



# Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

Volume 11 Issue 7

July, 2007

## Genesee Land Trust Backyard Habitat Tour Leslie and Stephen's Yard in Pittsford



Founded by Rochesterians in 1989, Genesee Land Trust works to preserve wildlife habitat, woods, wetlands, working farmland and other special places in our region. The Backyard Habitat Tour is its most popular fundraising event and is celebrating its 5th Anniversary Year. Leslie and Stephen's backyard was Stop Number 6 this year, and offered inspiration for folks who have raised their families and can now turn their attention to creating an enchanting outdoor environment. With the help of a garden designer, they created four season perennial gardens, and an eleven by eighteen foot irregular shaped



pond with a meandering stream and three small waterfalls. The evolving landscape set the stage for years of pleasure. Birds and butterflies stop by to bathe and feed. The rippling stream and waterfalls offer serenity. The koi entertain in the pond. Colorful flowers glow through three seasons, while dried ornamental grasses dance in winter's snow. A fascinating cast of critters, too many to list, visit to dine or quench their thirst. What had been a yard with grass and trees where children played, has now become a habitat that not only welcomes, but entices people of all ages and nature's children as well.

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

### Last Month

I must apologize for the confusion at LilyFest and the auction. Unfortunately, Ray Lucas was unable to be there in person due to a death in his extended family. He did go out of his way to assure the success of our auction by bring his usual generous array of donations from the companies for which he is a spokesperson. We are very grateful for his help and support through the years and hope that all is well for him and his family.

Due to this unexpected change, we were busy changing the displays and setting up for the auction. Therefore, we were not in a position to do the walk through and discuss the various water plant materials and pond and water garden displays at LilyFest. We tried to compensate for this in a little way by doing the plant material discussions for the plants that were available in the auction.

The auction was very successful in many ways. I want to thank everyone who attended LilyFest and the 40 or so people that were present for the auction. I also must add our thanks to Ray and his companies, Larry Nau and Bergen Water Gardens for their donations of products and to our own members for sharing some their plant materials as well. I must also thank Audrey for stepping in at the last minute to handle the role of auctioneer. She did a wonderful job and I am sure that it was her enthusiasm and skill that helped us to add over \$1200 to our treasury. We hope that this will enable us to bring in additional speakers and educational materials for our meetings and the library.

The closing thought from this

successful event is a sincere request for all of the members to consider and suggest a possible alternate fund raiser for future years. Ray has indicated that this may have been his last year in trying to support the various aquarium and pond societies that he has aided through the past years. As we mentioned several months ago, the current economy is making it more difficult for companies to justify their extensive donations. We would like to continue with some type of a plant auction, but this would only account for a small percentage of what we raise through the various products that are auctioned. Please give this some serious thought so that we will have time to evaluate your suggestions and have something ready to back us up next year, in case Ray is not available.

As I am writing this, I am happy to report that the Genesee Land Trust "Backyard Habitat" tour was also a successful event for them as well as for us as one of the sponsors for the event. We already have two families that he requested to be on a temporary mailing list to learn more about our club. Another family will follow us through our website. The Wheeler's and James' families were taking the tour and hopefully will have photos from some of the gardens to share with us either in the newsletters or future meetings. Of the 4 gardens that we were able to visit, they all had at least one water feature. This shows how important water features and water gardens are in establishing a welcoming habitat for nature. I am hopeful that the presence of water in these gardens will generate even more interest in water gardening and encourage others to check out our club or web-site.

### Coming Events

Due to the July 4th holiday, we will not be meeting on July 6th so that our members may enjoy the extended holiday weekend. We will meet on Friday the 13th. Since we are without a specific topic at this time, we will probably discuss the pond tour status and possible tour sequence, summer pond problems or a last minute surprise topic.

The Rochester Civic Garden Center, Summer Garden Tour will take place on Saturday, July 7th. This year it will feature 11 gardens in the Rochester-Pittsford-Victor and Mendon areas. While this may sound intimidating, some stops are somewhat clustered together and the others are within an easy driving distance of each other. Since we are not meeting that weekend, it could provide more members an opportunity to participate in this tour without giving up two days of the weekend. Some of the photos from this tour may also find their way into our meeting or newsletter schedule as well.

July 16-22 is the IWGS Symposium in Bangkok, Thailand. Larry Nau will be there for the recognition of the certified water lily collection that was prepared for this occasion and as part of the celebration of King Rama IX's 80th birthday. The collection should be superb and we are hopeful that Larry will have many photos, experiences and stories to share with us at future meetings. We will be donating some of our club pins and patches to Larry to share with his Thai hosts as is their custom of exchanging gifts as part of their welcoming of new guests.

The Niagara Frontier Koi and Pond Club pond tour is scheduled for Saturday, July 21st. We hope to

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have more specific information on this shortly, but we assume that we will have to give them an approximate number that might attend from our club by July 14th. If you are interested in joining us for their tour please call Bob Wheeler 461-5315 or Larry Hursh 473-6276 by July 14 to add your name to the list for our final count before or at the July meeting.

Our pond tour and picnic will be on Saturday, July 28th. We were able to reach our goal of 7 stops for our tour and are checking the possible sequence of stops, directions, approximate drive times and appropriate maps. For our newer members, this is a progressive tour. The visits are scheduled at specific times and we proceed from stop to stop according to the schedule. We do this so that the various hosts are able to participate in the tour. We will conclude the day with a picnic at the final stop, which will be at the home of Bob and Yvonne Wheeler this year.

The picnic is a pot luck type affair. The club will provide the meat dish, beverages and picnic supplies. The attending members will be asked to provide either an appetizer, side dish or dessert based on the first letter of your family name. The tentative schedule for this picnic will be: A-H Appetizers, Q-Z Salad or Side Dishes, and I-P Desserts. These assignments may have to change depending on the responses within a given alphabet grouping.

Please call Kathy Hursh at (585) 473-6276 by July 24th if you plan to attend the tour and especially if you will be attending the picnic portion of the tour and let her know then what you will bring for the picnic. Reservations are necessary so that we can adequately

plan for the purchase of the necessary meat, beverages and other supplies, so please let us know as early as possible if you will be at the picnic.

## Member to Member

John Nuccitelli has a series of Patio Pond Filter tanks that he is no longer using. He is willing to sell them at a very reasonable price. If you wish to upgrade your existing system or are thinking of expanding your pond this could be what you need. If you are interested please contact John at (585) 624-4608. He can give you more specific information on the equipment and if you have e-mail he can send you photos of it.

## Fun Frog Facts

It seems that most of us have been able to attract a certain amount of wildlife to our yards through the sounds and attraction of the water. One of the more noticeable and fun visitors are the frog family members. The current issue of *Aquascape- Lifestyles* has compiled a list of some common and some lesser known facts about frogs. We hope that you will enjoy these and possibly learn even more to help you enhance your observations and the pleasure of their visits.

- Frogs are carnivores that typically eat bugs and worms and sometimes other small animals.
- A hunting frog sits motionless and will seldom blink while waiting for its meal to come by.
- Frogs have developed a natural chemical type antifreeze that allows them to survive cold winters hibernating in burrows or buried in mud. Some, in colder areas, can even survive being frozen solid.
- Frogs are migratory moving from shallow, summer breeding ponds to deeper ponds and lakes for winter hibernation.

- In extended periods of heat or drought frogs enter a dormant like state called estivation.
- Since they are cold-blooded, they must bask in the sun in cooler times to warm up enough to move.
- Frogs have their eyes and nostrils on the top of their head so they can see and breathe while the rest of their body is under water.
- Frogs are primarily fresh water creatures and only a few can tolerate brackish or salt water environments.
- They do not drink water, but absorb it through their skin.
- Most frogs can change color slightly to match or blend into their surroundings.
- Native Americans believed that frogs brought them rain.
- The secretion from the skin of the Golden Poison Arrow frog of Columbia is so toxic that it cannot be handled with bare hands.
- The bull frog is the largest, true frog in North America.
- Frogs only have teeth on the upper jaw. There are none on the lower jaw.
- The lifespan of frogs in captivity have been known to exceed 20 years, but is unknown on those in the wild.
- A frogs bulging eyes enables them to see forward, to the sides and partially behind them.
- To swallow its food, a frog can pull its eyes down into the roof of its mouth to help move the food down its throat.
- There are 88 species of frogs just in North America and over 4,900 species worldwide.
- In Japan, the frog is a symbol of good luck.
- Frogs have amazing hearing. The eardrum can be seen behind their eyes and is sometimes used to determine the sex of a frog. The eardrum of a female is smaller

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than its eyes, while a males is the same size as its eyes.

- There is a desert dwelling Australian water- holding frog that burrows into the ground and surrounds itself in a cocoon of its shed skin. It can wait for up to seven years for the rains to come.
- The earliest known frog fossils were found in Arizona and are about 190 million years old.
- Australia is also the home of the gastric brooding frog. The female swallows her fertilized eggs. The tadpoles hatch and remain in her stomach for up to eight weeks, finally hopping out of her mouth as little frogs. During the brooding period, she is able to stop her gastric secretions so as not to digest her own offspring.
- The health and population of frogs and toads are also used to evaluate the status and quality of various wet lands and aquatic systems.
- Finally, in recognition of the “Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County”, some frogs can really jump as much as 20 times their own length.

Now, armed with these new facts, we hope that you will go out and get up close and personal with your frogs. See which are males and females and hopefully verify for yourself the conditions that your visitors prefer.

## Food For Thought

In MAKC magazine, Carolyn Weise brings an interesting point to light that was presented to her when having her new pond built in preparation for her move to Florida. It seems that in a straight sided, deeper Koi pond, it can be fairly difficult for anyone who might fall in to free themselves. This is especially true in a pond that has, over time, developed the usual slime coated walls.

We usually take the necessary

precautions to keep anyone from falling into the pond. But, what plans or escape routes do we have if it should happen or if you were to get stuck while deliberately in the pond trying to clean it.

Such a safety feature should probably be designed into any new ponds that we might contemplate building. While it is true that it might not give you the nice clean lines that you would like to see in a dedicated Koi pond or even a deeper garden pond, but human safety is also worth considering. The fish may have to learn to deal with this minor obstruction. They may even bump their noses from time to time, but if the site is smooth and properly shaped, there would be a minimum chance for a serious injury.

## Making Friends With Your Fish

A good starting point for making friends and hand feeding your fish is to get them to come toward you when you feed them. Once they trust you standing by and watching them eat, you can trail one hand through the water while adding a few pellets to the water from the other hand.

Don't think about trying to touch them yet. After a few of them are willing to come toward your empty hand looking for more food, they will associate your hand with food and some of the braver ones may even come close enough to eventually take the food directly from your hand. Soon they will learn that the ones who come to you get fed first. They will then come to you in a larger group.

After they have responded and accepted this routine, you can try to lightly touch or brush your hand along them while they are eating. Try to avoid touching them along the lateral line, since this is a more sensitive area of the body. Contact with the back, mouth and belly are

more readily tolerated. They may quiver or move away slightly at the first few touches. This reaction will diminish over time and, eventually, you may be able to cradle them lightly in your hand or gently stroke the accepted areas.

Not all fish will respond to you or this training. They just might not be “people” fish and won't be bribed into being your friend. There are also fish at the other extreme that will look forward to your touches regardless of whether or not you have food to offer them. The vast majority of them will allow or tolerate some touching, either from you or by them nibbling or brushing against you.

Smaller groups of fish and the younger ones are easier to work with, but it is not impossible to develop a rapport with a larger and older group. It may take longer and require more patience on your part. However, one of the advantages of working with a smaller groups is that it gives you an opportunity to observe their individual responses and behavior to the feeding and touching rituals. This becomes more like a one on one relationship.

A few closing thoughts that might help to make the training go more smoothly.

- It is better to make friends with your fish with an open hand, just as you would greet your human friends.
- Keep your movements slow and calm.
- If you move them to a new location or if they have been freaked out by intruders or some other activity in or around the pond, they may not be as friendly or respond in the same way until they have had time to settle down or readjust.

We hope that you will all have a glorious and safe holiday.



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## Board Members 2007

President: Larry Hursh  
Vice President: Bob Wheeler  
Secretary: Kathy Hursh  
Treasurer: John Roguski/Les Saiers  
Pond Tour Chairperson: Norm James/Les Saiers  
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](http://www.ggw.org/gvpakc)

## Calendar of Events

**July 6, 2007:** No Meeting tonight due to Holiday schedule. Enjoy the possible extended holiday weekend.

**July 7, 2007:** Rochester Civic Garden Center Summer Garden Tour from 10:00 AM -4:00 PM

**July 13, 2007:** Rescheduled Monthly meeting We hope to discuss mid-summer pond, water feature and fish concerns. Outline tour sequence for the pond tour

**July 16-22, 2007:** IWGS Symposium Bangkok, Thailand

**July 21, 2007:** NFKPC Pond Tour and Picnic.

**July 28, 2007:** This will be our pond tour and picnic.

**August 3, 2007:** Review NFKPC and GVPAKC tours.

**August 10, 2007:** NFKPC monthly meeting

**September 7, 2007:** We are still seeking suggestions for this meeting. Please contact if there is a topic that you would like to have featured or reviewed.

**September 14, 2007:** NFKPC monthly meeting

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