



## *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 2**

**March 1, 2014**



*A bubbler urn in the TAWGS garden display. Photo by Bob Saathoff.*

## **Spring springs at garden show**

By Bob Saathoff

Several of us in TAWGS have been overheard saying, "The two happiest days in February for us every year are the day we begin to construct our Water Garden Display at the Topeka EXPO Center and the day we tear it down after the Show ends.". When chatting with other Show Displayers during tear-down there is always a comment like, "Well, another one is done, and now it is time for Spring to arrive."

Earlier in the year, Don Taliaferro and Bob Saathoff from TAWGS met with Jerold Binkley and David Hedstrom from Topeka Beautification Association (TBA) to discuss a rough plan for this year's Garden Show Display. Jerold and Bob gathered specimen native stone prior to the Show and contacts were made to coordinate donated use of plant materials, man-made stone, mulch and other accessories. As is the case with most garden designs this one developed and grew as we went and turned out great. As you can see in the photos there was a lot of "green" in our Display. Some of the flowering plants didn't cooperate as planned but overall the Display was a beauty. A taller than usual waterfall was the

**Monthly Meeting**  
**7:00 p.m. March 19, 2014**  
Historic Old Prairie Town, 124 NW Fillmore  
**Speaker**  
**Deb Spencer, Waters Edge**



*Waterfall in the display at the TAWGS display. Photo by Don Taliaferro.*

centerpiece including a smoother than usual water flow. A bubbler urn, provided by Water's Edge in Lawrence,



An overview of the display at the garden show. Photo by Bob Saathoff

constructing and 40 person-hours tearing down. In addition, quite a crew from Shawnee County Parks & Recreation helped make it all possible. Hauling mulch, delivering native stone we stored at their facility, hauling loaner plants from Skinner's Nursery and the Veteran's Administration Horticultural Center, etc. was essential to our success. Capitol Concrete Supply supplied five pallets of man-made stone.

Again, many thanks go to everyone who helped in any way at the display. Thanks to Tom Platis who spent a lot of phone time recruiting folks to work during the Show. A special thanks to one of our newest members, Chris Newell. Chris jumped in with both feet (that is another story) and worked tirelessly throughout the Show. You are probably wondering what Don T., Chris N, and Bob S. are brainstorming for next year's Display. All that can be said is that at this point the concept is bigger and better than ever.



It takes teamwork to put the beautiful display together. Photo by Don Taliaferro.



Another view of the waterfall and display. Photo by Don Taliaferro.

was placed in an oval island at the edge of the Display. Members of TAWGS and TBA again joined forces in all phases of planning, constructing and tearing down.

A big thank you to twenty-two Club members who were involved in constructing and tearing down the Display; from TAWGS: Don Taliaferro, Chris Newell, Bob Saathoff, Cheryl Saathoff, Jim Mowder, Bill Clark, Linda Reynolds, Don Regier, Ray Schroeder, Tom Platis, Helen Platis, Sherry Reed, Kent Hampton, Dale Jirak, Phil Thompson, Amy Thompson. And from TBA: Jerold Binkley, David Hedstrom, Cindy RIndt, Don Wiltz, Steve Grenus and Doc Grindel. Bob estimated that with the combined efforts of the two groups, we had a collective 200 person-hours



## Water plants

By Duane Van Dolah

**Frogs-Bit**  
*Hydrocharis morsus-*

The Frogs-Bit is a subtropical free-floating plant, which inhabits the shallow waters of pools, lakes and the wetter marshy portions of Europe and western Asia. The common name derives from accounts that frogs bit the leaves when trying to catch insects. This delightful and graceful floating plant is like a small water lily. Borne on long petioles, the beautifully veined kidney-shaped green shiny leaves are about 1 inch across. They rest on the water in the form of a rosette. The small white flowers with a yellow center are unisexual. During the summer, the plant increases by means of stolons that arise in the leaf axils and grow to produce new rosettes.



As autumn approaches, turions (terminal overwintering buds that are rich in starch) drop to the bottom of the pond where they hibernate over winter. In spring they rise to the surface and grow new plants. Snails are very fond of the succulent leaves and can soon spoil their looks. It is a good choice for a container-pond or small pond since its growth is restrained. This plant is only half-hardy so to over winter. To do this, place some of the buds, which have fallen to the pond's bottom, in a jar filled with water and soil in a sunny window or under lights. Then return buds to the pond in April. Propagation is by division of clumps in the summer.



## Deterring herons

*The Pond Guy 2-22-14*

**We had a heron last year. How do I stop it from coming back?**

The bad news is, once a heron knows food is served in your pond, it'll be back for more. Chances are pretty good that it'll stop by for a bite to eat when it flies through this year, so be prepared with these surefire heron-proofing devices to keep the sushi lover at bay.

1. **Use a Decoy**— Your first plan of defense should be setting up a realistic Blue Heron Decoy. Heron are territorial by nature, and when one cruises overhead and sees that one of its feathered cousins (fake or real) has already claimed the area, it'll keep going until it finds its own pond to fish. Move the decoy regularly to make it appear even more realistic. Another expert tip: Remove the decoy during mating season, which runs from March through late May or June.
2. **Shore Up the Perimeter**— Heron refuse to land in water and hate stepping over wires, so we recommend Heron Stopas a second line of defense around the perimeter of your pond.
3. The impassable barrier — made up of simply nylon line and stakes — prevents the bird from approaching and protects up to 40 feet of shoreline without blocking your view.
4. **Set Up a Motion Detector** — For a final layer of protection, set up a ScareCrow® Motion-Activated Animal Deterrent. Thanks to a built-in infrared sensor that detects movement up to 35 feet in front of it and up to 45 feet wide, this heron-scaring tool chases off unwanted visitors with a surprise spray of water. It works both day and night to set boundaries around your water garden or koi pond. But be warned: It doesn't know the difference between an animal and a human, so you might get wet!



## Provide good conditions for koi spawning

*The Pond Guy 2-15-14*

If you want your fish to get frisky this spring and produce a brood of colorful fry, break out the

bubbly and try out these tips and techniques that will create the perfect mood for love.

1. **Create Ambiance**— Your koi don't need soft candlelight and rose petals for romance, but they do prefer an aquatic environment that's as pristine as possible. Perform regular water changes — that's changing out 10% to 20% of your water every two weeks — to help keep things clean and clear. Once water temperatures climb back up to 50°F, you can also begin adding the water-quality-boosting products found in DefensePAC®, like Seasonal Defense®, Nature's Defense® and Clarity Defense®.
2. **Heat Things Up**— Temperature and time of year matter when it comes to koi feeling amorous. The fish typically spawn when water temperatures are 65° to 70°F. In many ponds, this typically happens between May and June — in late spring and early summer, when the birds and bees start to get busy!
3. **Give Them a Love Nest**— Like you and me, koi like their privacy when it's time for them to mate. Before spring settles in, make sure you give them plenty of cozy spots and hiding places. Plants, tunnels, and Nycon Koi Kastle Fish Shelters will provide excellent coverage for them. In addition, give them a safe place to lay their eggs, like a fry mat or similar device.
4. **Know the Signs**— When you see the male koi chasing after the females, you'll know the game of love is on. Keep an eye on their behavior; however, because the males might try to run into the females, or push them into the rocks and the side of your pond to try to get them to release their eggs. Another telltale sign: Cloudy or foamy water accompanied by a distinct odor.
5. **Keep the Fry Safe** — Once the fry emerge from their eggs, they can't swim and will need a protected area that's safe from natural predators, like tadpoles, frogs and koi. Make sure you give them plenty of coverage with water hyacinth, water lettuce and other aquatic plants. You might also consider using a fine mesh tent, like the Nycon Fish Spawning Incubator, to protect them and prevent them from getting sucked in and lost in your filtration system.

**See Koi on page 4**

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

March 19	Monthly Meeting
April 16	Monthly Meeting
May 21	Monthly Meeting
June 18	Fish Fry at Saathoff's
July 16	Monthly Meeting
August 20	Monthly Meeting
September 17	Monthly Meeting
October 5	Apple Fest
October 15	Monthly Meeting
November 19	Pot Luck

.....  
**Koi continued from page 3**

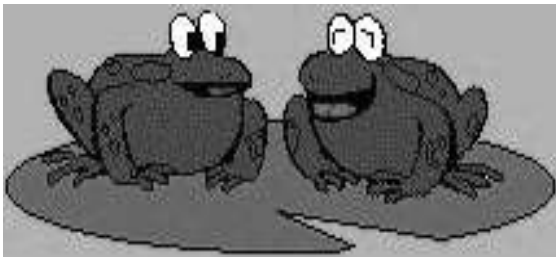
With a little staging and encouragement, it's not too difficult to convince your koi to spawn. Follow these tips, keep the brood safe once they hatch and, before long, you'll have a pond full of small fry! Good luck!

**Your Dues are Due if your label reads  
2-14, 3-14 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, 66605



**Check it out - [www.tawgs.org](http://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 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](mailto:fdgruver@embarqmail.com)

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