



# Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

Volume 8 Issue 4

April 2004



*This Kohaku won the Grand Prize at the 20<sup>th</sup> All-Japan Nishiki-go show held in Tokyo.*

## Fish of the Month The KOHAKU

The Kohaku was the first koi variety to become established in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and has remained the Japanese Favorite ever since. It is a white koi on which red appears in varying patterns. Each of patterns has its own name. As in all koi varieties, the body shape and the finnage must be of high quality.

A really outstanding Kohaku is rarely seen because most will fall short on one point of detail. The desirable points are as follows:

- The Hi (red) markings should be bright and even over all the body.
- The edges of the Hi should be sharp and well defined and not gradually changing from Hi to white.
- The Hi should not spread over the eyes nor into the fins,
- The Hi should not extend down the lateral line.
- The Hi on the head should not spread below the nostrils nor should it be seen in the tail.
- There must be Hi on the head.



## Taking Fish Photos Under Water

By Norm James



Although koi are usually viewed and photographed from above, underwater shots can show off the beauty and action in ponds. The process is quite simple. Place a digital camera on the bottom of an aquarium (18"x8"x12"), close to the glass on the long side. Float the aquarium in the pond while you adjust your hands so you can press the shutter. Lower the aquarium into the water, being very careful not to allow any water to flow over the top. The natural curiosity of the koi makes them eager subjects and the digital format makes it easy to capture lots of shots that can be sorted through to find the treasures. You might also be able to get a very close view of a fish with a problem without stressing the fish.

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I was very pleased to hear at last month's meeting that everyone's ponds, fish and water gardens had survived the winter so well. It is nice to know that there were no significant losses of fish or ponds this year. The weather is still changing so the danger of the cold weather is not completely over. A thin ice coating on the smaller ponds has come and gone several times. We have been able to check the fish several times and so far all are well. If however you should spot a fish that is ill or in distress, here are some suggestions from KoiVet.com for warming them to prepare them for treatment if the increased temperature alone is not sufficient.

Warming a fish up:

Fish in icy water sometimes need to be warmed up for various treatments and/or to rescue or revive them from some cold water illnesses such as "laying over". The fish should be placed in a large vat containing the icy pond water in which they were living. This is necessary to minimize and avoid shock. The vat should be set up in a cool garage or basement area so that the temperature will not equalize too rapidly and further stress or kill the fish-(The author recommends a

vat of at least 75 gallons so that the temperature will not increase more than ten degrees F in the first 18 hours.)

Allow the vat to warm very slowly to the ambient temperature of the area in which it is stored. Don't use a heater or do anything that could accelerate this warming process beyond the above rate. As the fish warm up to this gradual increase in temperature they will become more active so it is necessary that the vat be covered as the fish warm up.

Once the temperature reaches the mid sixties and remains there for at least 24 hours, you can start to raise the temperature gradually by using an aquarium heater, a paint bucket warmer or other device. At this point you want to raise the temperature no more than five degrees per day until it reaches the low seventies.

If the treatment that you want to employ or if you are raising the temperature to treat for KHV, additional considerations come into play. The water must have increased aeration beyond this point to provide sufficient oxygen for the fish. Again the temperature should change no more than five degrees per day until you reach the treatment

temperature. Continue the high aeration during the treatment and throughout the elevated temperature cycle. The crucial element in warming the fish, as mentioned, is taking it very slowly, employing increased aeration and reduced feeding at least in the initial stage.

There are also some cautionary notes that are also a part of this procedure.

\* Heat accelerates parasite proliferation but this can be minimized by adding salt to produce a salt level of 0.3-0.6%

\* Heat accelerates bacterial pathogen development. This can be controlled by the use of medicated foods, chemical dips and/or antibiotic medicines or in severe cases injections.

\* Add pH support by adding approximately one Tablespoon of baking soda per 100 gallons.

\* As a rule of thumb and working against a lower ambient temperature using a semi-insulated vat, you will need to supply the equivalent of 500 watts of heat per 100 gallons in the vat.

\* Use caution with the added aeration so that the spray, mist and added humidity do not cause mildew or spattering problems in the house area.

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As an update on the club activities, it was announced at the last meeting that our July 9th meeting will be held offsite. I have made arrangements to tour the gardens of Jerry and Karen Sue Kral. This garden site was one of the gardens featured on a WXXI program on the Secret Gardens Of Rochester. We also decided at the meeting that we would start plans for the Pond tour with July 31<sup>st</sup> as the target date. This date was selected in the hope that both the hardy and tropical water lilies and other plants would be at their peak, that the fish will still be very active and that the ponds will have stabilized and that the water will be clear for optimal viewing of the fish. (The chaos and turbidity of the breeding season will be behind us and the small fry and fish should be out and about too.)

If you are interested in having your pond or gardens on the tour please contact Brian Nagei at 385-0495 or Larry H. at 473-6276. It is never too soon to make the commitment and be sure that you will enjoy it as much as your visitors. As always, we will conclude the tour with our picnic. So please save the date and plan on joining in the fun.

While there are snow flurries in the air again as I prepare this newsletter, according to the calendar, it is really spring and our thoughts should be on getting things ready for the outdoor ponds and gardens once more. If you brought tropical plants in for the winter, you can start fertilizing them and increase their water schedule to start acclimating them to wetter conditions. That way, they will be ready to enter the bog or pond as soon as the weather is warm.

You can also divide them if necessary or take cuttings to start additional plants. You could even save some of the extras to donate to the club for the plant auction on June 6th at LilyFest.

Those of you who enjoy starting plants from seed should have them started now or at least within the next two weeks.

Once the plants and seedlings are ready, remember that they must be hardened off before full exposure to the sun and wind. This is simply setting them in a shady and sheltered spot for a few hours a day for the first week or so. It is usually a good idea to bring them back indoors at night to protect them from the colder night air. Then they

should be ready for their spring growth spurt and a season of lush growth and in some cases more flowers.

Our guest speaker for the April meeting will Fred Jung from the Central New York Koi and Water Garden Society. Fred is a member of the founding group of that club, a member of their board of directors and has given several presentations for them. His presentation for us will be on the various aspects of water chemistry for Koi health. He will also explain the identification and classification of the different types of Koi. Fred and his wife Jane may look familiar to some of you, since they attended one of our meetings a couple of years ago.

Fred heats his pond through

I the winter months to keep his Koi happy, healthy and active through the entire year. If there is sufficient interest in this from our members, I'm sure that he would be willing to share some of his experiences with us during the question and answer period.

if you are thinking about getting started with Koi this would be a good opportunity to learn how to get started with them and select the approach that would work best for you.

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The main theme of this newsletter and our coming presentation is Koi oriented. However, many of us keep goldfish rather than Koi. This current article in *KOI USA Differences Between Koi and Goldfish* by Scott Taylor should help to resolve some of the identification concerns.

The author starts with the disclaimer that there are about as Many differences between Koi and goldfish as there are between the various goldfish themselves. Having said this, he starts to list the more common differences, similarities and exceptions that can help us to keep these two specialized carp separate.

\* At maturity koi will have a much greater size and length than any goldfish. The growth rate of juvenile koi is much more noticeable than with goldfish.

Fancy goldfish may have different eye shapes and placements, different tail finnage and lengths and various body shapes.

\* Koi have barbels goldfish do not.

\* Well maintained koi can generally live to be 40-50 years old. Fancier goldfish generally live 5-8 years while the More common or simpler types can live considerably longer.

Carp koi and goldfish belong to the family

Cyprinidae which is the largest family of fish. Koi bear the carp latin name of *Cyprinus Carpio*. Goldfish bear the scientific name *carassius auratus* s.

\* Koi have normal size and shape eyes. Goldfish can have various eye size and shape from normal to up turned (celestial), telescope (popeye) and bubbleye.

\* Koi tails are a common single type tail except or the long fin (butterfly) type which is more commonly accepted in the US. Goldfish may have common single tails., longer comet tails or double, triple or veil tails.

\* Both koi and goldfish are considered to be flat head fish. Even the fancy goldfish that are bred for specific types of head growth are considered to still be flat head fish.

\* All koi will have a dorsal fin. Some fancy goldfish due to special and extensive breeding, do not have the dorsal fin.

\* Both koi and goldfish have cycloid scales that are plate like. There are two exceptions to this. They are: the Doitsu koi which appears to be scaleless and the pearl scale goldfish that has thick domed scales that look like pearls on the skin. As you can see goldfish are not koi nor are koi goldfish even though both are carp.

I hope that this has whet your appetite to learn more about koi. if so, here are some suggestions on how to learn more about these friendly and colorful additions to your pond. - Read some of the books and magazines that are koi oriented.

-Visit koi shows and try to evaluate the ones that you think look best and compare them to the standards and the judge's results.

-Visit knowledgeable koi keepers and dealers and again compare your fish or selections to their choices. - Study the fish to compare the differences in body structure, confirmation, color and patterns. Observe the fish over a period of 2-3 years and record how these change with time. If possible photograph them to have a more accurate record for comparison. -As your eye and ability to judge them and the quality of your koi improve, consider entering them in a koi show. Don't be concerned about the results. Win, lose or draw it can be a good learning experience. You can learn a great deal from comparing your fish to the others. Comparing and asking questions will help you understand what it takes to raise a quality fish: and win at a later show.