

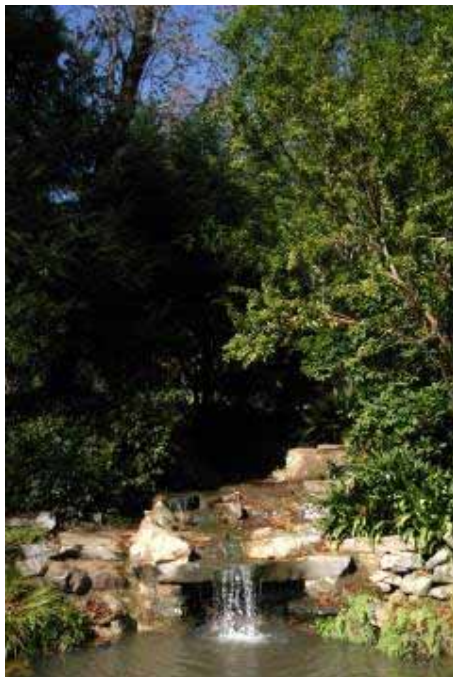


Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

Volume 12 Issue 02

February, 2008

Birmingham Botanical Gardens — Alabama



The **Birmingham Botanical Gardens** is a 67.5 acre botanical garden located at the southern foot of Red Mountain in Birmingham, Alabama. It is home to some 20 different gardens that includes a Japanese garden.

Birmingham Botanical Gardens
2612 Lane Park Road
Birmingham, AL 35223
<http://www.bbgardens.org>



Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

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

Last Month

While there was no regular club meeting in January, the Board did meet on January 11th and had a very productive, as far as I am concerned, meeting. We have a tentative outline of dates, topics and potential presenters that we are in the process of confirming.

One of the first suggestions was to have a presentation on landscaping ideas or sources of ideas for around our ponds. We settled on basic Oriental gardening concepts and designs as our first presentation, which may become part of an ongoing series. Al Pfeiffer of Oriental Garden supply, has agreed to do this presentation for us. He will confirm the date soon, but it will be either the April or May meeting.

The other sources of good ideas for landscaping are: attend the various flower and garden shows (especially those where the landscape companies have built displays similar to GardenScape), attend one or more of the numerous garden tours, join in other pond tours and, of course visit some of the public gardens as you travel.

To assist us with information on the various garden tours that they have enjoyed multiple times in the past, Bob and Yvonne Wheeler have supplied this list to at least get your calendar started. They will advise us of others that they think might be of interest as they are announced by the various sponsors.

- March 13-16, 2008 GardenScape "It's a Garden Life" \$12 admission. (www.rochesterflowershow.com)
- June 14, 2008 Greece Performing Arts Society "Notable Garden Tour" with musical enter-

tainment \$15 (www.greeceperformingarts.org)

- June 21, 2008 Genesee Land Trust "Backyard Habitat Garden Tour" \$15 non-members/\$12 members (www.geneseeandtrust.org/events.html)
- June 29, 2008 National Council of Jewish Women "Garden Odyssey" \$15
- July 12, 2008 Rochester Civic Garden Center summer garden tour \$20 non-members/\$15 members. (www.rcgc.org)
- August 2, 2008 Genesee Valley Pond And Koi Club pond tour Free Note that the date has been changed to the first weekend in August.

Some of the other topics that are in process are: rain gardens, more information on goldfish and other pond fish alternatives, a bonus presentation on Lotus- possibly on Saturday, April 19th., rain gardens and a presentation on deer in the yard and garden. We are still looking for a few suggestions for some fall oriented topics.

We will not have the usual first Friday meeting on the following dates: June 6th, but we may have a presentation prior to the plant and product auction at LilyFest on June 8th. July 4th is the holiday, so we will meet the following week on July 11th. and the August 1st date due to the pond tour and picnic moving to August 2nd.

Coming events

The first meeting for the 2008 year will be Friday, February 1st. We hope to have a tentative calendar of events and possible meeting topics for discussion of them at the meeting. The presentation, keeping with the theme of getting landscape ideas, will be a video on either the 2003 Chelsea Flower and Garden Show or one on "Public Gardens" which is one of a six part series pre-

pared by Audrey Hepburn.

Several magazines and newspaper articles have indicated that floating island gardens are going to be big interest items this year. We hope to do a demonstration on do-it-yourself floating islands, that has some interesting variations, that offer advantages over the commercial ones. It was shown in the book about the gardens of Disney loaned to me by Dave and Nancy Parrone. If you are interested, this might be a project that you could work on now and have it ready for installation after your spring pond work.

March 1, 2008 RCGC "Spring Symposium". Gordon Hayward and Karen Bussolini are this years featured speakers.

In his first talk, "**The Welcoming Garden**", Gordon Hayward will discuss and illustrate the process and techniques for developing a welcoming and engaging garden at the front of your home. In his second presentation, "**Small Buildings, Small Gardens**", he will explain how gardeners can use small buildings and structures to help ease the design process for installing new gardens. These structures not only serve as magnets to draw people to view and appreciate them, but they also provide an anchor for the gardens.

Karen Busolini's presentation will be "**Jazzing Up The Garden With Color And Contrast**". She uses her background as an artist and garden photographer to convey different ways of thinking about and combining plants and flowers for new effects. She also claims that this is something that anyone can easily do without angst or the use of a color wheel.

Topic and presenter for the March 7th meeting are being developed.

March 13-16 is this year's Garden-

(Continued on page 3)

Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

Scape flower and garden show. The theme is "It's A Garden Life" and the displays should show how you can spend more time living in and enjoying your garden. More information on the theme and possible insights into some displays are being pursued and, hopefully, we will have information to share with you by the February meeting or at the very latest in the March newsletter or meeting.

Fish Health

We have frequently talked about examining your fish for various diseases, parasites and injuries. We have even had the koi health advisers and veterinarians talk about taking body scrapings and tissue samples for microscopic analysis and various corrective treatments that might be easier accomplished if the fish were anesthetized. In the *Mid-Atlantic Koi Magazine*, Mike Angers, a Koi Health Adviser, has an article on Koi anesthesia.

He starts with this sort of summary of why it is not an often discussed or practiced procedure by most fish keepers. "For most Koi examinations and individual treatments, it is often best to utilize adequate anesthesia. If you have never administered anesthesia before, just the thought of doing so is frightening. For many of us, the fear is enough to cause us to never even try. For some the first experience is the last."

The easiest anesthesia to obtain and use is oil of cloves. Dosing is important too, because too much can overdose and kill the fish the same as an overdose for humans. The normal recommended dose is usually 1-2 drops of clove oil per liter of well oxygenated pond water that is strongly mixed to disperse the oil through the water. Otherwise, the oil droplets tend to glob up on the water surface. (You

can add up to 9 parts ethanol [drinkable alcohol] to one part clove oil to aid in its dissolving.)

It takes about 2 minutes for the Koi to become anesthetized and it should recover in about 5-6 minutes after being returned to a fresh container of well oxygenated pond water, if all went well.

The anesthetized Koi will begin to roll over to its side or back and become less responsive. Gill movement will become slower, but should not stop. When adequately sedated, you should be able to lift it with support in the center and the tail should not flex. For most examinations and scrapings, this light sedation is all that is needed. Furthermore, while you work with the fish outside of the anesthetic solution, deeper levels of unconsciousness may occur, which may include even more slowing of the gill movement. The comforting part of this is that even if gill movement should stop, the heart will continue to beat. Yes, unlike humans, the Koi brain can survive for fairly long periods of time without oxygen. On the other hand, if the fish starts to come out of the anesthesia before you are finished, you can place it back in the anesthesia solution for a short time to re-sedate it.

Remain calm, if the Koi is slow to respond after you place it in the fresh water when you have finished the examination or treatment. You may use your hand to move a stronger flow of water towards the front of the Koi and through the gills. You can also hold the fish and move it through the water. This will also increase the water flow through the gills. The more anesthesia that you had to use the longer the recovery may take. It is quite rare that the fish will not recover from this type of anesthesia, but it can occur.

Mike concludes the article by

stressing that it is best to try this on some inexpensive goldfish or other fish. You should do it several times to build your confidence and comfort level and like many things that we do, the more practice and experience that you have, the more relaxed, comfortable and safe the procedure will be.

Fish Facts

While we are discussing fish health this month, Erik Johnson, DVM, has an interesting article "Pond Fish Anatomy 101" in *Aquascape* magazine that highlights some of the lesser known facts about Koi. I've extracted a few of them for your enjoyment.

• Fins

The dorsal fin in Koi is extremely vulnerable to ulceration. Even very mild bacterial infections may erode a hole right through the middle of it. The fin may remain incomplete and continue to show a small hole after it has completed its healing process. This is not a problem for the fish itself, it may detract from the quality of the fish.

• Scales

Some wounded fish may have had some of their scales dislodged or shed them from the area around the wound. The loose scales and damaged tissue can become a harbor for bad bacteria to further infect the fish. To avoid this, you should gently scrub the wounded area with a soft piece of gauze soaked in hydrogen peroxide - a process referred to as debridement. It is only meant for the more serious wounds and should not be overdone. Usually only one debridement is needed and this allows the wound to try to heal without additional treatments which might remove the cells that are trying to heal the wound site. The fish do a good job of replacing these lost scales over a period

Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

that may extend to several weeks. The replacement scales may, however, be thinner and have different markings or coloration than the original scales.

- **Gills**

In addition to acting as “lungs” for your fish, the gills also act as a waste discharge mechanism. The waste is in the form of ammonia. This makes them the most important waste excretion organ that the fish has. Because of this, the gills are protected by a boney covering called the operculum to keep them from being damaged. If you should have to lift the operculum to check your fish’s gills, you must be very careful and gentle so as not to tear them.

- **Eyes**

Koi and goldfish do not need their eyes to continue to live. (Some even hatch without eyes.) Therefore, it is not necessary to euthanize a fish that has lost one or both eyes. Since the lips, mouth and barbels (on Koi) are loaded with many sensory structures, they can find and secure their food perfectly well.

The eyes are also protected from most types of trauma by a fat, cushiony blood supply to and from the eye called the choroid plexus. If the fish does suffer a blow to the eye, the choroid may swell and give the eye a slightly popped look. This is usually temporary and the swelling should reduce and the eye should sink back into the socket over the coming weeks.

- **Guts**

The digestive track of Koi and goldfish is very simple. The esophagus extends from the mouth to a stretchy wide spot at the top of the intestine. This is used for food storage since they do not have a true stomach. The food then passes from here into the intestine for processing.

- **Air Bladder**

The air bladder is a very delicate structure that fills with air through the capillaries extending over its surface. The air bladder balances the weight of the fish against the water to help it establish buoyancy. Any excess air can be released through the esophagus to the mouth. When necessary additional air can be obtained from the capillaries. A fish floating at the surface has usually lost the ability to release the extra air, while one that continues to sink toward the bottom may have suffered spinal cord damage in the area where the nerves that regulate the functioning of the air bladder emerge.

- **Skeleton**

These fish are boney and they are real bones--not cartilage as in some other aquatic species. They are not meant for bearing weight because, in the water, it is pretty much weightless and therefore, do not need them for strength. The main stresses that they must withstand are the hydrostatic pressure from the water and the flexing of the fishes mighty muscles on those bones.

Unfortunately, they do face an additional external stress and that is from us netting or handling them. After netting a fish, you should not carry it in the net. This could force the fish to bend into a u-shape and the weight of the fish could twist the skeletal bones and damage or break the back.

- **Muscles**

The muscles of a fish are oriented within thick bands called somites. These bands are stacked down the sides of the fish in thick orderly rows. Any process, like handling, that may damage the back and may destroy at least some of the nerves that control the muscles in that area. This damage to a somite causes the muscle to get smaller and a kink will develop in the side of the fish. The concave side of the

bend is the site of the damaged somite or muscle.

- **Teeth**

Koi have three or four molars that emerge from the lower gill arch near the back of the Koi’s throat. They are broad, crowned teeth with serrations on the top surface similar to human teeth. They are used to break and pulverize the shells, insects and crustaceans that they scavenge from the pond bottom. These teeth are shed and replaced on a continuous basis so that they have good teeth throughout their life. However, you don’t have to worry, they are located too far back for you to ever be bitten by a Koi.

Did you know

The ruby-throated hummingbird that visits our area has a heart rate of 615 beats per minute, while an American crow has a rate of 342 beats per minute, but the wild turkey is the winner at only 93 beats per minute.

Water lilies “breathe” through tiny holes called stomates located on the top of their leaves. If the leaves are coated with water for too long or from too much spray from waterfalls or fountains, they can essentially “drown” and may die.

A dragonfly eye is made up with 28,000 lenses. This is believed to provide it with the best vision in the insect world.

An extra transparent eyelid called a nictating membrane is activated to protect a frogs eyes when it is under the water.



Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

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 <http://www.gvpakc.org>

Calendar of Events

February 1, 2008: Our first meeting of the year. Video presentation from the 2003 Chelsea Garden Show in England. Demonstration on making a Disney type floating island planter.

February 8, 2008: NFKPC monthly meeting

March 1, 2008: RCGC “*Spring Garden Symposium*”

March 7, 2008: Topic to be determined and speaker are still being finalized.

March 13-16, 2008: GardenScape

March 14, 2008: NFKPC monthly meeting

Save the dates:

April 19, 2008: We are attempting to have a special presentation on Lotus by a guest speaker. This would be a free event and the public would be invited, but reservations would be required.

June 6-8, 2008: LilyFest with GVPAKC plant and product auction on June 8. We are also trying to find a speaker for a presentation prior to the auction.

August 2, 2008: Our Pond Tour will be changed to the first Saturday in August instead of the last Saturday of July.

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