



Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

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Featured Plants: Five Varieties of Arrowhead



Double-Flowering Arrowhead (*Sagittaria japonica*) (Top Left and right) The beautiful double flowers bloom all summer long. The foliage has narrow arrowhead shaped leaves. It grows 2 to 4 tall and is very winter hardy. This variety is a show-stopper, but blossoms last only a day or two.



Arrow Arum (*Peltandra virginica*) (Middle left) Commonly seen in ponds in this area, Arrow Arum is not a true Arrowhead. Often mistaken for Arrowhead, it has dark green, waxy foliage, grows 2 to 3 feet tall with arrow shaped leaves, is native to North America, and winters over very easily.



Arrow Head (*Sagittaria latifolia*) (Middle right) Has arrowhead shaped leaves and produces a white flower that blooms all summer long. It grows 2 to 3 feet and is suited for any water garden.

Variiegated Arrowhead (*Sagittaria graminea "Crushed Ice"*) (Bottom left) Enjoy foliage with creamy yellow and green mottling. Very striking. Has spikes of white flower clusters with yellow centers. Grows 24" high.



Silk Stockings Arrowhead (*Sagittaria australis "Benni"*) (Bottom right) A new introduction with striking, variegated maroon leaves. Has clusters of white flowers. Grows to about 24" high.



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

Pond Tour Review

Our pond tour and picnic on Saturday, July 28th was a great success. Despite dismal weather forecasts early in the week, the weather was perfect and so were the ponds. We were able to reach our goal of 7 stops for our tour and the sequence of stops, directions, approximate drive times and appropriate maps were very accurate and helpful. Norm and JoAnne James did a great job in putting them together.

There was enough variety in the ponds that there was a little something for everyone. There was everything from smaller preformed ponds to the larger sizes. Some were like natural habitats, others were more formal. Some had more than one pond and many included other water features in other garden areas, using the water presence as a unifying theme. Even the streams showed wider variation this year from a slow-moving pebble lined one, to a longer white water version. An interesting side note is that most of them were positioned closer to the house where the sound and view could be enjoyed from inside when the weather didn't cooperate. We even had an opportunity to see a great operating garden railway that included preformed ponds as scaled versions of lakes and park ponds along with the necessary buildings, vehicles, people and animals to complete the effect.

Our thanks go out to everyone who contributed to this tour by attending any or all of the stops and the picnic. As always, we had plenty of great food and good times. I want to further thank those very gracious hosts who, although

they were not members, opened their ponds and shared their enthusiasm for their ponds and their friendship with us. We hope to see all of you at future meetings and events.

Last Month

For those who weren't able to make any of the various tours, Bob Wheeler and Norm James prepared a photo presentation for the August meeting. The photos covered the Genesee Land Trust "Backyard Habitat Tour", the RCGC tour of "Gardens from Pittsford to Victor", the NFKPC Pond Tour and our tour.

There were many interesting water features, flower and other plant materials and many inspiring views and ideas that we can mull over during the rapidly approaching non-ponding season. Hopefully, with all these great ideas and new visions, we will have plenty of volunteer hosts who will want to show off their gardens and the changes that they have made to them. This could make our 2008 pond tour even better and more exciting than this year.

Now What ?

If you are one of those who are planning on adding a new pond, expanding an existing one, or just feel that it is time for a change, here are some very logical points, though not often mentioned, that will make a big difference in how your pond functions and could minimize your maintenance problems and enhance your enjoyment of it.

These water garden secrets appeared in a *Backyard Living* magazine article by Gary Wentz. A number of these are common sense ideas that unfortunately we don't think of or remember until it is too late and the work is already done.

*For northern gardeners, pick the

sunniest spot possible or one that receives at least 6 hours of direct sun. This will allow you to have a wide array of plants and will be sufficient enough in most cases to encourage blossoming. In a shadier location, you may have to rely on more foliage type plants and can expect fewer blossoms'

*Avoid the proximity of trees. Not only are there the usual problems of leaves or needles, branches, spent blossoms and seed pods to net out of the pond and skimmer, but pollen and dust collected by the leaves can also be flushed into the pond by the rain.

Tree roots can also be very aggressive and in some cases will break through the liner. In this case, you must provide an adequate barrier to keep the roots away from the liner. Another alternative is to raise the pond a reasonable distance above the root zone. However, this may somewhat suffocate the roots by restricting their ability to have a ready source of oxygen available. Furthermore, damage to the roots from digging the pond or if the pond has a fairly large surface area, it can restrict the water and nutrient supply to the roots in that area. These conditions may seriously injure the tree and could eventually kill it.

* Protect the pond water from runoff by creating a slight ridge that is at least 3 inches higher than the ground around the pond. If the pond is built on or into a slope, you should design a shallow channel that can carry the runoff around the pond and then divert it to another garden or flower bed.

* Incorporate these easy care ideas:

Leave an adequate work space all around the pond. When building near walls and fences, try to leave at least a 2-3 foot wide area so that you can get close to work on the

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plants or equipment without cramping yourself or doing various balancing acts. Also, locate pumps, filters, skimmers and waterfall boxes in easy access areas and if necessary camouflage them with rocks, plants or other decorations.

The pond skimmer is frequently considered only to remove leaves and other floating dust and debris. However, it can do much more if properly installed and connected. It can provide a more rapid water turnover to a waterfall. Can minimize dead spots in surface flow and could easily become part of a future pond expansion or filter system improvement if the piping is readily accessible.

Plan ahead to provide a winter home for the plants. This may be in a deeper part of the pond, a garden area where they may be healed in or buried for the winter or an appropriate storage area within the garage or house.

Extend the liner beyond the ridge line around the pond. This will keep or minimize any invasion of the regular garden plants into the pond. It will also minimize water entry at the liner and soil walls.

A mower edging of flat stones flush to the ground surface around the edge of the pond will minimize hand trimming. This also is easier than maneuvering the mower around an irregular stone edge.

Plan ahead and develop a plan to remove water from the pond. In case of emergency, you can have a location ready to receive a sump and a location where you can safely discharge the water.

If possible, try to incorporate ledges or step like feature within the pond to provide easy entry and egress. These can be helpful when caring for plant materials in the pond or for cleaning and inspecting the pond. If your pond is too small for built-in steps, plan the

entry point where the sides are most vertical. A sloping sides makes entering and exiting the pond more difficult.

*Minimize leaks during installation by using underlayment or suitable cushioning layer to protect the liner. Use only heavier (45 mil) pond liner.

Avoid making your own seams and to do it properly, it is very time consuming and they are more likely to be the source of future leaks. However, factory made seams are very reliable and as leak-proof as the liner material itself.

Exercise a lot of TLC with the liner during installation. Remove all sharp objects that may come into contact with the liner in and out of the pond site.

Minimize walking on the liner and even then wear soft-soled shoes.

Install the liner loosely. Don't stretch it. It will be stretched as it settles into the hole under the weight of the water.

Use scraps of liner under large stones, heavy pots and areas where you may have to walk in the pond as cushioning.

If using a pre-formed pond, it must be fully supported by compacting the surrounding soil as you backfill the excess hole area. The preform shell must also be kept level during the backfilling and compaction operation.

Member to Member

Koi We have been requested to find good homes for several (about 6) Koi. They are expected to be in the 5 - 8 inch size range. I will try to pick them up from the 2 families and have them in quarantine at my house by mid September. If you are interested, please call Larry H. at 473-6276 and you will be called when they are avail-

able.

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 and will contribute 50% of the sale price to the club. If you are thinking about upgrading your existing system or of expanding your pond, this might be useful. If you are interested please contact John at (585) 624-4608. He can give you more specific details and information on the equipment. If you have e-mail, he will send you photos of it.

Coming events

The September meeting may focus on growing and enjoying Lotus. This is an interesting plant and there have been some recent changes not only in the varieties available, but in some of the planting and winter protection plans.

Based on some of these recent developments and the availability of potted, growing plants, I am looking forward to trying these unusual plants again in my pond or garden.

In October, we will discuss some of the various techniques that can be used to winter over tropical water garden and other tender garden plants.

This is also the month in which we seek nominations for the various officer and board positions. It is always a difficult task, but the jobs are easy and very rewarding. So please consider volunteering for one of the positions. There are no guarantees, but if you were to be elected, it would be an opportunity for you to bring new ideas and activities into our schedule. We can promise you that the more you get involved, the more fun you will have.

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Edible Water Plants

In the past several fall meetings, we have discussed and sampled some of the edible pond plants. A plant that is probably a new addition to our list is wasabi. True wasabi is a Japanese aquatic plant in the mustard family. It grows in the rivers and streams in cool mountain valleys. The plant has a pleasing fragrance, bright green leaves and a hot, horseradish like flavor, which many of us may have experienced in oriental dishes. True wasabi is somewhat expensive and the root is usually grated fresh for best results and flavor. Unfortunately, many restaurants make a "counterfeit" copy by combining horseradish, mustard, corn starch and green food dye. These concoctions may be interesting, but bear no resemblance to the real thing.

I like to experiment with new plants and things like this. If others are interested in trying to grow this plant, we could order some plants as a plant growing trial and then make some fresh wasabi for a tasting on the pond tour or at a meeting around fall next year. Supposedly, there is a producer in the northwest that offers starter plants and cultural instructions for \$7.50 per plant plus shipping and handling. Please let us know if we should try to locate a supplier and the number of plants you might want.

Another edible plant of course is the lotus that is this month's main meeting topic. This is a recipe by Kit & Ben Knotts from an *Aquascape* magazine article. It uses lotus leaves as a wrap for a Baked Fish with Mango Salsa preparation.

6-8 oz salmon or fresh fish
1 lotus leaf for every two servings

Fresh mango salsa.(recipe below)

Place the fish in the center of a washed lotus leaf.

Spoon salsa over the top of the fish. Wrap the leaf around the fish and secure with chef's twine.

Bake for 30-40 minutes in a pre-heated 350 degree F oven. (Bake time will depend on the thickness of the fish)

When ready, slice and serve with additional salsa.

You will notice that even the lotus leaf by itself is quite tasty.

Bon appetite

Fresh Mango Salsa

1 fresh mango, peeled and chopped.

1/4 red pepper, diced

1/4 green pepper, diced

1 green onion, diced

Brown mustard, all purpose seasoning and some fresh lime juice can be added to suit your taste.

Mix the ingredients together and chill for several hours or longer for the flavors to blend.

You could also add other spices for a spicier version.

Enjoy with your fish or as a dip with chips or other dippable choices.

Aeration

The unusual heat of this summer may have created decreased oxygen levels in some of our sunnier ponds. The fish may have been stressed enough to gather near the surface, waterfall and other water return sources to take advantage of the more oxygen rich waters in those areas. Many pond owners rely solely on their streams and waterfalls to provide for the aeration and thermal mixing in the summer pond. They will then switch to diffusers and airstones for aeration during the winter months when the streams and waterfalls are turned off.

However, several of the water gardens that we toured this summer continued to use these devices as a supplemental air source through-

out the summer.

By locating the air supply at the bottom of the pond, the rising column of air bubbles creates continuous currents that will circulate the water through the entire pond. The tinier bubbles provide more oxygen exchange, not only at the bottom of the pond, but some are also creating potential gas exchanges as they rise toward the surface. The flow created by the airstream also helps to eliminate stratification and thermo clines, which are the various thermal layers within the pond and provide the fish with a more uniform temperature environment. Furthermore, these currents are also very efficient at mixing with the toxic gases and carrying them away.

The final advantage of the airstone concept is that there is a minimum amount of maintenance. They may only require cleaning a couple of times a year. Usually the airstones will last for a couple of years before replacement is required and even then they are inexpensive and easy to replace.

If you are not already using an air system, now might be a good time to try one. It would also give you a head start on making your winter change-over. The water is still warm, so that you won't mind having your hands in the water to make the set up as much as you might in October or November.

Note: the air supply must have sufficient pressure and flow to be capable of overcoming the water pressure at the depth you need.

(This was demonstrated at a previous meeting.)

Please, have a 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

Calendar of Events

September 3, 2007: Labor Day Holiday

September 7, 2007: Bob Wheeler will be conducting this month's meeting. The presentation will be on Lotus and will cover many aspects of this beautiful and interesting plant.

September 14, 2007: NFKPC monthly meeting

October 6, 2007: This month, we will discuss various methods used to winter-over water garden and other plants. There will also be an opportunity to review and discuss preparing the ponds and water features for winter. We must seek nominations for the various officers and board member positions.

October 13, 2007: NFKPC monthly meeting

November 3, 2007: We are hopeful that Larry Nau will have the date open to update us on his trip to Thailand. Election of officers and board members

November 10, 2007: NFKPC

December 7, 2007: This will be our Christmas party and year end celebration of another successful year.

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