

The Lily Pad

The Topeka Area Water Garden Society

Published Monthly – February to November

Volume 7, Issue 4

May 1, 2004



Ron Pinnell talks about landscape lighting at the TAWGS April meeting.

Lighting your landscape

by Diane Gruver

"There's a trick or two to good lighting," Ron Pinnell told TAWGS members at their April meeting.

Ron, who has a water garden in Overland Park, is a factory representative from Nightscaping lighting, based in Redlands, Calif. He sold pumps and other watergarden supplies before becoming a Nightscaping factory rep 12 years ago. Ron said Nightscaping was the first outdoor lighting company, which started in the late 1950's. Now they have 53 competitors, some of which are from foreign countries. Most of their fixtures are stainless steel and are guaranteed from 10 years up to a lifetime. Nightscaping fixtures are, unfortunately, available only through landscaping contractors. We learned quite a few tips from Ron and enjoyed his interesting talk.

The benefits of good landscape lighting are: safety, security, value and beauty. Using a video, Ron showed the effects of backlighting, down lighting, up lighting, path lighting and underwater lighting. Different fixtures are used for different effects. Highlight a flower bed with a fixture hidden in a tree. Shoot beams across the pond about 12 inches under the water. Put a 20 v. fixture in the water under the waterfall to emphasize the fall.

"You don't want to see the source of the light,"

Monthly Meeting

7:00 p.m., Wed., May 19, 2004

Taking Care of Fish

Jeff Yeckel, River City Koi – Kansas City

Ron said. "Hide it so you see the effect of the lamp, not the fixture." He said it is not a good thing to see the bulb.

Ron said that low voltage lighting (12 volt) is safer and less expensive to operate. Unfortunately many units sold are cheaply made and don't last very long. Inexperience with the voltage requirements of transformers causes voltage drop because people string too many lights on the same line and overload the transformer. Then we wonder why the lights at the end of the line are dim, or why some bulbs burn out faster than others. Poor connections absorb moisture which causes the lights to go out. Ron said that Nightscaping has developed a weatherproof, solid brass Ace connector that eliminates maintenance headaches and creates a permanent dependable connection.

For more information about Nightscaping lighting you can go to their website at www.nightscaping.com and see their line of fixtures and find the distributors in the Topeka area.

2004 Programs

- June 16 – Xeriscaping – Pat Shaw, Master Gardener, Topeka
- July 21 – Building a bog and plants that go in a bog – Kip Walker, Puddles-N-Pads
- Aug 18 – Bring birds into your backyard – Paul Willis, Master Gardener/Audubon Society
- Sept. 15 – Closing your pond – Eric Wood, Puddles-N-Pads
- Oct. 20 – Different types of plants for your yard – Pat Rokey, Master Gardener
- Nov. 17 – Pot Luck Supper – no speaker

Minutes April 21, 2004

President Tom Platis opened the meeting with self introductions. The meeting resumed following the interesting program on landscape lighting by Ron Pinnell

and refreshments provided by Dean Demoss and Diane Gruver. Volunteers for refreshments for May are the Peterman's and Bechtold's.

Doug Peterman moved and Stan Bechtold seconded that the minutes be approved as published in the April Lily Pad. Motion carried. Treasurer Jim Green reported that we currently have a total of \$6,491.51 in the combined bank accounts.

Officers reports included an announcement by Tom that the program for next month will be by Jeff Yeckel from River City Koi in Kansas City. He also said that he had been contacted by a man from Greenleaf who has a booth at the Farmers Market who is willing to donate five koi for the pond that TAWGS members will be constructing at the VA Hospital. He is also willing to give TAWGS members a discount on purchases of Koi.

Diane said that she has had several member's e-mails bounce back as incorrect. If you have a new e-mail address or just recently got e-mail, please let her know. She said that she had received an e-mail from Ron Hinkle who said that Fancy Fish will be sold at Jay's Bait on April 30 and May 1. She also said that Pat Rokey notified her that she has several goldfish and shubunkins to give away. Call Pat at 357-4422.

Mary Bechtold, chairman of the Pond Tour said that the committee will meet at 10:00 a.m. Saturday while the plant sale is going on at Fairlawn Plaza. She said advance publicity has been sent out and a few advertisers have responded to the initial letter that was sent to them in December. We have over ten ponds hosts who have indicated an interest in being on the tour and she will try to tour them in the near future. Please mark your calendars for June 26-27 and try to arrange your schedule so you can help pond sit. We will need lots of volunteers to help with this project.

Jim Green reported that work is progressing on the plans for the pond at the VA hospital. He said Doug Peterman has done a lot of work talking to people about things that are needed. Eric and Trina Wood have agreed to donate six large boulders and Bob Whitehead has donated rocks for the walks. The dig will be done by Kaw Valley trenching at 1:30 on May 13th. Volunteers are needed to build the pond on Saturday, May 15th, beginning at 8:00 a.m. Bring gloves, tools, shovels, sledgehammers, etc. Pizza and pop will be provided for lunch.

Joe Breitenstein reported that the Garden Council Pant Sale will be this Saturday, April 24, 8:00 a.m. – noon at a new location, Fairlawn Plaza. Set up will begin at 7:00 a.m. Dale Jirik will pick up the plants that Joe has for the water garden society to sell in our booth, since Joe will be busy setting up for the rest of the sale. Members who have extra plants are encouraged to have their plants marked and to the sale early. Tom Platis will get change and bring a table. Diane said that 13 people had helped at the potting party at Ward Meade the 17th. Eighteen lilies were potted for Ward Meade and 27 plants were potted for the plant sale. Dean Demoss will transport the 27 plants to the sale Saturday morning.

Joe also reported that he is still responsible for the rose garden at Midland Hospice. He said one of the

nurses gave him \$25 to buy plants to put around the pond that TAWGS built there a few years ago. The nurse said that lots of patients enjoy the pond and gardens. He said that the Garden Council had donated \$1,000 to Ward Meade for improvements around some of the buildings.

Earlene Jirik announced that the Ward Meade Garden Club is planning a bus tour to Omaha June 19th. The tour will include visits at the Loritzen Gardens, Arbor Day Farm in Nebraska City, a box lunch and dinner at the Lodge in Nebraska City. Price for the entire tour is \$50 each. She has 16 seats left so call her today at 266-5492 to reserve your seat. Earlene does a great job planning the tours!

Bob Saathoff announced that he had forget-me-nots to give away after the meeting. Don Taliaferro moved that the meeting adjourn. Motion was seconded and carried.



Dean Demoss, (l-r) Gerald Holdges, Barrie Gnagy and Mike Bradley work at the Potting Party at Ward Meade.

Potting Party held at Ward Meade

by Diane Gruver

Twelve TAWGS members and two guests met at Ward Meade Park early Saturday morning, April 17 and undertook the messy, smelly, dirty task of repotting the lilies stored in Anna's Pond. Armed with garden hoses, knives, scissors and garden trowels, we repotted 12 lilies for the fountain, and six lilies and two lotus for Anna's Pond. In addition to the plants for Ward Meade, we potted a total of 27 plants for the Garden Council plant sale for the 24th. Those plants were mostly lilies and a few pickerel donated by Gerald and Donnis Hodges. Everybody there had a chance to learn about potting lilies and take home as many rhizomes as they wanted. The unpotted extra lily rhizomes will be also be sold at the plant sale.

Joining in the fun were Barrie and Carol Gnagy, who later joined at the April meeting, and TAWGS members Tom and Helen Platis, Donnis and Gerald

Hodges, Michael Bradley, Jeannine Miller, Lindia Willis, Lynn Pelton, Hi Stockwell, Mary Blumbaugh, Dean Demoss and me, Diane Gruver.

Many thanks to all who helped that morning and special thanks to Dean who headed up the event by rounding up the dirt, sand, pea gravel and pots.



Tom Platis, Doug Peterman and Dean Demoss visit with unidentified customers at the soggy plant sale.

Plant sale a wet one

by Diane Gruver

Although we need rain badly, none of us were especially excited about the downpour that occurred during the plant sale Saturday morning, April 24th. To say we got drenched is an understatement!

It was already raining by the time we gathered at 7:00 a.m. at Fairlawn Plaza, but the faithful few were not to be daunted by a little water. At first, anyway. Three hours later it was still raining and we were cold, soggy and ready to pack things up. The bills in the change box were even sopping wet! In spite of the weather, we sold enough plants to make \$186 so our efforts weren't entirely in vain. The leftover lilies were returned to the fountain until a decision could be made about what to do with them.

Many thanks to Dean Demoss, who hauled the lilies to and from the plant sale and to Tom Platis who helped Dean pick them up and weathered the weather at the sale. Thanks to Dale Jirik who picked up the iris at Joe Breitenstein's house and to Doug Peterman and Larry Sheets who spent the morning in the rain. Others who helped were Betty Karnes, Hi Stockwell and Mary Bechtold. Other TAWGS members who were briefly on the scene to check things out were: Helen Platis, Mike Bradley, Marikay Peterman, Caryn Sheets, Debbie Dunkin, Kay McFarland and Becky Coffman. If I've left someone out I apologize – I had water on the brain! ☺

Spring steps to better plant performance

by RANDALL TATE, Chief Manager, The Water Garden
Reprinted from April 2004 Water Garden News

The calendar tells us it's spring and for most of us warm weather has certainly arrived, although for many it left as quickly as it came. Nonetheless, our aquatic plants are either now showing signs of new spring growth or soon will.

To get the best growth from your plants this pond season you should take care of a few things as soon as new growth starts to show in the plant containers.

Dividing and Repotting Plants

Your hardy water lilies and also your shallow water perennials need dividing every two to three years. Some aggressive growers such as Pickerel may need repotting every year. Dividing and repotting involves removing old growth and selecting the best section to be potted. Any old dead foliage should be removed, as this will only pollute the water. To divide most shallow water plants remove the plant from the pot and rinse away most of the soil exposing the roots. Rushes and similar types of plants form clumps. These can be cut through with a sharp knife. Cut away most of the plant leaving approximately 1/3 of the original plant to repot. Some plants like cattails and four leaf clover form runners and these can be twisted around the pot in a spiral. Shallow water plants that form rhizomes or tubers can be separated. Select a few of the best pieces to repot and discard the older pieces with little growth.

When plants are too crowded in a pot, each individual plant competes with the others for available nutrients meaning that none of them perform as well as they could.

Feed Your Plants

You should begin fertilizing your plants as soon as they start showing new growth. Water lilies and most flowering aquatics will benefit from a monthly feeding. Marginal plants that are grown mostly for their foliage can get by with feeding every other month. The best fertilizer to use is one designed specifically for aquatic plants. We have found that PondTabbs enable the plants to provide the most flowers.

As stated above, it is best to remove any dead foliage left over from last fall that may remain on plants in the pond. This will make more room for new growth. Continue the practice of removing dead and dying foliage throughout the year for the best-looking plants.

Koi and goldfish - a good match?

Reprinted from *Splash* 4-25-02

We are often asked if Koi and Goldfish get along in the pond. Yes, indeed, they do! Both are of the Carp family, and they "play rather nicely together." They will even interbreed, which can be a problem for the serious Koi enthusiast. Fry which are half Goldfish and half Koi may turn out rather ugly, too. If breeding pure Koi is important in the pond, Goldfish and Koi should not be kept together. If, on the other hand, the fish are kept purely for enjoyment then there is no problem.

Too early for Water Hyacinth & lettuce?

Reprinted from *Splash* 4-25-02

We, who love ponds, tend to get impatient this time of year to get our ponds looking beautiful again. Especially those of us living in colder areas. One of the staples of ponds in areas north of the Mason Dixon line are Water Hyacinths and Water Lettuce (they are considered a pest in many states south of the Mason Dixon line, because they do not die during the winter and can choke water ways).

Water Hyacinth are somewhat more tolerant of cool water than Water Lettuce. Water Hyacinth will survive if water temperatures warm to about 60 degrees, but Water Lettuce needs at least 65 degree water (Fahrenheit), 70 degrees is better! If the water is too cool, the plants will simply slowly disintegrate.

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

Calendar of Events

May 15	TAWGS Pond Construction at VA Hospital
May 19	TAWGS Monthly Meeting
June 16	TAWGS Monthly Meeting
June 26-27	13 th Annual Topeka Pond Tour
June 26-27	St. Joseph Pond Tour
June 26-27	Wichita Pond Tour
July 10 – 11	Kansas City Pond Tour
July 21	TAWGS Monthly Meeting
Aug. 18	TAWGS Monthly Meeting
Sept. 15	TAWGS Monthly Meeting
Oct. 20	TAWGS Monthly Meeting
Nov.17	TAWGS Pot Luck Supper

Water Garden Tip

In a new pond, add fish gradually to give the pond and filter time to catch up with the breakdown of fish waste. Microbe Lift can help speed up this process.

Your Dues are Due if your label reads

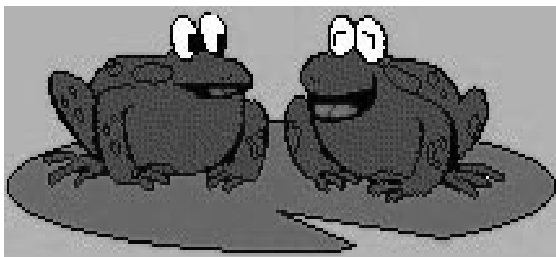
2-04, 3-04, 4-04 or 5-04

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

THE TOPEKA AREA WATER GARDEN SOCIETY

OFFICERS:

Tom Platis	President
Topeka	785-478-9514
Becky Coffman	Vice President
Topeka	785-272-6568
Diane Gruver	Secretary
Holton	785-364-3046
Jim Green	Treasurer
Topeka	785-272-7139



Check it out - 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 last weekend of each month. Address input and/or questions to:

Diane Gruver, The Lily Pad Editor
408 Emerald, Holton, KS 66436
785 364-3046 (w) 785-233-4085
fdgruver@holtonks.net

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