



Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

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Public Water Gardens Across the USA



Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden (above) - A Dale Chihuly sculpture in the water garden with floating spheres.



Atlanta Botanical Garden (above) -The collection of water plants in various ponds features water lilies, water lotus and other aquatic plants. It is one of the best collections of aquatic plants in the Southeast.

The U.S. National Arboretum (below)- A Moat Where Lilies Float. The diversity of water plants is astounding, from the huge floating pads of the Victoria water lilies to the grasslike leaves of dwarf cattails.



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

Last Month

From the reaction of those present at last month's meeting, the lighting topic was a popular one. Jim Stalker did a great job of explaining the basics necessary to get started on a do-it-yourself lighting plan. He demonstrated how the popular commercial fixtures are designed and built and how we could carry these concepts over to design and build our own custom fixtures using found or present household items. He explained the various tapes, sealants and coatings that can be used to make the fixtures and connections water tight.

He discussed how lighting concepts and components have greatly improved in the last 5-10 years. This is the result of lighting designers, landscapers and architects working together to create low wattage and low glare, multipurpose fixtures. They are intended to produce a natural, subtle feel to the overall effect. Interior designers, as well as pool and pond contractors, have also influenced some of these changes to make installation and maintenance easier and to make the outdoor rooms seem compatible and connected with the interior designs.

A good lighting design will flatter rather than overpower the appearance of the house, the surrounding landscape or the selected focal points. You can use shrouds, masks and filters to control the spread, pattern and color of the lighted area. Another approach to creating interesting light patterns is to use light shining at a low angle on the surface of a water feature or pond. By casting this reflected light onto a wall, fence or other objects, interesting and changing light patterns are created by the ripples, flow and surface movement of the water.

Since everyone seemed so interested and enthusiastic about his ideas, I thought that it would be a good idea to expand this program. I hope to present some additional design comments and concepts. These could help you get your plans and ideas ready for implementation or for improving an existing system in the coming season. These suggestions are based on information from the book *The Art Of Outdoor Lighting* by Randall Whitehead and recollections of previous classes and presentations that I attended on garden lighting.

Nighttime provides a chance to design a dazzling, festive or romantic atmosphere. You can highlight especially interestingly shaped trees and shrubs or sculptures and water features. You can create a series of exciting focal points that will keep the eye and mind moving to explore the area more fully.

People are drawn toward the brightest light, but this does not necessarily mean high wattage or glaring light that makes it harder to see the details of the surrounding area. A uniform soft light that draws your attention is preferred and can lead people to the areas that you would like them to see. The softer light not only highlights what you want to show, but also allows the details in the shadows to add their design elements to the picture too.

Cleverly installed outdoor lighting can replace the dark mirror like effect of windows with the soft glow view of the outdoor landscape. This has the additional benefit of visually expanding an interior room into the outdoors. It makes the lighted garden seem and feel like it is part of the room. The rule of thumb suggestion to produce this effect is that the level of outdoor illumination should be equal to or greater than the amount of light within the room. This doesn't necessarily mean the intensity should be high. The goal is attain a uniform light that blends the scene into the light pattern and shading of

the room.

A well designed lighting layout will utilize trees, shrubs, plants rocks and other objects to discretely hide or minimize the view of the light sources. The exception to this, of course, is where the light source is intended to be part of the decorative elements of the overall design. Used properly, outdoor lighting can be more exciting or dramatic than interior lighting.

We hope that this will give you some ideas and get you thinking of expanding the enjoyment of your gardens and hobby into the evening with your own light system. If you do, please share your results and experiences with us through photos or comments during the open discussions at a meeting.

Coming events

The May meeting will feature a presentation by Helen Roberts, DVM, on fish health. Helen is a veterinarian who specializes in fish care at the Aquatic Veterinary Services of Western New York in Orchard Park, New York. She is especially involved with the issues and treatment of the ornamental Koi fish. She has frequently lectured and been a panel member at various Koi and water gardening seminars and programs. She enjoys discussing and answering questions about these interesting and attractive pond fish.

In this program, she will primarily touch on spring health issues and new and pending USDA Koi importation regulations and how they may affect us and the hobby. These topics should aid you in checking the health, not only of your present fish, but your planned purchase of new fish too.

She will also discuss the quarantine process and after care. She has an interesting approach to quarantine that can be part of a permanent decorative system that is maintained as a ready to use quarantine/ treatment system. By having such a sys-

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tem ready and constantly available, a minimum amount of stress is created on both the fish and their owner.

Her reviews of the various conditions of fish keeping should help you to maintain your Koi at their healthiest level. You will be able to observe your fish and detect minor problems early so that they can be treated quickly before they become major concerns.

Time will also be allotted for a question and answer period.

Since this is such an important part of our caring for our charges, we are opening this meeting to other interested water gardeners. Since there may be a larger number of attendees for this event, I have and will continue to ask that anyone who is planning on attending this program to **please call (585) 473 6276 to reserve a place at the meeting.** (The room at RCGC can comfortably accommodate about 50 people with seating arranged without the tables sort of theatre style.

We hope that this sharing of information will help everyone to give the best care to their fish. In return, they will get the most out of them too.

It is fairly obvious from the signs of the garden centers reopening and the arrival of some plants and blossoms, that our pond and garden season is about to start. The problems with last year's growing season, the cost of fuel for both heating greenhouses during the colder winter and the increased transportation costs, some plants will have limited availability. They may also be slightly more expensive than in years past. I would like to suggest that you check out a few of the plant sales listed below as alternate sources of new plants to try at usually very reasonable prices.

The Genesee Land Trust will open the list with their native plant sale on the front lawn of the Brighton Town Hall on Saturday, May 19th.

The sale is open from 8:00AM -2:00 PM. They offer plants donated by members as well as some from nurseries. In the past they had some marginal and water plants and terrestrial plants that can be adapted to wet and boggy conditions.

This will be followed by the Proud Market Plant sale at Rochester Civic Garden Center on Saturday, May 26th. This starts at 8:00AM and continues until most plant materials are sold out (usually about 11:30 AM). There will be several vendors as well as plants offered by garden groups and the Garden Center. Various homeowners adjacent to RCGC also have plant yard sales that are also worth checking out.

The final one, at this time, will be LilyFest at Bergen Water Gardens on June 2-3 with our own fund raising plant and product auction about 1:30 on June 3rd. We will have a club area there that we will staff to answer questions about the club and in some cases about our ponds and fish experiences. We hope that we may recruit new members through these interactions. If you are willing to assist us with this, please call Larry Hursh at 473-6276.

We can also use plant materials for the auction on Sunday. If you are dividing or removing some of your plant materials this spring, please consider saving them to donate to this fund raising event. The proceeds go toward the expenses for guest speakers and educational materials for the meetings and the club information library. Since there will be no regular meeting on June 1st, we will hold a brief update meeting at 1:00PM just prior to the auction.

Still another sign of the gardening season getting closer is the announcement of various garden tours. This year, we have agreed to act as one of the sponsors for the Genesee Land Trust Garden Tour on Saturday, June 23rd. This can be a great opportunity for us to bring our club

to the attention of other gardening fans.

The Rochester Civic Garden Center is still in the process of confirming the gardens that will be available for their tour. It will take place on Saturday, July 7th and will feature gardens of the Pittsford- Mendon area.

The Niagara Frontier Koi and Pond Club is scheduling their pond tour for Saturday, July 21st. We have enjoyed exchanging pond tour visits with them for the past several years. We will be joining them again this year and if you are interested please call Bob Wheeler 461-5315 or Larry Hursh 473-6276 to add your name to the list.

Our pond tour and picnic will be on Saturday, July 28th. We have about half the ponds lined up for tour, but we could use a few more to make it a more interesting tour. If you have not been a host for a tour or have made some changes since our last visit, please consider adding your pond to the list. Also, if you know someone else that has a pond and might be willing to let us visit them let us know.

For our new members, we do a progressive tour. The stops are scheduled at specific times and proceed from stop to stop. This allows the hosts to also participate in the tour. We conclude the day with a picnic at the final stop. This is a pot luck type picnic. The club provides the meat dish, beverages and picnic supplies and the attending members will be asked to provide either an appetizer, side dish or dessert.

Pond Considerations

Most of us, probably, started in this hobby as water garden hobbyists and may even have started with a few gold fish. Then, we decided to add a little more color, interest or excitement by adding Koi. This has probably worked reasonably well for us in most cases. However, there are a few differences of which we should be aware to make it a more

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suitable and hospitable environment for both Koi health and psychology.

Initially, we were more concerned about how the pond would look to us and blend into our space. We minimized the functional aspects of creating a life support system for the aquatic inhabitants, fish and other wildlife, that would eventually become part of the system.

Now, we should consider some of the factors that we could or should adjust or change to upgrade this life support system. The more typical expectations for goldfish are probably less than 10 inches in length and perhaps a life of 6-9 years. These are demands that might be accommodated within the concepts of a starter water garden or pond. Koi, however, can grow to over 30 inches in length and live well into double digit years which can stretch the demands on a water garden system. With just the difference in size between these fish, the amount of waste generated by the larger ones increases exponentially. We, of course, add to this dilemma by pampering our fish with treats and typically overfeeding them. Instead of the continuous flow through system that nature provides for them, we use a recirculating, filtered water system. This system must do its best to try to simulate the cleansing effect of the high volumes of water that nature provides to minimize waste build up, control harmful bacteria, parasites and provide aeration.

Overstocking is a very important consideration. This is not so much a problem with the initial addition of fish, but becomes a very significant factor as the fish grow. Therefore, initial stocking rates should be based on the anticipated mature size of the fish. Oxygen levels can also be reduced by overstocking, especially during hot summer weather when the higher water temperatures and the increased oxygen demand of the fish decrease the ability of the water to hold as much oxygen. Therefore, it is frequently suggested that air diffusers be used to supplement the aeration provided by the filtration and other

systems. Using these aeration devices along the bottom of the pond, improve the water turn-over rate and thereby may improve water quality and clarity.

Space is another factor that is frequently compromised in a water garden situation. Female fish may require a larger volume of water than males. This may complicate your stocking capacity estimate even more. The goal should be to provide a filter system and space that will allow all of your koi, whether common or show quality, to have the best conditions to grow to their mature years in a good healthy environment.

Since flight is an important defense mechanism for our fish, they should have ample, unobstructed "flight patterns". This can be improved by minimizing the number of potted plants within the pond which could increase the risk of injury during flight. Eliminating plant shelves or other shallow areas and providing more vertical sides will improve their maneuvering and escape options from predators.

In a more open pond, we can provide extra security for the fish by increasing the depth. This extra depth further enhances the stocking range by providing more water volume within the same surface footprint area. Physiologically, Koi get more exercise and are more comfortable if the depth is greater than 4 feet. In cases where this is not possible, the feeling of security can be provided by fish caves that can provide refuge from predators or security when they may be frightened even by our own sudden movements. It may be helpful to have some small openings in the cave to provide some light for them as well as provide an observation point for us to check on them.

The dynamics of pond flow is also an important factor in fish health. The way that the water is drawn from and returned to the pond should cover all areas to eliminate any "dead" spots. Returning the water to multiple locations can improve the flushing action and assure a better

mixing effect of the waters and thus aid in the removal of containments and debris.

The final note is that having the best components, filter, pump, UV, foam separator and actual pond design does not ensure the best conditions for your fish or your pond. The systems must be matched and adjusted to work together and to complement each other. The more flexible and versatile the system, the better you will be able to adjust it to match the changing conditions and growth demands from your fish to provide what is best for their health and growth to full maturity.

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

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden
10901 Old Cutler Road
Coral Gables, FL 33156 USA
<http://www.fairchildgarden.org/>

Atlanta Botanical Garden
1345 Piedmont Ave. NE
Atlanta, GA 30309
<http://www.atlantabotanicalgarden.org/home.do>

The U.S. National Arboretum
3501 New York Avenue, NE
Washington, D. C. 20002-1958
<http://www.usna.usda.gov/index.html>



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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

- May 4, 2007:** Presentation on Fish Health by Helen Roberts a veterinarian who specializes in fish diseases-prevention and treatment. Reservations are required Call Larry 473-6276
- May 11, 2007:** NFKPC meeting
- May 19, 2007:** Genesee Land Trust - Native plant sale at Brighton Town Hall 8:30AM - 2:00PM
- May 26, 2007:** RCGC Proud Market Plant sale at the Castle 8:00AM until sold out (usually around 11:30-noon.)
- June 1, 2007:** No meeting tonight. We will have a brief meeting prior to the plant auction at LilyFest on June 3 about 1:00 PM
- June 2-3, 2007:** LilyFest at Bergen Water Gardens and Nursery.
Our plant and product auction will be Sunday, June 3, about 1:30
- June 23, 2007:** Genesee Land Trust - Backyard Habitat Tour
We are one of the sponsors for this event.
- June 21-24, 2007:** The AKCA Seminar in Mesa, Arizona
- July 6, 2007:** No Meeting tonight due to Holiday schedule
- July 13, 2007:** Rescheduled Monthly meeting Topic TBD
- July 28, 2007:** This will be our pond tour and picnic. Please consider adding your pond as a stop on this tour.

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