



# 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 17, Issue 10

Nov. 1, 2014



*Wes Chiles talks about closing your pond for the winter.  
Photo by Sherry Reed*

## Closing pond for winter

By Sherry Reed

Wes Chiles, the new manager from Waterscape Concepts shared steps that need to be taken when shutting down your pond for the winter. A nice clean looking pond will mean happy fish.

The first step on preparing your pond is to remove the pump. You can leave the pump running during the winter, however, if ice forms on the falls it can possibly drain the pond within 30 minutes. So it is a good thing to remove the pump, clean thoroughly of any build up of lime or calcium, and store in a cool dry frost-free place. Waterscape can service your pump for \$20 before you put in storage.

If you have numerous trees in the area of your pond a pond net is a necessity. Decaying leaves in the bottom of the pond will give off gases that can shorten the oxygen supply to the fish.

A deicer is useful in keeping a hole in the ice to help provide oxygen for the fish. Calcium can build up on the coils of the deicer, so it is important to keep these clean so the device can work properly. An aerator can also be used to keep a hole in the ice.

When the water in the pond reaches 50 degrees you may want to start treating it with a winter bacteria treatment to help with sludge and decay. Stop the treatment when the water reaches 32 degrees. When

## Monthly Meeting

6:30 p.m. Nov. 19, 2014

at

Historic Old Prairie Town, 124 NW Fillmore

## Pot Luck

Please bring a covered dish to share and your own table service

using any treatment in your pond, it is very important to know the approximate gallons of water in your pond, to determine the correct amount of treatment to add.

Make sure your fish are healthy before they go into the winter. You will want to stop feeding them when the water reaches 50 degrees. If you want to continue to feed them use a wheat germ based food until the water is 39 degrees. You don't want the fish to go into hibernation with a full tummy.

You will want to remove your plants before the first hard frost.

## Minutes October 15, 2014

President Tom Platis called the meeting to order.

Wes Chiles, the new manager of Waterscape Concepts, shared with us information on shutting down our ponds for winter.

Tom Platis read a letter from Parks and Recreations thanking the club for helping at the Apple Festival on October 5.

Nominations for officers for 2015 were presented by Bob Saathoff: Tom Platis, President; Chris Newell, Vice President; Jim Mowder, Treasurer; Sherry Reed, Secretary. Nominations were approved and accepted by all those present.

Chris Newell thanked everyone who attended last months meeting at the Trash Mountain aquaponics training center.

Bob Saathoff shared projects coming for Ward-Meade Park. Friends of Ward-Meade Foundation comprised mostly of volunteers of Ward Meade are planning to install a nine foot sound barrier wall on the north side of the gardens in order to help with the noise of the interstate. Shawnee county will place the other half along the north side of the village. Monies for half of this will come from the foundation which gets funds from the Apple Festival, Tulip Time, charges for weddings and the

bricks which are being sold for the memory garden. The other half of the money will be provided by the state. There is also plans to put in a jail in the village and building a saloon which will be a venue for receptions. Bob would like to see more events taking place at the park to make the community more aware of what is available at Ward-Meade Park.

A brick for the memory garden will be bought for TAWGS. There was some discussion of how many bricks might be needed to get the complete name of Topeka Area Water Garden Society displayed. Bob will check into this and report at a later date.

Topeka Beautification Association still wants to share a booth with TAWGS at the garden show in February. Bob Saathoff suggested that this year the TBA come up with the plan for the booth and TAWGS could incorporate water feature into their plan. Bob will talk with TBA.

TAWGS will meet next month at 6:30 p.m. for our yearly potluck.  
Sherry Reed, Secretary



## Water plants

By Duane Van Dolah  
**Water poppy**  
*Hydrocleys nymphoides*

Genus of deciduous or evergreen, annual or perennial water plants, the Water Poppies are grown for their floating foliage and attractive flowers. Thick, shiny, deep green, broad, heart-shaped, oval leaves measure 2-4 inches on trailing stems up to 3 feet long. Flowers of light yellow with a red and brown center 2-2.5 inches across last but a day but are produced rapidly through the growing season. Surviving in as much as 12-15 inches of water, it grows best in shallow waters of approximately 6 inches. Plant in rich soil. A gallon container works well for planting size. Plants should not be grown when the temperature drops below 41 degrees. To winter it over, place the plant in a shallow tub of water or pot up in a hanging basket and keep very moist. Provide at least 10 hours of light for a healthy plant. Plant in full sun outside and propagate by disconnecting rooted plantlets.

## Topping off pond in the winter



*The Pond Guy 10-18-14*

Though water fluctuations seem more pronounced in the summertime, winter water loss in your pond will happen. When it does, you'll need to top it off – but access to liquid water can be a challenge in

northern climates where landscapes freeze over.

## Reasons for Winter Water Loss

Before we get into how to turn up the heat in your water garden, let's take a look at why water loss happens during the cold season. It can be caused by the following:

- **Low humidity:** When the air contains little moisture, evaporation rates increase as the dry air will absorb the water (frozen or not) from your pond.
- **Windy conditions:** Wind can also escalate evaporation in your pond. A 5-mile-per-hour wind at your pond's surface, for instance, results in roughly three times the rate of evaporation on a still day.
- **Ice expansion, formation:** Because frozen water takes up more space than liquid water, it will appear that the volume dissipates in your pond as ice forms and expands.

A small amount of water level fluctuation is OK – but if your pond is very shallow (18 to 24 inches or less) and stocked with fish, keep a very close eye on your water level. A few inches of water loss could leave your fish in ice!

### Topping It Off

If your pond's water level drops more than an inch, you'll need to top it off. But how do you do that if the pond is covered in a sheet of ice, or if the water in your hose freezes solid as soon as you turn on the spigot?

First, you'll have to break through the ice. To crack through it, remember to never use a drill, hammer or other blunt object, as the subsurface vibrations could harm your fish. Instead, fill a bucket with hot water and pour it on one area of the pond to melt open a hole in the ice, preferably near the edge.

Next, use the heated K&H™ PVC Thermo-Hose™ to fill up your pond through the hole. The thermostatically controlled hose prevents ice from forming in your faucet or hose. The unit's built-in heating elements turn on automatically when temperatures dip below freezing so you'll have liquid water coming out of your hose. You can use the Thermo-Hose™ two ways: either keep it plugged into a power source all winter, or use it as-needed by plugging it in 30 minutes before use. Either way, hook it up to the spigot or water source only when in use and unhook it when you're done.

## Pondless water feature maintenance

*The Pond Guy 10-25-14*

As you've likely discovered, a pondless water feature makes a fantastic addition to a landscape. Whether it's a bubbling fountain, a colorful birdbath or a disappearing waterfall, pondless features deliver the tranquil sound of running water without the hassle.



Small water features are easy to keep, but you will need to do some simple chores. Here's a quick checklist to follow:

1. **Remove the Debris:** Dust will dirty the water feature, and debris may collect and start to break



down, leaving behind a slimy mess. As needed, manually remove large debris and then add a dose of FeatureFix™ to the water as a cleaner. The highly concentrated product will safely eliminate accumulated debris and clear unsightly discoloration and stuck-on organic materials, often within 48 hours. (*FeatureFix™ is not safe for use in features with fish, invertebrates or crustaceans, so use with caution.*)

2. **Clear the Water:** To keep your fountain flowing with clean, clear water, treat it regularly with FeatureClear™. The bacteria in this all-natural clarifier will digest organic debris to keep water crystal clear. Use every two weeks when water temperatures are above 50°F. Simply add one ounce for every 100 gallons of water for sparkling clean water without harmful chemicals. (*FeatureClear™ is safe for use around fish, plants, pets and wildlife.*)
3. **Top Off As Needed:** In addition to keeping things clean and clear, also keep an eye on the water level in your pondless feature's basin and top it off as needed.
4. **Inspect Mechanics, Connections:** Periodically inspect your feature's pump, tubing and connections to ensure that they are sound and functioning correctly.

With winter approaching, be cautious about running your pondless fountain. It will sure look cool, flowing or bubbling away in the frosty air, but freezing temperatures and ice formations can do some serious damage. If you decide to shut it down until spring, remove the pump from the basin, place it in a bucket with water and store it in a place that will not freeze. Be sure to leave water in the basin so the ground won't shift.



## Choosing de-icers

*The Pond Guy 11-11-12*

When backyard water features are home to year-round populations of fish, it's vitally important to prevent long-term ice cover.

Without a break in the ice, harmful gases produced by decaying leaves and other organic matter build up, threatening the well-being of wintering fish. To prevent that threat, many pond owners install thermostatically-controlled de-icers, which produce enough concentrated heat to keep a vent hole open during winter's coldest months.

When a de-icer is thermostatically controlled, it is set to turn both on and off at certain temperatures. In theory, that makes good sense: if the water is cold, the de-icer goes to work, and when the water warms, it switches off – saving on unnecessary electricity costs. The problem, however, is that the water temperature in a frozen pond may not rise above the thermostat's high-temperature shutoff threshold,

leaving the de-icer in full heating mode all the time.

Naturally, we've given this issue some thought. And that's why we strongly recommend the use of our Thermo Cube Thermostatically Activated Plug. Unlike a thermostatically-controlled de-icer, the Thermo Cube measures air – not water temperature. Thus, when the sun is shining, and air temperatures warm up, the Thermo Cube automatically cuts power to the de-icer, and turns it back on when the air temperature drops. The combination works flawlessly – applying heat when it's required to keep the ice open, and shutting it off when it's not.



*Chris Newell serves up food at Apple Fest with Tom Platis and Susan Mowder in the background.*



*Servers Susan Mowder, Cheryl Saathoff, Floyd Gruver and Miss Teen Topeka check the containers for beans and sauerkraut.*

## Beautiful weather for 2014 Apple Fest

Tom Platis reports that Apple Fest went well this year and he wants to thank everyone that helped. Volunteers included: Chris Newell, Cheryl Saathoff, Sue Mowder, Sherry Reed, Sandy and Don Regier and their granddaughter, Floyd & Diane Gruver and Helen and Tom Platis. Even Miss Teen Topeka helped. Thanks!

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

November 19 Pot Luck

**2015**

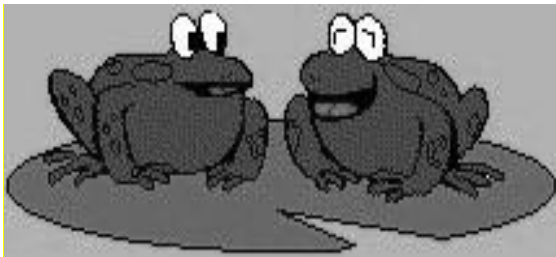
February 11	Monthly Meeting
March 18	Monthly Meeting
April 15	Monthly Meeting
May 20	Monthly Meeting
June 17	Monthly Meeting
June 20	TBA Garden Tour
June 27-28	Topeka Pond Tour
July 15	Monthly Meeting
August 19	Monthly Meeting
September 16	Monthly Meeting
October 4	October Fest
October 21	Monthly Meeting
November	Potluck and Monthly Meeting

**Your Dues are Due if your label reads  
9-14, 10-14 or 11-14**  
Please renew as soon as possible to continue receiving the newsletter.  
Send dues to  
**Jim Mowder, 3717 SE 31st ST, 66605**

**THE TOPEKA AREA  
WATER GARDEN SOCIETY**  
2014 OFFICERS:

Tom Platis Topeka	President 785-478-9514
Floyd Gruver Holton	Vice President 785-364-3046
Sherry Reed Topeka	Secretary 785-408-5060
Jim Mowder Topeka	Treasurer 785-267-0672

Meetings are usually 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 Mowder, 3717 SE 31st ST, Topeka, KS 66605.



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:

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