



# Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

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## GVPAKC Pond Tour – 2005 Visiting Glen and Rita\*



“There’s somethin’ fishy goin’ on in the basement!”

The inviting backyard landscape, which Glen designed himself, includes: a terrace; a winding dry streambed; a hammock suspended in a small grove of tall trees; and a stone encircled pond, with tropical and hardy water lilies, lotus and taro. Enclosed in an attractive privacy fence, the yard offers peace and relaxation. But the basement of Glen and Rita’s house conceals a surprise. Housed there, in two walls of aquarium tanks, is a large collection of exotic Bristol Shubunkins, bred for their large heart-shaped tails. Although all of Glen’s breeding stock are presently kept in the basement tanks, he plans to reintroduce some of the offspring into the outside pond.

\*Since Glen and Rita are non-member hosts, we are not cleared to use their last name.



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

I want to start by thanking those members who came out on such a nasty night. It apparently was just the start of what is turning out to be our rainy season. It has made it somewhat difficult to find a few necessary, but nice days to really get serious about preparing and closing the ponds and water gardens for the winter. It will get done pretty soon although with a little more difficulty in the colder weather. On a more positive note, and from my point of view, the meeting was very successful and informative.

Our thanks go out to Erika Casler for an interesting presentation on and the tour of the RCGC library and reading room. Everyone was impressed with the facilities and the extent of the materials and collections available.

Almost every family found a book or two of interest and were able to check them out for a month (until our next meeting).

The library staff will also try to select books and materials that may relate to a specific meeting topic for everyone to see and refer to for additional information or reference. These books may also be available for loan when properly signed out after the meeting. If these programs are successful, we may be able to continue it at future meetings.

The round table discussions went very well and everyone participated in either presenting a problem or failure or the comments about them. We touched on almost all aspects of water gardening and even discussed many of the materi-

als that we use or new ones that might be worth trying. The discussions also extended to other garden topics.

The concept of this open discussion provided a greater opportunity for member participation and seemed to be a significant learning experience and a great opportunity to get to know and understand one another and their interests better. I hope that it is an idea that you too feel is worth repeating, but possibly using a different topic to keep the information fresh and minimize repetition

Some thoughts from *Flowers & Fins* the Newsletter of the Springfield Watergarden Society to add to your ideas for winter pond preparations. Most of your hardy marginals can be left to winter over in the shallow water were they have been growing. You shouldn't have to move them to deeper water since that normally doesn't happen in their natural habitat and they survive quite nicely. One significant exception to this is Pickeral Rush. It has somewhat tender roots and the survival rate has been better when it is placed toward the bottom of the pond with your lilies and similar plants. Once the ice has left the pond in spring, it can be returned to shallower water to warm up and hopefully start growth a little earlier and more vigorously.

For those who prefer to travel during the winter or may be away for extended periods at that time, you may want to consider using an air pump and one or more air stones to maintain open water. The introduction of the air into the water should increase the oxygen level slightly more than what can be accomplished from the pump moving the

surface water. The air stones will not plug up and will continue to deliver a steady flow throughout the season. However, a mechanical filter might become plugged if it is not properly maintained and this will decrease the amount of circulation as the season continues. It could also minimize the chances of damaging the pump if there was a power-outage and the pond froze more deeply.

The officers and the Board will be working on next year's programs and topics in December and January. If you have any ideas for these future presentations or topics for the newsletter please call Larry Hursh at 473-6276 or e-mail them to lkhursh@aol.com. Similarly, if you have any information or articles that you would like to share through the newsletter, send them to us as above. You can write the article if you would like to help us or you could send the information and we will prepare something from it. Either way, it will offer us additional methods of keeping the newsletters and programs of interest to everyone.

November is an important month for us. As I mentioned last month, it is time for us to accept nominations and volunteers to become officers for the club. The current officers could be extended for another year if re-elected. But, it would be a great service to the club to have additional candidates to prepare for our continuation through the coming years. It is helpful to know that there are interested members who would be willing to train with the current Board and able to step in

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and maintain a type of continuity as we move forward. If you are interested or would like to recommend someone for us to contact, please let us know before November 2nd. We can also accept committed candidates up to the actual election voting.

Our meeting on November 4th will feature your favorite picnic and/or party recipes. Please remember to send or bring a copy of them for the meeting. We hope that we can then share them with others in future newsletters. (You could also bring a small sample for tasting purposes if you wish according to questions and suggestions at last month's meeting. I am sure that the members would greatly appreciate that too.) There will also be a presentation on edible water plants and if the ingredients are still available Sherry Nau may show their preparation and offer tasting samples. The library is checking on the books and other materials that they may have available on edible plants. We also hope to have some handout sheets regarding some edible garden and landscape plant materials. This should be another night for more member participation and a good exchange of useful information to enhance other enjoyment possibilities of your ponds and gardens.

Now is a good time not only to start thinking about your membership renewal but to think of activities and ideas to make this, our 10th year special. One of the suggestions that we received earlier was to possibly contact previous members to attempt to have a special event or reunion that we could invite them to attend. It is a great idea and could provide an opportu-

nity to renew some old friendships. However, it would require significant preparation time and background work. To accomplish this, we would have to start early in 2006 and we would need additional help from members other than just the board. If you agree with this proposal please let us know and if possible volunteer to work with us in putting a plan together. Since this could be a sizeable group, a larger meeting site may be required and we would also appreciate any suggestions that you might have regarding such locations. Contact any of the officers or board members or e-mail us through our website or [lkhursh@aol.com](mailto:lkhursh@aol.com)

The following information from *KOI USA* answers a question that was presented through the club by a non-member seeking help. At the time, we could not offer much help in identifying the problem.

Q: My fish appears to have algae growing on it. Is that normal? Will it kill my fish?

A: That is not algae. It is saprolegnia (or sap) a fresh water fungus that grows in cold water.

Some of the contributing factors to the growth of sap are:

- Stress, overcrowding and excess organic materials
- Handling and damage or removal of mucous coat
- Open wounds and breaks in the skin that provide direct access to unprotected tissue
- Parasites and pathogens that cause wounds and allow bacteria to enter to give sap a foothold on the tissue
- Pollution and water quality issues that can cause irritation of tissues

- Physical damage from spawning and other activities or attacks
- Reduced physiological conditions
- Frequent or larger temperature changes.

The sap fungus can attack fish weakened by any of the above factors and through the suppressed nature of the immune system in cold water and high stress situations. These conditions leave the fish almost defenseless.

Sap doesn't kill the fish directly but it creates an opportunity for a condition known as hemodilution to continue weakening the fish.

"By definition, hemodilution is a decreased concentration of cells and solids in the blood resulting from the gain of fluids from the tissues". The blood loses electrolytes to the point that it is less than life supporting. Sap can then penetrate deeper into the tissue layers allowing water to enter the fish which further dilutes the blood salts. Fish that are grossly infected with sap will often appear lethargic and may lose their equilibrium.

Sap can spread rapidly over the surface of the fish. Sometimes, even superficial damage to the initial tissue layers and especially the gills can be deadly. The more wide-spread the infection becomes, the higher the rate of hemodilution and the greater the risk that the fish will not recover. Quick management of this fungus becomes the key to saving your fish.

If you should be one of the unfortunate ones to have an active infestation of sap develop on your fish or in the pond, the following are the suggested treatments:

Malachite Green (MG) is the best

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treatment for all fungal problems including sap. Baths and dips work exceptionally well and one treatment will usually solve the problem. But, any contributing causes must be treated as well. There are certain cautions that must be observed when using MG. Use only in cooler well aerated water. Read the label carefully and follow all dosage and use instructions. The concentration levels for treatment are too high to be used for a pond-wide treatment to be effective. MG is carcinogenic and is banned for use if food fish may be effected in a mixed pond or where an overflow could affect them. Therefore, MG must be used with great care.

Salt is the second best treatment although it is a distant second. Salt in the 0.6 to 1.0% range as a 30 minute or less dip can help to eliminate sap. The caution with this approach is that the higher salt levels may cause more stress than the fish can endure. So carefully check the stability of your fish's general health before performing a high level salt bath treatment.

Formalin is mentioned in the treatment for sap but it is basically ineffective against most molds and fungi. It is suggested more to augment MG or salt treatment to attack any parasites that contributed to the sap attack. The precautions include limiting its use in warm water where it may cause a low oxygen situation to develop. Its toxicity is well known and therefore it must be used with great care. Formalin is not recommended for use where open wounds are present because of the harmful effects that it can have on exposed tissues and cell structures.

Potassium Permanganate (PP) is also one of the better treatments for

sap. The rate at 4 ppm (4 grams per 1000 liters) will eliminate most of the sap. The deeply embedded ones that survive may have to receive a further surface treatment using a paste of PP. The caution with PP is the danger of attempting to use it at all. It is not recommended for use by those inexperienced with it.

As mentioned earlier, sap is usually a secondary invader. Something else may have already become established to allow the sap to take hold. Therefore, when treating a sap affected fish, it is necessary to first control and eliminate the sap and then treat the actual wound site. At this stage the wound site may look somewhat like an ulcer.

These areas, if minor, should be treated with the appropriate wound or open sore medications or topical ointments. When the wounds are more extensive or severe, the advice of a fish veterinarian should be sought and injectable medications may be necessary.

The treatment suggestions for a sap outbreak as well as more details about the problem are available through the [www.koivet.com](http://www.koivet.com) website. Click on the disease and problem section then click articles and then saprolengia-water fungus.

Have you tried taking pictures of your koi? Now more than ever, Koi keepers all around the world are taking better and good quality photos of their precious pets. *KOI USA* offers some good suggestions for taking photos to submit to the magazine for the Koi show review. While you may not be thinking of submitting or having your photos published, the following guidelines may help you take better photos that you will enjoy more. By taking a series of photos from year to year

you can document the growth and color development of your favorite fish.

Taking fish photos

- Use a blue rectangular photo tub
- Shoot in a shady or diffused light area
- Use an external flash with a "Guide Number" of 130 better
- To minimize ripples, the water should be at least 1" above the dorsal fin
- The water should be free of bubbles and debris
- Allow any ripples to settle down
- Wait for the Koi to swim toward you. You may need to shoot slightly in advance of the desired position to allow for possible shutter delay. (the time delay between pressing the release and the shutter movement.)
- Shoot at a 45 degree angle to get a good view of the head and face of the fish
- Continually monitor your focus. Double check your photos (digital) before releasing the fish from the photo tub. There should be no glare or ripples. Ideally, the fish should be centered with both pectoral fins extended to the side. The eyes should be in sharp focus but the tip of the tail may be slightly blurred or softly focused.
- If the shutter delay seems excessive or is causing you problems getting the shot you desire, try turning off the auto focus feature and preset your focus on the area where you would like to shoot. Make sure that you have fresh batteries in

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the camera and flash to achieve the fastest cycle time

- Set your camera to the optimum settings for best quality, depth of field and image size.

Hopefully, this will help you to take the type of shots that you had envisioned all along. Once you have practiced and perfected these techniques on the isolated koi in a tub, you could move on to trying to

accomplish similar results with photos of the fish in your pond. It may be slightly more difficult to establish all of the guidelines within the pond setting, but the ones that you can control will help you to document how you see and enjoy them on a regular basis. By using these techniques, you should also be able to take better photos of the pond. You should be able to minimize surface glare and reflections by shooting at an angle

to the surface. You can somewhat attain the shade or diffused light concept by taking the photos during the softer light of early morning or evening sunlight.



## 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

We meet in a very friendly atmosphere at 7:00 pm, the first

## 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.

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](http://www.ggw.org/gvpakc)

## Calendar of Events

**November 4, 2005:** Recipe and cooking information exchange (possible demonstration and tasting) Election of officers.

**November 11, 2005:** NFKPC meeting

**December 9, 2005:** Pot Luck Christmas Party and Pond Jeopardy Game. We are looking forward to celebrating the end of a successful year and the start of our tenth anniversary year.

**December 9, 2005:** NFKPC Christmas Party

**January 6, 2006:** There will be no GVPAKC meeting this month.

**February 3, 2006:** This will be the start-up meeting for our tenth year. We welcome your suggestions for programs to make this a memorable year.

**Please remember our commitment as a group to help support NFKPC at the AKCA Seminar in Buffalo, June 22-25, 2006**

**This is a first for our area and is a great opportunity to see great Koi and to learn more about them from the experts.**

**Plan your schedules now, so that we can not only staff the booksales area but attend some of the programs too.**

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