



Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

Celebrating
Our
Tenth Year!

Volume 10 Issue 9

September, 2006

2006 Pond Tour Picnic at Angie and V.J.'s



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"Wet -n- Dry" "News -n- Views"

I hope that this will arrive in time to remind all of you that there will be no meeting on Friday, September 1. Due to that being the start of the Holiday weekend, we did agree to meet instead on Friday, the eighth at the regular time and place. I'm sorry that the timing is so close and I apologize for any inconvenience or difficulty that it may cause. The problem is that the end of the month sort of snuck up on me.

Thank you from the President

I must start by thanking everyone for their help, support and involvement in the past couple of months. With the Pond Tour and Picnic information replacing the August newsletter, we never acknowledged the support that Bob Wheeler provided through his slide presentation on the show Koi that were used for the judges training portion of the AKCA seminar in Buffalo. The fish were great specimens and the four categories that were selected showed some of the variations that make these fish so interesting and enjoyable.

I also want to thank Dave Parrone and John Roguski for their comments and appraisal of the video on starting a garden railway that was a part of that evening's presentation. They have been there and done that, so they offered their views on some of the overlooked trials and tribulations of trying to maintain a good operational railway in our area. This topic was also selected as background information because one of our tour stops would contain an operational garden railroad. We felt that this information would make seeing the train in operation a more enjoyable and interesting experience.

The next thank you will be a general one to cover everyone that was involved in making the pond tour so successful. First, there were all of the hosts for the gardens that we visited. It is always nice to see so many variations and combinations that make each pond or garden so unique and interesting. Next, a big thank you to Angie and V.J. Masciangelo for being such gracious hosts, for not only hosting the picnic, but for opening their house to all of us when the rains threatened and then hit with a vengeance. The final thanks go out to all who supported us with their attendance. Some attended only portions of the tour or picnic, others were able to join us for the entire day. All of this is very important because without all of this support, the tour would be meaningless.

The August meeting provided a couple of extra treats. In addition to the presentation on edible plants, Kathy Hursh prepared several treats for the attendees to sample. The tastings went well and it was a good opportunity to extend the social time of the meeting.

After a slight technical start-up problem, Les Saiers was able to share his photos, comments and experiences from the Niagara Frontier Pond Tour. We hope that this presentation will encourage more of our members to join us on future tours and joint ventures with our friends in the Buffalo area.

Coming Events

First of all, we hope that all of you will have a safe, happy and healthy Labor Day holiday period.

Our September meeting, as previously noted, has been rescheduled for Friday September 8.

Our guest speaker will be Brian Mosher from Sara's Garden Center. Brian is not only in charge of the water gardens there, but he also does some of the pond and garden

installations for them and their clients. His presentation will review some of the plant and other materials that can bring fall and winter color and interest to our ponds and gardens.

Hopefully, we have timed this properly so that some of the plants may already be showing their fall colors. That way, you may be able to find the materials and colors that you want and make note of them for purchase now or in early spring.

You should also look forward to the interesting changes that the snow itself can make in and to the garden. The unique mounding of the snow on the plants and objects can definitely change their appearance. Drifting snow, wildlife patterns and the changes in shape and size of the open water area created by your pump or bubbler can create highlights that can accentuate the depth of the snow cover. The freeze and thaw cycles create interesting icicles, texture and flow patterns that may be subtle but really shine and glitter as the angle of the sunlight changes. With careful observation, you will begin to realize that the expanses of white that we usually experience in a normal winter, are not really monochromatic, but are a significant field of unusual varieties of shading and color effects.

Next month, we will feature a round-table discussion of pond and water garden problems, attempted solutions both successes and failures and topics of general interest. This proved to be a good opportunity for everyone to get involved in the program last year and we hope that everyone will contribute again this year. The more people that are active in the discussions, the better the chances of this being an important learning opportunity for all of us. As in all types of gardening, the rules can usually be bent and even

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broken. The important thing is what works best for you. Sharing these experiences may just be the trick that someone else may need to get a little more enjoyment or success from their garden too. We will be looking for volunteers and nominees for our elections in November. With John and Kathy Roguski becoming snowbirds and being absent a portion of the year, we will definitely need someone to fill the treasurer's position. Please give some thought to becoming more involved in the club, either as a board member or as a coordinator for one of the functions or events.

The old adage of the more you become active in a group, the more fun, enjoyment and learning you can achieve has been true for most of us that have been active through the years. Join us to see for yourself.

Items of Interest

If you had a problem with mosquitoes or have Orfes, this extract from *MacArthur Water Gardens* "Pond Q&A" by Carolyn Weise should be helpful. The Orfes are a great addition to the pond for mosquito or other insect control. They are great "buggers" that love to eat mosquitoes, bugs, spiders and anything that lands on the water or near enough for them to catch. They are fast swimmers, but get along well with Koi and goldfish. They do not like to be alone nor do they like to be the only one of their kind in a pond. They prefer to swim together in schools and therefore should be purchased in multiples. This schooling tendency makes them more interesting and easier to observe in the pond. Remember, keep them happy by having several in your pond and they will return the favor by controlling your bugs and adding more action to your water garden.

Another interesting point, especially with the higher temperatures that we experienced most of this summer, is the importance of maintaining a reasonable to high level of dissolved oxygen. The detrimental effects on fish include:

- hypoxemia (low blood oxygen level)
- reduced immune function which can increase susceptibility to infection
- slowed healing response

However, the fish aren't the only thing being affected. Low levels of oxygen will also have an adverse affect on the growth of beneficial bacteria in our filters. Plants too can suffer if there is insufficient oxygen for photosynthesis in their submerged leaves.

There are many factors that can affect the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water.

Physically, it is reduced by a high fish population, a surface area that is too small relative to the total volume, decaying organic matter, high total solids and by chemicals added for disease or parasite treatments.

Mechanically, it can be the result of decreased aeration possibly caused by the lack of or an insufficient number of airstones, a poor water circulation pattern, the lack of a good waterfall or actively flowing stream and by dirty or bypassed filters.

A subtle contributing factor for those who fill their ponds with well water, is the water itself. Well water often has almost no dissolved oxygen content. Likewise, using make up water that has been aged in a container without aeration or agitation, can also be significantly lower in oxygen.

The final and the most important factor is water temperature. The warmer the water the less oxygen that it can hold. That is why on ex-

tremely warm, sunny days, it is necessary to maintain the highest possible water and air flow to the pond. Younger fish, especially koi, do best when the dissolved oxygen levels are at 9 mg/liter (9ppm). Some older fish can tolerate and survive at a level as low as 5 mg/liter but their abilities will be compromised until the oxygen level is improved.

In visiting various water gardens this year, it appears that our warmer season was very favorable for growing Lotus. Many of the plants had well developed seed heads that are frequently used as dried flower decorations. However, if you were lucky enough to have such a plant, you could try to sprout some of these seeds and thus increase the number of plants that you have for minimum cost and a little extra time and effort on your part.

It can be practical to grow them from seed for your own satisfaction but it probably is not worth the effort to try to raise them for resale. Very few will blossom during their first year even though they will grow quite vigorously. You will most likely have to wait until the second year for the plant to produce the blossoms that we all enjoy so much. Also, you don't have to plant all of the seeds the first year. Hold some over for future years in case your first attempt fails due to climate or other problems. The seeds are very long-lived with some 2,000 year old seeds still being viable. You really have nothing to lose and much to gain.

The first step in the process is a little tricky. You must file through the outer seed coat until you start to see the white of the actual portion of the seed that will germinate. Continue to file around the outer seed coat until the file line goes

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completely around it. Be cautious that you do not cut into the white seed as this could cause severe damage to the seed.

Next, soak the seed in distilled or purified water at 70-80 degrees F for 1-2 days or until the outer seed coat is soft. The outer coat should be easily removed and should be discarded at this point. You should now have a nicely swollen seed with a possible green shoot starting to show from the inside.

Transfer the seed(s) to a tray that will hold water and that has about an inch or so of clay or suitable water plant soil. You can anchor the seeds to the soil by placing a wire loop over the top of the seed and pushing the end of the wire into the soil. After the seed(s) are anchored, carefully add fresh distilled water. Do this slowly so as not to dislodge the seed(s).

The water should be kept at 75-85 degrees F and should be changed every day or two. Using a strong light will help to maintain the water temperature. Using a small bubbler or other type of gentle aeration will help to keep the water fresh and the temperature more uniform.

In a week or two, the seed should form small, delicate leaves called coin leaves. Once the seed has formed at least three coin leaves, it can be transplanted to its own pot. Use a 4 inch pot that has about 2 inches of fertile soil in the bottom. Add the new seedling, being careful not to damage the coin leaves. Again, do not bury the seedling in the soil, simply weight it down with a stone or other material. You want the coin leaves to float and not be submerged, so add water as necessary to achieve this condition.

Keep the plant warm and give it plenty of sunlight so that it will grow into the soil and flourish.

With luck and a favorable season, you will probably have to move it

to a larger pot with more fresh, fertile soil about midway through the season.

Here's hoping that some of you will take advantage of your extra bounty this year and experiment with these seeds and process. In two years, your plants might be the highlight as you are a host for a pond tour stop.

Water, water everywhere

This closing segment is based on information in "Lessons from the pond" by Ed Beaulieu that was published in *Lifestyles*.

What makes water so interesting? It is everywhere and it is by far the most powerful substance on our planet. It can cut through solid rock, it can move millions of tons of earth in a single day and control or at least influence our weather.

We flock to its shores, marvel at its vastness, spend billions to get to it, spend even more on recreation that includes it or we may simply sit and enjoy its sights and sounds.

We invest in water gardens with ponds, streams, waterfalls, bogs and other types of water features so that we can always have these pleasures close to us. These water features bring enjoyment, relaxation and contemplation and quickly become a topic of conversation for neighbors, friends and relatives who suddenly become interested and fascinated by its functions and inhabitants. It becomes a common thread that soon ties us all together.

In the global picture the amount of water in our backyard water features is almost non-existent in the charting of our planet's waters. However, it has the ability and attention necessary to make it have the greatest impact. It is up to people like us that love having our own private water sanctuary to educate others to protect and more fully enjoy our precious and significant water relationship.

Where is all the water?

- 70% of the planet is covered with water.
- Salt water accounts for 96.5% of the total water (Approximately 320,000,000 cubic miles)
- Icecaps and glaciers are the second largest source and make up 68.7% of our fresh water supply.
- Groundwater in aquifers below the surface provide 30.1% of our fresh water.
- Soil moisture is another form of groundwater that amounts to a mere 0.05% of our fresh water. Though insignificant in volume it is one of the most important because it keeps our plants alive.
- Permafrost and ground ice add 0.86% to our supply
- Lakes, rivers and swamps (the forms we most notice and probably the source of our water feature inspirations) provide a paltry 0.29%
- Atmospheric moisture which is very familiar is also quite variable but it is responsible for recycling water throughout the planet as rain, fog, snow and clouds.
- Biological water is found in living things. It makes up about 70% of our bodies and for an adult amounts to about 11 gallons.

Water is everywhere and is great to have around, especially in our water features.



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Board Members 2006

President: Larry Hursh
Vice President: Bob Wheeler
Secretary: Kathy Hursh
Treasurer: John Roguski
Pond Tour Chairperson: Brian Nagel
Refreshments: Yvonne Wheeler and Kathy Hursh
Newsletter Editors: Hursh, James, and Nau families
Webmaster: Norm James - gvpakc@attglobal.net

Purpose of the Club

- To promote, create and enlarge the hobby of keeping, breeding, appreciating and exhibiting Koi and goldfish.
- To promote and appreciate the hobby of Water Gardening.
- To disseminate information about Koi, goldfish and Water Gardening.
- To socialize and have fun.

We meet in a very friendly atmosphere at 7:00 pm, the first Friday of every month, at the Rochester Civic Garden Center (the Castle), 5 Castle Park, off Reservoir Ave., in Highland Park. Parking is free. Anyone interested in water gardening and/or Koi is welcome to join us. We ask that you consider joining the club after your third visit.

For more information call Larry H. (585) 473-6276 or e-mail lkhursh@aol.com or visit the club website at

www.ggw.org/gvpakc

Calendar of Events

September 1, 2006: No meeting tonight

September 8, 2006: Note the date change to avoid meeting on a holiday weekend. Presentation by Brian Mosher will be on plants for around the water garden to provide fall and winter color and interest. We will be requesting your input for a possible topic or presentation for the November 3rd meeting.

September 8, 2006: NFKPC monthly meeting

October 6, 2006: Round table discussions on pond problems, solutions, successes and failures. Seek volunteers and nominations of candidates for November elections.

October 13, 2006: NFKPC monthly meeting.

November 3, 2006: Elections. Topic/presentation to be determined.

November 10, 2006: NFKPC monthly meeting

December 1, 2006: Pot Luck Christmas Party and year end celebration and information review in Pond Jeopardy game

“Naturally Green” - A live gardening show every Saturday from **9-10 am** on **WYSL 1040 AM**.