Wildlife in the Garden

Jamie is best known for his expertise on water gardening and water features. He frequently speaks and writes on this subject. However, he started out his career with getting a master’s degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology back in the 70’s. He has considerable experience dealing with wildlife -- both attracting them and discouraging them. He has served as President of the Iowa Trappers Association which he learned and shared information with the experts. For example, he has personally handled thousands of striped skunks not only in his master’s work but in animal damage complaints he handled. He has since become a Lifetime Master Gardener and gardening is another passion he likes to share.

Don’t Miss This!

What: Wildlife in the Garden

Where: Missouri Botanical Garden, CBEC Building, Rm 125
        4651 Shaw Blvd
        Corner of Kingshighway & Shaw

When: Tuesday, February 20, at 7:00 p.m.

Who: Jamie Beyer from IA

Firewitch Dianthus was the Perennial Plant Association’s 2002 Perennial Plant of the Year
KOI POND WARTS

When I was a kid I had warts on my hands. The supposed cause was playing with frogs. There was a man in our town who could cure you of these warts. His name was Luther Walker. He was the school janitor, my school bus driver, and lived in the old school house. Luther had been in World War I, had been shot through his cheek, and a wad of tobacco had stopped the bullet. He wore bib overalls and drove a 1930 Essex. Got the picture? One day I asked Luther if he could cure me of these warts. He looked at the warts, moved his hands over mine and said nothing. In two days all 100 plus warts were gone!

I consider pests, critters that visit our pond, "warts". They are there, not invited, and difficult to remove. Unfortunately, Luther is no longer here, as I would bring him to our pond, have him wave his hand and the herons, raccoons and mink would be gone. So what can we do? Herons...had a few several years ago. I knew they were around as they perched on our garage roof and deposited reminders of their presence. I had heard that herons are very territorial so Carol and I purchased a plastic heron and placed "Herald" by the koi pond. One morning I saw that Herald had two new heron friends. So much for the territory theory! We then stretched fishing line across the edges of the pond. Apparently, herons don't like to wade around fishing line.

Then there were the raccoons. They wiped us out twice. So, I purchased a large "Have-a-Heart" trap. We caught nine raccoons, one cat, one opossum and a chipmunk. Is there any animal unhappier than a large, adult raccoon in a trap or a neighbor with a missing cat? It was obvious there was an endless supply of raccoons and neighbors' cats. The next approach was using "Nite Guard" flashing lights and a motion-activated water spray "Scarecrow". No more raccoons!

Then there are the mink. Fortunately, they have not yet discovered our pond. Mink are excellent swimmers and will visit your pond alone or with other family members. They can wipe out the koi in your pond and rarely leave evidence of damaged fish bodies. Many koi owners will cage their koi in the pond from November to March. Thus, your koi investment is protected during this time when mink are more active. They mostly come to our ponds when the streams are down, and their food supply is low.

So, what are our options with the visiting mink? We can trap these clever predators. Then what do you do with them? Start a business of raising mink for fun and profit? Or rehabilitate them as household pets, companions for your cat or dog? Finally, consider a mink whisperer, be the first one in your neighborhood? As you can see there are many options. Have a great experience.

Dan Gravens

Have-a-Heart Trap
Nite Guard Solar Predator Light and Protection
Scarecrow Water Spraying Animal Repeller

Ellen Kloubec
Kloubec Koi Farm
North America’s Premier Breeder of Champion Koi

Effinger Garden Center
Grown Here To Thrive Here
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WATER WORD, February 2018
Presidential Ponderings

Greetings, Folks!

Well, the weather can’t seem to make up its mind! I understand that Punxsutawney Phil (the “National Groundhog”) has seen his shadow and so, reportedly, we’re in for another six weeks of winter. Brrrh! Compared with last winter this one has already been an ugly one. It’s bad enough we’ve seen single digits on the thermometer, but we’ve even ventured into negative territory a couple of times! I’ll be glad when my little buddies resemble living creatures instead of statues!

Well, as to the club: I’m pleased to announce that we have a new “Webmaster!” “Joel Belding” of “Mobile Nerd” has taken the reins from Phyllis Morris. Joel will be updating the look and functionality of our site. We will be exploring new capabilities such as allowing online membership renewals, Pond-O-Rama ticket sales, and other functions. The new site should be up and running possibly as soon as you are reading this. Thanks to Ginny Mueller for obtaining the proposal from Joel, and thanks to Phyllis Morris for her service to the club following the death of George, the webmaster she succeeded.

Also noteworthy is our new sound system. The new one is much more compact than the faithful one that has served us well for the last 10 years. The total weight of the new one is only about 40 pounds and it will easily fit in the trunk of an average car instead of requiring a van like the old system. Our thanks to Steve Metzler for finding and procuring the new equipment and thanks to Beverlee Maschek.

Ok, well we got the new year off with a presentation by Josh Hetley on alternative pond building methods. I thought it would be interesting to look at some of the methods other than the classic liner-based system we’re familiar with.

This month we have Jamie Beyer coming to talk about wildlife and your pond environment. He’ll be talking about how to attract the critters you want and discouraging the critters you don’t.

Well, the winter has been something of a mixed bag here at the house. Sherry and I invested in a new net arrangement this year. It has a border and is made of stretchable material. It has two cross pieces that form an “X” and we have suspended it in the middle from a clothesline-like arrangement. It has worked well. When it snows the net sags but springs back when it melts. No more collapsed PVC frames and broken pipes.

We did; however, have a problem one morning. I got up and looked out the window, only to notice a fountain that was out of place. It seems the cold and ice put a strain on the plumbing and one of the pipe joints separated. Fortunately, MOST of the water was falling back into the pond but it was obvious that we had lost several hundred gallons. I shut off the waterfall pumps (leaving the aerator running) and drained the lines. Several days later things thawed out and so I was able to make repairs. I got the waterfall running again but over a period of a week I was still losing water, so it is shut down until it’s warm enough to do some serious surgery.

Dave Stahre
Membership meetings in 2018 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, on the third Tuesday of every month unless otherwise noted.

**February 20**—Jamie Beyer “Wildlife in the Garden” in the CBEC Building, 4651 Shaw Ave.

**March 20**—Terry Miline, Master Gardener “Revitalize your Garden” in the CBEC Building, 4651 Shaw Ave.

**April 17**—Judy Evans “Plant Auction” in the CBEC Building, 4651 Shaw Ave.

**May 15**—To be Determined, in the CBEC Building, 4651 Shaw Ave.

**June 19**—To be Determined P-O-R Host Meeting at 6 p.m.

**June 23-24**—Pond –O-Rama

**July 17**—To be Determined

**August 21**—Jewel Box

**September 18**—To be Determined, in the CBEC Building, 4651 Shaw Ave.

**October 16**—To be Determined

**November 13**—Annual Potluck & Elections, in the CBEC Building, 4651 Shaw Ave.

Pot luck dinner and election of officers. Nominations will be accepted for the positions of President and Secretary to serve two-year terms beginning in January 2019.
St. Louis Water Garden Society and Northern Midwest Zen Nippon Airinkai (NMZNA) are making plans to bring St. Louis their first koi show. How exciting! Some of the best koi in the Midwest will be on display. NMZNA members reside in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Tennessee, but the show is open to all koi enthusiasts. The dates are September 14-16, 2018. This is a three-day event! Please note your calendar. You won't want to miss it!

Benching (measuring and classifying the koi) of the hobbyists will begin on Friday afternoon as they are placed in the show vats. The koi judging will take place on Saturday morning by certified judges. They will compare fish of similar size in each category based on five criteria: Body Confirmation, Color, Pattern, Quality and Finish. A future article will explain these traits in greater detail. The top winners will then compete for the championship awards, which are presented at the banquet on Saturday evening. On Sunday, there will be a judges’ walk-around, where the major winners will be viewed and discussed. During the show, there will be vendors offering fish, pond and garden related products from across the Midwest.

This will be another prime opportunity to showcase our club to the country. There will be many volunteer opportunities for everyone throughout this festive weekend. Join the fun! Watch for future articles and sign-ups.

Rick Jokerst
AKCA/Koi USA Representative
rickjokerst@gmail.com
cell/314-368-2652

Out on a Limb and need some help? Find resources at www.slwgs.org!

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Design Reflections Koi Ponds
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.

The St. Louis Water Gardening Society is a member of the Associated Koi Clubs of America (AKCA). Visit the association’s website at www.akca.org.

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:

2017 SLWGS Officers and Board Members

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Vice President
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Cathy Schallenberg (618) 920-9104 iwsschall52@aol.com
KOI SHOW CALENDAR

Go see what all the buzz is about! It's fun and educational!
Information provided by Pam Jokerst, Special Events Coordinator.
Contact her at pamjokerst@gmail.com or cell/314-276-9461.

UPCOMING KOI SHOWS FOR 2018

March 3-4  31st Koi Club of San Diego Show--koiclubofsandiego.org-- Del Mar, CA
March 9-11 Central Florida Koi & Goldfish Show--cfks.org--Orlando, FL
March 17-18 44th ZNA Socal Koi Show--znasocal.org--Gardena, CA
April 7-8  11th ZNA Norcal Koi Show--znanorcal.info--San Jose, CA
May 25-27 23rd Greater Louisville Koi and Goldfish Society Show--louisvillekoiclub.com-- KY
June 22-24 26th Midwest Pond & Koi Society Show--mpks.org--Chicago, IL
July 27-29 7th Tri-State ZNA Koi Show--tristatezna.com--New York, N.Y.
July 28-29 38th Northwest Koi & Goldfish Club Show--nwkg.org--Portland, OR
August 3-5 11th Upper Midwest Koi Club Show--uppermidwestkoiclub.org--Minneapolis, MN
August 24-26 7th Michigan Koi & Pond Club Show--mkpc-se.com--Detroit, MI
September 7-9 25th ZNA Potomac Koi Show--znapotomac.org--Washington, D.C.
September 14-16 17th NMZNA Koi Show at SLWGS--nmzna.net--St. Louis, MO

Library Update

The library books have been sorted into two groups. I will alternate bringing the groups to the meetings. A list of all library books will be on the new SLWGS web site when it is completed. A request for a specific title can be made at any time. Please let me know if there are any suggestions for new books.

Betsy Meier  lidodeck@att.net
SLWGS Librarian

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 write. Sharing your knowledge is what this club is all about. We learn from others who have the same interests.
Send this form with your $25 check for email or $30 for snail mail payable to the St. Louis Water Garden Society mail to:

Gail Abernathy, 10922 Killdare 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)

Time to Renew!

Membership renewals for all St. Louis Water Garden 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 left. Dues are $25 or $30 per household. 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 2018.
Many plants that have “lily” as part of their common name (such as daylily, calla lily, lily of the valley or peace lily) are not “true” lilies. True lilies belong to the genus *Lilium*. The bulbs are made of fleshy, overlapping scales with no protective covering.

True lilies have stiff stalks with relatively narrow strap-like leaves from top to bottom. Large, showy flowers develop at the tip of each stem. These flowers may be trumpet shaped, bowl shaped or bell shaped with reflexed petals. They might nod downward, face outward, or turn upward. Many lilies are incredibly fragrant, while others are grown for their unique color or markings. There are short ones, tall ones and many in between. There are early-, mid- and late-season plants so you can have them blooming all summer long.

**Go Deep, No Bones**

So how do you grow something so beautiful? Many gardeners are a bit timid when it comes to growing lilies. According to Becky Heath, of Brent and Becky’s Bulbs, an online retailer at brentandbeckysbulbs.com, “I think the biggest mistake gardeners make with lilies is they don’t plant them deeply enough. Of course, roots form at the base of each bulb, but on lilies, roots also form ‘up the stem,’ which helps to anchor the beautiful, but often heavy, flowerheads and helps keep them from falling over. I don’t love seeing staked plants in the garden! Planting them deeply also helps protect the bulbs from the ‘underground bulb monsters,’ because we have found that they often go to whatever is the easiest food to gather. Lilies, in most soil types, ought to be planted at least 8 inches deep – in light soils, they can go even 10 inches deep. If it’s impossible to plant that deeply, just build up the soil on top of the bulb once it’s planted!”

Becky also notes, “Don’t put bonemeal in the hole, because it isn’t as nutritious as it was during our parents’ time, and it attracts rodents and dogs, who love to dig up the bulbs searching for the ‘bones’!” She suggests using a bulb fertilizer such as Bulb-Tone when planting, and in the spring use a phosphorus-rich formula such as 5-10-10.
Inside this edition:
Wildlife in the Garden ............. Page 1

Also Inside:
Koi Pond Warts .......................... Page 2
Presidential Ponderings .................. Page 3
SLWGS Calendar of Events ............ Page 4
What can you see & do at SLWGS Koi Show .......................... Page 5
2018 SLWGS Officers and Board Members .......................... Page 6
Koi Show Calendar .......................... Page 7
Library Update .......................... Page 7
Note From Editor .......................... Page 7
Renewal Form .......................... Page 8
Lilies .......................... Page 9

Photo of the Month

Look at this beauty “Audacious Siberan Iris” Wouldn’t this look gorgeous by your pond?