



# 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 5

June 1, 2014



Aaron Jones points out a landscape idea during his talk at the March TAWGS meeting.

## Ideas for landscaping

by Sherry Reed

Aaron Jones with Schendel Lawn and Landscape shared some of his ideas for landscaping with TAWGS at the May, 2014 meeting. The business started in 2002 as Creative Landscaping and then partnered with Schendel Pest Control to form Schendel Lawn and Landscaping in 2010. They are located at 4707 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Topeka.

Aaron said there are different elements in designing a landscape. There is annual color in the plants you choose. Depth and height are another element to consider just in the setting of walls, fences and trees. Different textures will add to the landscape with rocks, evergreens, water features. Lines and shapes are also something to think about in your design. Finally elements and structures will help add interest to your landscapes in such things as fire features, pergolas, bubbling rocks or landscaping lighting.

A few things to consider when you are designing the landscape is the functionality or purpose, the aesthetics or beauty of the area and the cost

Some helpful hints for designing were shared by Aaron. The first is to take baby steps, start small. Then walk through plant nurseries and write down what you like. Sketch out your ideas on paper-paper is cheap, plants are not. Try to keep a continuity of materials and

**Monthly Meeting**  
7:00 p.m. June 18, 2014  
**Fish Fry & Pot Luck at**  
**Bob & Cheryl Saathoff's**  
5831 SW Turnberry CT  
Bring side dish, table service and lawn chair

lastly learn from your neighbors.

If you still need further inspiration, you can get more ideas from magazines, social media such as, instagram, pinterest, facebook, etc. Or you can visit botanical gardens around the country.

## TAWGS minutes 5-19-14

President Tom Platis called the meeting to order. Introductions were made.

Floyd Gruver introduced the evening speaker, Aaron Jones with Schendel Lawn and Landscape.

Treasurer's report showed a beginning balance of \$2312.55, with inflows of \$40 and outflows of \$141.25, with an ending balance of \$2211.30. Don Taliaferro moved to accept the treasurer's report, Tom Routh seconded the motion.

Sandy Regier made a motion to approve the April minutes as reported in the Lilypad, Linda Reynolds seconded the motion.

Old business: there are 5 definite ponds on the tour and looking for 2 to 3 more. The tour will be on the last weekend in June, 9:00 to 4:00 on Saturday and 12:00 to 4:00 on Sunday. Tickets will be available for \$5 at the usual businesses that have sold in the past and possibly Schendel's Lawn and Landscape. Names were taken for pond sitters. No news on the reflecting pond in Gage Park.

Floyd Gruver made the motion to adjourn, Jim Green seconded the motion. Sherry Reed, Secretary

*Don't forget the fish fry and tour of beautiful gardens at the June meeting at Saathoff's!! Bring a side dish, table service and a lawn chair.*



## Moisture loving plants

By Duane Van Dolah  
**Gray's sedge**  
*Carex grayi*

This sedge is also called the Globe Sedge and Morning Star Sedge. It is native from the eastern 1/5 of Kansas and Oklahoma, to the whole eastern United States. The light green blades of the leaf are 3/8 inch wide and gets from 12 to 40 inches long. The small tufts of grass are ordinary looking except for its seed head. They are 1 to 1 1/2 inch stars that have multiple spikes. They also are light green in color that turn a light tan or brown when mature. They will reach a length of 12 to 40 inches on thin stems in June through Frost. It's hardy from zones 2-8 and enjoys being in moist to less than an inch of water over the crown. It grows in part sun or light shade and can be found along streams, wet to moist woodlands and swamps. Propagation is by seed or division of the clump in late spring. The seed pods make great additions to a flower arrangement.



## What causes foamy water?

*The Pond Guy 5-17-14*

Is foamy water making your pond look more like the inside of a washing machine than an aquatic oasis? All that bubbly white or gray buildup is likely being caused by an excess of organic material in the water. Accumulation happens when too many fish are living in the pond, you're overfeeding them, filtration is inadequate or there's runoff seeping into your water garden. Then, as the water flows down your waterfall, air and water collide, causing the proteins and other organics to be trapped inside bubbles rather than turning into ammonia and nitrites. Air-water collision is why the foam forms, particularly the base of your waterfall. What's the solution? Short-term, you can change out part of the pond's water to remove the foam. When you do, be sure to add some Pond Logic® Stress Reducer PLUS to the fresh water, which will form a beneficial slime coat on your fish and make tap water safe for them. In addition, add Pond Logic® Defoam to your water. Safe for fish, plants and wildlife, you simply shake the can and pour its contents into the pond. The foam will disappear in no time. Long-term, you have several options:

- Increase Filtration: Boost your filtration by adding plants to your pond or increasing the capacity of your existing filtration system
- Relocate Fish: Too many fish will produce excess waste, which means more foam. The rule is to allow 1 inch of adult fish per square foot of surface area, so if you have too many koi or goldfish in your pond, you might want to think about finding new

homes for some of them.

- Cut Back on Meals: If you're feeding your fish too much or too often, the excess food adds to the extra organic material in your pond's water. Only feed your fish an amount they'll eat in a few minutes.
- Add Nutrient-Eating Bacteria: To help break down the nutrient load in the water, add beneficial bacteria in such as, LiquidClear™ to work. They digest the dead organics in the pond, making the water crystal clear and foam free.
- Aerate the Water: Aeration will also help reduce the nutrient load by circulating the water column and feeding fresh oxygen to the busy bacteria. Foamy water can be a nuisance, but once you achieve some balance in your pond's ecosystem, those bubbles will disappear in no time.

## Birding for your health

*Birds & Blooms 2-18-14*

You know the old saying "An apple a day keeps the doctor away"?



Well, you could say that about birds. Sure, birdwatching, photographing and feeding birds is a fun hobby, but there's much more to it than that. This simple activity can provide major health benefits and add to the quality of life for just about anyone.

We're always trying to persuade more people to take up an interest in birds, and now we have one of our best reasons yet. Go birding—it's good for you! Take a look at how a little dose of feathered friends and Mother Nature can have a big impact on your well-being.

### Birding makes you happy

Although it's possible to do a lot of birding just by looking out the window, sooner or later birds will lure us outdoors. While this alone can lift your spirits, there really is a scientific tie between your mood and being outside. When we're outdoors moving around and breathing fresh air, we tend to take deeper breaths. With more oxygen transported to all the cells of our bodies, including our brains, we become more alert, and our mood is likely to be elevated. Also, during half an hour in the sun, we can soak up almost a whole day's requirement of vitamin D. Vitamin D is important for our physical health in a variety of ways, and it also helps to alleviate anxiety and depression.

### Birdwatching makes friends

Studies have shown repeatedly that a strong network of friends will help you to stay happy and healthy. And if you take up bird-watching, you'll probably discover many new friendships. An interest in birds brings together people from all walks of life and of all ages and backgrounds. Birding crosses all social and economic barriers and creates a sense of camaraderie that can help forge lasting friendships. Sharing our love of birds with new friends—and with those who have never tried birding—is beneficial for the birds, too. The more people we can get interested in birds and nature, the more support we build for conservation.

## Birding keeps you physically active

Birding can be as low-key and relaxing as sitting in a comfy chair and watching the birds at your feeders. But it can also qualify as wonderful exercise. Simply going for a walk might be boring, but going for a walk to look for birds gives you a focus and a reason to keep going. And if you get serious about seeking new and different birds, you may find yourself hiking long distances and carrying all kinds of birding gear. Even if you stay close to home, bird feeding also requires some physical activity. This is especially true if, like us, you live in an area where you've got to shovel several inches of snow (or sometimes several feet!) from around your feeding station in winter. Use the birds in your backyard as inspiration to keep moving. Birdwatching takes you out into nature.



## Birdwatching takes you places

Pursuing birds in their natural habitats is bound to shake us out of our normal routines and haunts. Watching the sun rise over a meadow, going out into the woods at night to look for owls, even going to the landfill to see a rare gull—all of these take us beyond ordinary experiences. For many birders, once they've gotten to know the birds in their area, there's an insatiable curiosity about species elsewhere in the world. Birding can be the motivation to travel far and wide. For instance, Kenn has watched birds on every continent. We're not suggesting that everyone should go to that extreme, but visiting new and different places and exploring the bird life there is an exciting way to expand your knowledge of the world at large.

## Birding feeds the brain

Keeping our minds active and healthy is essential for our overall sense of well-being. The Alzheimer's Association suggests that if we want to keep our brains healthy we need to keep learning new things. What better way to do that than by continuing to learn about birds? If you are new to bird-watching, just identifying the birds you see can be a challenging mental puzzle. If you are an experienced birder, you can still learn new things every day about the behavior of your local birds. Studies have shown that these kinds of mental exercises can help form new neural paths that can help fight back against diseases like Alzheimer's, other forms of dementia and Parkinson's.

## Birdwatching leads to new experiences

Variety is the spice of life. This is an old saying, but it's true. Lack of variety in our lives can lead to boredom and a general sense of fatigue. Adding variety can make us more energized and positive, giving us more to look forward to. And of course, in terms of variety, birds offer a dizzying

array of colors, calls and behaviors. You can't predict all the birds you'll see while going out birding. On any given day, some of the expected birds will be nowhere to be seen while totally unexpected ones may pop up at any moment. So birding offers both a reassuring sense of the predictable and an exciting sense of the unpredictable, keeping us on our toes and alive to the possibilities.

An interest in birds can be the gateway to a world of discovery. Once you go outdoors and start looking around, it's almost impossible to just see the birds. Before long, a beautiful butterfly, an intriguing mushroom or some unfamiliar turtle will distract you. It's OK to be distracted—the birds won't mind. As we're fond of saying, when you learn more about nature, your view of the world becomes more three-dimensional. Some of our best friends are humans, but there are about a million other species of living things out there that are also worth knowing. And new experiences make life worth living! Birdwatching can do wonders for your physical and mental well being.

## Is a water-fall enough

*The Pond Guy 5-31-14*

As your waterfall gurgles and churns gallons of water, it would certainly appear that your pond is getting plenty of aeration.



All that action does, in fact, help with gas exchange and infuse oxygen into the water. But it isn't always enough, especially if you run your waterfall pump for a short time during the day.

If a pond isn't aerated enough, expect to see these telltale signs:

- **Algae Battles:** Algae thrive in calm water that's devoid of – and in need of – oxygen and beneficial bacteria. If you regularly fight algae blooms, that means your pond is out of balance and could use some additional oxygen and movement throughout the entire water column.
- **Oxygen-Starved Fish:** Fish that need more O<sub>2</sub> will hang out beneath your waterfall, where oxygen supplies are the densest. They may also be coming to the water surface, gulping and gasping for breaths of air because there's not enough in their environment.
- **Too Many Fish:** The general rule for a fish population in a pond is to allow 1 inch of adult fish per square foot of surface area. If you have too many fish, or your existing population has outgrown their space, aeration is critical to their health and well being.
- **Stagnant Water, Mosquito Boom:** Is the water stagnant in certain areas of your pond? Are you suffering through a mosquito boom in your backyard? These little pests prefer to lay their eggs and raise their young in still water – so you might have created a perfect mosquito habitat!

**Continued on page 4.**

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

June 18 Fish Fry at Saathoff's  
~~June 28-29 Topeka Pond Tour~~  
July 16 Monthly Meeting  
August 20 Monthly Meeting  
September 17 Monthly Meeting  
October 5 Apple Fest  
October 15 Monthly Meeting  
November 19 Pot Luck

- **Muck Accumulation:** Decomposing plant matter and fish waste build up when the water is still and your biological filtration system – beneficial bacteria – breaks down. That muck feeds the algae blooms, which create more muck. It's a vicious cycle that can be remedied with aeration.

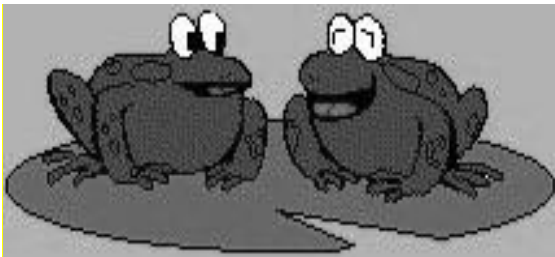
Do any of these ring true? If so, your waterfall or stream is not providing enough aeration for your pond

**Your Dues are Due if your label reads 4-14, 5-14, 6-14 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	President
Topeka	785-478-9514
Floyd Gruver	Vice President
Holton	785-364-3046
Sherry Reed	Secretary
Topeka	785-408-5060
Jim Mowder	Treasurer
Topeka	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)

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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:

Diane Gruver, The Lily Pad Editor  
408 Emerald, Holton, KS 66436  
785-364-3046 or 785-364-0666  
[fdgruver@embarqmail.com](mailto:fdgruver@embarqmail.com)

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