



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 8

September 1, 2006



Kip Walker (r) talks about landscape lighting at the August TAWGS meeting held at the home of Don and Ruth Taliaferro. Members (l-r) are: front row - Betty Karnes and Tom & Pat Routh; 2nd row - Donnis Hodges, Hi Stockwell, Linda Reynolds, Kay McFarland, Helen & Tom Platis, Sandy & Don Regier and Don Taliaferro.

Kip Walker shows landscape lighting in and around the pond

Using the beautiful backyard pond setting of the Taliaferro's, Kip Walker gave an interesting program about landscape lighting in and around the pond. The nice part about the program was that Kip was able to place the lights in the pond or landscape to show exactly what he was talking about. With lights, he made a great backyard setting look even better!

Touching on new products first, Kip said that a new plastic frame called Matrix will soon be available to use in place of huge rocks in the pond. It looks like a milk crate and is very strong and sturdy. He also said that beginning January 1, Aqua Scape and Nursery Pro will combine for a new company called Aqua Scape Pro.

Turning to lighting, Kip said, "Most of us set a light on the top shelf and point it into the pond." That really isn't the best way to light a pond, he said. "You don't want the light to come back at you, giving a deer in the headlight effect."

Kip demonstrated up-lighting tall plants by placing a light in a gorgeous papyrus plant in the Taliaferro's pond. He said it is even more effective when there is a gentle breeze and the plant sways in the wind. Another light highlighted a spitting statuary and the water

Monthly Meeting
6:30 p.m. Sept. 20, 2006
Ted Ensley's Garden House
3720 SE Yacht CT, Lake Shawnee
Go east on SE 37th, jog right at the T and turn onto Yacht CT.
Bring a covered dish and table service.
Hamburgers will be furnished.

arcing into the pond. A light in the waterfall made it almost look like a burning gas fireplace. In the landscape, Kip highlighted a statuary, a hosta and a tree.

"Place lights to see things that you like," Kip said. Place them inside or outside of the pond. You can highlight driftwood, statuary or anything that you would like to see.

Tips that Kip gave on lighting included:

- Leave a 20% cushion on the transformer. In other words, make sure the bulb's total wattage doesn't add up to as much or more than the transformer.
- Loop the line back to the transformer so that the last light will be just as bright as the first light. (Positive to positive and negative to negative.)
- Wind additional cord around a light that you put in the pond so you will have enough cord to lift the light out of the water when you need to change the bulb.
- Don't handle halogen bulbs with your bare hands, the oil from the skin will cause them to burn out quicker.
- Buy wire nuts that are silicone filled or use liquid electrical tape to make the connections waterproof.

Kip said that high voltage lights will give off more light than low voltage lights but the disadvantages of high voltage lights are:

- They cost more
- They are more expensive to operate
- They can kill your fish and give you a "kick" if a connection comes loose

"A low voltage is a softer and safer light," Kip said.

Kip is a sales rep for Lilly Pads & Landscapes and covers several states. He has a background in

stage and concert lighting and has worked for Lilly Pads and Landscapes for several years.

Thanks to Kip and Puddles-N-Pads for the neat underwater lily light that Pat Routh won as a door prize.



TAWGS members, including: front row (l.-r.) - Mary Eberhardt, Betty Karnes, Tom & Pat Routh; second row – Joe Breitenstein, Cheryl Saathoff, Caryn & Larry Sheets, Donniss Hodges, Helen & Tom Platis; back row – Marikay & Doug Peterman, Mary & Stan Bechtold, Hi Stockwell, Linda Reynolds, Kay McFarland, Don Taliaferro and Sandy & Don Regier enjoy the beautiful evening around the pond at the Taliaferro's.

TAWGS Minutes, August 16, 2006

President Duane Eberhardt called the meeting at the pond at the home of Ruth and Don Taliaferro to order with self introductions. He welcomed everyone to the beautiful setting at the Taliaferro's back yard. Betty Karnes moved and Larry Sheets seconded that the minutes be approved as mailed in the August Lily Pad. Motion carried.

Officer Reports

Duane said that he and Mary will be out of town during October Fest so he needed someone to volunteer to chair the TAWGS part of the event. Tom Platis graciously agreed to be in charge of things. Thanks Tom!

Vice President Floyd Gruver said that some of the TAWGS members have been busy helping at Lake Shawnee. Tom Routh and he and Diane, along with 8 – 10 county employees, had moved five pallets of patio blocks on the 15th and there will be another work day on the 22nd. Pat Routh has helped water the plants around the TAWGS pond and also donated a lotus for it. Thanks to all involved, especially to Bob Saathoff who has spearheaded the TAWGS part of the project!

Floyd also reported that he had removed a garbage bag of spent lily blooms and pads from the fountain at Ward Meade recently. He said Diane tried to give moral support and advice, but, since it was very hot, he directed her to go sit in the shade and leave him alone. ☺

Floyd reported that the September 19th meeting will be a pot luck at 6:30 p.m. at the Ted Ensley House at

Lake Shawnee. Dave Bartels will give the program on the plans and progress of the gardens at the lake with a walk around tour of the gardens. Don Taliaferro moved and it was seconded that the society buy hamburgers for the pot luck. Motion carried. Jim Green will be in charge of buying the hamburger and buns. Two or three grills will be needed to cook the hamburgers. Members are asked to bring a covered dish and table service.

Secretary Diane said that it was good to see so many people at the meeting. She reported that she and Floyd will be gone for the September and October meetings. She said that Don Taliaferro has volunteered to take the minutes for those two meetings. Thanks Don! Diane will write the September newsletter before she leaves and there will be no October newsletter since no one volunteered to do it. The November newsletter will be late as she will write it when she gets back the last of October.

Treasurer Jim Green reported that we had \$5,996.80 in the checking and \$1,164.89 in the savings for a total of \$7,161.69. He reported that he had checked the pond at Hospice that TAWGS built a few years ago and it is in fairly good shape. He will see who is in charge of the pond to see if a few improvements can be made. Floyd said he had also gone by the pond and suggested they might put some of the excess hyacinths in the bio filter. Jim also commented that the VA pond looks gorgeous; the landscaping and lilies look good. He also said that the Wildlife and Parks pond is in really good shape.

Joe Breitenstein reported that TAWGS were in charge of the refreshments at the August Garden Council Meeting. He thanked Betty Karnes, Duane & Mary Eberhardt, Helen & Tom Platis, Debbie Dunkin, and Floyd & Diane Gruver who, along with Joe, furnished the refreshments.

Jim Green reported that he, Bob Saathoff and Betty Karnes went to the Ward Meade Wine and Cheese Buffet July 25th. TAWGS received a Time Keeper Award at the meeting.

Mary Bechtold moved, and Larry Sheets seconded that we present Dave Bartels a \$2,500 check for the Lake Shawnee garden project at the September meeting which will be held at Lake Shawnee. Motion carried. We will ask Bob Saathoff to present the check and oversee how the money is spent. We will also ask Bob to contact the news media for possible coverage on the presentation. Meeting adjourned for the interesting program that Kip Walker gave on new pond products and landscape lighting in and around the pond. Delicious banana splits were served by Cheryl Saathoff and Ruth Taliaferro.

Fun fact about koi

Reprinted from Splash 8-11-06

Koi can and will make eye contact with pond owners who take the time to tame them. Koi can see in color, but they are short sighted with vision being sharp for only about 3 to 6 feet.



Door Greeters and Refreshments

Month	Door Greeters	Refreshments
Oct.		Eberharts
Nov.		Pot Luck

Geek it up

By Brent DeShazer

I'm a new pond owner in the Topeka area (Berryton), having just built a 12'x6'x3' pond next to the front entrance of our home which is situated on three acres just south of Topeka. I just recently found the TAWGS web site from a google search and have been going through it and reading some of the articles in the back-issues of the Lily Pad.

In addition to being a new pond owner, I'm also a major computer/electronics/technology nerd, and my family and friends joke that no matter what I do I have to find some way to "geek it up", and our pond has been no exception. Some of my projects this summer after installing the pond have been:

1. Building and installing a small underwater video camera that can be watched from any television in our house day or night, and will soon be streaming onto the Internet. I built my camera for about \$100 whereas most of the ones I found for sale online were \$250 or more.
2. Monitor and graph the pond water temperature on my computer using an inexpensive "1-wire" sensor and interface
3. Automating my pump to automatically turn off for an hour or so each day to help kill the algae growing on the waterfall

Some of these projects can be done in "degrees" as well. For instance, automating the pump can be:

Simple - just using a plug-in timer like what many people use for Christmas lights
Medium - using an automated outlet and stand-alone controller/timer
Complex - using an automated outlet with a computer controller, that only shuts off the pump if the sun is shining or the temperature is higher than a certain set-point, and can automatically adjust for differing times of day depending on the time of year, length of day and DST.

The underwater camera can be:

Simple - just assemble the camera and connect it to a single TV for viewing
Medium - have the fish-cam available on any TV in the house on a certain channel (76, in my case) -OR- stream it to the house computers and onto the Internet
Complex - have the fish-cam available on all TVs -AND- stream it to computers and the

Internet.

Editor's note: Brent recently contacted me by e-mail to ask if he could write some articles for the Lily Pad. He realizes that not all people will want to "Geek Up" their ponds, but for the ones that do, he has some neat ideas.

Water gardens do not equal mosquitoes

by RANDALL TATE

Chief Manager, The Water Garden

Reprinted from 8-06 The Water Garden

Summer is back (with a vengeance I might add). As in recent summers, newspapers across the country feature articles on the West Nile Virus and disease spreading mosquitoes. Customers call with concerns about their pond and how it may be contributing to the mosquito population (actually it is usually the neighbor of a pond owner that causes the customer to contact us).

It is a common misconception of non-pond owners that water gardens breed mosquitoes. But, water gardens are not an additional concern for the increase of a mosquito population. This is for several reasons.

1. Most water gardens contain fish. The fish eat the mosquito larva in the pond. Mosquito fish can be added to a pond, but koi and goldfish do a good job as well. Mosquito fish can also quickly over-populate a pond.
2. Water gardeners are also more likely to know about products like Microbe Lift's biological Mosquito Control, which kills mosquito larva before they can mature. The Mosquito Control is a liquid so there is no unsightly residue and it can be used in ponds with or without fish and also in birdbaths or any other place where water collects. It is safe for fish, birds, people, and pets.
3. Water is a natural attractant of dragonflies and damselflies. These creatures are often called Mosquito Hawks. So, if your neighbor complains about your pond because they are concerned you are going to give them the West Nile Virus, point out the dragonflies hovering around your pond and ask them if they are aware that the average dragonfly consumes hundreds of mosquitoes per day. Dragonfly larva also eat mosquito larva.

If anything, a water garden helps fight against mosquitoes.

The real problem areas for mosquito breeding are the neglected pots, toys, downspouts, etc. Anywhere that water collects is a potential breeding ground for the biting pest, the mosquito. When possible empty these of water. When this is not an option, we go back to the biological Mosquito Control solution.

Mosquitoes lay eggs in still water. Ponds with areas that aren't well circulated that fish cannot get to may also benefit from the use of the biological mosquito control.



Floyd Gruver (center) and Tom Routh (2nd from l.) carry patio blocks at a work day at Lake Shawnee while county employees prepare a patio area at the right.

Patio built at Lake Shawnee

Floyd & Diane Gruver and Tom Routh worked with county employees on August 15th to begin building a patio near the water in the garden area at Lake Shawnee. Bob Saathoff is coordinating the work days which will continue through the summer.

Educational Opportunities

Puddles-N-Pads, Topeka – 785-233-3474

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

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

Plants that cannot freeze solid in the winter time

Hardy water wisteria, golden buttons, melon sword, houttynia chameleon, New Zealand jumping rush, azure carpet, cardinal flower and the lobelias, water clovers, parrot feather, water parsley, pickerel plant and lizard tail should be lowered to the bottom of the pond to assure that they live through the winter. Some winters you might be lucky enough for them to survive on the shelf, but don't count on it being a sure thing!

2006 Pond Tour pictures



Colorado river rock surrounds the 16x21 ft. oval pond at the home of Don and Sandy Regier. Don and Sandy became TAWGS members after being on the tour. Welcome!



Tom and Mary Blubaugh's kidney shaped pond is surrounded by a natural stone patio.



Larry and Barb Shipman's 20x24 pond has a natural 10' multiple waterfall.

Sudden fish death in summer

Reprinted from Splash 8-11-06

We get many emails and calls from Pond Owners who suddenly, without apparent reason, find some or all of their pond fish are dead. Usually this happens with koi, and often with the oldest and biggest ones!

There are, of course, many reasons why pond fish could suddenly die. The usual cause in the summer is oxygen depletion, though. Fish need to extract oxygen from the water (using their gills) to live. The larger the pond fish (and koi are generally the largest pond fish) the more oxygen they need. But...The warmer the pond water, the less oxygen it can store.

It is very important to provide adequate aeration and to make sure the pond is not overstocked with fish (in case the electricity goes out).

Aeration can be provided with waterfalls, fountains and air pumps. For short term emergencies (lack of electricity) it is sometimes enough to throw a few bags of ice in the water to cool it so it can store more oxygen.

WATER PLANTS

By Duane Van Dolah

Marsh cinquefoil



POTENTILLA PALUSTRIS

Marsh cinquefoil is a low-growing, sprawling perennial. It is one of the few members of the rose family that is truly aquatic. Its reddish trailing stems can be as much as 12 inches long, with 3-7 leaflets per stem that are lanced shape and heavily toothed. The leaves and upper part of the stem are often hairy with short, stiff, white hairs on the underside of the leaves. The stem floats in shallow water or sprawls along the shoreline. The flowers at the end of the stem are 1-2 inches across that are deep red turning purple in late summer. It is native to North America where it grows along lakes, streams, and swamps. The leaves and the seeds are eaten by browsing animals and waterfowl. The roots were used by the Indians as a medicinal plant for dysentery and stomach cramps. With a spread and height of 12 inches in zones 3-9, it grows in sun to part shade. It does best in moving water 1-3 inches deep. Propagation is by seeds and roots.

Fall pond preparations

by ERIK TATE, Operations Manager, The Water Garden
Parts reprinted from 9-04 Water Garden News

Sludge on the bottom of the pond should be removed as best we can. If it is about 1/4" thick or so, it is normal and should not be a concern. This sludge is a combination of decaying plant debris, leaves, fish waste, and more. Some of this can be removed with a net. The finer debris can be removed by siphoning or by using a vacuum such as the Mini-Vac or the PondoVac 2.

Remember to continue use of beneficial bacteria. Microbe Lift Autumn Winter Prep is made for cooler

weather and can continue to be used throughout the winter. These bacteria will reduce maintenance by breaking down sludge and debris as well as sustaining biological activity throughout the cold winter months.

You should have stopped feeding your plants by this point. As the foliage on your hardy plants begins to die back you should remove any dead and dying leaves and place the plant deep enough in the pond to keep the roots from freezing. While it is true that some marginal plants will survive even if their roots freeze solid it is best to lower all of your plants below the ice zone.

Prepare your fish for winter

The best time to insure healthy fish in the spring is in the fall of the preceding year! It is much easier to prevent and if necessary, cure problems while the water in the pond is still warm and before the fish go into dormancy.

Examine the fish closely at feeding time. Are there any specks, spots or unusual markings? Any signs of parasites? Fins that look like they have been torn or have had bites taken out of them? Bloody spots on the body of the fish (especially near the fins)?

Switch koi to easily digestible fall food when the temperature drops below 55 degrees Fahrenheit.

Stop feeding when the water temperature drops below 48 – 50 degrees, the fish cannot digest food once the water gets cold. They may act hungry, but please resist the urge to feed them.

Place pieces of PVC or Terra Cotta pipe in the bottom of the pond for your fish to hide from predators now that the plants no longer provide adequate shelter.

Put a floating de-icer in the pond to insure adequate oxygen/carbon monoxide exchange during freezing weather.

Cover the pond with a net to keep out leaves which would contaminate the water and consume much needed oxygen when they decompose.

Wintering tropicals inside

There are two primary factors to consider in growing plants indoors: light intensity and light duration (day length). Tropical plants are especially affected by the length of daylight hours.

Put tropical plants in a sunny window and supplement the short daylight hours with some form of artificial light to extend the daylight hours to 14. South windows are best and west windows are second best for light intensity.

A homemade light fixture can be created with a shop light with florescent lights. Special plant grow lights are more expensive but can be relied upon to supply necessary light in small setups. For convenience, set the lights on a timer. Maintain water temperature in the seventies for best results. Don't crowd plants and run a fan to help keep the stalks from becoming weak.

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

Calendar of Events

September 20 – TAWGS monthly meeting – Potluck
at Lake Shawnee
October 1 – October Fest
October 18 – TAWGS monthly meeting – Speaker –
Deb Spencer, Waters Edge
November 15 – TAWGS Pot Luck Supper
2007
June 23-24 -Topeka Pond Tour

Pond Tips

As the plants in the pond go dormant, fish find less cover to hide from predators such as birds, etc. Use a 5 gallon bucket or a flower pot turned on its side in the bottom of the pond to provide the needed cover

Store unused pumps in water to keep them from drying out during the winter.

Your Dues are Due if your label reads 8-06, 9-06, or 10-06

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

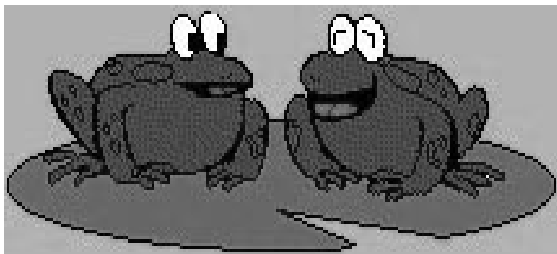
Send dues to Jim Green, 5701 SW Arrowhead CT, Topeka, KS 66614

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

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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
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We reserve the right to edit input to meet publishing requirements. Copy cannot be returned.