



# *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 15, Issue 6**

**July 1, 2012**



*Ray Schroeder (r) tells TAWGS members about the history of the mansion.*

## **TAWGS tours Ward Meade mansion**

Even though TAWGS has been meeting in the Preston Hale room at the Ward Meade mansion since our inception in 1998, few people had ever seen the inside of the living quarters of the mansion. It was a real treat for all of us for Ray Schroeder to give us a tour of the mansion, log cabin and drug store following our potluck supper June 20.

Building of the limestone and brick Victorian mansion was started in 1870. Upon completion, it was the largest house in Topeka at the time. It was located along the banks of the Kansas River near the area where a ferry was operated. Travelers were welcomed at the house as they passed through the area.

As years went by, the family moved away and the house deteriorated, the business people in Topeka decided to tear the mansion down, but the garden clubs of Topeka wanted to save the house for a place to hold their meetings and flower shows.

The replica of the first cabin for the family is actually three cabins joined together. It is now used to serve hearth dinners to people that want to experience the flavor of the early days. One of the cabins was originally located in Gage Park and was dismantled piece

## **Monthly Meeting 7:00 p.m., Wed., July 18 Historic Old Prairie Town**

**124 NW Fillmore**

***"Everything You Always Wanted to Know About  
What Lives in Your Water Garden But Were Afraid  
to Ask"***

**Clint Goodrich & Diana Lehmann**

by piece and put back together at the present location.

Some members wanted to wander in the 6 acre botanical gardens which feature several water gardens and streambeds, plus a dry streambed. Trees and plants, both perennial and annuals, create a beautiful scene for visitors to enjoy.

Ray said he and his family lived at the park for about 12 years when he was the caretaker of the house and gardens. They did not live in the mansion rooms with the period furniture, but in rooms attached to the north side of the house. He said he raised his children in that house and he can tell many entertaining stories of things that happened in years gone by.

## **Interesting program for July**

*by Bob Saathoff*

A very informative team presentation will given at the July 18th TAWGS meeting at Old Prairie Town. Clint Goodrich, Environmental Scientist with the Kansas Dept. of Health and Environment will discuss and show samples of the various invertebrates that use our water gardens in the early stages of their lives. Diana Lehmann, Environmental Scientist and Training Coordinator with the KDHE will discuss various kinds of algae that can live in our water gardens and alternative treatments. Diana is also very knowledgeable on blue-green algae that has been developing in our lakes, streams and reservoirs.

Please come and enjoy this presentation by two scientists who work in Kansas streams, lakes and wetlands as they discuss the good and the bad things that we make homes for in our water gardens along with benefits and possible cures.



*Bob Saathoff cooks fish for the fish fry/potluck dinner at the June meeting.*

## TAWGS Minutes 6-20-12

Present: Don Taliaferro, Ruth Taliaferro, Susan Kraus, Bill Kraus, Jim Mowder, Sue Mowder, Diane Gruver, Floyd Gruver, Tom Routh, Pat Routh, Don Reiger, Sandy Reiger, Hi Stockwell, Michael Bradley, Mary Pat Fischer, John Fischer, Ray Schroeder, Tom Platis, Helen Platis, Jim Green, Dona Peterson, Jeff Hampton, Colleen Hampton, Marikay Peterman, Doug Peterman, Cheryl Saathoff, Bob Saathoff, Amy Thompson and Phil Thompson

Guests: Jamie Hawk and Galen Hawk

**June program:** The annual fish fry/pot luck dinner was held followed by a tour of the Ward-Meade mansion and Old Prairie Town with Ray Schroeder.

**May Minutes:** A motion was made by Jim Green and seconded by Mary Pat Fischer to approve the minutes, the motion carried.

**Treasurer's report:** Jim Green reported that TAWGS incurred \$579.53 in expenses. A majority of the expenses, \$500, were to cover the annual premium for the liability insurance. Jim reported that he had not yet sent the check. A motion was made by Diane Gruver and seconded by Michael Bradley to approve payment of the liability insurance. The motion passed.

Another \$111 was spent on printing the Pond Tour tickets.

Jim shared that he recently learned of a computer virus that will prohibit access to the internet on July 9. He cautioned members to go to [www.DNS-ok.us](http://www.DNS-ok.us) to determine if their computer may have been infected.

Jim also reported that he has not yet sent the IRS non-profit reinstatement documents.

Bill Kraus made a motion to accept the treasurer's report; Jim Mowder seconded it and the motion carried.

### Other Business:

- Apple Festival – The Apple Festival will be held Oct. 7 at Old Prairie Town. TAWGS needs to identify a chair person who will coordinate volunteers to help with this event. As part of the

room rental fee for the monthly TAWGS meetings at Old Prairie Town, TAWGS has agreed to provide assistance with the event.

- Pond Tour – Outstanding logistics such as ticket distribution, pond sitter assignments and plaques were discussed and managed by Phil Thompson and Don Taliaferro
- Topeka Beautification Association – Bob Saathoff said that they are in need of entries for their ponds and gardens contest. Judging would be held June 29 and July 1

A motion to adjourn was made by Mary Pat Fischer and seconded by Jim Green. The motion carried.

The next meeting is 7:00 p.m., July 18, 2012 at Old Prairie Town. Amy Thompson, Secretary

## Fish love bloodworms

The Pond Guy 6-22-12



What are those tiny red worms in my filter?

They're tiny, they're wriggly, and they're blood-red – or at least a creamy pink color. What are they? They're non-biting midge fly larvae, also known as bloodworms. Though they're an unsettling infestation to see in your filter, they're actually harmless to your fish.

Know Your Chironomidae

Midge flies hail from the family Chironomidae, which includes more than 10,000 different species worldwide. Some varieties appear bright red in color thanks to a hemoglobin-type substance that helps them live with oxygen-depleted water, giving them their "bloodworm" nickname.

As adults, midge flies resemble mosquitoes, but they have fluffy antennae and no blood-sucking proboscis. Large numbers of them can be a nuisance as their droppings can cause damage to paint, brick and other surfaces. And when their tiny corpses pile up, they can cause a stink.

Home Sweet Home

These insects thrive in freshwater aquatic and semi-aquatic environments. In their larval stages, they live in tree holes, bromeliads, rotting vegetation, soil and artificial containers – including filtration systems, infesting media pads. They spend their time attached to the container's solid surface and taking in tasty food as it floats by.

Midge flies lay their eggs in water, preferring it to be still, clear, dark and safe from critters like fish and frogs that nosh on the larvae when they emerge. To protect themselves, the bloodworms actually create and live in tiny half-inch tubes they build from mud, algae and other naturally occurring resources. Look closely in your filter,

and you'll probably see some of these worm-sized mud huts.

#### A Tasty Fish Treat

Don't worry: These little guys won't harm your pond or your fish. In fact, if one wriggles its way into your pond, it will be a welcome treat for your fish! Goldfish and other smaller fish will gobble them and their little mud homes; koi and other larger fish will treat them as tasty hors d'oeuvres.

Bloodworms are quite nutritious for fish. In fact, the insects are about 55 percent protein – which is a key nutrient fishes need to grow, reproduce and maintain their health. So rather than balk at the tiny worms, scoop them out of your filter and give them to your pond dwellers. They'll thank you for them!

## Moisture loving plants

by Duane VanDolah

### *Rosinweed*

*Silphium Integrifolium*

Also called the Whole-leaf Rosinweed, this perennial plant has a thick stem that doesn't branch until near its flower clusters. The stem is usually hairy, as well as the light green leaves which have hairs on both upper and lower sides. This gives the leaves the feel of sandpaper. The leaves can be any assorted shapes from egg-shaped to lance-shaped, 3-6 inches long and 1-2 ½ wide. It gets its name from the sticky sap that comes from breaking the stems in half. Reaching to a height of from 1 ½ to 5 feet and a spread of 2-3 feet, the plant forms clumps by growing a large tap root and small rhizomes. Because of the deep tap root, propagation by division is not recommended. Flowers are short clusters, 2-4 inches wide, sunflower-shaped, and yellow in color. The flower petal rays are 1 ½ inches long with a large deeper yellow disk in the middle. The Rosinweed grows in zones 4-8 with full sun and very light shade. Blooming season starts between June and October, lasting 1 to 2 months. It can be found in the Eastern half of Kansas in Tallgrass and mixed-Prairies, roadsides, and moist rocky soils, including seasonal flooded areas. Propagation is by seed.



## Submerged plants important

*The Pond Guy 6-8-12*

If you're like most pond hobbyists, you probably have plenty of growing and blooming greenery surrounding your water garden – but what about sub-surface varieties? Underwater plants, like hornwort, and red stemmed parrots feather, offer great benefits to your water feature and its inhabitants, including:

**Filtration:** Underwater plants naturally filter your water. How? Plants, with their copious amounts of surface area on their leaves, stems and roots, absorb nitrates and

fish waste – which is actually fertilizer to them. The result is a body of water that's cleaner and clearer, thanks to Mother Nature's nitrogen cycle.

**Predator Protection:** Sub-surface plants also give your fish and other pond critters places to hide when predators stalk or attack. Koi and goldfish will swim into the lush growth and hide out when a raccoon stops by the pond or a blue heron circles overhead. The greenery provides excellent camouflage for your finned friends.

**Aesthetic Appeal:** As popular as they may be, gravel-bottom ponds are boring. And they're not very natural-looking either. Have you ever seen a wild pond or lake with no plants beneath the surface? Nope, didn't think so. Ponds planted with below-the-waterline foliage create a more realistic-looking – and aesthetically pleasing – water feature, which is something most (if not all!) hobbyists hope to achieve.

**Oxygen:** Underwater plants are called "oxygenators" for a reason. They naturally produce oxygen as a byproduct of photosynthesis – and oxygen is one of the best things for your pond's health and vitality. When submerged plants are used in combination with a sub-surface aeration system, you'll wind up with cleaner water that truly supports your pond's inhabitants.

**Spawning Areas:** The leaves, stems and root systems of underwater plants give your pond life safe places to spawn and lay their eggs. And when those tiny fry hatch, the plants provide protection, food and a comfy place to call home.

Submerged plants are easy to add to your water garden or fish pond. Simply fill planting baskets, like the Laguna Submersible Pond Planting Baskets, with planting media, add some oxygenators, and place the planted basket on the bottom of your pond or on a plant shelf on the side of your pond. The planting baskets allow the plant's roots to branch out and find nourishment while containing it and preventing fish from nibbling on its root system.

Add some plants to your pond today. Your fish will thank you for them!



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

June 30-July 1	Topeka Pond Tour
July 18	Monthly Meeting
Aug. 15	Monthly Meeting
	Pot Luck at Thompson's
Sept. 19	Monthly Meeting
Oct. 7	Apple Fest
Oct. 17	Monthly Meeting
Nov. 14	Monthly Meeting & Potluck Dinner

---

## 2012 Refreshments

July - Kent & Coleen Hampton  
August - Pot Luck at Thompson's

**Your Dues are Due if your label reads  
Any time in 2011, 6-12 or 7-12**

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

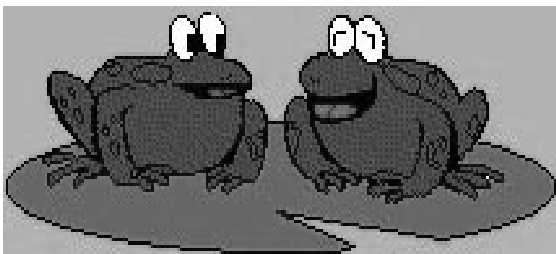
Send dues to Jim Green, 5701 SW  
Arrowhead CT, Topeka, KS 66614

### THE TOPEKA AREA WATER GARDEN SOCIETY

#### 2012 OFFICERS:

Don Taliaferro Topeka	President 785-272-8348
Bob Saathoff Topeka	Vice President 785-272-7125
Amy Thompson Topeka	Secretary 785-273-7005
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)

### *The Lily Pad*

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  
408 Emerald, Holton, KS 66436  
785-364-3046

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

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