



*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 13, Issue 6**

**July 1, 2010**



*Ray Schroeder (r) tells TAWGS members about the trees and flowers in the Ward Meade Park Gardens.*

**TAWGS tours gardens**

Ray Schroeder, former Topeka Parks and Rec. employee, gave TAWGS members a tour of the gardens at Historic Old Prairie Town following their June meeting.

Ray said the gardens were more exotic at first, with unusual stuff for many years, but now it is a mature garden and it has changed a lot over the years.

Walking past the newly installed streambed that many TAWGS members helped build, Ray pointed out the largest pecan tree in northeast Kansas. He said it has been struck by lightning six times during its lifespan. Ray said you can hear the American Linden tree in the spring because it is full of bees. Other trees that we walked by were the Caltalpa, Moerheim blue spruce, Katsura, Golden bamboo hedge, Osage orange, park hedge, Sycamore, Magnolia, Witch Hazel (it blooms in the spring and is used for water witching) and Weeping Purple Beech.

Other trees he pointed out were: Chamasyprurs (a tall evergreen), White pine, Ohio buckeye (Indians fished with it), Redhorse chestnut buckeye, Bottle brush buckeye, hardy Rubber tree and Ray's favorite – the Tri-color Beech tree. Other trees along the way were: Copper beech, Green spire linden, and the native Soapberry tree (it has seeds to make soap).

In addition to the trees, the gardens have many hostas and perennial and annual flowers.

Ray's heart and soul are in the gardens as he

**Monthly Meeting**  
**7:00 Wed., July 21, 2010**  
**Historic Old Prairie Town**  
 (formerly Ward Meade Park)  
**New Ideas for Rain Gardens**  
**and Rain Harvesting**  
**Kip Walker, PADS**  
 (Professional Aquatic Design and Supplies)

started working on them in the mid 1960's and he and his family lived in the mansion for about 12 years. The city's downsizing of employees made Ray decide to retire to preserve a job for the younger folks. He will not be replaced so he worries that the gardens will not get the care they need.

At the present time, Ray plans to come back to work in the gardens a few days a week and develop a volunteer program where TAWGS and other garden clubs can come to help keep the gardens beautiful.

**TAWGS 6-16-2010 Minutes**

Before the meeting started we had a delicious meal of fried fish provided by Allen Ellis and Bob Saathoff, and cooked by Don Taliaferro, Bob and Allen. Side dishes were provided by the members.

Our president, Don Taliaferro, had us do self introductions as we were eating and after the meal Don called the meeting to order.

Floyd Gruver presented a TAWGS cap signed by the members to Ray Schroeder. Last Friday, 6-11-10, was Ray's last official day with the City Parks and Recreation. We know we will still be seeing a lot of Ray and working with him as he sets up a volunteer schedule of members to help take care of things that need to be done around the grounds. Ray's retirement party will be 8-6-10 from 6:00 – 10:00 p.m. here at Ward Meade. Ray said we were all invited.

Treasurer, Jim Green reported that we have \$2,547.99 in the bank. Duane Eberhardt made a motion to approve the treasurer's report and the motion was seconded by Hi Stockwell. Motion carried.

Phil Thompson reported that the advertising for the pond tour starts this week in the Topeka Capitol

Journal's home magazine. It will also be in the Make Momma Happy insert of the paper the week of the pond tour. There will also be some radio spots.

Allen Ellis said he still needed some pond sitters.

Jim Green made a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting, 5-19-10 as written in the June Lily Pad. Kip Walker seconded the motion which carried.

Diane Gruver brought up having a member pond tour, but we will discuss it next meeting.

Kip Walker made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Doug Reynolds seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Following the meeting Ray Schroeder gave us a tour of the grounds, discussing some of the history of the park and some of its many beautiful trees.



Ray Schroeder shows off the hat that TAWGS members signed and was presented to him by Floyd Gruver.

## Can koi and goldfish breed

Reprinted from 6-26-10 *The Pond Guy*

Would that make it a koldfish?

Your fish have finally spawned and after what seems like eons of waiting they are starting to grow into full grown koi...or goldfish...or...what are they?

Your newcomers seem to have unique new patterns and colors that are different than their alleged parents, is it possible your koi and goldfish have crossbred?

While it is possible to crossbreed the two types of fish, it is fairly uncommon for the process to naturally occur in your pond. The outcome of such instances yields sterile offspring that are unable to reproduce. It is much more common to produce new colors and varieties of fish due to

two different types of goldfish reproducing.

While some pond owners are curious about the potential to crossbreed their fish, many more would be happy to just experience the spawning process even once in their back yard water garden regardless of the results. If it has not happened for you yet, make sure you are providing adequate habitat in the form of submerged plants so if your koi do spawn, the eggs and fry will have places to attach and hide to avoid becoming an easy meal (yes koi will eat their own young). Furthermore, maintain a healthy water feature by providing adequate filtration, aeration, and beneficial bacteria.

# Moisture loving plants

by Duane Van Dolah

## Indian Rhubarb



### ***DARmera PELTATA (Peltiphyllum peltatum)***

The Indian Rhubarb is the only species in this genus. It is native to the Western United States in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Another common name for this plant is the Umbrella Plant. In the wild it grows along streams and in wet marshes. The flowers appear first before the leaves do. Flowers that appear in early spring are small, star-shaped, white to pink that form round heads. The stalks that hold them are red tinted and 1-2 feet long. The plant gets 3-4 feet tall and 2-3 feet wide. In mid-spring the leaves show on slender stalks. The leaves are round and up to 24 inches across, dark green, heavily veined and deeply lobed with toothed edges, turning a red shade in fall. The large thick rhizomes grow along the surface of moist to muddy soils. The Indian Rhubarb likes it cool, so a north location is recommended in sun or part-shade. A higher pH over 7.5 can make growing difficult for it. It will grow in zones 5-9. The cultivar 'Nana' is about half the size of the species, growing 12-15 inches tall with 6-8 inch leaves. Propagation is by seed or division in spring.

## Battling mosquitoes

By Erik Tate Operations Manager The Water Garden

Here are a few tips to help in the battle against mosquitoes:

Install a water garden. Yes, that's right, I said "install a water garden". 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. In fact, a water garden helps fight against mosquitoes. Bodies of water are a natural attractant of dragonflies and damselflies. These creatures are often called Mosquito Hawks. The average dragonfly consumes hundreds of mosquitoes per day. Dragonfly larva also eat mosquito larva. Also, most water gardens contain fish. The fish eat the mosquito larva that may still end up in the pond.

Empty anything in your yard that is holding water unnecessarily. This is where most residential mosquito problems originate. Downspouts, pots, toys, tarps, etc collect water and provide the perfect breeding ground for mosquitoes.

Treat other areas with biological mosquito control. Mosquito Dunks, Mosquito Bits, and Microbe Lift's Biological Mosquito Control are all natural biological treatments that you can add to any water that needs it. These areas include fountains without fish, birdbaths, low areas of the yard that puddle, etc. Mosquitoes have always been annoying and in recent years the concern of disease such as the West Nile Virus has brought a new level of concern to mosquito control. Fortunately, there are ways to help reduce the mosquito population in your yard.



## Refreshments for 2010

We have a couple of months that we need someone to volunteer to bring refreshments. Also, it is nice to have more than one couple each month. If you would like to volunteer, please call Don Taliaferro at 272-8348 or e-mail dontal@swbell.net or Diane Gruver, 364-3046 or fdgruver@embarqmail.com.

July	NEED VOLUNTEERS
August	Tom and Helen Platis
Sept.	Floyd & Diane Gruver
Oct.	NEED VOLUNTEERS
Nov.	Pot Luck

## Lighting adds ambiance

Adding pond lights is a great way to bring your water garden to life after dark. There are a few things to think about when setting up pond lights.

#1 - Point Pond Lights Away From the Viewing Area. When placing your pond lights, it is always suggested to point the lights away from the viewing area (where you sit or stand to enjoy your water garden the most). This will prevent the lights from shining in your eyes when trying to enjoy the view.

#2 - Selecting the right light. Pond lighting is generally 12 volt. 12-Volt is much easier and safer to work with than standard 115v power. 12 volt power is produced by simply adding a transformer. There are basically two types of lights spot lights and flood lights. The difference is that a spot light will produce an intense light to directly light up a subject or feature, where a flood light can provide a glow on a larger target.


Tip: It is recommended to use only 90% of the

total transformer output to maximize light potential. For example: a 300 watt transformer should have a maximum of 270 watts of watts. That would be equivalent to (5) 50 watt lights and (1) 20 watt light. Please Note: Some pond lights will come with their own transformer.

#3 - Combo Underwater Lighting and Landscape Lighting. Don't only think of adding pond lights to light up the water. Make sure to add some landscape lighting to show off your landscape and set the tone.

### Pond Tip

*Help your koi spawn with water hyacinth.*



## 2010 Pond Tour Pictures



*A large toad guards the pond of Ed and Linda Klem on the recent pond tour. He was a major hit with the visitors.*



*A foot bridge spans the 4,000 gallon pond at the home of Chuck and Sharon Tracy.*

Go to [www.tawgs.org](http://www.tawgs.org) for more great pond pictures!

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

### Calendar of Events

- July 10-11 – KC Pond Tour
- July 10-11 – Wichita Pond Tour
- Aug. 18 – Monthly TAWGS Meeting
- Sept. 15 – Monthly TAWGS Meeting
- Oct. 3 – Apple Fest
- Oct. 20 – Monthly TAWGS Meeting
- Nov. 17 – Monthly TAWGS Meeting

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*Part of the cycle of water lilies and other aquatic plants includes foliage turning brown and then rotting off. This is normal as long as new foliage is emerging as well. To help reduce the amount of sludge build-up in your pond, remove dying foliage, including spent flowers, from plants before it has a chance to fall into the water and decay.*



**Your Dues are Due if your label reads 5-10, 6-10 or 7-10**  
 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 2010 OFFICERS:

- |                          |                                |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Don Taliaferro<br>Topeka | President<br>785-272-8348      |
| Bob Saathoff<br>Topeka   | Vice President<br>785-272-7125 |
| Sandy Regier<br>Topeka   | Secretary<br>785-286-9998      |
| Jim Green<br>Topeka      | Treasurer<br>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.tawgs.org](http://www.tawgs.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@embarqmail.com](mailto:fdgruver@embarqmail.com)

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