Care and Propagation of Water Plants....

Steve Hogenmiller is the Horticulture Supervisor at Tower Grove Park. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture from New Mexico State University. He majored in Horticulture with an emphasis on ornamental plants and greenhouse production and he was awarded the Undergraduate of the Year award in 2003 from the American Society of Horticulture Science and graduated with honors.

After working at Fantastic Gardens of New Mexico, he moved back to St. Louis to work at Tower Park for several years, then went to Glorious Gardens Inc for five years, and back to Tower Grove Park last year. He is in charge of Arboriculture and Horticulture crews maintaining, planting and designing Tower Grove Park trees, shrubs, display beds and lily ponds.

Don’t Miss This!

What: Care and Propagation of Water Plants
Where: Missouri Botanical Garden, Ridgway Center, Beaumont Room
When: Tuesday, March 21st, at 7 p.m.
Who: Steve Hogenmiller from Tower Grove Park

Another question was, "When should we start pond cleanouts?" John Nies answered, "As soon as possible." He explained that he removes the fish to a holding tank filled with water from the pond. He then cleans the pond and refills it with fresh water treated with dechlorinator that also removes chloramines. I would also suggest, while the fish are in the holding tank, to add a potassium permanganate, treatment to your pond to kill parasites. This will also remove any dissolved organics to produce crystal clear water. Do not move your fish back into the pond until the PP is neutralized with hydrogen peroxide. The PP turns the water purple and is complete when the color is gone. This is very effective, but must be done properly.

Call me for more specific information on this procedure. Please text me your koi - pond related questions.

Rick Jokerst  AKCA/KoiUSA Representative
314-368-2652 or rickjokerst@gmail.com

Steve Hogenmiller

TEXT THE REP

At our last general meeting in February, the question was asked again, "Should we feed our fish during these warmer days? They look so hungry!" The answer is still, "NO, NO, NO!" Do not feed your fish until the water and air temperatures are consistently in the upper 50's. You will be doing more potential harm than good. Their metabolism is still sluggish and cannot process food. Remember, the nitrifying bacteria that handles the ammonia doesn't wake up until the water temperatures are in the 60's. There are algae and microorganisms in the pond for the fish to graze on.
In February, Pat Tosie and I attended the monthly MPKS (Midwest Pond and Koi Society) meeting in Chicago. The speaker was Myron Kloubec of Kloubec Koi Farm in Amana, Iowa. His talk was titled "How To Identify If Something Is Wrong With Your Koi and What To Do About It". I thought I would share a synopsis of his talk and add a little insight.

Koi, like most animals, will exhibit behavioral changes if something is wrong. The key is to identify and address the problem early. Some warning signs include loss of appetite, clamped fins, lying on the pond bottom, the koi congregating at the waterfall (oxygen problem), flashing (rubbing themselves on rocks or sides of pond), jumping, darting around the pond, or seeing bumps, sores, foggy eyes, lesions or frayed fins. These are signs of possible issues. Koi are pretty hardy if kept in reasonably good conditions and you are doing your routine pond maintenance.

If you witness any behavioral or visible changes, what do you do? The first step is careful observation. Second is to then consider what may have affected your pond in the last several days. Were there pump issues, someone doing maintenance in your pond without disinfecting their equipment or waders, weather issues, new fish from unreliable sources, not quarantining or properly treating those fish before adding them to your pond or birds and frogs bringing in parasites? Third should be doing a water change and checking the parameters of the water in the pond. Fourth could be salting your pond with non-ionized solar salt, up to a 3% concentration, to kill most parasites and not affect the plants. If only a small number of fish seem affected, it is recommended to remove them from your pond to quarantine and treat them.

If you have questions, please call me or your local pond retailer. We will be happy to help you.

Happy Pondering, Rick Jokerst
AKCA/KoiUSA Representative
314-368-2652 or rickjokerst@gmail.com
Greetings, Folks!

Well, luck was not with us last month! I got a call about noon on the day of the meeting from our speaker Bryan Prather who was supposed to talk to us about “The Birds of Winter.” Poor Bryan was sick and could not make the meeting! I tried at the last minute to round up something but to no avail. We ended up with a question and answer session that went well.

I’ve rescheduled Bryan for our October meeting. Hopefully he’ll be healthy then! That may work out better schedule-wise as we will be heading into winter.

This month we have Steve Hogenmiller from Tower Grove Park coming to advise us on the “Care and Propagation of Water Plants.” It should be entertaining as well as informative. We will also be giving Steve a check to help Tower Grove Park as part of our community support program. I hope you will all be able to attend.

Next month we have our annual plant auction. I’m trying to get a commentator to provide information on the offerings but so far haven’t had a lot of luck. I’ll keep trying. In May, we have “Dr. Bob” (Bob Passovoy) from Chicago coming to talk about pond water chemistry. While the subject can get quite detailed I’ve ask Dr. Bob to gear the talk toward “practical chemistry for the average pond owner,” in other words give us some detail on what is going on in our ponds but not “water” our eyes!

I’m working to fill in the remaining gaps in the schedule. I’ve got Mike Hernandez (inventor of “Tomigai” fish food) for the banquet. He’s an expert on a wide variety of topics. Right now, we are planning on hearing how he selects champion koi for showing.

Well folks, Joan Ziskind has helped to proof read and figure the route in our annual Pond-O-Rama ticket booklets and our Water Word Newsletter. She’s done an excellent job, but she’s informed us that this will be her last year in that capacity. Anyone out there interested in taking over?

Ok, folks I guess I’ll get back to my pond project. As you may recall last time I mentioned the problems I had in keeping the perimeter rocks on the pond ledge and keeping them from falling in. After several failed attempts at stabilizing them I realized I needed a more solid foundation. What I figured out was that adding interlocked landscaping stones to the pond edge provided a stable platform on which to work. The main problem I had with this was that I had to lift up the liner and underlying felt to accomplish this. It was a little tricky keeping pond water from flowing back into the gap but I managed to handle it. One interesting side-light was I acquired a digging mascot “Samantha” a two-foot garter snake who seemed to take a liking to the cool earth between the liner and the dirt. Although she didn’t show up every day I did encounter her on at least three occasions and learned to run a stick between the liner and earth before putting my hand in the groove. While she behaved herself, I cautioned her against eating my frogs and warned her about Sherry, the snake-hating lady of the house!

Well enough for this month!
Membership meetings in 2017 will be held on the dates and at the locations listed below between 7 and 9 p.m. Meetings will be held at the Missouri Botanical Garden Ridgway Center, Beaumont Room, unless otherwise noted. They are on the third Tuesday of every month unless otherwise noted.

March 21—Care and Propagation of Water Plants—by Steve Hogenmiller from Tower Grove

April 18—Plant Auction

May 16—Water Quality for a Koi Show by Bob Passavoy from MPKS CBEC Building Rm 125

June 13—Pond-O-Rama Host Meeting at the CBEC Building Rm 125

June 20—June 24-25—Pond-O-Rama

July 18—

August—Annual Banquet Mike Hernandez—Inventor of “Tomigai” Fish Food.

September 19—

October 17—Birds of Fall & Winter Bryan Layton Prather of Wild Birds Unlimited

November 14—Annual Potluck & Elections Pot luck dinner and election of officers. Nominations will be accepted for the positions of vice president and treasurer to serve two-year terms beginning in January 2018.

Looking for more information about pond building, plants or fish care? Visit our website, www.slwgs.org Check out our “Articles of Interest” section and “Links We Like” for help.

NATIONAL KOI SHOW & POND TOUR CALENDAR

April 1-2—ZNA NorCal National Koi Show, San Jose, CA www.znanorcal.info

May 6-7—Lone Star Koi Club’s Annual Water Garden and Pond Tour, Houston, TX www.lonestarkoi.com
Have You Seen These Water Lilies Yet?

The Violicious perennial waterlily is a newly registered intersubgeneric waterlily. It is the result of hybridization of an annual waterlily and a perennial (hardy) waterlily. This type of hybrid was not even thought about a few years ago. Violicious is a great bloomer starting out between a blueberry or amethyst color and each day getting a little lighter in intensity. One plant will have several colors of purple at any given time. The flowers are 5” to 7” with lemon to apricot centers and purple tipped stamens. The flowers open during the day and will have a light tropical scent. The overall plant is medium-sized with bronze pads which will turn to a nice dark glossy green. What makes this purple perennial waterlily so special is the fact that blooms so much more than any other purple perennial Lily on the market.

Citrus Twist perennial (hardy) waterlily is a beautiful hybrid with flower petals that start off pale yellow and change to pink in the center. The stamens and anthers are bright yellow, and they stand out against the pink center petals. Sometimes the center petals will have crinkle or twist to them, thus the name Citrus Twist. The leaves are green with dark red to purple mottling. This gives this lily a unique look to the leaf. Citrus Twist is an excellent bloomer and will work in any size pond.

Ruby Star is a perennial (hardy) waterlily really known for its abundance of flowers. The star-shaped flowers are very vibrant ruby red color. The plant will stay fairly small covering just under 2 feet of water surface. Ruby star will work in any size pond. Looks great even in a tub or patio garden. The pads are a nice green color.

Check with are advertisers to see who will be selling them. I was told these lilies will be available by pre-ordering and paying for them before hand. Only one of our advertisers will be allowed to sell them here in Missouri. So call around or better yet stop by. You may find something you cannot live without.
Water Word is published by the St. Louis Water Gardening Society 10 times annually, and is distributed to all members. The newsletter contains information about water gardening and fish-keeping, as well as information about SLWGS meetings and activities. Contributions of articles and photos are welcome and should be sent to the Water Word editor listed below. Documents should be in common text formats, and photos should be in high resolution (300 dpi or higher) jpeg format. The deadline for submissions is the first of each month.

Information about the Society, including how to join, can be found at our website, www.slwgs.org or from any of the officers and board members listed:

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Message from Pond-O-Rama Chairs - Ginny & Bob

A huge thank you to all of our members, contractors, and retailers who volunteered to be a host on our 17th Annual Pond-O-Rama this year, June 24th and June 25th.

YOU ARE THE BEST!

With so many new water features and some hosts that haven’t been on for a few years, it will be awesome! More information will be forthcoming! The ticket hotline 314-995-2988 is up and running with ticket seller info. Please support our ticket sellers. They are wonderful! Tickets will be available in early May. We are currently coordinating the host information, directions, and maps for the tour. Thanks to Joan and Mary who do a phenomenal job of editing.

The Pond-O-Rama committee is always looking for assistance in writing, editing, ticket seller contacts, etc. Let us know if you can help out! We’d love to have you!

MEMBERS: Our brochures have been printed and we have lots of them to promote our event. Please consider taking a few and placing them in your favorite restaurant, bar, store, shop, business, or office. We also have posters available to put in strategic locations. We would appreciate you helping us out!

PUBLICITY: is always a great way to promote Pond-O-Rama. If you have a contact at a newspaper, magazine, etc., please contact Ginny (vcmueller16@hotmail.com) with the information. If you would like to be featured in any of the articles on Pond-O-Rama, send Ginny the info and pictures.

NOTE From Editor

***Looking for articles. We’d love to have articles from members about their ponds or what we should be doing in our dirt gardens. Do not be afraid to. Sharing your knowledge is what this club is all about. We learn from others who have the same interests.

Library and Learning Center

The Library and Learning Center would like to remind anybody that may have interesting photos or articles about Koi, pond care or pond construction to please bring them to the next meeting. Photos can be reclaimed at the end of the meeting or donated to the library. As mentioned last year, the library has bought a digital photo frame. So if you have a favorite photo of your fish or pond bring it in on a jump drive and it can be added to the photo frame. You can also email them to Katie at beezey696@hotmail.com and she can upload them.

Bob Henson (hatt8v92@aol.com)
Ginny Mueller (vcmueller16@hotmail.com)
Isn’t it AMAZING how koi and goldfish go into “dormancy” and not eat for months on end? Then, in spring, once water temperatures warm up, they come back to life. This mesmerizes most folks. Koi and goldfish, and the varieties within each species, are cold blooded meaning that their body temperature is the same temperature as the water.

Spring time is a unique time for all pond fish. Visual inspection of the fish and a simple water test will tell you whether to go left or right.

Testing the water is the single most important step in preventing fish disease and algae problems. Most fish illnesses are a direct result of bad environmental conditions. Detecting bad environmental conditions early is like catching a human disease early in that the illness can be prevented by correcting the environmental problem. Using a quality test strip or a quality master test kit prevents costly fish illness and therefore eliminates costly medications. Most water garden centers offer free water testing services.

Another excellent spring time habit is to add pond salt. Pond salt adds essential electrolytes into the water enhancing the slime coat of fish. The slime coat of koi and goldfish is the equivalent of our immune system. Once the slime coat breaks down, or there is less slime coat production, koi and goldfish become susceptible to parasites, fungal infections, and other diseases. The rule of thumb when adding pond salt is 5-10lbs per thousand gallons of pond water. If you’ve added pond salt in the past, have your pond salt levels tested before additional treatments.

Water changes are an essential part of opening the pond for spring. During summer months, ponds are topped off weekly due to evaporation. In spring, with cooler temperatures, it’s not a common practice to top off the pond or add water unless performing a water change. Water changes replace and refresh essential minerals koi and goldfish need for color, an effective immune system, and growth. Water conditioner is an essential component of a water change as tap water contains chlorine and chloramine metals like copper, zinc, tin, and other trace metals that are toxic to koi and goldfish. It’s not because the pump failed, it’s because the gill function of the fish is ineffective due to water changes and the addition of tap water without using a quality water conditioner. Koi TLC is an all-natural water conditioner made from plant material that neutralizes all metals within tap water. Testing pond water, using the proper medications, and a high quality water conditioner will ensure the fruits of labor during winter months produce dividends in spring months as well as ensure koi and goldfish make it through the summer. After all, we all name our fish…admit it! How uncool would it be if they made it through the hard winter months only to die in the summer?

Cheers to spring

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Time to Renew!
Membership renewals for all St. Louis Water Gardening Society members are due in January. If you have not sent in your dues yet you may make your payment in person at the February meeting, or mail a check to Gail Abernathy, Membership Chairman, using the form at right. Dues are $25 per household for email copy of the newsletter $30 per household for snail mail copy of the newsletter. While non-member guests always are welcome at SLWGS meetings, there are definite benefits to membership. For example, all member household receive two free Pond-O-Rama tickets, a $30 value. In addition, all members receive the regular issues of Water Word, and may participate in a number of special events throughout the year, including tours and field trips that are arranged for members only. Don’t miss out on the fun of 2017.

Send this form with your $25 check for email delivery or a check for $30 for the snail mail version of our Newsletter, payable to the St. Louis Water Gardening Society or SLWGS to:
Gail Abernathy, 10922 Kildare Court, St. Ann, MO 63074
Please print or type clearly

Name(s) (Include Spouse)
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☐ New Membership ☐ Annual renewal (Renewals are due in January)
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Photo of the Month

2016 Pond-O-Rama Host Clampett beautiful water feature