



# 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 6

July 1, 2014



Sandy Regier and Don Taliaferro fill their plates with delicious fish and food at the June meeting at Saathoffs. Photo by Sherry Reed

## 6-18-14 TAWGS Minutes

A big, big, big thank you to Bob and Cheryl Saathoff for hosting and providing delicious fish for the annual June fish fry. The setting was as wonderful as the food. Don and Ruth Taliaferro assisted the Saathoffs with the potluck.

President Tom Platis called the meeting to order. The treasurer's report showed a beginning balance of \$2211.30 with an outflow of \$518.79 making an ending balance of \$1692.51.

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved with a motion from Sandy Reiger and seconded by Tom Routh.

Ray with Ward Meade Garden talked about the Memory Garden progress. A bubbling rock has been put in place. There are plans for a new arbor and a sitting area. A hosta garden will be constructed on the north side of the building with Hostas of the Year since 1995 to the present. Memorial bricks will be sold to members of different clubs using the facility and employees of the park. Large bricks will sell for \$250 and usual size bricks for \$50. Proceeds go to the park.

Chris Newell told us a little about the aquaponics project associated with the Trash Mountain Project. He could take our group on a tour of the facility if interested.

Don Taliaferro spoke about next year's pond tour. We need to start finding ponds to be on the tour now. The

## Monthly Meeting

7:00 p.m. July 16, 2014

Historic Old Prairie Town

Speaker

**Melody Weller**

Wild Bird House



Earlene and Dale Jurik, Sue and Jim Mowder, Phil Thompson, Ruth Taliaferro and Jim Green line up for food at the potluck at the June meeting. Photo by Sherry Reed.

Kansas City club has invited us to be a part of their tour next year if we so desire. The KC club also invited us to tour their ponds this year with a discounted price.

Bob discussed combining our club with Topeka Beautification for our tours next year or possibly combining the two clubs. It was decided to table this until the next meeting.

Don made a motion to adjourn with Dale Jirik seconding the motion. Sherry Reed Secretary

## Notice!

If you are receiving the newsletter in the mail, would you consider getting it off the website? With postage costs and regulations it would save TAWGS a few bucks every month. If so, please e-mail me at [fdgruver@embarqmail.com](mailto:fdgruver@embarqmail.com)



## Water plants

By Duane Van Dolah

### Water Hyssop

A genus of about 56 species of mostly aquatic or semi-aquatic plants, they are found in shallow water, marshes, pond margins, and slow moving streams of warm-temperate and tropical

regions in Asia, Africa, Australia, and North and South America. Low, spreading to upright, often succulent stems, these plants bear opposite, toothed, ovate to spoon-shaped leaves. The leaves are fragrant when crushed.

Bacopa can be grown as a ground cover in bogs, or near the edge of the pond, or trailing from the lip of a waterfall. Flowers bloom in summer and range in color from white to pink to purple. Flowers are borne in clusters of 1-3 and are bell shaped. It thrives in sun or shade with the stems reaching 2-4 inches and spreading 24 inches. It needs moist soil or water 1 inch deep. Fully submerged, it will grow but not flower. Propagation is by cuttings. Three inch cuttings can be brought into the house in early fall and put in a container of water and should be placed in a sunny warm window where it will root out for next year. Most grow in zones 9-11 and there is one specie in 6-11.

There are three species suitable for pond use. One type to look for is Bacopa caroliniana, lemon bacopa, which is an easy-to-grow ground cover. It has lemon scented leaves and bright blue flowers. It will grow fully submerged. Another type is Bacopa lenagera 'Variegata', variegated lemon bacopa. It is also called lemon bacopa but has no scent. However, it does have distinctive gold veining on fleshy, green leaves with pale blue flowers. Bacopa monnieri, water purslane, is a bacopa with light green leaves and nearly ever-blooming white flowers striped in pink, lavender, or blue. It is tolerant of seasonal flooding in clear water that can get 4-12 inches deep during that period. It can also take light foot traffic and mowing in zones 6-11.



### What causes fish to swim upside down?

The Pond Guy 6-7-14

Unless you've taught your pond fish some pretty cool party tricks, it's possible that they're not

getting enough oxygen due to a lack of aeration.

Fish will display some odd behaviors when they're not getting enough oxygen, including gasping for air at the surface, hanging vertically in the water, and spending a lot of time around the waterfall or stream where oxygen levels are at their highest – at least for the few hours each day when the pump is running.

Some other telltale signs of insufficient aeration are:

- The water in your pond appears to be stagnant in certain areas
- You've noticed a growing mosquito problem
- Algae growth always seems to be a battle you can't win
- Muck has accumulated at the bottom of the pond

Medical issues, like swim bladder problems, could be causing your fish to swim sideways, too. But, before you take your finned pal to the veterinarian, try adding or adjusting the aeration in your water feature. You can also check your ammonia and nitrite levels using a water test kit.

If your pond has a lot of fish for its size, or is a medium or large water garden or koi pond up to 16,000 gallons in size, consider adding an Airmax® KoiAir™ Aeration Kit. Its energy-efficient design includes a dual diaphragm pump that infuses oxygen into the pond while being virtually maintenance free.

If you have a handful of fish in a smaller pond that's up to 2,000 gallons in size, check out the Airmax® PondAir™ Aeration Kits. It's designed for decorative ponds and water gardens, and features an airflow control valve that allows you to adjust the aeration output with the turn of a dial.

Aeration should help your fish swim upright again. But if it's still acting strange after you've pumped up the oxygen, you may want to check in with your veterinarian for medical advice. Good luck!



### Bullfrog tadpoles/frogs are fun

The Pond Guy 6-14-14

Those big croaking amphibians sure love living in a water garden. Bullfrogs gobble pesky bugs and nibble on nuisance algae while entertaining their human hobbyists with their leaping prowess and trance-inducing ribbit-ribbit songs.

When they're adults, bullfrogs are impressive



creatures: As one of the largest frogs in the world, they grow to 8 inches long and weigh up to 1½ pounds. When they're tadpoles, they're impressive, too. The dark green swimmers measure up to 6 inches long, which is larger than most other frog species, and sport a dorsal fin that begins behind its arrowhead-shaped body.

Caring for your tadpoles involves understanding their habitat, diet and developmental stages. Here's what you need to know to grow your baby bullfrog into a beefy bug-eating adult.

### **Healthy Habitat**

Bullfrog tadpoles like to swim in shallow water on fine gravel bottoms. As they grow, they tend to move into deeper waters. They have speckled-skin camouflage to help protect them from predators, but you should still plan to provide a wide variety of floating and submerged plants, like parrots feather, frogbit and water lilies, as well as rocks and other hides to your pond. The little guys will hang out among them should a hungry bird or fish fly or swim by for a bite to eat.

### **Algae, Please**

When they're young, bullfrog tadpoles are herbivores that love to nibble on the string algae that forms along your rocks and under plants. Though they have been observed eating frog eggs (gasp!) and other newly hatched tadpoles, the algae should keep them more than satisfied – at least until they become adults. That's when they become carnivorous critters with a hankering for bugs, rodents, reptiles, birds, small fish and even an occasional bat.

### **From Tadpoles to Adulthood**

While they're in their tadpole – or pollywog – stage, these tiny gilled critters live exclusively in the water. But after about one year, the tadpoles will start to grow legs. Shortly thereafter, they grow arms. As their tails shorten, they develop lungs and their gills disappear. The tadpole, now several years old depending on where it's growing up, has finally transformed into a froglet that can make the leap from water to dry land.

Once your tadpole has grown into an adult, you can expect that bad boy to be around for 8 to 10 years. Enjoy your new pond pal! Ribbit!

***Editor's note: We loved having frogs in our pond but could never get them stick around for long. They travel in the rain because they have to stay moist so whenever it rained we always worried about them leaving, which they usually did. Also, we rarely had baby fish when we had a frog so we weren't bothered with an over fish population. They are good at weeding out the babies. I loved the sound of their mating call. It is hard to believe that such a little frog can make such a big sound!***

## **Lowering energy costs**

*The Pond Guy 6-21-14*

Energy costs have certainly been on the incline lately, and so it makes perfect sense to search for ways to save some of your hard-earned cash.



If you must –though it is not ideal – you can shut off your waterfall at night as long as you have your aeration system operating. It'll keep the oxygen flowing overnight.

However, consider the hidden costs that you could be incurring:

### **Dealing with Poor Fish Health:**

Still, quiet water – even just during the overnight hours – means that fewer water molecules are circulating and making contact with oxygen-rich air at the pond's surface. The stagnant water will be unable to release dangerous gases, like ammonia, and absorb life-giving oxygen. That could cause your fishes' immune systems to suffer, which could lead to disease or worse.

### **Replacing Beneficial Bacteria:**

For your filtration system to remove contaminants from the water, it needs moving water flowing through it – so if your pump is off, your water's not moving. If all the water drains out of your filter, you could wind up with a loss of the beneficial bacteria that live on the media inside, which means you'll need to replace them later.

### **Managing Algae Blooms:**

Moving water helps to keep debris suspended in the water column and pulled through the skimmer and filter for efficient removal. But if the pump is turned off, that debris will settle to the bottom of the pond and build up, creating a dense food source for nuisances like algae. When it starts to bloom, it'll take your time, energy and some algacide to clear up – which can equal a pretty penny.

Pond pump manufacturers understand that water gardeners are concerned about operating costs, so many of the designs on the market today, including the RapidFlo™ and MagFlo™ Pump, are energy efficient and consume relatively little electricity. Pumps that used to cost \$100 a month or more to run have been replaced by models that cost as little as \$12 a month.

Now that's some serious savings!

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

July 16	Monthly Meeting
August 20	Monthly Meeting
September 17	Monthly Meeting
October 5	Apple Fest
October 15	Monthly Meeting
November 19	Pot Luck

**Pond Tip**

When potting up or dividing your aquatic plants it is best to use the largest pot that your pond has space for. This will not only help the plants reach their full potential, but also maximize the time your plants have in the pot before they need to be divided thus saving you extra work potting your plants. This is not as important with tropical plants that will not survive the winters in your climate and are just treated as annuals.

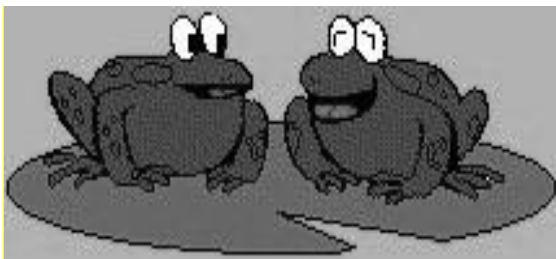
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5-14, 6-14, 7-14 or anytime in 2013**  
Please renew as soon as possible to continue  
receiving the newsletter.  
Send dues to  
**Jim Mowder, 3717 SE 31st ST, 66605**

**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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