



Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

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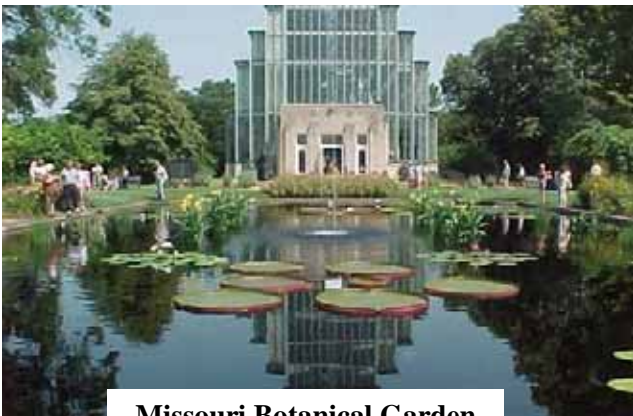
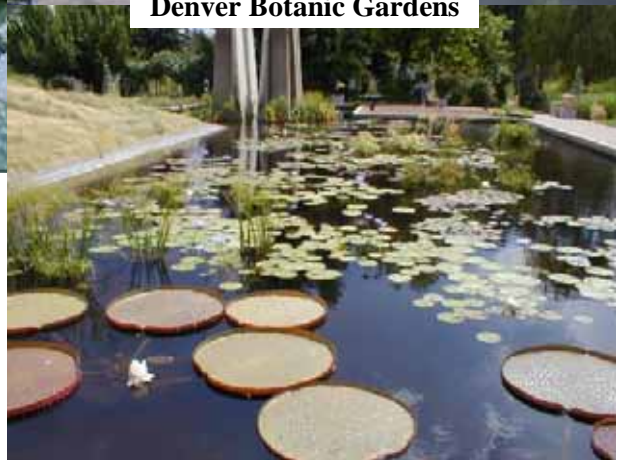
Public Water Gardens Across the USA



Ganna Walska Lotusland



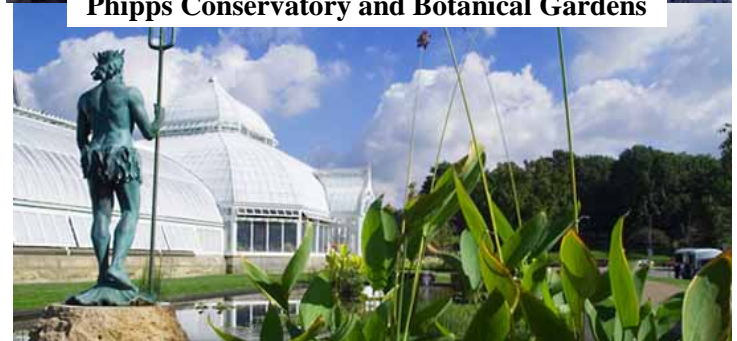
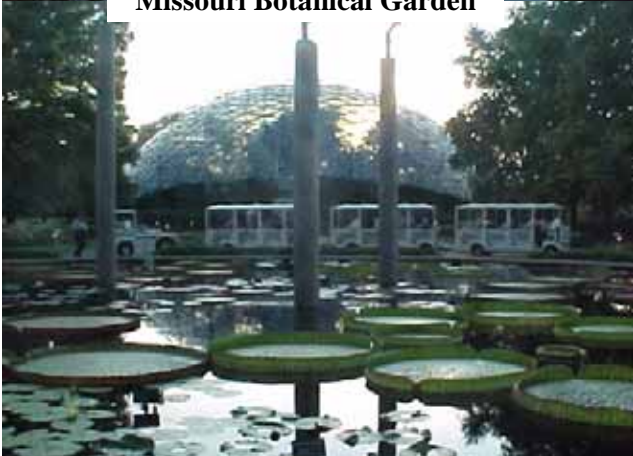
Denver Botanic Gardens



Missouri Botanical Garden



Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens



Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

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

Last Month

What a month this has been. We were all somewhat spoiled while awaiting the late arrival of our cold and snowy winter weather. Well, it is obvious that it is here now, in all its "glory".

Unfortunately, it all seemed to start with our February meeting. It was a very cold night both outside and inside. I want to thank all of you that came out for the meeting and for staying in the cold castle for the meeting.

It was not your imagination, the heating system was not working and the only reason that it warmed up a little was due to your presence. So, I want to thank you for your vital contribution of that extra little heat. The system has been repaired and we should be in for a warmer meeting this month and in the future. I have also been informed that there is a manual reset that may provide some relief if the problem should recur.

I want to thank David Griffin for his presentation on some of the work of the Nature Conservancy. It was interesting to learn more about the various unique, natural areas that we are fortunate to have not only in our state, but in such close proximity to the Rochester area.

I was surprised to hear that some of the bogs in the Moss Lake area were actually floating peat bogs. The photos looked very interesting and piqued my curiosity to the point where I want to learn more about the area and hopefully make it a stopping point on some of our future travels through that area.

The closing segment on Longwood Gardens did a great job of explaining the services and breeding efforts that make this garden such a great attraction. Unfortunately, the segments that we selected really did not do justice to the wonderful displays, events and aesthetics of these gardens. My hope and wish is that you found it and our

discussions of sufficient interest that you will be interested in experiencing it for yourself. It is located in a very interesting section of Pennsylvania and there are so many attractions that there is a little something for everyone.

Coming events

March 2- Larry Nau will have a power-point presentation on the IWGS 2006 Symposium. This event included trips to several areas in Florida and I'm sure that it will offer insights into the wonders of water gardening in a much warmer climate and with an extended growing season. He will also include an overview of some of the events and plant materials that are being collected for the 2007 Symposium in Thailand. To celebrate the King's eightieth birthday, the IWGS has created a special collection of waterlilies and lotus to be installed in the newly created King Rama IX Public Park. Since Larry was involved in selecting and obtaining most of the plants for this park, we should be able to have a preview of the many varieties that will be on display during this event.

I'm also hopeful that we will have time and that he may even have photos of some of the 2006 lilies of the year for us to enjoy and possibly add to our gardens. As I mentioned previously, the color card of these supplied with the IWGS *Water Garden Journal* were very beautiful and most interesting.

Please note the date change of our April meeting to Friday, April 13th so that our members can enjoy an extended Easter holiday vacation.

For this meeting, we will offer a more do-it-yourself approach to pond and garden lighting. With the improvements in lighting materials, their ready availability and water and weather resistant sealers, there are many things that you can convert to garden lighting fixtures. You can create custom and unique lighting effects and possibly add fiber optic highlights without the expense of the commercial offerings.

Jim Stalker, an electrician and hands-on gardener and ponder will

show and describe some of these possibilities, as well as offer suggestions on selecting the proper wiring and power equipment ratings that are so important to the success of your lighting plan.

While you should plan for some flexibility and growth within the system, he will stress the need to decide the type of lighting effects you want, either subtle to extend the viewing into the early evening hours or a bolder approach to full night time viewing or possibly a compromise somewhere in between.

Dues

We have come to the end of the grace period for collecting the annual membership dues which are still only \$25.00 and include the monthly newsletters and free pond tour, picnic and Christmas Party. If you haven't sent in your renewal yet, please consider doing it now while it is fresh in your mind. To make it easier for you, if we haven't received your renewal by the time of this mailing, a short form renewal blank has been included with this newsletter for your convenience. If we haven't received your renewal by the end of February, this will be the last copy of the newsletter that you will receive.

Member to Member

June Amies is home and still in the rehabilitation process from her broken hip and subsequent surgery. She is doing quite well and is able to get around on her own using a walker. They have taken the house off the market and plan on staying in their home. They are confident that this will help them in the long run and they are looking forward to attending meetings again, but admit that it will probably be several more months before that will be possible.

Zooplankton

What are zooplankton? Zooplankton are microscopic, passively floating or weakly swimming animal and plant life forms that exist in a body of water

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and they are suspended within the water column in most ponds. They are especially important in our water gardens because they are instrumental in helping us to win our battles with algae. Unfortunately, it sometimes may take two years or longer for them to become established and mature enough to be a significant influence in balancing the pond.

If zooplankton is so important and may require this longer time to mature and become effective, should we skip our various pond clean-outs and especially wouldn't it be advisable to skip the spring clean-out? The answer according to Brian Helfrich of Aquascape Design is absolutely no. The clean-out is vital to building a healthy ecosystem. This is more important in colder climates where ponds freeze over for much of the winter. He compares your developing pond ecosystem to a fine, aged wine. For the best results, you cannot rush or force the maturation process. You have to be patient and give it time to develop at its own pace. By the third year, most ponds start looking great and are healthier than the previous years when all the factors that make a great pond were developing and maturing.

The pond isn't the only thing that has to mature. We all started as novices and made our share of mistakes or upset the natural balance that we wanted by changing things too quickly trying to achieve that really clean, clear and neat pond. Being a pond owner requires us to go through some learning curves too. We sometimes do more harm than good by trying to get our ponds into perfect mid-season shape too soon and by being too picky. We clean and scrub and try to kill off everything to get a fresh start for the season to come.

The old adage that it is darkest before the dawn sort of covers the pond situation. You do need to clean the pond, but don't overdo it. You need to leave and have some biofilm, algae and active beneficial bacteria to keep the pond healthy. There will be some imbalances, especially in spring since these various organisms become ac-

tive at different times and under different conditions. The pond may take on some definite less than desirable appearances. It may be frustrating to watch a pond go through these phases. However, if you are patient, good things should come from it. Try to remember the good things that you enjoyed most about the pond when you first started it. Think about how you have improved it and enjoyed it more each year. Finally, think ahead to the new wonders that you expect to see and add this year and what they may hold in store for you and your pond once you have gone beyond these hard times. Like others who have gone through it, I guarantee you that you will see that it is worth the effort to keep the pond ecosystem healthy.

A Time For Change

Now that winter is here and the various garden catalogs have arrived, it is time to think of some possible changes and improvements that would make your pond or water garden more enjoyable.

If you are of an artistic nature, you may want to consider adding some garden art or statuary. You may want to develop your own pieces from "found" items or build a modern piece from various scrap materials.

You might want to continue the idea of water to other parts of the garden to create continuity by adding another pond or container water garden. These can be transition ideas, or could bring the soothing relaxing sounds of the water garden closer to you on a deck or patio that is too distant from the main pond.

Fallen logs and drift wood can add a more natural appearance to the pond or stream. Wooden planks and bridges can add interest, and by providing a crossing point, they will provide yet another view point and additional enjoyment.

Instead of just having potted plants on the pond shelves, add some rock work or floating islands to create planting pockets to ease the transition from land to water. You can also add

wicking materials at the pond edge to bring extra moisture to pond side plants or to allow some grasses or other plant materials to cascade over the rocks without the possibility of their drying out or more sensitive plants from drowning from too much water if they were directly in the pond.

You could also take a concept from oriental gardening, and add an accent stone or some viewing stones. For a pond, it is best to choose weathered and more rounded edged stones. Stones with moss or lichen growths are also great additions. Just verify that the growing materials are from sun or shade locations similar to your pond exposure.

Now kick back with a few catalogs and some paper and pencils and plan your spring changes in between trips outside to shovel snow and checking your pond for open water for the air exchange.

Cold Winter Thoughts

The timing may be a little off, but here are some possible things to consider in helping your fish survive a cold winter. The cold and other winter conditions are more difficult and threatening to young and small (less than 6 inches) Koi and their survival. These young Koi will fare well and grow much faster in warmer winter conditions. Many of these suggestions are from a response by Brian Drake to the cold weather question in the current issue of *Koi USA*.

You could consider bringing your smaller Koi to a more sheltered location. Many Japanese Koi breeders bring all of their Koi into greenhouses starting in October and November. The water, as well as the greenhouses are heated.

For us, we could try something as simple as covering the pond or erecting a simple temporary greenhouse over it. This could increase the temperature by as much as ten degrees depending on the type of cover, the number of layers or cells in the various poly products that you might choose and the efficiency of the joints

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and seals.

They could be brought into the garage or house using an aquarium or portable show tank or tub to house them. This indoor area must be well ventilated or you could experience a serious mold problem developing on the walls and ceiling.

A more elaborate and costly consideration is to heat the outdoor pond so that you don't have to stress the fish by moving them in and out of the pond. It can be expensive heating the pond electrically, but gas powered heaters are available and could be more economical to operate. Heating can also be accomplished with solar technology or by circulating water through a heat exchanger. In our area, the pond would definitely heat more efficiently if it was covered.

A final suggestion, that would also be appreciated by the Koi all year long, would be to install or increase the pond depth so that its deepest parts are a foot or two below the frost line calculated for our area. This added depth would have a moderating effect on the water temperatures in both winter (warmer) and summer (cooler). It offers the Koi more protection from the sun and predators and also provide them more exercise because they seem to enjoy swimming up and down through the depths of the pond.

The Springfield Water Garden Society also offered these suggestions in their newsletter to help members who lost power during one of their winter storms. If you lose power and can get to the pond before the air opening freezes over, you can half fill a large plastic jug or large plastic beverage container and place the container in the opening. It should float and even if the water freezes around it, there will be small openings around its edges to let the harmful gases escape. This will be a temporary fix that should get you through until the power is restored.

As soon as the power is restored, check all the piping to make sure that there are no cracks or leaks and that

none of the lines are plugged with ice or other debris.

On a more personal note, remember to check your air-stone and air lines to make sure that they are working and haven't become plugged with frozen condensation. This is something that we have mentioned and discussed several times at our meetings.

The new twist that I experienced during our recent really cold spell was a real surprise. When I tried to lift the tubing through the deep snow, the tubing fractured. I have done this in the past and never had a problem. The tubing was very hard and rigid, so I think that over time, the plasterers have evaporated or leached from the tubing making it less flexible and more susceptible to fracturing.

The tubing was too rigid to be repaired by inserting a repair fitting. It was also buried in too much ice and snow to remove and replace it immediately. After a few minutes of searching, I was able to find a piece of rubber tubing with the appropriate diameter that would simply but snugly slip over the outside of the broken and separated section to seal the joint and make a temporary repair.

I hope that this solution will keep the airline operating until we experience a sufficient thaw to make a more permanent repair or do a complete replacement in spring.

Public Water Gardens Across the USA (continued from front page)

Ganna Walska Lotusland

Lotusland Foundation
695 Ashley Rd
Santa Barbara, CA
<http://www.lotusland.org/>

In the foothills of Santa Barbara lies a spectacular 37-acre garden estate. Created by Polish opera star Ganna Walska as her private retreat, Lotusland is a botanical exhibit unsurpassed in diversity and beauty.

Denver Botanic Gardens
1005 York Street

Denver, Co
<http://www.botanicgardens.org/pageinpage/home.cfm>

Rooted a mile high, Denver Botanic Gardens has been a favorite Denver destination for over 55 years. Art and science unite in the Gardens' spectacular 23-acre urban oasis, offering an unforgettable artistic garden experience, as well as a living laboratory for education and acclaimed conservation and research programs.

Missouri Botanical Garden

4344 Shaw Boulevard
St. Louis, MO

The Missouri Botanical Garden is a botanical garden located in St. Louis, Missouri.

Founded in 1859, the Missouri Botanical Garden is one of the oldest botanical institutions in the United States and a National Historic Landmark. The Garden is a center for botanical research and science education of international repute, as well as an oasis in the city of St. Louis, with 79 acres of horticultural display. It includes a 14 acre Japanese strolling garden named Seiwa-en, the *Climatron* geodesic dome conservatory and garden founder Henry Shaw's original 1850 estate home.

Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens

One Schenley Park
Pittsburgh, PA
www.phipps.conservatory.org

Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens is a complex of buildings and grounds set in Schenley Park, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (near the Carnegie Museums in Oakland). The gardens were founded in 1893 by steel and real-estate magnate Henry Phipps as a gift to the City of Pittsburgh.



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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

Calendar of Events

March 2, 2007: Larry Nau will be providing us with an overview of some of the happenings at the IWGS 2006 symposium and a preview of the IWGS 2007 celebration in Thailand. We hope that he will also have photos of the 2006 water lily selections. The preliminary photos were great'

March 3, 2007: RCGC "Spring Symposium" will feature presentations on garden design and planting and getting consistent blooms from Hydrangeas.

March 15-18, 2007: GardenScape the flower and garden show at the Dome in Henrietta. This year's theme is "Drams in the Garden" There will be a masquerade ball as part of the theme on Friday from 8:30 PM 'til midnight.

April 13, 2007: Please note the date change. We have opted not to meet on the Good Friday holiday so as not to conflict with some family travel plans. Our topic will be Do-It-Yourself garden lighting. Jim Stalker will describe some DIY fixtures and guide us through sizing the wire and transformer components.

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