



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 14, Issue 6

July 1, 2011



Bill Riphian talks about the history of the Parks & Rec. of Topeka at the TAWGS meeting. Photo by Bob Saathoff.

Riphian tells history of Parks & Rec of Topeka

Bill Riphian gave a very interesting program on the history of the Topeka Parks and Recreation Department of Topeka. He has been with the department for 24 years so has seen a lot of changes during that time.

Bill showed wonderful slides of old pictures of the parks, swimming pools, Ward Meade Mansion and other aspects of the parks. Several TAWGS members could remember some of the things that he talked about as they lived in Topeka during that time.

Bill said that Gage Park was about 3 miles out in the country when the land was given to the city. A lot of

Monthly Meeting
7:00 p.m., July 20

Historic Old Prairie Town
(formerly Ward Meade Park)

Program to be announced
later

the work on Gage Park was done during the depression.

TAWGS Minutes 6-15-11

Don Taliaferro called our meeting to order with self introductions after we all enjoyed a delicious fish fry and pot luck. Also, Mary weaver introduced a few of the pond tour hosts that were there.

Our Guest speaker for the evening was Bill Riphian from Parks and Rec. We enjoyed a slide show and talk on the history of Topeka Parks.

Motion was made by Mary Weaver to approve the minutes of our May meeting as written in the Lily Pad. Amy Thompson seconded. Motion carried.

Treasure Jim Green reported we have \$1,167.63 in the bank. Bob Saathoff made a motion to approve the treasurer's report. Michael Bradley seconded. Motion carried.

Bob Saathoff said that Ray Schroeder is working at Old Prairie Town 3 days a week. Ray said there is some drainage problems here that he feels can be taken care of by building a couple of dry stream beds to divert the water. Ray will probably be at our next meeting to discuss this further.

Tom Platis reported that Apple Fest this year is October 2. He will not be able to be chairperson this year as he can't be there all day, but he will be able to help. We will need a volunteer to do this so anyone willing please let Don Taliaferro know.

Mary Weaver reported that everything is going well with the pond tour. The tickets have been printed and distributed. A date was set for Friday 8-5-11 in the evening and 8-6-11 during the day to dismantle the pond in front of Puddles & Pads. The material we take can either be stored at Puddles and Pads or Old Prairie Town until it is needed for other projects. More on this will be

discussed at our next meeting.

Diane Gruver reminded us of the member pond tour we are setting up for August 21 or August 14. Don Taliaferro is checking with Scott at the Brickyard Barn Inn to see if either of these dates would be okay. Don said to call him if we are willing to be on the tour. We need 3 or 4 ponds and then would end up at Brickyard Barn Inn for a potluck.

Phil Thompson suggested that anyone on Facebook could share information with their friends about the Pond Tour which would be a good way to get the word out.

Cheryl Saathoff made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tom Platis seconded. Motion carried.



The Ecosystem of the Garden

Birds & Blooms 6-9-11

Your wildlife garden is an ecosystem of interconnected parts. Everything is connected when you create a welcoming habitat for wildlife, the priority of your garden.

It's not just the birds and the blooms as two different subjects. It is that the birds are connected to the blooms, which are connected to the insects, which are connected to frogs, toads, and bats. It's a food web, a chain of events that all work together to create a total system.

The Five Pillars of Ecosystem Gardening

1. Sustainable Landscaping

Sustainability may be one of the most overused words in the gardening world right now, and there are long wordy definitions to attempt to clarify its meaning. But I break it down into two areas:

Manage your Inputs. A sustainable garden does not need all of those bags and bottles of stuff that you can find at the garden center.

Manage your Outputs. A sustainable garden will work to eliminate outputs from your property, such as managing storm water on-site, and managing your yard waste on-site through composting.

2. Healthy Soil

Ever heard that adage, "Feed the Soil, not the Plant?" Healthy plants need healthy soil. And wildlife gardeners know that there is more wildlife beneath the soil than there is above the ground. Chemical fertilizers and pesticides destroy these soil organisms, and these organisms are responsible for keeping your soil healthy.

3. Water Conservation

I don't know why we treat rain water as toxic waste to be rushed immediately off of our properties, but with good planning you can keep this valuable resource in your garden, reduce your water bills, and help stop flooding and stream bank erosion.

4. Remove Invasive Plants

Invasive plants are escaping from our gardens, and running rampant through our woodlands and natural areas. We as taxpayers pay \$138 BILLION every year trying to control these species. These plants are destroying wildlife habitat, so we can make a big difference for wildlife in our gardens by removing these plants.

5. Add More Native Plants

Native plants support local food webs. We have the power to really help wildlife when we add more native plants to our gardens. Every state has a native plant society that can help you determine the most appropriate plants for your garden. And these wonderful people are a great resource, not only about the plants but also where you can find them close to you.

When we follow these five principles, we will automatically begin to see more wildlife in our gardens.



Try small water features

The Pond Guy 6-10-11

One of the many great things about pond keeping is that it's a scalable pastime. Whether you live on a postage stamp or a plantation, it's possible to create a perfect pond that's the perfect fit.

For small yards – and people who just want to get their feet wet (pun completely intended) – container water gardens offer all the satisfaction of pond keeping, without the need for a backhoe, or even much of a backyard. Container water gardens are pretty much just like they sound: small, self-contained pools that are tailor-made for a few select Aquatic Plants, and even a choice selection of your favorite fish. These stand-alone gardens are ideal for decks, patios, gardens, and anywhere else you'd like to

add a water feature around your home.

Starting your own adventure into container water gardening is simple. As a first step, we strongly recommend reading through one or more Container Water Garden Books. Both Container Water Gardening for Hobbyists and Water Gardening in Containers provide a world of useful information that can help you get started – while sidestepping common mistakes.

After you're sufficiently up to speed, it's time to gear up. Start with the right container for the water garden space you've identified. Next, you'll need to shop for the perfect plants, some choice plant media and a plant basket or two to hold them. If fish are in your water garden's future, you'll also want to consider an aeration system to keep your aquatic environment safe and healthy for habitation. Finally, as the perfect finishing touch, you'll also want to consider some halogen lights, with colored lens options that make your water garden a night time spectacle to remember.

Should I eradicate all algae from my pond?

The Pond Guy 5-26-11

In a word, the simple answer to this question is no. Algae serves a vital role in the health of your pond, providing both natural filtration and food for fish and wildlife. Algae also looks aesthetically pleasing in a pond, provided there's not too much of it.

To better understand algae's place in your pond, it's important to know the different types that are common. First, there's filamentous algae. Often referred to as "pond scum," growth of filamentous algae typically begins on the pond bottom. As it grows, it rises to the surface, and can quickly spread to cover the entire pond if not controlled.

String algae is the second variety of algae pond owners will invariably come to know. Essentially a variation on filamentous algae, this algae isn't harmful, but its rapid growth can quickly take over the pond if it's not controlled. Frequently seen on rocks in waterfalls, string algae has been known to double its mass in 24 hours when conditions are right – leaving little room for beneficial algae growth, and inhibiting the growth of beneficial bacteria and plants.

Where filamentous algae are generally unwelcome in most ponds, planktonic algae is its beneficial counterpart. Planktonic algae generally thrives within the first few feet from the surface, where it relies on light for photosynthesis – and produces food for microscopic pond dwellers and newly-hatched fry. While typically desirable in ponds, planktonic algae can bloom, and some forms can be toxic to animals. In those circumstances, special measures may be necessary to control its growth.

In order to maintain a healthy balance of algae growth in your pond, there are a few simple steps that go a long way. First, make sure you sufficient aeration. Stagnant water is an open invitation for excessive algae

growth. Even if you have a waterfall, consider adding something to increase water circulation. For more aggressive algae treatment, use an algicide such as AlgaeFix to kill the algae and then follow up with the Pond Logic® DefensePAC. And as a precautionary measure, consider adding a selection of aquatic plants to help maintain your pond's equilibrium, to reduce excessive algae-promoting sunlight, and to provide safe havens for fish.

Moisture loving plants

By Duane VanDolah

Spotted Water Hemlock **CICUTA MACULATA**

Also known as Spotted Cowbane and Water Hemlock, this North American perennial is considered one of the most poisonous plants in all the plant kingdom. It causes vio-

lent convulsions and then death. The biological relative of this plant was the poisonous plant Socrates used to kill himself. Very minute parts of this plant ingested will result in death in 15 minutes to 2 hours.

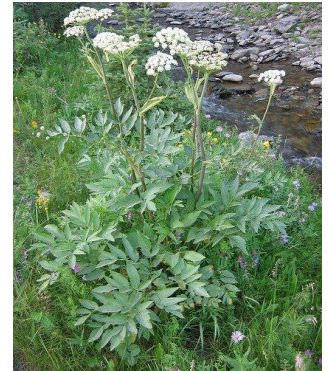
A stout, erect herb, the new starting leaf growth resembles the carrot from which family, the parsley family, it is from. The plant reaches 3-7 feet tall and 3-6 feet wide, branching sometimes. The strong, waxy stems are green and sometimes purple with spots or stripes, which gives it the name of Spotted Water Hemlock. The green narrow leaves are in groups of three and sometimes more. The leaves are 8-20 inches long and 1 ¼ inch wide, and are very finely toothed along the edges. The flowers are formed in a 6-inch globe with clusters of 15-20, small pure white 1/8 inch florets in July-August. The flowers have a very slight to no odor at all, but the leaves, when crushed, release a pleasant licorice or anise odor. Washing hands after skin contact is a must.

Although it will grow in sun, it is happiest growing in part sun, in zones 2-8. The Spotted Water Hemlock needs consistent wet conditions. It prefers streams, ponds, wet meadows, and bogs. Temporary flooding up to 12 inches deep can be tolerated. Propagation is by seed or division. It is a great source for nectar as food for small-tongued insects.

Besides food for the Swallow-tailed Butterfly and small butterflies, some of the more unique wasps that visit are the Cuckoo, Chalcid, Braconid, Spider, Paper, Mud Daubers, Wild Carrot, and Velvet Ant wasps among other wasps. Again this plant should not be planted where people or mammals are around; but if you live in a rural area, the Spotted Water Hemlock could be a very useful plant for its flower and the insects that feed on it.

Tip

Do you have trouble with fish rooting around in the gravel and soil of the plant pots in your pond? If so, try adding potato sized cobble stones on top of the gravel to discourage this behavior.



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

2011 Calendar of Events

July 9-10	Topeka Pond Tour
July 20	Monthly Meeting
Aug. 5	Dismantle pond at P&P
Aug. 6	Dismantle pond at P&P
Aug. 17	Monthly Meeting
Aug. 21	Member Pond Tour
Sept. 21	Monthly Meeting
Oct. 2	Apple Fest
Oct. 19	Monthly Meeting
Nov. 16	Monthly Meeting



Annual plants typically produce many more flowers than perennial varieties. So, if you want more flowers on your water lilies, you should choose plants from the tropical varieties.

Your Dues are Due if your label reads 5-11, 6-11 or 7-11

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

2011 OFFICERS:

Don Taliaferro Topeka	President 785-272-8348
Bob Saathoff Topeka	Vice President 785-272-7125
Sandy Regier Topeka	Secretary 785-286-9998
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.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 third weekend of each month. Address input and/or questions to:

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 785-364-3046

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