



# *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 9**

**Oct. 1, 2011**



**Dave Bartles (r) tells TAWGS members some of the plans for the Garden by the Lake.**

## **TAWGS tours gardens**

Dave Bartles from Shawnee Co. Parks and Recreation, gave TAWGS members an interesting tour of the gardens at Lake Shawnee following our potluck/meeting in September. The vivid colors of all the beautiful flowers were just awesome. It doesn't seem to matter what season, there are always beautiful flowers blooming everywhere.

Dave said that almost all of the gardens are now under an irrigation system which really saves time for them by not having to drag hoses every place. This fall they are going to run new sidewalks in the south part of the gardens.

The "drive-in" gazebo (tongue in cheek) has been temporarily repaired for now with new pieces to be added later to repair the structural damage. The gazebo was literally moved when a drunk in an airborne pickup crashed into it when a deputy was chasing him. The gazebo is used for many weddings.

The roses in the garden have a virus that is hard to treat so the bushes will be removed and new plantings put in their place, probably this fall. The long awaited fountain is now in place and looks very nice. The ravine that TAWGS members worked so hard to clear and plant hostas and ferns in a few years ago has really developed into a lovely area too.

As for the merger of the city and county parks and recreation departments, Dave said he really doesn't

**Monthly Meeting**  
**7:00 p.m., Wed., Oct19**  
**Historic Old Prairie Town**  
**124 NW Fillmore**  
**Melody Weller - Wild Bird House**  
**Attracting birds to your back yard**

know very much about it yet. He knows that there will be some budget cuts.

Look for the Lake Shawnee Gardens on Facebook soon, as they strive to enter the new modern era of technology, Dave said. He also reported that Julie Trowbridge who had worked for the gardens for many, many years retired in March.



**The new fountain in the gardens looks very refreshing.**

## **TAWGS Minutes 9-21-11**

Don Taliaferro called our meeting to order with self introductions before we enjoyed a delicious potluck at the Lake Shawnee Garden House. During the dinner we had a short meeting. Bob Saathoff made a motion to approve the minutes as written in the Lily Pad. Tom Routh seconded. Motion carried. Jim Green reported that we have \$2,461.61 in the bank. A motion was made to approve the treasurers report by Michael Bradley. Dona

Peterson seconded. Motion carried.

Tom Platis gave us the times scheduled for the volunteers at Apple Fest on Oct. 2. He said we could get a letter from the city with our time and other instructions.

Don Taliaferro said he would call some of the members to form a nominating committee for officers for next year.

Diane Gruver asked what had been done about reinstating TAWGS as a non profit organization. Tom Platis and Jim Green will get together to see what needs to be done to get this accomplished and report on this next meeting.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Floyd Gruver and Tom Routh seconded. Motion carried.

Dave Bartels then gave us a tour to show us some of the things that have been done at the lake and some of the new things that are going to be done.

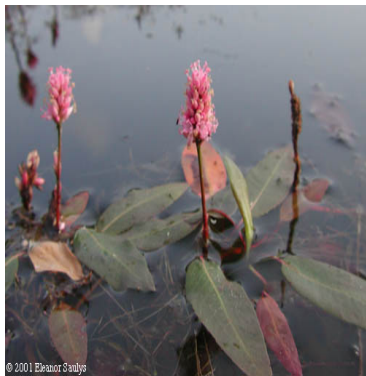
Sandy Regier Secretary

# Water plants

by Duane VanDolah

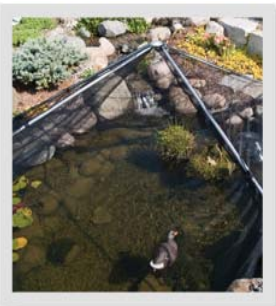
## Water Smartweed

*Polygonum amphibium*



Smartweed is a native plant that floats and spreads across the water. The long, narrow leaves are 1-10 inches long and are ½ inches to 2 ½ inches wide, willow-shaped and dark green, glossy and leathery. The leaves are usually tinged in red and accented with a red or black chevron design. Forming a mat on the surface to about 3 feet across, flowers start growing to a height of 3 feet with pink spikes, 4 inch long flower heads bloom in June through September. The plant grows in full sun to part-shade and at a water depth of 12-18 inches but will adapt to shallower or water depths to 4 feet.

Water Smartweed is a perennial herb, and the name Smartweed refers to the strong acid sap in the plants. Seeds from the Smartweed provide food for waterfowl, marsh birds, and song birds. Medicinally it is used as an antiseptic, a cure for poisoning, mouth sores and stomach aches. Propagation is by cuttings or seeds. In Fall, it puts on a great display with the pink flowers and red Autumn-colored leaves.



## To net or not to net

*The Pond Guy 9-24-11*

Leaves are notoriously difficult to train. Try as you might, they simply fall wherever they please. And

when their drop zone of choice is your pond, the task of cleaning them out quickly loses its novelty. Fortunately, there are lots of ways to keep even the most determined leaves out – and cleaning your skimmer on a regular basis is just the beginning.

For those who experience limited leaf drop in their pond, a skimmer may do the lion's share of the work by gathering up the majority of floating leaves and debris. For any surplus, and for leaves and debris that sink to the bottom of the pond, hand nets and vacuums may be sufficient to keep your water clean and clear.

But not everyone enjoys the satisfying sense of accomplishment that comes with manual leaf removal. If you're one of those who don't, we strongly recommend the use of pond netting to stop leaves before they reach the water. There are plenty of options. For economical, single-season purposes, try the Dewitt Economy Pond Netting. For a more durable option that stops leaves and debris, keeps predators at bay and allows abundant light penetration, consider the Clear Fine Mesh Pond Netting. For durable protection that will provide years of use, the nylon mesh construction of the Premium Pond Netting is an exceptional value.

For the ultimate in pond protection, though, the Nycon Big Top Pond Cover is a natural choice. Designed to prevent penetration by even the smallest debris – while keeping predators out – this durable cover forms a tent over your pond, and will provide years of seasonal service.

However you choose to preserve your pond's pristine appearance, timing is of the essence. As soon as leaves start to fall, it's time to take action. And whether you're skimming, cleaning or covering, we have everything you need to make the job a breeze.

## Bringing fish inside for the winter

*The Pond Guy 10-12-10*

While we don't really like to think about it, there are places in the U.S. that get cold enough to freeze decorative water gardens solid if the pond is not deep enough. As your fish do not appreciate being turned into popsicles you will probably want to bring them indoors for the winter. Since the majority of you don't have a beautiful indoor pond just waiting to house our fish in the colder months how do you go about creating a safe environment for your fish to bunker down in?

Your first and foremost priority is to select a location that is climate controlled, safe from disturbances and large enough to facilitate a holding tank. Your basement or heated garage are a couple places you can consider. The container you choose to hold your fish should be made of a fish safe material and should be cleaned thoroughly before use. The size of this container will depend on the size and number of fish you need to relocate. Unless they are sardines your fish will not do



well when packed tightly into a tiny container.

Purchasing a small pre-formed pond liner is a great idea for someone who has large Koi or an ample amount of fish that need a winter home. You will also want to purchase some Pond Netting to keep your fish from jumping out of their winter apartment and onto your garage floor.

The new container can be filled with water from your water garden or you can start from scratch and fill it with tap water. If you decide to fill from the tap you will want to add a Water Conditioner to neutralize any chloramines and remove other potentially harmful elements from the water. In addition to pond conditioner you will want to allow a few weeks for the water in the container to cycle and balance. Aeration and filtration will play a major role in the well being of your fish once they are relocated. If you currently use an external pressurized filter your water garden, this can be used for your inside application as you will have to bring it in for the winter regardless. You will also need a small pump to circulate the water in this container as well which you may also be able to borrow from your outdoor water garden. If you have neither a pump nor pressurized filter on hand you can purchase an All-In-One system to do the job. If you have to use a new filter or you decided to fill the container with tap water seed your filtration pads with PL Gel to ensure an adequate presence of beneficial bacteria and reduce the waters cycle time.

When the time comes, collect your fish using a fish net and transfer them to their new home using the same acclimation process you would undergo with new fish. Do not feel the need to rush through the transporting process as your fish are safe and comfortable in their water garden for the time being. Take your time to make sure your fish are moving into a safe and comfortable environment so you and your fish can enjoy some indoor ponding this winter.

## Winterization do's and don'ts

*Reprinted from Splash Pond Market*

It is already that time of year, where did the summer go? Now it is time to get the pond ready for winter and to do a few simple things to help make sure your fish survive until spring:

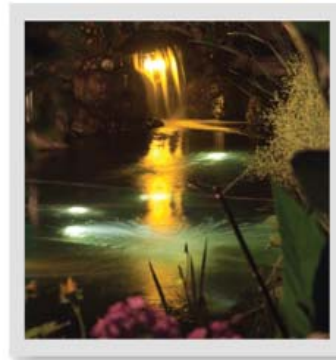
Hopefully you will already have moved your tropical plants inside, so they do not freeze! Examples but not a complete list of plants that must be moved inside in colder climates: Water Canna, Taro, Umbrella Palm, Papyrus and tropical Water Lilies. Water Hyacinth and Water Lettuce should be fished out and discarded. If allowed to die in the pond they will sink and make a terrible mess to clean up in the spring (they will also foul the water and take up valuable oxygen while decomposing).

Stop feeding the fish when the water temperature dips below 50 degrees Fahrenheit, they will no longer be able to digest food. Koi in particular should be fed a cool weather food once water temps go below 65 degrees to make sure they can digest it properly.

Put netting over the pond if there are a lot of trees around, to prevent them from ending up in your pond! Netting also helps to protect your fish from predators once the plants die down and no longer provide cover.

Ensure that your fish have adequate oxygen during

the winter by either letting a pump run or putting a de-icer in the pond. T I P: Pumps tend to clog and it is very unpleasant to have to clean them when the water is cold. Using a de-icer instead eliminates that chore - crowded ponds may need an air pump in addition to a de-icer to provide adequate oxygen.



## Chose the right pond lights

*The Pond Guy 9-17-11*

Although it seems like it should be simple, the sheer variety of available pond lights can make it a bit daunting to choose what's right for your needs. But in truth, that's where it starts: decide exactly what you want to light – and how – and the choices sort of narrow themselves. So take a moment to think about what you're trying to illuminate. A waterfall? A fountain? A spitter? The whole pond?

As luck would have it, there are options to fit all of your pond lighting needs. For submerged waterfall lighting, the Halogen Waterfall Light is fully waterproof, and exceptionally easy to install. For more generalized lighting both underwater and around the pond, the HalogenMini™ 3-Pack Halogen Light Kits are simple to install, and they offer the added appeal of colored lenses for a lively, customized look. For greater energy efficiency and exceptionally long bulb life, the LEDPro™ 36 – 3 Pack Warm LED Light Kit is the ideal choice. These lights can be installed in or out of the water.

Because LED bulbs can last for up to 100,000 hours, they're essentially maintenance free. Regardless which light kit you choose, installation is simple. The transformers are designed with quick disconnect fittings – and there's no need to recruit an electrician to get your pond wired and ready.

Once you've identified your specific pond lighting needs, you should also spend a moment pondering the stage of your pond's construction – and the flexibility you're hoping to achieve. If your pond is brand new, or if it's currently drained, it greatly simplifies the process of installing underwater lights. If it's not, you may want to consider an installation without submerged lights. Through some creative design, the effect can be every bit as dramatic.

If you're planning to automate your pond lighting, you may also want to consider installing timers, or photocells that trigger lights when darkness falls – without any need to flip a switch.

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*Some tropical water lilies will bloom all winter if kept in a tub container inside and given at least six hours of bright light each day.*

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

## 2011 Calendar of Events

Oct. 2                      Apple Fest  
Oct. 19                     Monthly Meeting  
Nov. 16                     Monthly Meeting



*Fish do not have stomachs, they digest their food in their intestine! This is part of the reason why it is important to switch to cool temperature food when the water temperatures fall - so undigested food does not get impacted in their intestine.*

**Your Dues are Due if your label reads  
8-11, 9-11 or 10-11**

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

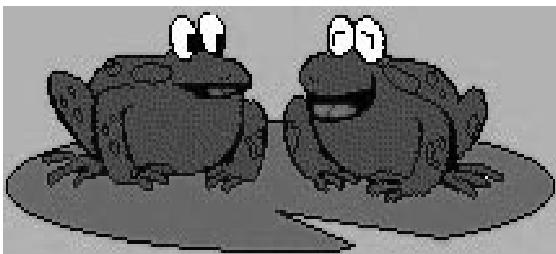
Send dues to Jim Green, 5701 SW  
Arrowhead CT, Topeka, KS 66614

### 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](http://www.tawgs.org)**

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Published Monthly, February to November by the Topeka Area Water Garden Society (TAWGS), a non-profit organization. TAWGS does not warrant the information in this newsletter. The opinions expressed are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Topeka Area Water Garden Society.

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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785-364-3046

[fdgruver@embarqmail.com](mailto:fdgruver@embarqmail.com)

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