



# The Lily Pad

## The Topeka Area Water Garden Society

Published Monthly – February to November

The objective of the society is to encourage a greater appreciation and interest in water gardening and aquatic plants, to disseminate information about those interests and to help our members stimulate the study and culture of water gardens.

Volume 9, Issue 2

March 1, 2006



### 2006 Topeka L&G display awesome

Display Chairman Bob Saathoff and his committee for the 2006 Topeka L&G show did a spectacular job on the display. "It was awesome," Bob said.

Working with the Topeka Beautification Assn. and the Shawnee Parks and Recreation, the display turned out spectacular! It consisted of a large pond with a double waterfall spilling out of a wetland filter. Below that pond was a separate conventional pond with a beaver dam and stream bed that made it look like the large pond was spilling into the bottom pond through the beaver dam. A bridge, (supplied by Puddles-N-Pads) spanned the stream bed. In keeping with the theme "Nature's

### Monthly Meeting 7:00 p.m. March 15, 2006

Historic Old Prairie Town

(Ward Meade Park)

Flowers around your water garden  
Jerold Binkley

Playground," you could find (on loan from Stone Nature Center, KS Dept of Wildlife and Parks and Bell Taxidermy, Harveyville) a beaver, two raccoons, two bobcats, skunk, turkey, and a fawn deer if you looked real hard. Thirty six fish (supplied by the Fishin' Hole) swam in the two ponds. Floyd & Diane Gruver built a bubbler (grate supplied by Water's Edge) like they have in their back yard which provides running water to birds, squirrels and other wild life all year round. A fourth water feature, a Pondless waterfall, (supplied by P&P) was built by Don & Ruth Taliaferro. Unfortunately, the second day that water feature began giving problems when an electric heater in a booth nearby interfered with the pump so it had to be shut off. One hundred seventy cubic yards of dirt and seven pallets of stone were provided by Shawnee Parks & Rec. along with many other essential items to make the display possible.

The upper area of the booth consisted of grasses, trees (provided by Skinners Nursery), and leaves that made a winter scene, while the lower areas provided a spring feel with shrubs, tulips, daffodils and iris. The flowers were provided by Topeka Beautification and Shawnee County and the trees and shrubs were on loan from Skinners. Dennis Lowry also provided a beautiful arbor that was used to display pictures of various pond members' ponds.

The committee of Bob and Cheryl Saathoff, Don and Ruth Taliaferro, Dean Demoss, Doug and Marikay Peterman and Floyd and Diane Gruver began working on the idea in December. Several planning meetings were held with Dave Bartles from the Shawnee County Parks & Rec., Jerold Binkley, Dave Hedstrom and Dale Smeltzer from TBA and Bob and his committee. Bob and Jerold spent many hours over the winter collecting unusual rocks for the display and Doug and Marikay spent hours collecting wild grasses and leaves. Duane and Mary Eberhardt joined the

committee on Monday the week of the show when we started building the display and worked continuously with us the entire time. Bob estimated with the combined efforts of the three groups, we probably had a collective 1,000 man hours in the project. It was fun though and gave us a chance to re-new friendships and make new ones from the other organizations. The joint effort provided a display that none of us could have done by ourselves.

Many thanks go to everyone who helped in any way at the display and especially to Bob Saathoff for chairing the committee. Thanks to Betty Karnes, who spent hours on the phone recruiting people to work during the show. Thanks goes to these workers: Bob & Cheryl Saathoff, Don Taliaferro, Betty Karnes, Dale & Earlene Jirik, Debbie Rush, Tom & Helen Platis, Larry & Caryn Sheets, Bill & Susan Kraus, Lynn Pelton, Mary Blubaugh, Barrie & Carol Gnagy, David Heineman, Duane & Mary Eberhardt, Trudy Weir, Stanley Wilch, Gerald & Donnis Hodges, Dick & Pat Rokey, Becky Coffman, Lynda Reynolds and Marikay Peterman.

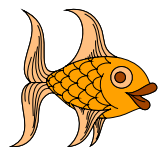
For reasons unknown to us, the display received second place instead of first, but we all know that it was the most spectacular booth at the show. ☺ We are already wondering what Bob and his committee will come up with next year!



Chairman Bob Saathoff and wife Cheryl look over the display when it was completed.



A beaver dam separated the top pond from the lower pond.



# Fish 201

Julie Riggles from Puddles & Pads gave an interesting program entitled Fish 201 (contrary to my publication in the last newsletter of Fish 102) at the February TAWGS meeting. Julie said that she thought most of the members already knew the basics in Fish 101 – don't have sharp rocks, don't stock too many fish, etc., so she concentrated on fish health and water quality.

"Water quality is the most important factor in fish health," Julie stressed. "Parasites live naturally in a pond, and they attack the fish if the water quality goes down." Other water quality factors are ammonia, nitrates, nitrites, and pH.

## Ammonia

Sometimes it is more troublesome to control ammonia in the springtime because the bacteria aren't working yet. It can also be caused by too many fish. It can be corrected by a partial water change, lowering the pH and adding dechlorinator.

## Nitrites

High nitrites usually follow high ammonia and can cause brown blood disease in your fish. Too low nitrites will cause ich, fin rot and other bacterial infections. Treatments include a large water change and the addition of salt.

## Nitrates

Nitrates are not highly toxic to fish in low to moderate levels. Routine partial water changes will keep the nitrate levels within the safe range. A pond full of plants shouldn't have any problems with nitrates.

## pH

Ponds made with limestone rock will have a high amount of pH. High ammonia and high pH levels will be a problem for your fish. Use vinegar to lower the pH level. A pH crash happens suddenly and requires a complete water change.

## Fish Disease

Julie said that Puddles-N-Pads now has a microscope so customers can bring their fish in to be tested. A fish biopsy can be done on a fish that is still alive by scraping its sides and put that under a microscope. Some diseases she talked about were flukes, which cause ulcers, anchor worms (looks like a piece of thread) and lice which can be seen by the naked eye. Some other diseases can only be seen by a microscope.

"The single most important disease control is quarantine," Julie said. A quarantine tank needs to be about 100 gallons and have good aeration. You can use a high salt treatment or stress coat. Fish do not like to be alone so it is best to have at least two to keep from stressing them. A good source for fish information is at [Koivet.com](http://Koivet.com), Julie said.

Julie has worked for P&P for 10 years as a water garden expert. Julie and P&P co-owner Trina Wood recently attended a seminar on fish health at Reno, Nevada.



# TAWGS Minutes Feb. 15, 2006

President Duane Eberhardt opened the first meeting of the year with self introductions. VP Floyd Gruver introduced the guest speaker, Julie Riggles from Puddles-N-Pads, who gave an interesting talk on fish health.

The meeting resumed following refreshments provided by Duane and Mary Eberhardt and Floyd and Diane Gruver. Mary Ann Bechtold moved and Mary Pat Fisher seconded that the minutes as they appeared in the February Lily Pad be approved. Motion carried.

President Duane announced that all the shifts for the Topeka Lawn and Garden show have been filled. He thanked everyone who agreed to work. Duane said he was passing around a list for people to sign up to be door greeters and provide refreshments during the year. No one signed up for March so if you would be interested in providing refreshments or greeting at the March meeting please call Duane at 246-0240.

VP Floyd Gruver announced the programs for the 2006 meetings. Secretary Diane Gruver gave the treasures report in the absence of Jim Green. We have \$2,710.56 in the checking account and \$1,153.35 in the savings account.

Diane read a letter from Waters Edge and said that they had sent a check for \$22.50 which they recommended that we use to pay for half of the membership fee in the International Waterlily and Watergardening Society. After some discussion Jon Fisher moved and Donnis Hodges seconded that we match the \$22.50 to join IWGS. Motion carried.

Diane asked that people be sure to watch their mailing labels to see when their dues are due since we do not normally send out statements.

Pond Tour Chairman Mary Ann Bechtold said that the committee met and set the pond tour for June 24-25. The flyers, which were done by Hi Stockwell, are done and are ready to be handed out at the Topeka Lawn and Garden Show. She reported that Donnis Hodges has agreed to solicit the pond sitters for the 2 days. Hi Stockwell will do the tour guide; Jon Fisher will do the map. Diane said that she sent the advertising letters out in January and is getting a few responses back already. Mary encouraged members to please consider putting their pond on the tour, as it will our 15<sup>th</sup> annual tour and we would like to make it special. Duane E. is in charge of lining up ponds for the tour. Mary said she is looking for someone to collect photos from the last 15 years and burn them on a CD which would be sold for \$5. If anyone is interested in helping on the CD's or anything else on the tour please contact Mary Ann at 267-1611.

Bob Saathoff reported that the committee for the booth at the lawn and garden show this weekend is hard at work at the expo center. With the group effort of the Topeka Beautification Assn. and Shawnee County Parks and Rec., there are sometimes 20 workers working on the project, which is about 2,000 sq. feet. The county has hauled in 16 dump truck loads of dirt for the display which will include four water features. He said it looks like the cost will be around \$100, maybe a little more. The county will re-use the dirt, rock for the rock walls and liners, Puddles-N-Pads has loaned the river rock and pumps

and Waters Edge loaned a grate for the bubbler. Flowers will be provided by the county and Gerald Binkley and shrubs and trees will be borrowed from Skinners. Duane thanked the people that have worked so far this week and thanked Betty Karnes for calling for volunteers to work at the display during the show.

Duane announced that he has received word from Dean Demoss the he will not be taking care of the fountain at Ward Mead this year. Duane asked for volunteers but nobody stepped forward. Please consider helping the club out by volunteering to head a committee to take care of the fountain. This is a requirement for the club in exchange for the use of the Preston Hale room for our meetings, so it is not an optional project.

Meeting adjourned.



## Volunteers for 2006 Door Greeters and Refreshments

Month	Door Greeters	Refreshments
March		
April	Fishers	Gnagy, Hodges
May	Sheets	Pot Luck
June		Pettermans, Sheets
July		Jiriks, Betty Karnes
Aug	Don Taliaferro	Taliaferros, Saathoffs
Sept.		Pot Luck
Oct.		Eberharts
Nov.		Pot Luck

As you can see, we have lots of room for volunteers so please contact Duane or Diane to offer to do your share.

## Don't drain pond in spring

*Reprinted from 2-24-06 Splash*

We are definitely not big fans of that! It is very hard work, disturbs and stresses the fish and pretty much destroys the ecology of the Pond!

A Pond that has been well maintained with regular scheduled additions of Beneficial Bacteria and is well aerated should only need to be drained completely every few years.

Spring Clean-Up (getting stringy stuff off waterfalls and growth off rocks) can be accomplished lickety-split with "Green Away" or "D-Solv" and layers of sludge and decomposing leaves and such can be degraded and just about eliminated with "Sludge Away" and/or "Spring/Summer Cleaner".

Definitely preferable to draining and scrubbing, which stresses the fish (not to mention the pond owner) and destroys the little ecological system that has

become an important part of your garden (a lined pond takes at least 2 years to mature and every time it is completely drained that period starts all over again).

Drain and replace about 1/3 of the water to dilute any environmental toxins which may have accumulated during the year because of evaporation and leave it at that!

# WATER PLANTS

By Duane Van Dolah



## Dwarf Papyrus: Cyperus Isocladius

This dwarf form tropical central Asia resembles a miniature *C. papyrus* but is much more manageable. With a height of 12-18 inches and a spread of 6-12 inches. This species makes an attractive specimen plant for both formal and informal ponds. Also works well for tub and tabletop containers. The 2" inch tight tufts of green stems are topped with round spiked flower heads of yellow-green florets that turn bronze in late summer. It enjoys sun to part shade in moist to 2" of water. Propagation is by seed, plant division and a unique way by bending a stem so that it touches the water. Which creates a new plantlet and also by cutting the flower head and floating it upside down in water. The plant thrives in zones 9-11 but can be wintered over by bringing it in indoors and placing it in a sunny window. Keeping the soil moist but not submerged in a tray or saucer of water. Temperature should be above 50 degrees.

## Winter pond problems and their solutions

Copyright Water Garden News

Most of the country has had a pretty mild winter, but even these weather conditions can cause a few annoying problems:

### String Algae

String algae (also called blanket weed, hair algae, etc.) This problem can be tackled a couple of different ways, both of them very effective but with just slightly different results: "Green Clean" and "D-Solv" will wipe it out almost instantly on rocks and waterfalls, but must be repeated when new growth starts. "Pond Balance" will slowly dissolve it (takes about 10 days or so, but it will stay gone longer. In all cases it helps to add a beneficial bacteria that will take some of the nutrient overload out of the pond (the excess nutrients are feeding the algae).

### Disappearing Fish

Most fish in garden ponds have very few places to hide in the winter, because the plant cover has died down. This situation makes them prime targets for predators, in particular predatory birds like Owls, Hawks

and Herons. Often, the pond owner notices his fish disappearing one by one without any visible signs in or around the pond that a predator has visited. These critters can be kept at bay by netting the pond and putting a decoy by the pond. Hawks and Owls can be deterred by the net (they scoop the fish up in flight), Herons will stand next to the pond and sometimes work their way through the net to get to the fish. They are best deterred by a decoy (they are very territorial and if they see that a Heron (the decoy) is already at the pond they will look for another place to hunt.

## 2006 TAWGS programs

Speaker	Topic
March 15 - Jerold Binkley	Flowers around your water garden
April 19 - Eric Wood	Rain Gardens
May 17 - David Bartels	Pot luck at Ensley Garden House at Lake Shawnee – What they have done and what they plan to do
June 21 - Brad Cheney	Problems around ponds – Container gardens
July 19 - TBA	
August 16 - Kip Walker	Pond Lights and new products
Sept. 20 David Bartels	Pot luck at Ensley Garden House at Lake Shawnee and tour of gardens
Oct. – Deb Spencer	Disappearing fountains and waterfalls
Nov 15 - No Program	Pot Luck

## Sex and the pond

By Kathy Gill-Hopple

Reprinted from 2-06 Kansas Pond Society Newsletter

While waiting for spring to come, it would be fun to hear the chorus of frogs from the backyard pond; but it is too cold now for even the most romantic creatures. Once the air is warmer, ponds will come alive with the sounds of male frogs looking for love. When the night is filled with croaks, grunts, moans, and snores, those little froggy girls have to figure out which male belongs to their particular species. The girls listen for the right pitch, intensity, volume, frequency and duration of the calls before responding. When they decide they have found just the right man, they move silently to that area (Although American bullfrog girls answer with calls of their own). Nature has provided for this by equipping the female with just the right kind of ears, the "tympanum", located behind the eyes. What she is able to hear is determined by the size and distance between the tympana.

Don't be slackers, girls - you have only about 24 hours to get your eggs fertilized! "Satellite" males often gather near the calling males, waiting silently to benefit from all the activity. They will crouch down, be very still, then intercept the female that responds, or

they may even try to stage a coup, taking over the territory if the calling male leaves to rendezvous with a female. They may start their own calling, to take advantage of any females that straggle in. I can think of a few "satellite" men I have known!

Breeding season varies by species, climate and geography. Some species will call at certain times in some parts of the country but may call all day in others. Most frogs and toads will start calling about a half hour after sunset, although on dark, rainy days they may be actively calling. Most small frogs have a high-pitched chirp, and most large frogs have a low-pitched, deep voice. By calling, the male is advertising his species, sex, reproductive state, and location. Some frogs are very loud, such as green frogs and spring peepers, which can be heard almost a mile away. Vocal sacs underneath the mouth, single or paired, amplify the sound. After the air is drawn in through the lungs, the frog closes his mouth and nostrils (who knew!?!). The air moves across the vocal sacs which act like balloons to amplify the sound. When trying to locate the source of the croaking, try to enlist a helper to scope out the location of the noise maker. Nick Baker's *The Amateur Naturalist* suggests that both people point in the direction the sound seemed to come from, then slowly move toward the spot, where a line drawn from each of you will cross. Keep moving closer each time the frog makes a noise.

FrogwatchUSA is a marvelous organization dedicated to monitoring the status of frogs and toads in the wild. You can be a part of this group by joining and supplying your own observations to others. There are 22 species of frogs and toads in Kansas and plenty of sites besides our own ponds that attract them.

Warm spring air is still too far in the distance to suit me, but at least I do not have to be in a deep-freeze state like the frogs at the bottom of my pond. To survive the winter, an enormous amount of glycogen is stored in the liver, acting like an antifreeze, lowering the body's freezing point to protect sensitive tissues while the rest of the body turns to ice. Once the temperature in the pond warms up, the heart, liver and kidneys will thaw, normal metabolic activity will return, and the singing, courting, and silent stalking will occur. Let the fun begin!

Sources: *The Amateur Naturalist Frogs, A Chorus of Colors* For a remarkable opportunity to hear frog calls, try this web site: <http://www.exploratorium.edu/frogs/tracker/> To participate with FrogwatchUSA: <http://www.nwf.org/frogwatchUSA/> Little known frog facts: The Pacific tree frog is the only frog that makes the familiar 'ribbit' sound. Frogs were the first land vertebrates to develop vocal cords. ANDRLA'S

Most Commonly Reported Species - 2005 (all are native to Kansas): Spring peeper, Green frog, American toad, American bullfrog, Gray tree frog, Pickerel frog. Other Kansas Toads and Frogs: Cope's gray treefrog, Crawfish frog, Eastern narrow-mouthed toad, Great plains toad, Northern cricket frog, Green toad, Plains spadefoot, Plains leopard frog, Red-spotted toad, Southern leopard frog, Spotted chorus frog, Strecker's chorus frog, Western narrow-mouthed toad, Woodhouse's toad, Unknown gray treefrog.

## Educational Opportunities

### Puddles-N-Pads, Topeka – 785-233-3474

March 25 - 8:30 a.m.	Spring start-up
April 1 - 8:00 a.m.	So you are thinking about a pond
April 1 - 8:30 a.m.	Installing a water garden
April 10 - 6:30 p.m.	Installing a water garden
April 22 - 8:30 a.m.	Installing a water garden
April 29 - 4:00 p.m.	Installing a water garden
May 11 - 6:30 p.m.	Installing a water garden
May 20 - 8:30 a.m.	Installing a water garden
June 10 - 8:30 a.m.	Installing a water garden
June 24 - 10:30 a.m.	Fish 101
June 24 - 12:30 a.m.	Pond Plants
June 24 - 2:30 p.m.	So you're thinking about a pond
June 24 - 3:00 p.m.	Installing a water garden
June 25 - 12:30 p.m.	So you're thinking about a pond
June 25 - 1:00 p.m.	Installing a water garden
June 27 - 6:30 p.m.	Installing a water garden
July 8 - 8:20 a.m.	Installing a water garden
July 31 - 6:30 p.m.	Installing a water garden
Aug. 5 - 8:30 a.m.	Installing a water garden
Aug. 31 - 6:30 p.m.	Installing a water garden
Sept. 9 - 8:30 a.m.	Installing a water garden
Sept. 14 - 6:30 p.m.	Installing a water garden
Sept. 23 - 8:30 a.m.	Installing a water garden
Oct. 5 - 6:30 p.m.	Fall shut down
October 7 - 8:30 a.m.	Fall shut down
Space is limited to 16 people per class so register early.	

### Waters Edge, Lawrence – 785-841-6777

April 1 - 10:30 a.m.	Opening your pond
April 15 - 10:30 a.m.	Opening your pond
April 15 - 11:30 a.m.	Repotting aquatic plants
April 22 - 10:30 a.m.	Disappearing fountains and waterfalls
April 29 - 10:30 a.m.	What's new in water gardening
April 29 - 11:30 a.m.	Why is my pond green
April 30 - 1:00 p.m.	Dividing and repotting aquatic plants
May 6 - 10:30 a.m.	Disappearing fountains and waterfalls
May 6 - 11:30 a.m.	Adding aquatics to the perennial garden
May 13 - 10:30 a.m.	Better filtration for your pond
May 20 - 10:30 a.m.	Bells and whistles (adding lighting, fogger, spitter, pump switch, auto-fill, skimmer)
June 3 - 10:30 a.m.	Rain gardens
June 10 - 10:30 a.m.	Early summer pond care and all about tropical waterlilies
June 17 - 10:30 a.m.	Go native
June 24 - 11:00 a.m.	Lotus – myth & mystique
Aug. 5 - 10:30	Frogs, toads and tadpoles
Sept. 16 - 10:30 a.m.	Getting ready for fall and leaf netting
Oct. 7 - 10:30 a.m.	Bubbling bird baths and fountains
Oct. 7 - 11:30 a.m.	Building a tabletop fountain
Oct. 21 - 10:30 a.m.	Winterizing your garden pond

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

## Calendar of Events

March 1-5 – Wichita Lawn & Garden Show  
March 15 – TAWGS monthly meeting  
April 8 – 19 – Tulip Time  
April 19 – TAWGS monthly meeting  
May 17 – TAWGS monthly meeting – Lake Shawnee  
June 17-18 – TBA Garden Tour  
June 21 – TAWGS monthly meeting  
June 24-25 - Topeka Pond Tour  
June 24-25 - Lawrence Pond Tour  
June 24-25 – Wichita Pond Tour  
July 8-9 – Kansas City Pond Tour  
July 19 – TAWGS monthly meeting  
August 16 – TAWGS monthly meeting  
September 20 – TAWGS monthly meeting – Lake Shawnee  
October 18 – TAWGS monthly meeting  
November 15 – TAWGS Pot Luck Supper

### Your Dues are Due if your label reads 2-06 or 3-06

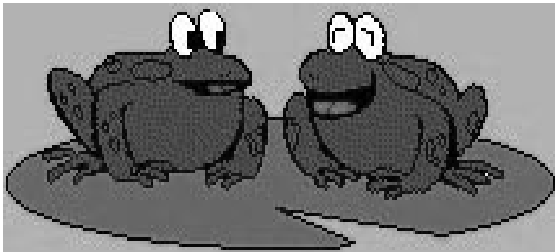
Please renew as soon as possible to continue receiving the newsletter.

Send dues to Jim Green, 5701 SW Arrowhead CT, Topeka, KS 66614

## THE TOPEKA AREA WATER GARDEN SOCIETY 2006 OFFICERS:

Duane Eberhardt Topeka	President 785-246-0240
Floyd Gruver Holton	Vice President 785-364-3046
Diane Gruver Holton	Secretary 785-364-3046
Jim Green Topeka	Treasurer 785-272-7139

Meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month at Old Prairie Town (Ward Meade Park) unless otherwise publicized. Dues are \$15 per single or \$20 per family and can be sent to Jim Green, 5701 SW Arrowhead CT, Topeka, KS 66614.



Check it out - [www.tawas.org](http://www.tawas.org)

## *The Lily Pad*

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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 third weekend of each month. Address input and/or questions to:

Diane Gruver, The Lily Pad Editor  
408 Emerald, Holton, KS 66436  
785 364-3046

[fdgruver@earthlink.net](mailto:fdgruver@earthlink.net)

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