



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.

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Helen Platis (l-r) Karl Purvis and Mary Ann Bechtold work to remove the crowded lily rhizomes from the pots.

Members meet to re-pot lilies

Saturday, May 10, a few TAWGS members met at Ward Meade Park to re-pot the lilies for the fountain and Anna's Pond. Those helping with the project were: Duane Eberhardt, Karl Purvis, Mary Ann Bechtold, Tom and Helen Platis and Floyd and Diane Gruver. Thanks to all that helped!

Questions posed at meeting

TAWGS members had an opportunity to ask questions about anything concerning their water gardens at the May meeting. Some of the issues addressed were:

1. How high of a string fence to you need around the water garden to discourage herons? Suggestions were: the string should be at least 12 inches off the ground; a small decorative fence could be placed around the edge of the pond so that the heron can not walk into the pond; a squirt of water from a motion activated "Scarecrow"; or a heron decoy, but it will need to be moved daily.
2. How much water is lost through evaporation? You will lose about an inch (or more) a day from evaporation, depending on the wind, temperature, waterfall and the length of a streambed if you have one. Also birds in a streambed can displace a lot of water. An automatic fill valve will keep the pond at an even depth and you don't need to worry about adding

Monthly Meeting

6:30 p.m., Wed., June 18, 2008

Ensley Garden House – Lake Shawnee

East 37th and West Edge Road

Fish Fry and Pot Luck Supper

Please bring your own table service, a desert and a salad

A walk through the gardens will follow the meal

- dechlorinator every day.
3. How do you handle string algae? Most people were satisfied with Algae Fix. Other suggestions were to remove it with a toilet brush, barley bales or pellets and use less plant fertilizer.
4. What kind of filter media in the bio falls? Lava rock can be heavy and there are lighter media that can be used such as plastic balls, a plastic ribbon media, and PVC shavings.
5. What are the pros and cons of running the falls all winter? If you have a skimmer the running water will keep an open spot in the pond during cold spells; the ice formations on the waterfall can be very beautiful, but be careful that the water is not diverted out of the pond; wildlife enjoys a place to get a drink during the cold winter when most water is frozen over.
6. How do you plant lilies and other aquatic plants if you don't use pots? The plants can be tucked into the rocks and secured with rocks around them; lilies can be potted in pea gravel or baskets which allow the water to flow thru the media.

TAWGS Minutes May 21, 2008

President Duane Eberhardt called the meeting to order with self introductions. We had several guests.

It was decided to have the meeting first and then have time for questions after refreshments.

Duane thanked everyone who helped re-pot lilies at Ward Meade May 10th. He said that we had lots of rhizomes left and they were available to anyone after the meeting. Duane also reported that VP Don Taliaferro was ill but wanted to thank everyone who helped build the pondless waterfall at Felker park, including Karl Purvis, Brad Cheney, Hi Stockwell,

Michael Bradley and Phil and Amy Thompson. He said there is a water line problem so the water is not running at this time, but it is hoped to get it fixed soon.

Secretary Diane Gruver reported that Bob Saathoff had requested approval to invite the vendors and suppliers that helped with our display at the Topeka Lawn and Garden Show be invited to the fish fry which will be held at the Ensley Garden House at Lake Shawnee June 18th. The members agreed that it was good to include them as a thank you for their support. Diane asked that everyone bring their own table service and a salad and dessert to make sure that we have enough food for the guests. The supper will start at 6:30 p.m.

Diane also requested that anyone that would be willing to get their newsletter from the website to please let her know. The benefits of the electronic newsletter are that the pictures are in color and it would save TAWGS about 65 cents a newsletter.

Treasurer Jim Green reported that we have \$5,702.78 in the checking account and \$1,211.06 in the savings account for a total of \$6,913.84. We have five projects showing liabilities since not all money that has been appropriated has been spent. We have \$3,472.00 left that is not appropriated. Jim moved that we move \$1,213.25 in the lawn and garden display account to the general checking and \$19.14 from the Ward Meade project. Michael Bradley seconded the motion and it carried. Ken Mulder moved and Allen Ellis seconded that the treasurer's report be approved. Motion carried.

Jim also reported that he had filed a 1090EZ tax form online with the IRS so we are now on record. He also said that a man in Silver Lake has some gold fish to give away – Betty Karnes said that she would like to have them.

Tom Platis, chairman of the 2008 Pond Tour reported progress on the tour. He said that Ward Meade would like some help on Saturday because there is a wedding at the park. Waterscape Concepts and Jacksons Greenhouse will be the commercial bonus ponds this year and there are eight private ponds and two public ponds, Anna's Pond and the new pondless waterfall at Felker Park. There will be a bus load of people who will tour Regier, Bell and Lloyd's ponds on Thursday afternoon at \$4.00 per person. The reception for the pond hosts and volunteers will be held Wed., June 25, at 7:00 p.m. at Waterscape Concepts (across from Tractor Supply on east Hiway 24). If anyone would like to provide some cookies, please contact Diane at 785-364-3046 or fdgruver@embarqmail.com.

Hi Stockwell said that the tour guide/ticket was about finished and he will include a membership application and a survey card in the guide.

Michael Bradley moved and Betty Karnes seconded that we charge a group rate of \$4.00 per person for seven or more people on vans, etc., that live in congregate homes, with one tour guide being provided to the group. Motion carried.

Following refreshments provided by Connie and Allen Ellis, the group was allowed to ask any questions they had about water gardening. At 9:00 p.m., Michael Bradley moved and Jim Green seconded that the meeting adjourn.



Pondless waterfall built at Felker park

Don Taliaferro headed up a committee to help build a pondless waterfall at Felker Park in May. The water feature is inside the tennis area and will be seen by many people who play tennis and attend tennis tournaments.

In addition to Don, volunteers were Brad Cheney, Karl Purvis, Hi Stockwell, Michael Bradley, and Phil and Amy Thompson. Thanks to all who had a part in helping to build the feature.

Saturday schedule for work at gardens

The Saturday schedule for those people that are not able to work during the week but would like to lend a hand at the gardens at Lake Shawnee is as follows:

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., Saturday, June 28, July 26, August 23 and September 27. Meet at the Trailhead shelter and restroom just north of 37th and West Edge Road at Lake Shawnee.

For those that are willing to work in the evening, you can call Bob Saathoff (272-7125 or e-mail bobsaathoff@yahoo.com) and he will notify you when they are working in the evening.

Refreshments 2008

June	Taliaferros and Saathoffs
July	Mary and Tom Blubaugh
August	Tom and Pat Routh
September	Floyd & Diane Gruver
October	Gerald and Donnis Hodges
November	Potluck

Water Plants

By Duane Van Dolah

Texas star hibiscus

Hibiscus coccineus

This cultivar of hibiscus was with me for almost 10 years. Two winters ago there was an ice storm that killed some of my plants and the Texas Star Hibiscus was one of those casualties. It became such a strong plant with a height of over 8 feet tall with a spread of about 3 feet. I had finally put it in a 24-inch pot to hold



the roots and to try to keep it upright in the gentle breezes here in Southwest Kansas. But that was what proved its demise. The Texas Star Hibiscus is for zones 7-11, and I was no longer able to lower it to the bottom of the pond. But it did itself proud in those 10 years.

This cultivar grows 6-9 feet tall with a spread of 3-6 feet. Single petal, star-shaped flowers are a rich red that reach 5-8 inches across. The dark green leaves are in the form of maple leaves, which are long and slender with a blush of maroon. It loves full sun but can handle part-shade. It needs moist soil to water 4 inches over its crown. Like most perennial hibiscus, this plant goes completely dormant in the winter and must have the top pruned off to the ground.

A friend of ours knew we had lost this great plant, so she brought two for me last month from Austin, Texas. So far they've only been hailed on for an hour last week. Oh, by the way, the plant tag says that it needs rich organic soil with good drainage. Keep moist for best growth. In the perennial section it's \$6.99, but in the water garden section the same plant is \$15.99.

Just kidding about the last sentence, but it's true.

One passion gives birth to another

by Gay Schneider

Editor's note: We used Gay's lily on the Pond Tour promotion this year. We hope you got to see her photos on display at PT's Coffee during May.

It is odd that often times one passion gives birth to another. When we put in our pond, I had no idea the impact it would have on me. It was clear from the beginning that I would be the one that would be caring for it. The living water drew me in like a fish. I was totally fascinated by the sounds and beauty and the fact that it was my little world to create, to mold into a beautiful, serene haven. Of course, taking pictures of the pond became something I did daily.

As I began seeing the pond through my camera, I noticed the smallest things, like the way a shaft of sunlight played over the water, creating sparkles and the way it illuminated the water plants, making them seem as if they were shining from within. I began going in close up, and from the waters surface, with some really amazing results. I was quickly becoming hooked.

On the advice of friends I entered a contest that is put on yearly by the AquaScape website. I ended up winning 2nd place in the Plant division. This blew me away, my first contest, and a national one at that, and I placed!! Now the game was on. I was taking pictures of every plant in my pond and around my house. I upgraded my camera and the results were stunning! Last summer two of my pictures won 1st AND 2nd place in the photo contest that Puddles and Pads had, and I had an article with a photo that ran in Water Gardening Magazine.

We were on the Pond Tour last year, which was so rewarding and we also won 1st place in the pond division of the Topeka Beautification Contest. All in all we had a VERY good year! That was my 2nd full season with

a pond. Before this time I had never had a fish in my life, indoors or out! I spent the first year soaking up all the information I could from numerous sources, and perfecting my pond keeping skills. Last year was spent sharing the pond and my pictures. I make note cards with the pictures and they are very popular Christmas gifts.

I am now on the consumer advisory panel for Lawn and Garden Retailer magazine. It is the magazine for garden stores like Skinners. Bi-monthly I get to write a short article, and I always get in some pond "stuff". I enjoy throwing some "land plants" into the pond and seeing how they do. It is really AMAZING that some do extremely well, and are so much more affordable than some of the "water" plants. For example, last year I took a little pot of pink impatiens, removed it from the pot, stuck it between 2 rocks on the lower level of the waterfall. That thing never went a day from May till freeze that it wasn't literally covered with blooms. It got huge and I trimmed it several times. One little \$2 plant and a whole season of color and beauty! The one planted in a hanging basket never came close to the one growing in water. I had more success with a hosta that I put in the biofalls. It grew and grew and bloomed two times! The falls is in shade with only morning sun and the hosta worked much better than the Water Hyacinth did. They do great in the biofalls that tumbles into the stream as it is in full sun.

Soon it will be time to begin this years water planting...I CAN'T WAIT!!

Koi can be bad boys

Reprinted from 5-01 Water Garden News

Koi can be a problem for some tender plants. We keep koi with our water lilies and most shallow water plants with no problem but we place cobbles or potato size stones in the top of the planting containers to keep the fish from digging out the soil while looking for worms and small crustaceans.

If koi are nibbling on your plants then consider using Plant Protectors to keep the fish away from the foliage.



Still need e-mail addresses

I have had several e-mails come back to me as undeliverable when I send e-mails to our members or for the newsletter. I need new addresses for Tom and Georgia Sirridge, Mary & Gayle Gordon, Debbie & Richard Dunkin, Joe & Trudy Weir, Janet Nyfeler, Mike & Janet Cool and Linda & John Donnelly.

Also, with postage going up again, if you would consider receiving your newsletter electronically, please let me know at fdgruver@embarqmail.com. You will be notified each month when it is available on the website.

9900 SW K-4 Highway
Topeka, KS 66614

Calendar of Events

June 14-15 – TBA Garden Tour
June 18 – Monthly TAWGS Meeting
June 28-29 – Topeka Pond Tour
July 12-13 – KC Pond Tour, Kansas City
July 12-13 – Kansas Pond Society Tour, Wichita
July 16 – Monthly TAWGS Meeting
Aug. 20 – Monthly TAWGS Meeting
Sept. 17 – Monthly TAWGS Meeting
Oct. 15 – Monthly TAWGS Meeting
Nov. 19 – Potluck

You should pinch mums by cutting off about an inch of new growth when they are six inches tall to delay flowering and to produce bushy, well rounded plants. Use shears for this purpose rather than trying to remove individual tips – repeat this pinching and shearing process as new growth elongates until July 4th.

Your Dues are Due if your label reads 4-08, 5-08 or 6-08

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

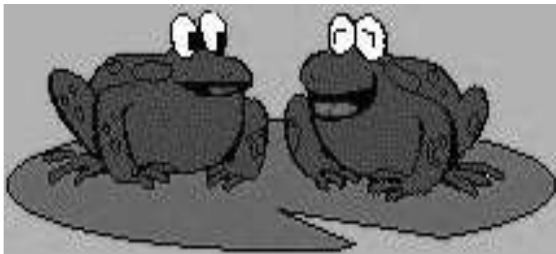
Send dues to Jim Green, 5701 SW Arrowhead CT, Topeka, KS 66614

THE TOPEKA AREA WATER GARDEN SOCIETY

2007 OFFICERS:

Duane Eberhardt Topeka	President 785-246-0240
Don Taliaferro Topeka	Vice President 785-272-8348
Diane Gruver Holton	Secretary 785-364-3046
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:

Diane Gruver, The Lily Pad Editor
408 Emerald, Holton, KS 66436
785-364-3046
fdgruver@embarqmail.com

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