



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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Doris Hammond, Sherry Reed, Sue Mowder, Linda Reynolds, Sandy Regier, Tom Platis, and Tom and Pat Routh visit with Mary Weaver about her beautiful pond.

TAWGS Minutes 9-16-15

The September meeting was called to order at the beautiful water garden of Mary Weaver. The setting was tremendous as well as the snacks provided by Mary and Pat and Tom Routh. Thank you all.

Our program was a continuation of developing strategic plans for the future of TAWGS, with Shawnee County Extension Agent, Jamie Hancock. At the August meeting we determined the values of TAWGS, which were education, promotion/recognition of water gardens, service and social. We then brainstormed ideas or goals as to how we could meet these values. The members then individually voted for their top six goals. At our September meeting, Jamie had calculated the top eight goals from our voting at the last meeting. From the top eight we brainstormed ideas as how to meet these goals. Some very good ideas were generated and now all we have to do is implement some of them!

The nominating committee presented a slate of officers for 2016. Jim Mowder will continue as treasurer and Sherry Reed will continue as secretary. Nominations from the floor were needed for President and Vice-President. Floyd Gruver nominated Mary Weaver for Vice-President. She would like to have some time to consider this and will let the committee know before the next meeting. Tom Platis nominated Chris Newell for President.

Monthly Meeting

7:00 p.m.

Oct. 21, 2015

Historic Old Prairie Town, 124 NW Fillmore

Speaker

Wes Chiles – Waterscape Concepts

This slate of officers will be voted on at the next meeting.

Two projects in the works for next year is the building of a pond less waterfall at the Shawnee County Extension office in conjunction with the Shawnee County Master Gardeners and a new project at Ward-Meade.

One of the article writers that Diane has used for the Lily Pad has passed away. Diane will send a card to his wife and seek permission to continue to use some of his past articles in the newsletter.

Chris Newell reported that approximately \$400 dollars would be needed to increase our storage space at Water Scapes. This would increase our space from 8x12 feet to 16x16 feet. Floyd Gruver made a motion to complete this project and it was seconded by Diane Gruver. Motion carried.

Bob Saathoff suggested having Deb Spencer from Water's Edge come speak to us at our October meeting on how to close down our ponds for the winter.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.



Overwintering tropical lilies

The Pond Guy 9-12-15

Vivid and fragrant, tropical water lilies are the floating jewels of a pond. If you live in USDA Hardiness Zone 9 or lower, you'll need

to take extra special care of these warm-weather-loving beauties over the cold season. To overwinter tropical water lilies, you have two choices: send them into dormancy or keep them growing.

Going Dormant for Winter

If you decide to send your water lilies into dormancy for the winter, stop fertilizing them in the fall to slow their growth and help them prepare their tubers for winter. After the first frost, pull out your Aqua Gloves™ and follow these step-by-step instructions:

1. First, remove the lily and planting basket from the pond. Using your hands, dig around in the soil just below the plant's crown to feel for the tubers. They normally range in size from an acorn to golf ball, but they can be smaller or larger.
2. Take out the tubers and rinse each one very well with a strong stream of water. Use your pond scissors to trim off remnants of roots or stems. If small tubers are growing on a larger tuber, remove them and store them—they could turn into new lilies plants next year!
3. Store the tubers in a plastic bag or glass jar that's filled with damp (not wet!) peat moss, sphagnum moss or sand. Consider dusting them with a fungicide before sealing them up. Keep the container in a room that stays warmer than 50° F.
4. Once a month through the winter, check on your tubers to be sure they're still damp. Spritz them with water if they get dry.
5. When water temperatures climb back to 60° F in the spring, replant the tubers in a planting basket filled with fresh, fertile soil. Position them just below the surface with the pointy side up and round side down.

Keep Them Growing

If you decide to keep your water lilies growing over the winter, set up a space in your home for a grow light and an aquarium or lined indoor pond. After the first frost, take the lilies and their planting baskets inside and follow these tips:

1. First, trim off the largest leaves and any dead, dry or damaged leaves with your pond scissors.
2. Place the planting baskets and plants inside in an aquarium or lined pond filled with water.
3. Keep the water temperature above 60° F, and use a grow light to keep the lilies growing slowly over the winter.
4. Once the weather outside warms and your pond's water temperature climbs back to 60° F, transplant your lilies or add some fertilizer to their existing soil and submerge them.

Overwintering tropical water lilies isn't hard, but it does require some space and planning. Good luck!

Editors note: I have tried several ways to overwinter tropical lilies and haven't had much success, but it is always worth a try if you have room and are willing to go to all the hard work.

Plants that cannot freeze solid in the winter time.....

Information provide in October 1999 Reflections

Hardy water wisteria, golden buttons, melon sword,

houltyniaameleon, New Zealand jumping rush, azure carpet, cardinal flower and the lobelias, water clovers, parrot feather, water parsley, pickerel plant and lizard tail.

Lower all of these semi-hardy marginals to the bottom of the pond to assure that they live through the winter. Some winters you might be lucky enough for them to survive on the shelf, but don't count on it being a sure thing!

Don't clean up too good

Reprinted from 10-15-01 Splash

Raking leaves and cleaning up the yard is a chore most of us are starting to perform now. But WAIT! Getting the yard and garden too clean deprives many critters of habitat for winter survival! To keep the environment in and around your pond balanced care has to be taken to provide adequate shelter from one season to the next:

- Put a few handfuls of leaves on the sheltered side of medium to large rocks around the pond to provide shelter for toads, newts, etc.

Leave a few weeds (grasses) to go to seed. This is

- koi could grow in the right conditions. Colossal parents often produce colossal offspring, and if those fry live in a spacious pond with clean, aerated water and good food, who knows how big they'll get!
- **Age.** Like most living things, koi develop faster when they're young and slower as they age. Your 4-inch koi quickly doubled in size because they're still adolescents; as they get older, their growth rate will slow down.
- a valuable food source.
- Do not scrub all the string algae off the sides of the pond. String algae provides nutrition for your fish if they get the "munchies" on an occasional warm day.
- Do not use herbicides, fertilizer, etc. close to the pond where it could wash into the pond with the next rain or be carried into the pond by the breeze while you are applying it.

Give fish places to hide

Reprinted 9-03 Splash

When the plants in the pond start dying down for the winter they leave your precious fish pitifully exposed to predators! Hawks, owls, etc., consider koi and goldfish a Gourmet Dessert! Take steps to prevent them landing on the predator dinner plate, give them places to hide:

- 1) Take large terra cotta flower pots and put them in the bottom of the pond turned on their sides (the fish can scoot into them). Be sure the pots do not contain residue from fertilizer, etc.
- 2) Cover the pond with a net even if there are no large trees nearby.
- 3) Use two foot sections of white PVC pipe and put them on their side in the pond so the fish can hide in them.
- 4) A five gallon bucket works fine also.

Fall pond preparations

by *ERIK TATE, Operations Manager, The Water Garden*
Parts reprinted from 9-04 Water Garden News

Sludge on the bottom of the pond should be removed as best we can. If it is about 1/4" thick or so, it is normal and should not be a concern. This sludge is a combination of decaying plant debris, leaves, fish waste, and more. Some of this can be removed with a net. The finer debris can be removed by siphoning or by using a vacuum such as the Mini-Vac or the PondoVac 2.

Remember to continue use of beneficial bacteria. Microbe Lift Autumn Winter Prep is made for cooler weather and can continue to be used throughout the winter. These bacteria will reduce maintenance by breaking down sludge and debris as well as sustaining biological activity throughout the cold winter months.

You should have stopped feeding your plants by this point. As the foliage on your hardy plants begins to die back you should remove any dead and dying leaves and place the plant deep enough in the pond to keep the roots from freezing. While it is true that some marginal plants will survive even if their roots freeze solid it is best to lower all of your plants below the ice zone.

Hazards of loss of power, loss of circulation

By *Joyce Tsuji*

Reprinted from 6-04 Water Works, North Texas Water Garden Society

Losing circulation in your pond can be hazardous to your pond and fish for several reasons. In winter, if temperatures are below freezing, your pipes may freeze, or worse, burst. If your pond is heated, then the nitrifying bacteria in your filter that detoxify the ammonia from the fish will be knocked down if the filter becomes anaerobic (oxygen deficient.)

Losing power in the summer is also not unheard of, even in the most urbanized areas. Loss of power at this time can be even more disastrous because the fish are actively feeding, metabolizing and producing more waste and, at higher temperatures, water holds less oxygen than at lower temperatures.

The bacteria must also be more active to keep up with the fish waste production and will also die quicker from lack of oxygen. Therefore, although we are not likely to lose power for days in summer, even a few hours may be enough for the bacteria to start dying off.

How long your filters and fish can go without circulation is a function of fish load in your pond and the size and type of filters you have. Under gravel filters and filter tubs may be more resistant to temporary loss of circulation than bead filters but their resilience also depends on how clean they are.

An under-gravel filter that is in great need of cleaning will quickly go anaerobic (it probably already has a lot of area that is anaerobic) than the one that has been maintained. So this is another good reason to regularly maintain your filters, regardless of which type you have.

Thus, having an alternate power source becomes very important to koi keepers. While some battery systems

exist, the most common emergency power comes from generators sold at hardware stores and building supply stores.

How many fish are safe for winter

Reprinted from 10-10-01 Splash

The most basic requirement for your fish during the winter months is oxygen! If there are too many fish in the pond and the water starts to freeze over or there are many cloudy days in succession the oxygen level in the pond can get dangerously low. The easiest way to prevent this is to make sure that there are not too many fish in the pond (this problem can be seen in reverse in the summer, when the hot, still weather can cause drops in oxygen in the water.)

The general rule of thumb is one inch of fish per one square foot of surface area. More fish can be kept in the pond, but adequate measures have to be taken to make sure the pond can sustain them.

Thin out oxygenators

Reprinted from 9-4-01 Splash

Many ponds have nice, thick growth of oxygenators, Parrots Feather, etc. by now. Some of that needs to be thinned out as the days and nights start getting cooler because it will partially die down and the decomposing organic matter will put too much of a load on the bacterial culture in the pond as the bacteria start to go dormant when the temperatures fall.

When it is time to thin out (not eliminate!) depends on the part of the country where the pond is located and how deep the pond is. Warmer layers of water in the bottom of the pond will support these plants longer than the colder layers near the top. As the temperatures start to get lower and the days get shorter these minor chores can be done a little at a time.

Don't forget to use a sturdy net to fish out leaves that have blown into the pond and soon it will be time to cover it completely with a net to prevent too many leaves falling into it.



Guest Debbie Peet, Jim Mowder, Doris Hammond and Sherry Reed admire the water lettuce in Mary's pond.

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

October 4 Apple Fest
October 21 Monthly Meeting
November 18 Pot Luck
June 25-26, 2016 Topeka Pond Tour



Pond Tips

If you have fish food left over, be sure to store it in your freezer for the winter. It is recommended that the food be packed in double plastic bags or in re-closable plastic containers and stored in a freezer to help retain its quality.

Submersible pumps that are turned off for the winter should be kept in water. Allowing the pump to dry can reduce the lifespan of the pump.

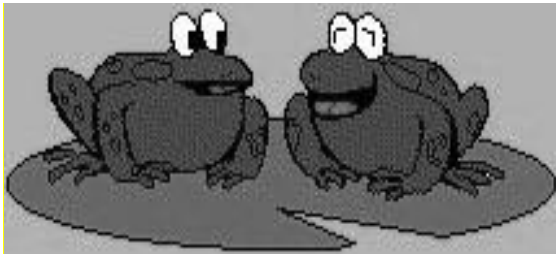
If you lose power and your fish start sucking at the surface (a sign of oxygen deprivation), put some hydrogen peroxide in a spray bottle and spray across the water surface. This will temporarily add oxygen to the water.

**Your Dues are Due if your label reads
8-15, 9-15 or 10-15**
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**
2015 OFFICERS:

Tom Platis	President
Topeka	785-478-9514
Chris Newell	Vice President
Topeka	785-633-4854
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, 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:

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.