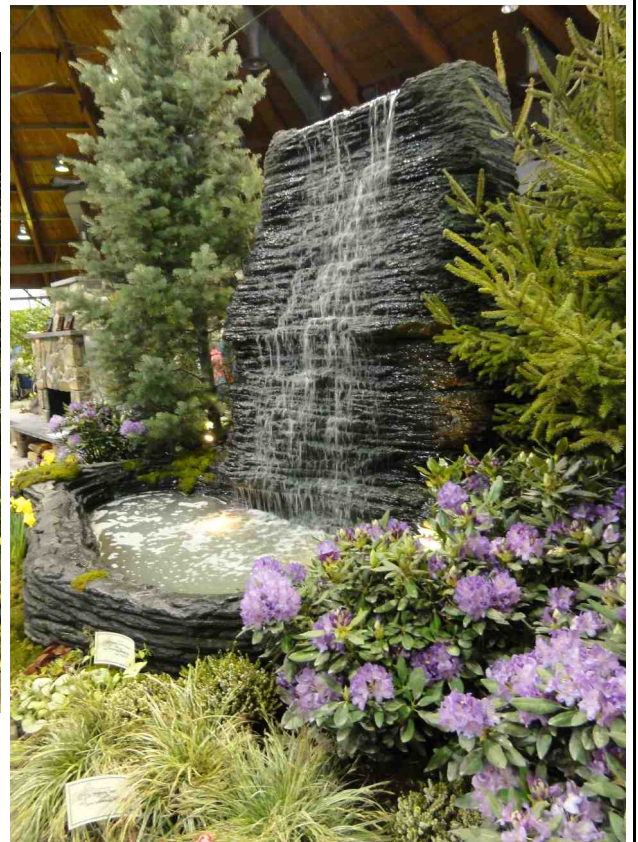


Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

Volume 15 Issue 04

April 2011

Some Water Features at 2011 Gardenscape



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“News From Norm”

Time is Running Out to Renew

This is our last reminder to renew. If we have not received your renewal yet, please complete and return the renewal form attached to this newsletter. The end of 2010 brings the start of 2011 and another year for the club. We hope you've had a fun and educational time as members of the club and will renew your membership for another year. If you received a complimentary membership for hosting a pond tour stop last year, we hope you will consider joining the club. On your renewal forms, please make note of any areas of interest that you'd like the club to cover in 2011 during our meetings or in this newsletter. This really helps us plan for presentations that meet your needs. □

We Need Your Help!

If you are receiving our Newsletter via US Mail and you have an email address, you are asked to send your email address to gvpakc@rochester.rr.com so you can begin receiving the Newsletter via email. Currently it costs about \$15.00 per subscription each year to print and mail the newsletter. We expect that cost to continue to rise. Please note that it may become necessary in coming years to raise club dues for anyone who wants or needs a printed copy of the newsletter. Please help. □

March Meeting

President, Bob Wheeler filled in for our scheduled speaker, Joe Cummings from Water Gardens by JC, who was unable to speak, because of a family emergency. We hope everything has worked out well for them. Bob delighted us with a beautiful introduction to the 2010 IWGS award-winning waterlilies, with some surprises. This was one of the few years that a hardy waterlily took the top award. Interspersed among the pictures of lilies, we saw snapshots of winter landscapes. It was a perfect pairing, like strawberries and ice cream – and just as sweet, served with a recording of soothing harp solos. □

Not to be Missed!

Be sure to pick up the March-April 2011 issue of Upstate Gardeners' Journal. Club member, Noelle Nagle and the work she does at the Lambertton Conservatory in Highland Park are featured in Michelle Sutton's article, "Interpreter Under Glass." You'll get a behind-the-scenes look at the Conservatory, but best of all you'll feel like you've spent a little time with Noelle! □



The Pond Keeper's Ten Commandments

Ben Helm. Author of the Water Gardener's Bible.

<http://www.watergardenersbible.com>

o.uk/

To be complete, the water gardener's bible should of course have a set of rules to follow. By following these 10 commandments, you will be on the way to a beautiful and successful pond.

1. There isn't such a thing as an instant pond.

We live in times of instant credit and instant coffee. You can dig and construct very quickly – perhaps even in a weekend, but the pond will take months to become established with healthy plants and fish. There are natural processes that a pond must experience, and if you try to create a pond any faster than that, your pond, plants and fish are likely to encounter problems. These could either be terminal for your fish and will certainly hit you in your pocket.

2. Endeavour to follow nature's example in all pond work

Your pond will be an artificial creation in your garden. Even so, to be successful, you will need to keep as close to nature's example to create a successful pond. Follow examples from the natural landscape as to how to make your pond look as though it has always been there – following that through with plant selection and fish (even though you will likely to choose ornamental varieties). The more you choose to deviate from the natural model, the more involved and

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greater the management will need to be to keep your pond balanced.

3. Bigger is better

Build your pond as large as possible. This is not for pride or vanity, but for an easier life and a healthier, more stable pond. Larger ponds are easier to keep clean, and give you a greater scope for landscaping and planting. If you choose a pre-formed rigid pond, what might seem huge in the garden centre, when sunk into your garden, mysteriously perform a shrinking trick. Many pond keepers regret not having created a larger pond in the first place. It's worth learning from their experience.

4. Stock the pond gradually

Even though your pond is an artificial creation, stocked with plants artificially and ornamental fish, it will still mature at the same rate as a natural pond would – even when filters and pumps are involved. So when adding fish, do so gradually over several months to avoid causing water quality problems. Experience shows that the first 3 to 6 months of a pond's life are the most crucial.

5. Test the water regularly

The pond's water quality is the same as your blood. If it's healthy, then the pond will be healthy. The water quality has the greatest influence on how the pond will perform. Unfortunately, clear sparkling water can look stunning, but at

the same time can be toxic. The only way to find out is to test it periodically – as this will tell you what is happening in your pond – and what to do if the test results are not right.

6. Regular fish watching

You might often see a shepherd 'resting' on his crook in the field. In fact, what he is doing is watching his flock – looking out for any tell-tale changes in behavior. How your fish behave will give you a clue as to the quality of the water in your pond. Spend time just watching your fish, noting any abnormal behavior and following up accordingly.

7. Children supervised at all times

Ponds are beautiful – but also dangerous, especially for young visitors to your garden. The sights and sounds of a pond can prove irresistible to children, putting them at risk around a pond. Keep them supervised at all times – especially if they are not familiar to your garden.

8. Electricity and water

Unless your pond is a still-water, natural pond, it is likely that most ponds will have electrical equipment in or around the pond. Lights, pumps and even heaters are used safely in ponds around the world, but where electrical equipment does come into contact with water – there are always risks to consider. To prevent serious accidents, install and use all equipment safely with the standard safety devices.

9. Think long term with plants – give them plenty of space

Pond plants live a spoilt life. They are watered well and tend to thrive very quickly. Give plants plenty of space to expand when adding them to your pond. Choose suitably sized plants – and try to avoid those that have a reputation for getting out of control.

10. Keep your pond plants in the garden

Many pond plants pose a risk to our natural aquatic habitats. Some are 'alien species' and if let loose into native ponds and streams, have shown that they can soon become pests that then dominate the local fauna and flora. When trimming plants – always dispose of them in a compost heap or the bin. Once they are in your back garden, keep them there.

□



Pond Spring Startup

With spring starting to come and summer not far behind now is the time to get the pond ready for summer. Proper preparation in the spring makes for a healthier pond all summer.

Ponds should reach a water temperature of 48 degrees F or above before being disturbed.

If you have not done so already you will want to remove and store your netting you used to keep debris out of the pond.

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Next you will want to remove any dead leaves and other organic debris, as well as any significant accumulation of sludge from the bottom of the pond. You can use a skimmer net or a pond vacuum. Several different pond vacuums are available. Some work better with leaves, while others do better with sludge.

Water garden and ponds are special environment that take time to develop. Below are critical pond temperatures. These are the changes that take place in your pond as the water temperature rises for spring:

- 40° No bios established. No bad elements to be concerned about.
- 48° Aeromonas bacteria (ulcer disease) begins to develop.
- 50° Danger Zone Begins... Cold-water parasite "Costia" thrives! Flukes begin to grow and reproduce (slower than in warmer temperatures).
- 52° Nitrobacter (the good bacteria that converts ammonia to nitrites) is slowing growing. Treatment: you can start using product like Koizyme to fight Aeromonas bacteria
- 60° Nitrosomonas (the good bacteria that converts nitrites to nitrates) begins to grow. Fish's immunity system wakes up but not fully developed.
- 62° Other parasites (such as trichodina, chilodinella and ich) thrive!
- 65° Danger Zone Ends... Immunity system on fish is

kicking in, still not 100%. Start using beneficial bacteria to jump-start the pond.

74° Past the danger zone - All good bacteria "bios" are fully active, Fish immunity system is fully developed.

Completely draining and scrubbing down a pond will remove the beneficial bacteria. A partial water change, however will help by diluting minerals and pollutants which may have accumulated due to evaporation. Doing a 1/3 water change is recommended, making sure to use a de-chlorinator if using tapwater. Koi are very sensitive to sudden temperature changes. Filling must be done slowly to allow the koi time to adjust.

This is a good time to test for water quality. Making needed adjustments now will go a long way toward assuring a satisfying summer season.

Pumps, filters and all other equipment should be cleaned, checked and reconnected. All electric wires and connections, including ground fault interrupters should be checked to make sure they are working properly.

The ultraviolet light clarifier should be disassembled so that you can clear the internal quartz glass tube. Be sure to replace the UV bulb every year to keep it working at maximum performance.

Once the temperature reaches about 50 degrees F you can start dividing your hardy marginal and fertilizing all your pond plants. Tropical water plants can be

moved back to the pond when the temperature of the water reaches 60 degrees.

When you begin fertilizing your pond plants push the fertilizer tabs as deep as possible into the soil and as close to the edge of the pot as possible. It will help prevent the fertilizer from leaking into the water.

At around 50 degrees you can start feeding the fish about once a week with a good quality cool weather fish food. The pond filter should be running for about a week before you start to feed the fish. Don't be tempted to feed more on those 70 degrees days when your fish are looking at you with their hungry eyes. It is the water temperature that is important. It must not dip below 50 degrees F. Feeding fish when the pond water is not consistently above 50 degrees can have deadly results. At around 55 degrees you can start feeding 2 to 3 times a week. Once the water reaches 60 degrees you can feed once a day. At 65 degrees you can begin to switch over to a staple diet or growth food.

If you have fish, you will want to test your water several times a week, until the beneficial bacteria in the filter and pond are working at optimal levels. □



Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club
140 Winslow Ave,
Rochester NY 14620

If you would like to write an article for the newsletter or have an idea you would like to have researched, please send your article or your ideas to Norm James at gvpakc@rochester.rr.com

If your mailing address or email change or you would like to receive your newsletter via email, please send your change to: newsletter@gvpakc.org, or call Norm James at 334-3536.

Board Members 2011

President: Bob Wheeler
Vice President: Larry Hursh
Secretary: Open
Treasurer: Les Saiers
Pond Tour Chairperson: Les Saiers & Norm James
Refreshments: Yvonne Wheeler
Newsletter Editors: N James, B Wheeler and L Hursh,
Webmaster: Norm James - gvpakc@rochester.rr.com

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 Bob Wheeler. (585) 461-5315 or e-mail BobWheeler58@gmail.com or visit the club website at

<http://www.gvpakc.org>

Calendar of Events

April 1 2011, Meeting: Friday 7PM, GVPAKC meeting at Warner Castle. Our speaker will be: Larry Nau on his Trip to China

May 6 2011, Meeting: Friday 7PM, GVPAKC meeting at Warner Castle. Presentation by Denis Monefeldt on "Maintaining a Water Garden isn't Natural".

May 7 2011: Rochester Dahlia Society 2011 Sale 8 to 12 at the Webster Arboretum, 1700 Schlegel RD, Webster

May 14 & 15 2011: Henrietta Garden Club Plant Sale 9am to 5pm Gro-Moore Farm Market 2811 East Henrietta Rd.

June 3 2011, Meeting: Friday 7PM, No Meeting due to Lilyfest/Auction

June 4-5 2011, Lilyfest at Bergen Water Gardens and Nursery

June 5 2011, Sunday: Club Auction at Bergen Water Gardens and Nursery

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