



Genesee Valley Pond & Koi Club Newsletter

Volume 9 Issue 9

September, 2005

GVPAKC Pond Tour – 2005 Jerry and Audrey Behlau’s Florida Fantasy



With just one step into Jerry and Audrey’s garden, visitors leave urban Rochester behind and walk into an enchanting Florida fantasy. Tucked under the graceful branches of a large willow tree, surprises greet visitors as they follow a wooden boardwalk: three ponds, one filled with young Wood Duck ducklings, beautiful Koi, and catfish; a lovely and varied collection of lush green and blooming plants; friendly tropical birds and Red-golden Pheasants with their brilliant plumage; and one not so brilliant, but impressive large iguana named “Iggy,” who lords over all from his lofty perch. This bit of southern comfort is one of the best-kept secrets in Rochester.

Jerry and Audrey are members of a wild bird preservation group and raise ducklings to be released into their native habitat. They also dream of returning some day to Florida.

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

It is very difficult to figure out where and how to start this month's newsletter. I obviously want to start with an overview of the pond tour and how successful we think it was. However, that is almost like patting ourselves on the back. In reality, it is and was the result of everyone helping to bring it together and making it so enjoyable for everyone who participated. Statistically, we had 49 people that were part of the tour in one way or another. We also enjoyed sharing our experiences and joy of ponding, the tour and our new friends with 38 people relaxing through the picnic at the end of the tour.

Our thanks go out to all of the members who supported and joined us or opened their ponds for us, to the non-members who were so gracious in opening their ponds and gardens too and to those who recruited their friends or neighbors to also share their endeavors with us. Without this extra support and enthusiasm I'm positive that we would have had a far less significant and comprehensive tour.

This tour had a little something for everyone. We had large ponds and smaller ones too. There were sunny and contrary to some theories shady ones. We were treated to various types of supporting wildlife from native frogs, turtles and toads to various exotic birds. The discussions and techniques that we saw for breeding Koi and Bristol Tail Shubunkins were a significant bonus. Thank you all and we look forward to seeing you again at future events.

The future should hold some interesting topics and events. As noted on the calendar page, we will not meet on the first Friday of September due to the holiday weekend.

We will however, meet on September 9, which is the second Friday. Bob Wheeler will show photos from this year's NFKPC pond tour. Also, if time permits, we can discuss the information and possibly respond to questions from this newsletter regarding the main topic on invasive species.

In October, we would like to have a round table discussion on "what works for me". Like gardening in general, there are many variations in water gardening that can bend the rules and still work well. We hope review past or present experiences-- their successes or failures and possibly recommendations for additional experiments and trials for next year. We must also select or solicit candidates for the November election of officers and board members. We will also have a representative from RCGC library to explain the newly proposed book loan for resident club members. We will have the opportunity to tour the library and learn how their system works.

In November, we will attempt to follow through on a suggestion from the picnic. We will see if we can obtain some of the recipes from the picnic and possibly attempt to prepare something that we can enjoy at the break. We will be voting for the officers for 2006 and start planning for our 10th anniversary year. There is also the possibility of a guest speaker.

December will be our usual pot -luck Christmas Party and Pond Jeopardy game.

JoAnne James and Kathy Hursh

have read and reviewed the galley copy of "Royal Koi And Kindred Spirits" by Richard Wainwright. While the book is not so much about Koi as it is about life experiences, they found it to be a very touching story and were very enthusiastic about it. They have sent their reports to the author and received a personal thank you from him. If any one else is interested in reading this story, we should have the copy available at the meeting.

We will also have copies of the *Bog Gravel Filtration* article from the Water Garden Journal that was the basis for last month's presentation on this new approach to pond filtration. If you are unable to attend the meeting but, are interested in receiving a copy, please call 473-6276 or e-mail me lkhursh@aol.com and we will send a copy to you.

As mentioned earlier in the newsletter, the RCGC is anticipating making some changes in their library procedures to encourage and increase use of the library. For resident clubs of RCGC, they will, with advance notice, have available a selection of books or materials on the monthly topic that they may have for member review at the meeting. Members could then sign out any books of interest for a four week term versus the usual three week period. This would allow members to have the book until the next meeting without having to make a separate trip to return it. We hope to have a member of the library staff available to give us a tour of the library and explain the organizational methods that they have developed to facilitate retrieval.

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ing materials easier.

I have had two calls from people outside of the club who have larger Koi for sale. If you are interested, you can contact them on your own to check on their continued availability, size, condition etc.

The more local one is Debra Kuhs of Webster who had 4 and possibly more larger Koi (12-14") that have outgrown her 1000 gallon pond. She would prefer that you contact her by e-mail dlk1950@yahoo.com (if you do not have e-mail you can call 671-2644).

The other contact is Marsha in Orchard Park. They are closing their pond and are selling their Koi, a bubble bead filter sized for a 10,000 gallon pond and a winter storage tank approximately 13'x3'x3'. She had a number of large Koi (16-18") some of which are Japanese. She can be reached by phone (716) 649-1387 or by e-mail mpdp@localnet.com.

A recent issue of Native Plants devoted most of the issue to various aspects of invasive plants. The information was quite good and some of the facts were very interesting and alarming. Therefore, I thought that it would be appropriate to share of those thoughts with you.

We have often mentioned the problem with invasive water plants but the problem is much larger and more wide spread than just the water garden or boggy plant materials with which we are so familiar.

There are an estimated 4,000 non-native plants in this country at the present time. Of these, botanists feel that 900 have already become invasive. As our desire for different or exotic plants is continuing to increase, these numbers will also continue to rise.

The definition that was used to give meaning to these projections is as follows. An exotic invasive plant is any plant that has been moved, intentionally or accidentally, from its native place to a new location where it has aggressively colonized the new territory, is capable of driving native species to extinction in that area, can disrupt the functioning of the native ecosystems and may dramatically change the composition and natural character of a native landscape.

One study back in 1998 indicated that, already at that time, the introduction of invasive species was the second leading cause, after habitat loss, of species extinction in the United States. Unfortunately, more than half of America's invasive plants arrived here as planned garden or horticultural introductions. On the positive side, the great majority of exotic plants grown in gardens are not invasive nor are they likely to become invasive. Therefore, we are still able to try and enjoy many new species. They do recommend that any plant that appears to be becoming invasive in your garden or area should be removed and destroyed as a first step in minimizing any future problem(s).

While we are somewhat protected from some plant invasions by our cold winters, we must be aware of what is happening in other areas, especially as we share our plants with others or as we move plants when we relocate.

Some more recent concerns list plants with which we are familiar. Heavenly bamboo (*Nandina domestica*) as invasive in some areas of Texas, purple fountain grass (*Penisetum* spp) is invading natural ecosystems in the arid West and

Mexican petunia (*Ruellia brittoniana*) is invasive throughout the Southeast. That is why there are many restrictions regarding the movement of plant materials across state borders.

There have been recent discussions where various groups are advocating the screening of plants for their invasive potential before they could be released to the nursery trade for distribution to public and private gardens. Some of the criteria for a screening technique might include: its invasiveness elsewhere, does it already have a wide geographic distribution, does it produce copious quantities of viable seed, is it easily spread by bird or animal dispersal or can it spread vegetatively or any combination of the above concerns.

There is more information available regarding noxious weeds and invasive plants on the internet. The Federal Noxious Weeds list can be accessed through the USDA site <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/permits/fnws-by-cat-e.html>. Your state noxious weed list should also be linked to the USDA web page noted above. Additional sites that might be of interest are: Invasive Plants of the Northeast at <http://arboretum.conncoll.edu/salt/invasives.html> and The Nature Conservancy: Weeds <http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu> The Alien Plant Working Group (APWG) focuses on invasive plants that affect natural areas and ecosystems throughout the United States. Their main web-based project, *Weeds Gone Wild: Alien Plant Invaders of Natural Areas* is available through the National Park Service site www.nps.gov/plants/alien. In addition to providing background and current status information on the

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threat and impact of invasives, it has worldwide links to invasive species specialists. It also explores techniques for managing them in their illustrated fact sheets. The database includes over 1140 identified invasive species.

There is also a manual for quick field identification of invasive plants and their look-alikes. It is *The Weed Buster's Handbook: Techniques for Managing Invasive Plants of Natural Areas (Mid-Atlantic Region)* Many of the control recommendations of this manual are based on the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques.

After researching some of these sources, suppose you discover that you are growing an invasive plant in your garden. The obvious choice should be to properly dispose of it. Then you wonder what you could use to fill the void or cover the bare spot. The substitute may well be a similar but non-invasive version of the same or similar plant or perhaps an even better choice is a nursery propagated native plant. Native plants can be an excellent choice. Since many of them are also being threatened with extinction by loss of natural habitat, you could be minimizing the possible loss of another species. They have proven their adaptability to the vagaries of your area and success and survival should be more reliable.

Notes: * Ecologists usually refer to a native or indigenous plant of North America as those that were growing wild in a given locale prior to European settlement usually stated as approximately 1500.

* A naturalized plant is a non-native plant species that has escaped into the wild and is growing and reproducing outside of cultiva-

tion and without human assistance.

* Botanists also refer to naturalized species as an introduced species because, whether brought in intentionally or accidentally, it has been introduced to and survived in the native flora and ecosystem.

The invasiveness of these naturalized or introduced species in their new habitats can vary widely, depending on the species, the place and the microclimate and therefore may change from state to state or within regions of a given area.

Some examples of exchange or substitution of natives for invasives are: Mexican Petunia (*Ruellia brittoniana*) which is invasive in the Southeast can be replaced with the Carolina wild petunia (*Ruellia caroliniensis*) and there are other native wild petunias that occur in various portions of the country that would also be suitable alternatives. Scarlet milkweed (*Asclepias curassavica*) which is gradually becoming more invasive can be replaced with the more common Butterfly weed (*asclepias tuberosa*) (If attracting butterflies is one of your goals in maintaining these plants, the substitutes could include rudbeckia, coreopsis and liatris sp.)

A few of the more common plants that are considered invasive in our area are: Queen Anne's Lace (*Daucus carota*), Blue Chicory (*Cicorium intybus*) and the orange daylily (*Hemerocallis fulva*). We have all grown up with these plants and probably enjoyed them as children. The fact that we see them so frequently along the roadside and in fields, has changed them from more of a nuisance plant to the invasive category. However, each one of them originally evolved on distant continents. They have probably been here for so long that

the method of their arrival is probably lost. They could have been imported as novelties or been stowaways in cargo or baggage or on clothing. They have adapted well and were considered by many of us as we were growing up as wildflowers or weeds.

There are approximately 22,000 native plant species in North America and 4,000 alien plant species with established wild populations. This indicates that about 18% of our cultivated floral species are non-native and the percentage inches up with each new introduction of an alien ornamental.

This may also change because there are nearly 5,000 native species that are now considered to be at risk. Fortunately, since this is a problem that we have created, we should be able to improve the situation with care and understanding. It is one that we can gradually turn around.

Another concern regarding invasives is their impact on the visual or aesthetic appeal of a native landscape. Many of the invasives include characteristic variations of textures, colors, heights or even profiles that may seem oddly out of place or proportion to the view of adjacent or remaining native area. This creates what is sometimes referred to as the "visual ecology" of a region. In the worst case scenario, these invasives, if aggressive enough, create a monospecific stand that overruns or conceals the appreciation of the native flora. While this may be less intense and urgent than the other invasive problems, only time will tell how the loss of an area's visual recognition may affect our identification and association to the area.



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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

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

www.ggw.org/gvpakc

Calendar of Events

September 2, 2005: NO MEETING today due to the holiday weekend.

September 9, 2005: Meeting Slide presentation of photos from NFKPC pond tour courtesy of Bob & Yvonne Wheeler and a discussion on invasive species information from this newsletter.

September 9, 2005: NFKPC meeting

October 7, 2005: Round table discussion "What works for me", library presentation and nomination or volunteering of candidates for November elections.

October 14, 2005: NFKPC meeting

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

November 11, 2005: NFKPC meeting

December 2, 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.

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