the plant. Leave runners in place when cutting off the tubers.

When re-planting the Lotus, plant the tuber at an angle, so the growing tip IS NOT COVERED! The tuber may need to be held in place by a rock until it grows new roots.

Lotus are heavy feeders and should be fertilized every three to four weeks for best blooms.

Plant Fertilization Schedule

Plant	Water Temp.	Monthly	Twice Monthly
Water Lilies	60° - 74°F	YES	-
Water Lilies	over 74°F	-	YES
Lotus	over 59°F	-	YES
Bog Plants	over 59°F	YES	-
Submerged Plants	-	NO	NO

From Lilyponds

Solving Pond Problems

Reprinted from 5-01 Splash

Fish disappear from pond without a trace - If no signs of disturbance around the pond can be detected, the culprit is often a bird (hawk, owl). String fishing line across the pond in a zig-zag pattern. The bird will be discouraged after hitting this barrier a couple of times during its dive for your pets.

Raccoons go fishing in the pond - Try putting a cheap transistor radio tuned to a talk station next to the pond at night. The radio has to be moved to a different location EVERY night. Raccoons are very smart, if the radio voice does not move they figure out quickly that it will not come after them.

Too early for Water Hyacinth & lettuce?

Reprinted from Splash 4-25-02

We, who love ponds, tend to get impatient this time of year to get our ponds looking beautiful again. Especially those of us living in colder areas. One of the staples of ponds in areas north of the Mason Dixon line are Water Hyacinths and Water Lettuce (they are considered a pest in many states south of the Mason Dixon line, because they do not die during the winter and can choke water ways).

Water Hyacinth are somewhat more tolerant of cool water than Water Lettuce. Water Hyacinth will survive if water temperatures warm to about 60 degrees, but Water Lettuce needs at least 65 degree water (Fahrenheit), 70 degrees is better!

If the water is too cool, the plants will simply slowly disintegrate.

Spring chores around the pond

Parts reprinted from 2-2001 Water Garden News

Testing water chemistry (especially if you keep fish) is important in the spring as well as in new ponds. A weekly check of ammonia and nitrite levels is important at this time of the year. The ammonia and nitrite levels should be zero. Also, test the pH occasionally. If you find that you have trouble maintaining a proper pH level, you may not have enough buffering capacity in the water. Buffering can be increased by using a product like Crystal Clear's Buffer. The pH of the pond should be between 6.8 and 7.6. As long as your pH is not extreme it may be better to leave it alone instead of making adjustments. A large change in pH can be deadly to your fish. When adjustments in pH levels are necessary they should be done with care.

Inexpensive test kits, which offer guidelines for acceptable chemical levels in ponds, are available. Bacteria can be very helpful for maintaining your pond. Microbe-Lift PL or Crystal Clear's Nitrifier should be used in the spring if your filter system was not in operation during the winter. This product contains bacteria that will help to get your filter up and operating quickly. It is also helpful in new ponds.

Clarifier type bacteria like Crystal Clear's Bioclear Biological Clarifier work to keep your pond cleaner by consuming the sludge that accumulates on the bottom of the pond and in the filters. This product has proven to be greatly effective in reducing sludge accumulations.

Check supplies, which should always be kept on hand for the proper care of fish, plants, and their aquatic environment. We recommend always keeping a supply of dechlorinator available. A dechlorinator should be used whenever fresh water is added to the pond. But most importantly, it could save your fish in an emergency. A good supply of dechlorinator is invaluable should your pond develop a leak, which would require large amounts of fresh water to be added.

Is your net in good shape? A multipurpose net is useful when you need to catch your fish to temporarily remove them from the pond. You should be prepared to remove any fish that become sick. Sick fish should be kept in a hospital or quarantine tank to keep them from infecting other fish in the pond. A strong skimmer net is also useful for removing leaves and other debris from the pond. When allowed to accumulate, large amounts of leaves give off toxic gas and can be detrimental to your fish. Microbe-Lift Autumn Prep is a product that contains bacteria and enzymes that help to break down leaves in cooler fall and spring temperatures.

Did your thermometer survive the winter? Water temperature is used to determine when to feed your fish and how much food they should be given. Keeping track of your water temperature will also be important in the fall if you have tropical plants which will need to be moved indoors for the winter.

A spare pump is good to have in case your pump stops working during hot weather, when dissolved oxygen levels can drop to dangerous levels quickly. You can use your spare pump for your hospital or quarantine tanks should you need them.

Is your filter media holding up? Some types of filter media break down quickly and may need to be replaced in the spring. If you have a sponge type media consider replacing it with a mat type media such as Signal Pond Products Fiber Filter Media that will last for years and is much easier to clean. It can be cut with scissors to fit most filters.

When replacing filter media change only a portion at a time. Allow a few weeks for bacteria to establish in the new media before replacing the last of the old media.

If you have had trouble maintaining clear water you may want to consider adding an ultraviolet sterilizer before your pond has a chance to green up this spring. Or you may only need to add a larger biological filter or more plants. Anacharis (underwater plant) is recommended for all ponds to maintain clear healthy water. Use one bunch for every square feet of pond surface area for ponds up to 50 sq. ft. For ponds with a surface area 51 to 200 sq. ft. use one bunch per every 2-3 sq. ft. Ponds over 200 sq. ft. use one bunch for every 3-4 sq. ft. You will want to provide 50% to 70% surface coverage with water lilies and other plants if you are in full sun. This will block sun therefore reducing algae. It will also keep the water cooler helping the fish as well as reducing algae.

Do you have a large tub? Tubs in the 10 to 100 gallon range are useful for housing fish while cleaning, remodeling, or making repairs to your pond. Large ones also make good quarantine of hospital tanks.

Even though it may still be cool and windy outside your window, now is the perfect time to be thinking about those new plants or fish that you want to add this spring.

Topeka Area Water Garden Society
9900 SW K-4 Highway
Topeka, KS 66614

2003 Calendar of Events

May 21	TAWGS Monthly Meeting
June 18	TAWGS Monthly Meeting
June 21-22	Topeka 12 th Annual Pond Tour
June 21-22	Wichita Pond Tour
June 28-29	Lawrence Pond Tour
July 12-13	Kansas City Pond Tour
July 16	TAWGS Monthly Meeting
August 20	TAWGS Monthly Meeting
Sept. 17	TAWGS Monthly Meeting
Oct. 15	TAWGS Monthly Meeting
Nov. 19	TAWGS Monthly Meeting
2004	
Apr. 10 – 21	Binkley Tulip Days

Pond Tip

When a pond water feature's flow slows, you should clean the filter as soon as possible to prevent possible pump damage.

Water Garden News Pond Tip May 5, 2003

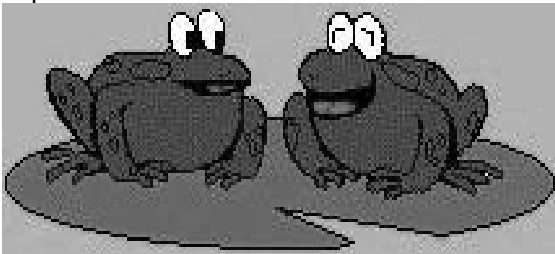
Your Dues are Due if your label reads

3-03, 4-03 or 5-03

**Please renew as soon as possible to
continue receiving the newsletter.**

THE TOPEKA AREA WATER GARDEN SOCIETY OFFICERS:

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Becky Coffman	Vice President
Topeka	785-272-6568
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Jim Green	Treasurer
Topeka	785-272-7139



Check it out - www.tawgs.org

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The Lily Pad encourages submission of articles pertaining to water gardening from the membership and other interested parties. Deadline is the last weekend of each month. Address input and/or questions to:

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