



# The Water Spout

## Capital Area Pond & Water Gardening Society Newsletter March, 2005

Capital Area Pond & Water Gardening Society, Founded June 1993  
Best website on the web... [www.capwgs.org](http://www.capwgs.org) ... go there!

### APRIL MEETING

#### EARTH DAY



**LOCATION:** Downtown Baton Rouge – North Blvd near Shaw Bldg  
**MEETING:** Sunday, April 17 at CAPWGS Booth, 2:30 PM

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Saturday, April 16</b> | <b>Sixth Annual Seed and Plant Swap<br/>BREC Botanic Garden – Independence Park, 9:00 AM – 12:00 Noon</b>    |
| <b>Sunday, April 17</b>   | <b>Baton Rouge Earth Day, 7:00 AM - 8:30 PM, Meeting 2:30 PM<br/>Downtown Baton Rouge on North Boulevard</b> |

### OFFICERS

**President:** Margaret Mercier  
(225) 751-2293 (h) (225) 266-3590 (cell)  
(800) 878-4848 (fax)  
[mmercier@louisiana.com](mailto:mmercier@louisiana.com)

**Vice-President:** James Carter  
(225) 664-3487 (h & w)  
No email

**Secretary:** Sandi Bordelon  
(225) 774-9342

**Treasurer:** Lance Beecher  
(225) 769-0253 (h)  
[lancebeecher@bellsouth.net](mailto:lancebeecher@bellsouth.net)

## Capital Area Pond and Water Gardening Society Minutes for the March 2005 Meeting

Our March meeting was held on Sunday, the 20<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 at the AG Center during the LSU-AG Spring Garden Show, March 19 and 20<sup>th</sup>. It was a great show and I think everyone who attended probably left with their mouths watering or green thumbs itching.

Margaret Mercier called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for coming. She thanked James Carter for donating about 135 Koi for the club to sell. James Carter, Lance Beecher, and Margaret Mercier set up the display.

Margaret welcomed Andrea Bennett back. She had knee surgery recently but is doing fine now, but she is having a pond problem: her waterfall is collapsing. A tentative date for pond society members to help restore the waterfall was discussed, but a definite date has not been set. Discussions at recent meetings included the suggestion that we help pond society members with their pond projects in addition to our community projects. Members and community friends are encouraged to come and help with all of our projects.

Buzz and Alice Werline volunteered for the "booth watch" on Saturday and donated plants to sell. They also brought a poster of photos of the construction of their pond from beginning to end. It was a great example of the fact that you can have a great water garden without professionals doing it. Buzz and Alice joined last year before they started their pond in order to take advantage of club members' advice and suggestions and they have accomplished a wonderful water garden with a waterfall.

We also welcomed a new member, David Taylor, who joined last month. We look forward to seeing David at all future meetings and getting to know him and his family. Edith Ossowski rejoined and we're especially glad to welcome her back. She is going to be moving from Baker to Walker and will have to rebuild her pond. (Actually, she told her husband, Bob, she was going to move her whole yard.)

Margaret reminded us that our April meeting will be held at Earth Day on April 17, downtown on North Blvd. Set up for our backyard habitat begins at 7:30 AM and the festival is from 12:00 Noon till 8:30 PM. Our meeting that day will be at 2:30 PM. Please come and join in the fun of being part of this environmental education event. Our booth will be situated close to the new Shaw Center for the Arts. We will sell fish and plants and welcome all volunteers. If you would like to donate fish or plants, please contact Lance, James, or Margaret. Raffle tickets for a beautiful cypress glider donated by James will also be sold and the drawing will be at Earth Day. Tickets are \$2.00 and are available from Lance or Margaret.

The Botanic Garden at BREC Independence Park will be having their Spring Plant Sale and Gardening Expo on April 2 from 8:00 AM until 2:00 PM. A Pavilion Party will be held April 3 at the Botanic Garden. The proceeds are to be used to build an Iris Pavilion in the center of the Botanic Garden's Louisiana Iris Garden. Margaret said she has been talking to Bill Palmer about the equipment needs for the project of renovating their pond.

On April 16 from 9:00 until 12:00 Noon, The Sixth Annual Earth Day Seed and Plant Swap will be held at the Botanic Garden at Independence Park. For each plant you bring, you can swap for a plant – bring 10 and you get 10. Contact Margaret Mercier, Chairperson, at [mmercier@louisiana.com](mailto:mmercier@louisiana.com) or 225-266-3590 if you would like to contribute plants or staff a Pond Society membership table during this fun event.

We have also registered to participate in the Tomato and Herb Festival, to be held at John Folse's White Oak Plantation on June 12. It is always a treat to visit White Oak Plantation – more on this later.

We had two door prize drawings: Janis and Gerald Bonds won a lovely antique fish planter with plant. Happy and Sam Harris won a LSU-AG Calendar by Dan Gill with tons of garden hints and photos. Congrats to you all.

Members in attendance: Danna Spayde, Charlotte Gray, Janis & Gerald Bonds, Edith Ossowski, Happy & Sam Harris, Margaret & Larry Mercier, James Carter, Betty Klenke, David Taylor, Lowell Tilley, Nellie L. Carter, Andrea Bennett, Keith & Shirley Baker, Sandi Bordelon, Buzz & Alice Werline and Andrea's guest Jody Daigle.

I, Sandi Bordelon, volunteered after being nominated as Secretary and look forward to trying to do the best job possible. Any help, suggestions or general news about you and your family is welcome. We really would like to see more of you at our meetings. Margaret commented that all of our members have a lot to contribute to our club and we want to encourage our members to attend all meetings and events.

Hope to see all of you on Earth Day.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Bordelon

---

### **Light Weights**

Floating candles look nice in a small pond, but sometimes they tend to float to the edge and stay there, where it's hard to see them. You can create "candlesticks" to keep them in place.

You'll need glass votive holders that are flared at the top. Take them to the hardware store and buy some black PVC pipe, slipping the holders into the pipe to make sure they will sit down into the pipe without sliding through it.

Next collect empty whipped topping tubs and a bag of concrete. Measure the depth of the pond and cut the PVC into lengths about ¼" shorter than the depth. Then mix the concrete and fill the tubs, setting one end of a length of PVC in each tub. For stability drop a little cement into the top of each pipe. The concrete flows to the bottom to help steady the candlestick.

When the cement is dry, peel the tubs away and spray paint the cement black so it won't show under water. After the paint dries, set the "candlesticks" in the pond. Slip the votive holders and candles into the tops of the pipes. A long fireplace lighter is used to light the candles easily.

Remove and store when not in use.

From "Reader Tips" in *Garden Gate Magazine*, April, 2004; submitted by reader Lauren Norcross of Massachusetts. Pg. 4.

**Quarantine & Acclimatization**  
**An article by Paula Reynolds**  
**Aquatic Patho-biologist & Epidemiologist**  
**Lincolnshire Fish Health laboratories & Research Centre**

---

### **Prevention is better than cure**

Failing to quarantine newly purchased fish is the major contributing factor in the introduction of disease and parasitic infestations into the Koi pond. Nowadays it is important to isolate all new fish due to the fact that the numbers of Koi being bred and reared intensively are indirectly creating an increased risk of all health problems. An increasing number of Koi-keepers are experiencing high mortalities, or the total loss of their Koi collection due to diseases of all kinds. Koi Herpes Virus (KHV) is a serious disease but Koi-keepers should bear in mind that there are other virulent pathogens that also have the potential to devastate a Koi pond. Quarantine therefore should be regarded as a vital aspect of the hobby and it can be rewarding to observe new Koi closely for several weeks in a tank before introduction to the pond.

### **The wrong word**

The word quarantine creates inaccurate associations due to its use with other animals. In Koi-keeping terms quarantining is the isolation of newly purchased Koi during the phase in which recovery from stress and adaptation to a new environment takes place. This reduces the risk of latent infectious disease being passed on to existing healthy Koi, and lowers the risk of the new fish contracting environmental disease from the pond whilst at their most vulnerable.

### **Risk assessment**

It can help hobbyist's appreciate the risks new Koi pose to existing fish by understanding why disease develops more frequently in recently imported fish. The immune system of Koi is challenged continuously by the various environments in which they live. Intensive fish farming techniques can mean overcrowding and dependence on chemicals to control disease rather than good husbandry at the producing farm. Inadequate preparation by exporters leads to poor conditions during a long plane flight. Once landed in the U.K the Koi take many trips around the distribution network before arriving at the aquatic outlet from which they will be sold to hobbyists. Some Koi experience more stressful events than other fish and some simply cope better. Whilst dealers specializing in Koi quarantine prior to sale the fact remains trade premises are naturally cross-infective no matter how well managed simply because fish live there and new stocks are constantly being introduced.

### **Biological cycles**

We term the settling in period in any new habitat acclimatization and no dealer can complete this long and complex process for the Koi he sells as they still have to be transported into yet another set of conditions after sale which triggers off the process yet again. Now add into this already challenging situation the fact that Koi having been uprooted in many cases repeatedly from environments in which they have started to establish and inevitably interrupted natural life cycles. Growth, development, reproductive potential can all be affected and Koi are vulnerable to parasites and diseases when the immune system is compromised. It is not always disease in the environment itself that fish succumb to. Koi may appear healthy yet carry disease sub-clinically and latent infections can also be triggered by environmental changes. Stress affects Koi internally increasing the level of hormones in circulation, if the level does not decrease as the fish acclimatizes kidney failure can result.

### **The relevance of Temperature**

Whilst temperature is not the only trigger of serious disease it is very influential. Therefore during quarantine gradually raising the water temperature to 68F/ 20C and holding it for a month will fulfill at least the temperature criteria for an outbreak of certain serious diseases including KHV. The potential for more serious health problems during isolation is obviously limitless. Ensure that all equipment for the pond is not shared with the quarantine tank or all you efforts at avoiding cross-infection will be wasted.

### **Companion fish**

A companion fish that has lived in the pond can be housed with the fish in quarantine. If the new fish are carriers not showing signs of disease the companion fish being naive could succumb and the reverse is also true the existing Koi can be carriers of disease that the new fish are vulnerable to. Whilst this practice risks the companion Koi it is still far better than risking the entire pond.

### **Medication during quarantine**

Initially allow the Koi to settle into the quarantine tank observing them to ensure normal behavior and eating patterns. There is no need to use any medications against disease or parasites only intervene with chemicals if the need arises and a genuine health problem materializes. The water should be tested regularly particularly in the case of a new filter system. If flicking is observed this can indicate a parasitic problem if the water is tested free of ammonia and nitrite. Koi normally carry some parasites but the stress of movement is enough to scale up this level. The most common "after-sale" parasite is whitespot often carried sub-clinically, recently moved Koi should be observed for this infection. Resembling a sprinkling of salt on the body whitespot causes lethargy together with loss of appetite and kills if untreated.

### **Statistically speaking**

There is evidence that some Koi travel better and are less stressed on arrival with a lower incidence of health problems when they have lived in larger water volumes. In addition when expertly prepared and packaged for export which is more skilled than

is realized Koi arrive in far better condition. Larger Koi also fare better having the advantage of a more mature immune response whereas small Koi have a lower survival rate. This is not just due to their immaturity but statistically smaller Koi are sold and sadly end up in inadequate environments. All Koi have the same potential to develop disease despite their age, size pedigree, or price tag because the processing they all undergo can initiate health problems. In addition cross-infection with Koi from infected sources is a major factor in the spread of disease and this exposure occurs in all types of trade premises not just retail outlets.

### **Potassium dip instead of quarantine?**

Dipping fish in potassium permanganate is often regarded as an alternative for those without quarantine facilities and this is a myth. No chemical on earth cures all known parasites or diseases and dips can be an additional burden to Koi still stressed by transportation. Dips in potassium permanganate strip the mucus layer, which disadvantages Koi living alongside fish whose mucus layer is intact, parasites and bacteria will find the new Koi a sitting target. Fish often arrive previously treated against parasites and over treatment can be a risk particularly to the gills of newly transported Koi. There are rare instances in which a dip is an option for a diagnosed health problem but no chemical is a substitute for quarantine.

### **My Koi died in quarantine**

The principle of quarantine itself cannot kill fish. If a Koi dies during this period stress is the most likely cause with disease low down on the list of possibilities. Fish that die during quarantine may well have died irrespective of whether quarantined or not. A common fault is the size of the tank, which proves inadequate for the numbers of Koi it houses and larger Koi do need more water volume. If the tank is too restrictive this can increase stress instead of diminishing it. The conditions in the quarantine tank must be good and often the water quality is poor due to low-level filtration bacteria.

### **How long is a piece of string**

There is no real answer to the question how long shall I quarantine as no one can quantify the potential risk carried by any one Koi. Many serious hobbyist's quarantine for a year whilst those opting for the middle of the road approach isolate for three months and those that live dangerously just a few days. Temperature has a major influence on disease development and seasonal changes naturally affect the life cycles of all fish pathogens. For example, the more harmful parasites that threaten the gills are active at spring and summer water temperatures and one month in quarantine during winter in an unheated tank may not be sufficient for such parasites to reveal their presence or even be eradicated by treatment. Disease may not be apparent at low temperatures and if water is heated during isolation this will add to the length of the quarantine period. It may be months before the Koi can be introduced to the pond because of enormous temperature variation. It is vital to ensure that every pond parameter mirrors the quarantine tank before the Koi are introduced to minimize the adaptation the Koi have to experience.

### **Acclimatization**

The process of acclimatization has two distinct phases, the partial acclimatization achieved by floatation and gradual introduction of fish into the water of the quarantine tank or pond in which they will live. Full acclimatization is a slower and far more complex process varying in how long it takes to complete from Koi to Koi.

### **Partial acclimatization**

Partial acclimatization is carried out to minimize stress and Koi are floated in the bag in which they were transported and attention is focused on variations in the parameters of the water the Koi has traveled in compared with the quarantine tank. Water testing kits should be in use and any water chemistry variations such as p. H gradually adjusted by introducing a little tank or pond water into the floating bag. A thermometer ensures Koi are never released until the water temperatures are identical. The length of time this whole procedure takes depends on the initial water temperature and the results of all the water tests, it cannot simply be guessed as 10 minutes because it will vary with air temperature and other factors. Never leave a floating bag unattended especially in hot weather as oxygen levels can drop and always discard the water in the bag when the fish is released never pour it into the tank.

### **What a GAS**

Following the initial introductory phase General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) takes Koi through various internal changes as they get to know their new surroundings. For example, the p. H of both the pond water and the blood in Koi must equalize and the hormone carbonic anhydrase is either produced or withheld in order to maintain this delicate balance. The depth and size of their new pond is measured by sending out electrical impulses and processing the result via the swim bladder. Yet another new environment can be the last straw resulting in ill health or even death if acclimatization fails. For the majority of Koi once health risks are minimized they are ready for life in the pond. This final move must be as stress free as possible the vital factor being how identical the water chemistry, temperature, and general conditions are in both the pond and the tank, thus ensuring this final environmental change is the safest the Koi has ever experienced.

### **It will never happen to me!**

It is not the length of time that Koi are quarantined for that matters it is whether the Koi have fully acclimatized that is the real issue and this naturally varies fish to fish and cannot be quantified into a safe timescale. Quarantine is not foolproof but it does minimize the risk of all health problems. Hobbyists and dealers who dismiss the need for quarantine see health issues from a narrower perspective believing that fish are replaceable if the worst happens. For most Koi-keepers it is a sad experience to lose a whole pond of Koi to disease and the misery is made worse if the fish were family pets for many years. It is my experience that the negative aspects of the hobby are avoidable and those who opt for quarantine get far more satisfaction and pleasure out of keeping Koi.

---

## Internet Interests...

**Best Website on the web. GO THERE!**  
Capital Area Pond & Water Gardening Society  
<http://www.capwgs.org/>

Here are a few of our members favorites...

- Pond keeper Magazine <http://www.pondkeeper.com>
- Water Gardening Magazine Info on disease topics for aquatic animals <http://www.koivet.com>
- National Pond Society <http://www.bandd.net/nps/index.htm>
- Austin Pond Society <http://www.austinpondsociety.org/>
- Stokes Tropicals in New Iberia <http://www.stokestropicals.com/>
- Rare and Exotic Seeds <http://www.seedman.com>
- Big Cat Sanctuary <http://www.yogieandfriends.org>
- Miami Valley Water Garden Society Web Page <http://www.mvwgs.org>
- Pond Pals Tour <http://members.aol.com/marylady/pondpals/pindex.htm>
- Water Gardening Magazine <http://www.watergardening.com>
- Master Garden Products <http://www.mastergardenproducts.com/watergar.htm>
- <http://www.ponddoc.com/>
- [www.gardenlink.com](http://www.gardenlink.com)
- St. Joseph Water Garden Society: [www.sjwatergarden.com](http://www.sjwatergarden.com)

Go to the CAPWGS website for more favorites. If you have a favorite that will benefit other society members, please let us know. Thanks!

To purchase a business card ad space, contact Bridget Hayes 225-275-4698 or [lilypads@capwgs.org](mailto:lilypads@capwgs.org)

**JIMSTONE Co.**  
Custom Supplier of Natural  
Landscape & Building Stone

Phone: (337) 261-5707	Phone: (225) 272-5707
Fax: (337) 261-5330	Fax: (225) 272-5793
1823 Jefferson St.	13751 Florida Blvd.
Lafayette, LA 70501	Baton Rouge, LA 70819
1-888-600-Rock(7625)	Toll Free 1-888-272-9790
<a href="http://www.jimstoneco.com">www.jimstoneco.com</a>	

*Just-A-Swinging*



**Cypress Outdoor Furniture**  
James Carter

37200 Highway 16 • Denham Springs, LA 70706 • (225) 664-3487

**Landscaping & Garden Centers**

CREATIVE & PERSONAL SERVICE  
DESIGN & INSTALLATION  
SINCE 1979



**Harb's Oasis**

SPECIALIZING IN  
RENOVATION LANDSCAPING &  
WATER GARDENS

**Charbel L. Harb, B.L.A.**

13827 Coursey Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70817 (225) 756-2720	38460 Hwy. 42 Prairieville, LA 70769 (225) 744-4813
--	---

**Note from the Editor:** I look forward to serving as your Newsletter editor for this year. Your ideas or any information you would like to add to the newsletter are always welcome. Please contact me at 225 755 2449 or email me at [betty@lakeshoregroup.com](mailto:betty@lakeshoregroup.com).