

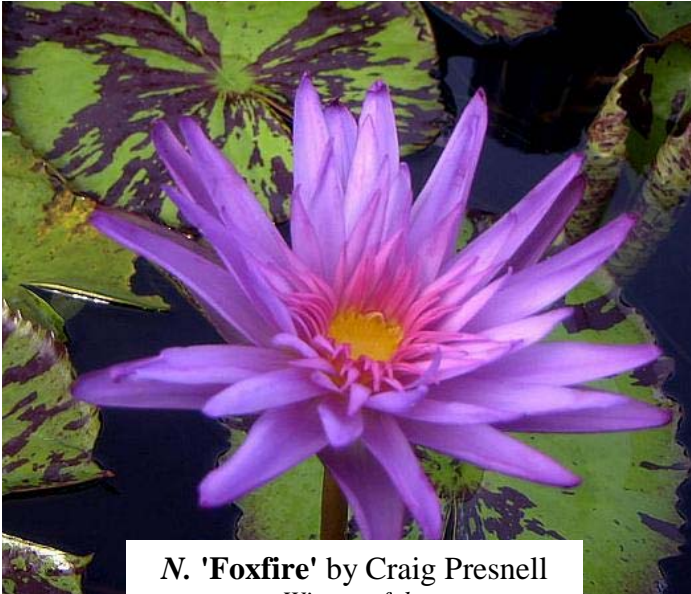
Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

Volume 9 Issue 4

April 2005

New Waterlilies For 2005

Waterlilies have long been a popular pond plant, producing beautiful blooms, as well as protective shade for controlling algae. Below are 4 new varieties that were entered in the International Water Garden Society 2004 New Waterlily Competition.



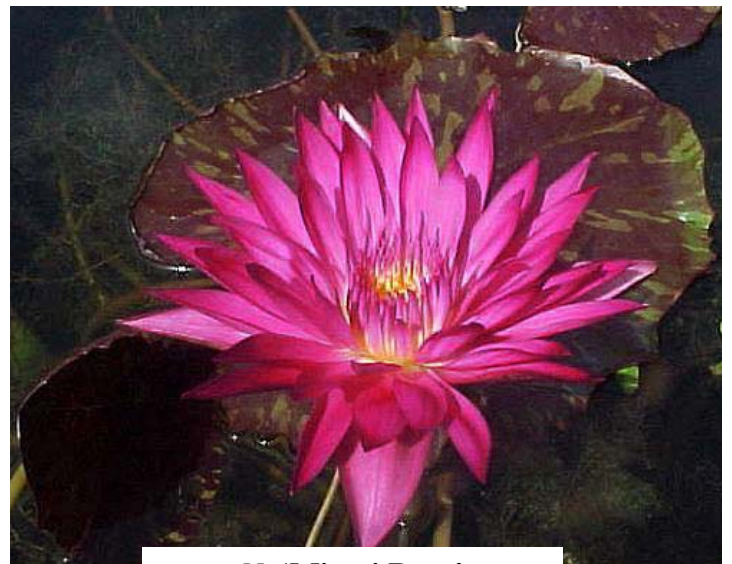
N. 'Foxfire' by Craig Presnell
*Winner of the
IWGS 2004 Best Tropical Lily
&
IWGS 2004 Best New Waterlily*



N. 'Mangala-Ubol' (Nopchai Charnsilp)
by Dr. N. Nopchai Chansilpa
*Winner of the
IWGS 2004 Best New Hardy Lily*



N. 'Avalanche' by Crag Presnell
*Winner of the
IWGS 2004 Second Best Tropical Lily*



N. 'Miami Rose'
*From the
Florida Aquatic Nurseries*

Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

Our March meeting was another success thanks to the fine presentation by Larry Nau. To make certain that everyone would be enthusiastic about lotus, he showed a selection of these plants in bloom just to pique their curiosity.

He has a gift for making what may seem like a difficult problem quite easy to do and understand. I want to thank him for taking the extra time to uproot his own plants to bring samples of various lotus tubers to illustrate the proper technique for identifying the growth points. These delicate growth buds are the most important part for locating the optimum division point on the tubers. He then potted the division explaining as he went the proper location and method of positioning the tuber in the pot. He stressed the importance of frequent fertilization if you wish to have healthy, vigorous blooming lotus. They are very heavy feeders. He also detailed many of the ways that they can be used in and around the pond, tubs and regular gardens. At the end of his presentation, he donated the newly potted tuber to be raffled to someone in attendance. The lucky winner was Karen Saiers, a visitor, at her first meeting. Now she and her husband Les are anxious to get started on the pond that he has been planning for the past year.

We also discussed the various edible parts of the lotus and how they could be prepared. It is almost entirely edible as alternate parts come into harvest throughout the season. Cross-sections of the tubers and stems were also shown to demonstrate their decorative nature.

Larry also advised us to watch for possible legislation that may effect the plants and fish that we may be

allowed to have. It is important for us to watch for these rules and regulations. We should be ready to respond as interested parties to assure that the rules imposed truly impact our area and hobby and are not just copies of legislation that may only be significant in the area of origination. We must also be vigilant on our part to make sure that we do not harbor or release any potentially invasive plants, fish or other wildlife.

I hope that many of you were able to attend GardenScape this year. It is always a great event with a lot of new ideas and applications for both plant and hardscape materials and accessories. It is also an opportunity to renew old contacts and possibly make new ones to keep us informed on what is changing not only in our hobby but gardening in general. While this introduction to spring may have been a little premature this year, it was a good stimulator to get us jump-started again and ready for the another pond and water garden season..

Our April 1st meeting will feature a presentation by Marlene Hyden from the Niagara Frontier Koi And Pond Club. She will explain what a Koi Health Adviser is and the importance of possibly having one in each club. They can play an important role in helping a club meet its goals of guiding members to healthier ponds and fish, encouraging breeding of better quality fish and disseminating the latest and best information to everyone. Marlene became a trained KHA by completing the program produced and operated by the AKCA. She will give us details on this, what this program entails and how they,

as a club, have applied and benefited from this training.

I have also asked Marlene to give us a status report on the plans and preparations for the AKCA 25th Annual Seminar which will be held in their area. The NFKPC will be hosting this event on June 22-25, 2006. This should be a big event for them and AKCA.

While our club has decreased in size since we offered to help them with this event over 2 years ago, I would still like to follow up on what our role might be in helping them and the AKCA make this a great and memorable event.

For our May meeting, we will be presenting information on spring cleaning the pond and preparing for the start of the season with everything in the best possible condition. We will present information not only on what we should be doing on our own but we will be comparing that to the techniques and preparation services by pond maintenance professionals.

While we are anxiously looking toward spring and what we hope will be safer and healthier living, weather and driving conditions, this changing period can be very hazardous for our ponds and fish dependents. The frozen surface has protected our finned friends from rapid temperature changes, prowlers and predators. The increasing open water area can now allow these predators access to our pets. Unfortunately, they may still be moving slowly due to the cold water and could be easy victims of the so called "early birds" getting the worm.

My pond also has tracks of various types of wildlife that have used the

(Continued on page 3)

Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

open water around the bubbler as their water source during the winter months. It is conceivable that as the area opens more, they may damage the liner trying to get closer to or escape from the water. Larry Nau mentioned that deer had damaged one of his liners at the nursery when their hooves broke through it. Fish are cold blooded and therefore, their body temperature is about the same as the water temperature. This results in their immune system nearly shutting down at 55 degrees or below. Since most of the disease organisms are not very active in that range, they were not too bothersome over the winter. Unfortunately, some of the pathogens can become active from 55 and above. This can be problematic for our fish because the lower temperatures have increased their stress level and reduced the amount of protective slime coat. These changes render them more susceptible to attack by parasites, bacteria and viruses. This is further complicated by the fact that the fishes immune system is slower to respond and really doesn't become too active until it warms above 62-65 degrees.

Water quality can also be an additional threat. Most of us have gone through the winter with no or greatly reduced filtration. Consequently, fish wastes, decaying organic materials and other dusts and debris have built up. These are good breeding locations for the diseases and parasites. The excess nutrients from some of the decaying products have also been feeding any string algae that may have been present. With more exposure to light the free floating algae can also start to bloom at low temperatures and make it difficult to ob-

serve our friends on a regular basis to assure that they are not ill or being attacked.

Here are several suggestions to safeguard your pets and help them through these difficult changes.

* Net out or vacuum excess material from the bottom as soon as possible. Try not to overexert the fish and cause additional stress during this operation.

* Start the your filtration and recirculation as soon as practical.

You may want to delay starting waterfalls until temperatures are more stable.

* Start partial water changes using a de-chlorinator and monitoring temperatures to minimize variations.

* Add slime coat enhancer and/or stress reducer to the water.

* Add beneficial bacteria to the pond and filter to get them established more quickly.

Finally, if you notice anything unusual try to identify the problem as quickly as possible. Then start treatment if you can or seek the help of others if you are uncertain.

Q: Why are some koi prices so variable? I've seen koi at various sources with a wide range of prices. Is it possible to have that much variation or is it simply a marketing thing?

A: To a certain extent, it is partially a marketing problem. Water gardening and fish keeping are a rapidly growing and expanding industry. Like any popular trend, there are some who want to get into the action as quickly and easily as possible to make a profit. They become a baby fish source, breeding for quantity not quality and in some cases without regard for health or good growing conditions.

These fish are often available at very low price ranges.

Good breeders will only use their best quality fish for breeding purposes. They will also select them for age, color pattern, variety and over all health.

After breeding, the adults are separated from the eggs and fry to prevent the adults from eating them. A culling process starts as soon as possible. This removes any undesirables that may be sickly, deformed and possibly stunted fish. The culling continues through several more stages of growth to eliminate additional ones with growth or health problems and to select the most appropriate candidates for sales and the best will be retained for potential future breeding.

The sales classes are broken down as follows: Pond run will have good confirmation but the patterns or colors are not satisfactory. Select koi will have good confirmation and patterns but the color(s) are not satisfactory. Quality koi will have good confirmation, pattern and color.

The reputable breeders also ensure that their fish are fed the appropriate foods, are in prime condition, the equipment is always clean, the fish are checked and treated for diseases and parasites and may even be vaccinated to ensure their health.

These concerns should also be followed by responsible merchandisers that sell the koi to us the consumers. The better ones will even quarantine their fish for a period of time for observation and to verify their health before offering them for sale. They may be treated for stress or other difficulties resulting from shipping or transport.

Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

These are some of the contributing factors effecting the cost of koi. If you consider the potential joy that they may bring over their anticipated life span, however, the cost of the quality versus quantity is worth it.

We have been very fortunate in that our area does not appear, thus far, to have been too involved in the Koi Herpes Virus outbreak . But this in no way means that we should not have to be concerned about this potential killer. There has been considerable research on positively identifying and treating it before it is too late to save the fish. On the positive side, there has been some good news coming from the research at the University of Georgia.

The information for these notes were published in the MAKC magazine by Dick Roemer.

The University has been doing background DNA testing on koi that were showing symptoms of the disease. These tests have indicated that the presence of the disease can positively be detected in the DNA if the fish have active symptoms at the time of the test. It did not yield a positive test if the disease was present but dormant. Another problem was that to get the most accurate results, the testing can not be completed on living specimens.

This, therefore, meant that it would not be very useful to verify whether any newly received or purchased fish had been exposed to the disease.

In response to these difficulties, the University researchers have been working on developing a test that would identify the presence of KHV antibodies in the fish without seriously harming them. The test would be performed using a small

sample of blood from fish. This test could be relatively inexpensive and could assure dealers and customers that the koi were free of the disease. The antibody test will also show positive if the koi has previously been exposed and has developed the antibodies as a response to it. Since the test is only a few months old, it is difficult to predict how long these antibodies will remain detectable in the koi. The test is now commercially available and could be a major breakthrough in the search for answers to this disease that has had such a significant impact on the entire koi world.

On the negative side of the good results in detecting the disease, there is now conflicting information on the dormant or inactive status of the disease in "survivor" fish. In one experiment, laboratory raised koi that were certified disease free were introduced into a pond of "survivor" koi which appeared healthy, lively and happy following their surviving an outbreak of KHV.

Both groups did well until the water temperature reached the KHV active range. Then all of the new lab koi died. When these victims were submitted for DNA testing, they all tested positive for the virus. This raised the caution that the "survivors" may indeed be carriers and not good candidates to be included with healthy fish.

These tests will be repeated again in spring and as required at future times in an attempt to resolve this issue as well. This is all promising news regarding this disease. The research at the University is still progressing and it will continue the program but it is currently limited to the funding available.

They may do additional antibody research, as a possible off-shoot of this, to develop other specific tests for the presence of other antibodies for additional viruses and bacteria. A contribution to this research is something we may want to consider as a club or individuals.

A gentle reminder that July will be National Water Gardening Month and that we will have many opportunities to participate in various water garden tours. Most of all, I would like you to think primarily of offering your pond as part of our tour on July 30th this year. You will have plenty of time to get ready and you will find it a great way to accomplish more on your own pond and get to know other members better as they inquire about your pond.

I was recently informed that our regional NAWGS chapter will be resuming their meetings on April 25th. They will be offering 'A Parade Of Ponds' on the weekend of July 9th. Steve Popen will give us more information on that and some of the NAWGS national tours at our May meeting. There may be a tour in your vacation area if you will be away during the Rochester tour.

The RCGC tour of gardens along Lake Ontario is July 16th. This may not have a water garden specifically but it is always a great tour.

The IWGS Symposia will be July 21st-26th in Bethlehem, Pa. It will be a great opportunity to learn more about water gardening and to tour some beautiful gardens in the Pa. and De. area.

I have not yet had a confirmation on the NFKPC tour but I hope that Marlene will be able to tell us about it at our April meeting.

Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

We will publish more details on all of these events as they become available and as the event dates approach. While it may seem that these events are more distant time wise, they will be here before we know it. You will now have plenty of time to support our and other group events to make this years National Water Gardening Month a success.

Board Members 2005

President: Larry Hursh
Vice President: Bob Wheeler
Secretary: Kathy Hursh
Treasurer: John Roguski
Pond Tour Chairperson: Brain Nagel
Refreshments: Yvonne Wheeler and Kathy Hursh
Newsletter Editors: Hursh, James, and Nau families

- 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.

Purpose of the Club

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. 473-6276 or e-mail lkhursh@aol.com or visit the club website at

www.ggw.org/gvpakc

Calendar of Events

- **April 1, 2005:** Presentation on the AKCA Koi Health Advisor (KHA) program by Marlene Hyden
- **April 8, 2005:** NFKPC meeting

- **May 6, 2005:** Presentation on pond cleaning
- **May 13, 2005:** NFKPC meeting
- **May 21, 2005:** Genesee Land Trust Native Plant Sale
- **May 28, 2005:** RCGC Proud Market Plant Sale

- **June 3-5, 2005:** LilyFest and Plant Auction
- **June 5, 2005:** GVPAKC monthly meeting will be at 1:00 pm at LilyFest prior to the plant auction.
- **June 23-26, 2005:** AKCA seminar in Tulsa, OK.

Some events to consider in the long range planning.

- **July 16, 2005:** RCGC Garden Tour
- **July 21-26, 2005:** IWGS Symposia in Bethlehem, PA
- **July 30, 2005:** Tentative date GVPAKC Pond Tour
- **August 12-14, 2005:** Koi America in Chantilly, VA

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