



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 16, Issue 9

October 1, 2013



Fire trucks set outside Ward Meade Park during the TAWGS September meeting.

Monthly Meeting
7:00 p.m. Oct. 16, 2013
Historic Old Prairie Town, 124 NW Fillmore
Program to be announced later



Moisture loving plants

by Duane Van Dolah

No speaker but lots of excitement

Gas fumes met president Don Taliaferro when he opened the door to the meeting room at Ward Meade Park for the September meeting.

It didn't take long for waiting members to scatter to the garden area while phone calls were made to the gas company. While killing time in the gardens we heard lots of sirens and wondered what in the world was going on. We soon found out when they pulled into the parking lot with lights flashing.

It was decided to move the meeting to the old time drug store while authorities checked the premises.

We are not sure if they ever determined the odor, but most of us are convinced it was natural gas. We were happy that we had an alternate place to meet and that no one was hurt.

2013 Refreshments

October	Amy and Phil Thompson
November	Potluck

Michigan lily

Lilium michiganense

If you ever wanted to have a tall lily growing around your pond or waterfall, but it got too wet and rotted your bulbs, then maybe you should try this bulb. The Michigan Lily is a native of Missouri where it can be found growing in wet lowlands along swampy areas. It likes its roots shaded and its head in the sun. The more moisture, the more sun it can handle. It grows to the height of 2-5 feet tall and with a spread of 1 foot. The Lanced-shaped leaves at the base are up to 4 inches long and 3/4 to an inch wide. The long bare stems hold 1 to 8 downward, facing blooms that are 2 1/2 to 3 inches across with pale-to-deep-reddish-orange petals. They fade to yellow towards the center, with purplish-brown spots around the petals. The petals curve back to the flower stem which gives them the common name of Turkscap. Blooms appear from early to late summer. Michigan Lily grows in zones 3-7 in full sun to dappled shade. The rhizomatous bulbs spread to from a small clump and can be divided and should be planted in the fall.

I'm still trying to understand why the Michigan Lily is named for Michigan when it's native to Missouri. My guess is the plant botanist found it first in Michigan before finding it out west in the frontier of Missouri. Something to ponder!



Do need a heater?

The Pond Guy 9-21-13

Unless you house warm-water fish like Plecostomus in your water feature, you won't need a heater to heat things up. Most pond fishes, including koi and goldfish, will overwinter just fine in their outdoor digs because they go into a pseudo-hibernation state when water temperatures fall. Their metabolisms slow and they're able to tolerate cooler water—even water that's frigid enough to freeze.

If you live in a climate that experience those freezing temperatures, what we recommend is a de-icer or aerator (rather than a heater) to keep a hole in the ice. This hole allows for gas exchange, through which necessary gases like oxygen enter and harmful gases like ammonia escape.

Which option is right for you?

- **De-Icer:** A de-icer's purpose is to float on the surface and melt a hole in ice that has formed on a container of water, whether a koi pond or water garden. Unlike a heater that actually warms the entire body of water, a de-icer like the K&H™ Thermo-Pond 3.0 Pond De-Icer simply melts an opening in the ice sheet, thereby allowing for gas exchange.
- **Aerator:** Rather than create a hole in the ice from above, an aerator, like the PondAir™ Aeration Kit, circulates the water below the ice sheet. In areas with relatively mild winters, that subsurface water movement will keep a hole in the ice that allows for gas exchange—but when temps really dip, an aerator may not be enough to maintain a vent hole.
- **De-Icer, Aerator Combo:** An excellent and convenient option to consider is the PondAir™ & Thermo-Pond Combo. It combines both the Thermo-Pond and PondAir™ Aeration Kit, providing your water feature the one-two punch it needs to stay well-vented throughout the winter.

If temperatures in your area vary between above- and below-freezing, consider installing a ThermoCube®. The thermostatically controlled outlet turns on when air temperatures drop below 35° Fahrenheit and turns off when air temps rise above 45°F. This handy-dandy device will save you money, which is something we can all appreciate.

Fall is just around the corner

The Pond Guy 9-14-13

Though we all wish summer could linger on forever, the reality of



fall—and its associated pond chores—is nearly upon us. Cooler temperatures, shorter days and those brightly colored (and falling) leaves means you need to take a break from summer fun and get to work.

Here's a quick rundown of the prep work you should be doing now:

Add Bacteria

When temps start to fall (particularly below 50°F), it's time to add some cool-water beneficial bacteria to your pond, like the tiny muck-eaters in Pond Logic® Seasonal Defense®. They go to work decomposing leaves, scum and sediment that will inevitably build up over the fall and winter, which will result in better water quality for your finned friends.

Clean Up Your Plants

Cut back and remove any dead plant vegetation that's inside and around your water garden. Use a handy long-reach tool, like the pond scissors and pliers, to cut back water lilies and clear away dead marginals. As the temperatures cool even more, you'll need to remove floating plants like hyacinth and water lettuce, sink your hardy water lilies and marginals into the deeper areas of your pond to protect them from freezing, and make plans to overwinter your tropical lilies inside.

Cover Up

Blowing leaves and other debris will drop into your pond during the fall, and if you don't get them out, they'll decompose over the winter and create a mucky mess in the spring. Plan to put a net over the pond, like the Pond Logic® PondShelter™ Net Kit, to keep them out, and use a skimmer net to remove any stragglers.

Have Supplies Ready

While you're thinking about fall, now is a great time to stock up on winter water garden supplies. Purchase a six-month supply of Seasonal Defense®. Buy some Spring & Fall Fish Food, which will help your fish transition from their regular diet to one that's easier to digest in cooler temperatures. Make sure you have an aerator or deicer ready to keep a hole in the ice. Preparing ahead of time will prevent any last-minute scrambling.

Regular Maintenance

Finally, continue to perform regular maintenance chores, like keeping your filter clean and operating well, doing periodic water changes, and feeding and checking on your fish. Summer is nearly over, but don't neglect your pond-keeping routine!



What causes brown water

The Pond Guy 9-7-13

There's only one thing worse than green water—and that's brown water. In some ponds or water features, the end of summer or beginning of fall

brings with it this discolored water. It's caused by one of two reasons:

- **Debris Tea:** When leaves or pine needles fall into your pond, the tannins in them create a type of all-natural debris tea, which turns the clean and clear water in your backyard feature a shade of brown. This is the most common cause of tea-colored water.
- **Sediment Stew:** If you have a lot of floating particulates or sediment in your pond, playful fish, wind or some other action can sometimes disrupt it, mixing it into your water column via your pump or aeration system.

To determine what's causing the brown water, grab a glass jar from your kitchen, dunk it in your pond and fill it with the water. Let it sit for 24 hours and take a close look at the results. Is the water still tea-colored? Then you have tannin-colored debris tea. Do you see sediment settled at the bottom of the glass? Then you have some sediment stew.

Once you pinpoint what's causing the brown water, here's how to treat the problem.

1. **Clean It Up:** Because both causes start with an abundance of organics in the water, your first course of action is to clean the bottom of your pond to remove any muck, leaves and remaining debris with a pond vacuum or skimmer net.
2. **Water Change:** Next, do a partial (10 to 25 percent) water change, which will freshen things up and clear the water. Don't forget to add a water conditioner to treat the water for your finned pals.
3. **Add Beneficial Bacteria:** If you have sediment stew, add some Nature's Defense® (if water temps are above 50°F) or Seasonal Defense® (if water temps are below 50°F). The beneficial bacteria will digest any accumulated organic debris and eliminate the brown water.
4. **Use Activated Carbon:** If you have debris tea, toss a media bag filled with Pond Logic® Activated Carbon into your pond. The carbon will absorb the tannins, leaving behind clear water.

To prevent the discoloration from happening again, keep the organics out of the pond. Clean up the muck regularly with a skimmer net or vacuum, and when the

leaves or pine needles start falling, cover the water with pond netting, like the Pond Logic® PondShelter™ or The Pond Guy® Premium Pond Netting.

TAWGS 9-18-13 Minutes

Guest speaker: There was not a guest speaker at the September meeting.

Minutes: Sandy Reiger moved that the August 2013 minutes be approved, it was seconded by Floyd Gruver, the motion carried.

Treasurer's report: Jim Mowder reported that TAWGS has a balance of \$2,826.68 in its account. Bob Saathoff made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report; it was seconded by Tom Routh. The motion was approved.

TAWGS Memberships

The pond supply retail outlets have agreed to distribute punch cards to those interested in earning a free membership to TAWGS. Don Taliaferro will work on designing the card. A special punch will be purchased for each location to use.

2014 Officers

A request for officers was mentioned at the meeting. Jim Mowder will be Treasurer, no other officer positions have candidates.

TAWGS & TBA

Due to some concerns TAWGS will no longer pursue asking TBA members to join with TAWGS and become one association. However, TAWGS will continue to try and work with TBA for the Flower, Lawn and Garden show.

Garden Show

The Garden Show's theme for 2014 is "The Sport of Gardening."

Midland Hospice

Their facilities need to be cleaned.

Apple Festival

The Platis' are asking for volunteers to help with the food tent. Those interested need to go to the food tent on Oct. 6 between 10 and 3.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Don Reiger to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded by Phil Thompson, the motion carried.



Don T, Amy and Phil Thompson sit on stools at the drug store during our September meeting.

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

October 6	Apple Fest
October 16	Monthly Meeting
November 20th	Potluck and Monthly Meeting

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You should always have any electrical devices used in your pond, such as lights, pumps, de-icers, etc., protected by a ground fault interrupter.

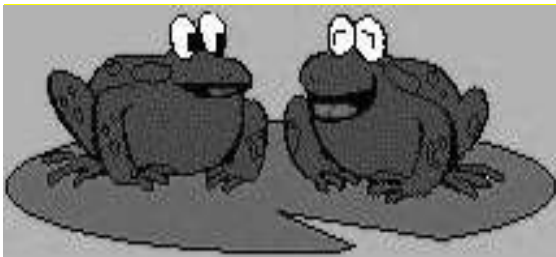
Warm spells throughout the winter may tempt you to offer food to your fish. It is much safer for the fish to avoid this temptation; fish cannot properly digest food in water below 50 degrees.

Your Dues are Due if your label reads 8-13, 9-13 or 10-13
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**
2013 OFFICERS:

Don Taliaferro Topeka	President 785-272-8348
Open Amy Thompson Topeka	Vice President Secretary 785-273-0672
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, 3713 SE 31st ST, 66605



Check it out - 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:

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