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*The Newsletter of the  
Pikes Peak Koi and Water Garden Society  
Colorado Springs, Colorado*

## A Peak at Ponds

### April 2026

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Join Us April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
for our  
PPKWGS Club Meeting

Our April Club Meeting will feature  
**Karen Pattist from K.O.I.**  
**Common Problems I See in Ponds**  
And  
**Birgit Landin from the Colorado  
Springs Utilities will speak with us  
about the quality of our water**

Thu, Apr 9, 2026 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Photo by [EJ Li](#) on [Unsplash](#)

While it's still only April, something to keep in mind is that the koi breeding season is coming up. When the water warms up to 65-70 degrees – usually in the May/June months – it's breeding time! By the time koi are around 3 years of age, they are sexually mature and can start to breed. When females are ready to lay their eggs, the males can become aggressive, chasing the females around the pond and headbutting them in an attempt to get the females to lay their eggs. This can be very distressing for the females, who may need a safe place to hide in order to escape the attention of the males.

Once laid, the eggs can be found stuck to any protected thing that is underwater, but usually an underwater plant. After hatching, the little fish – or fry - are vulnerable to being eaten by any number of predators, so they also will need a protected area to grow into a safe size. Koi keepers generally remove the fry from the larger ponds to allow for this safety, or at least provide areas of shallow water that the adult koi cannot access. Once they are large enough to not be eaten by other larger koi, they can be returned to the main pond to join the rest of the fish.

## President's Ponderings

### I Cherish This Time of Year!

After the long quiet of winter dormancy, spring returns at last, and with it one of the most exciting seasons for koi keepers and water gardeners alike. The stillness of the pond begins to stir, plants awaken and send up tender new shoots, and Koi that spent the colder months in slow, deliberate motion once again glide through the water with renewed vitality.



Beneath the surface, fish that have carefully conserved their energy through winter begin to move more freely as the water warms. There is always something special about that first sight of them cruising through the pond again—brilliant flashes of orange, red, white, and gold. After a long winter, I feel a spark of excitement when the fish become active again.

Yet the magic of spring extends far beyond the fish themselves. The pond garden also begins its quiet transformation. Hardy water lilies unfurl their first leaves, marginal plants push upward through the soil, and the edges of the pond gradually soften with fresh greenery. Soon dragonflies will return to patrol the water's surface, frogs may pay their seasonal visits, and the pond will once again become a lively and captivating centerpiece of the garden.

I simply couldn't wait any longer. The winter cover has come off, and the waterfall is running again—and I must say, I love the sound of moving water. There is something deeply satisfying about that gentle cascade, a sure sign that the pond has come back to life.

One of the great joys of belonging to a koi and water gardening club like PPKWGS is sharing these moments with fellow enthusiasts. Every pond is unique, and each season brings its own lessons, discoveries, and ideas worth exchanging.

So as you begin preparing your pond for the months ahead—cleaning filters, trimming plants, and keeping an eye on water temperatures—take a moment to appreciate this annual renewal. The ponding season is just beginning, and the most beautiful days are still to come.

Here's to another season of beautiful fish, thriving plants, and peaceful moments by the water.

Happy Ponding!      Bob Oatman      PPKWGS President      [President@ppwgs.org](mailto:President@ppwgs.org)

### Union Printer Spring Workshop



Join us for our first spring workshop on April 25th at the Union Printers Home!

Whether you're new to ponding or simply eager to refine your skills, our Spring Workshop is the perfect opportunity to learn from experienced members and connect with fellow enthusiasts. We'll be sharing how we re-pot lilies and will happily answer any other pond-related questions you may have.

With nearly 100 lily pots to divide and fertilize, we need all the helping hands we can get! If you can spare a Saturday morning and enjoy great company, we'd love to have you join us.

To participate, visit our website at [ppkwgs.org](http://ppkwgs.org), login, navigate to the Calendar, click on April 25th – Union Printers Spring Workshop, and sign up at the bottom of the page. Signing up is highly recommended—in case of bad weather and rescheduling, we'll notify all registered participants to avoid any unnecessary trips.

Everyone is welcome, and young people with strong backs are especially encouraged to lend a hand! We look forward to seeing you there!

## Cold Water Fungus Among-us

One of the most common ailments we see in our ponds during spring warm-up is the cold-water fungus *Saprolegnia* (SAP). Sap fungus is present in all ponds and is Mother Nature's way of cleaning the water of dead or dying organic matter. In the water, sap looks like fluffy cotton, but out of the water, it looks like a glob of slime. Although it is usually white or grey, it may turn brown or green as algae adheres to the filaments.

It is typically considered a “secondary” invader. Meaning that something else initially violated the integrity of the fish’s protective slime coat, providing direct tissue access for the sap filaments to attach to the fish. Whatever initially exposed the skin or tissue is the “primary” invader. This could be a wound, bacteria, parasites, pathogens, stress, or simply damage to the slime coat due to netting. This is why netting your fish is never recommended, especially in the spring when their slime coat is thin.



However, sap can also be a primary invader. It can flourish down to 37°F which is why it gets the reputation as a “cold water” fungus. When the water is cold, our fish enter a state of hibernation called torpor, and their immune system is greatly suppressed. So, a thin winter protective slime coat or the addition of stress is a green light for the sap to attack.

How do you prevent it from occurring in the spring?

Provide a stress-free environment.

Keep the pond clean of organic debris.

Quickly remove dead or dying fish and excess food.

Proper fish handling (which starts with as little handling as possible).

Eliminate parasites.

How do you cure it?

**Malachite Green (MG):** Dips or baths work exceptionally well. Use only in cooler, well-aerated water. Read the label carefully for instructions and precautions.

**Salt:** This is a distant “second best” treatment to MG. A 30-minute or less bath at .6 to 1.0% can help eliminate sap.

**Potassium Permanganate:** In the right hands, PP is one of the better treatments for sap. PP treatments at 4PPM (4g/100 liters) will eliminate most of the sap, but for deeply embedded sap, further surface treatments using a PP paste may be required.

Remember, sap is usually a secondary invader. So, when treating a sap-affected fish, first eliminate the sap from the surface of the fish and then treat the actual wound site, which is most likely starting to look like an ulcer.

Bob Oatman

## Here's a quick spring startup checklist for a koi & water garden pond:

- ◇ **Remove winter debris** (leaves, twigs, sludge from bottom)
- ◇ **Inspect liner and pond edges** for leaks, tears, or shifting rocks
- ◇ **Reconnect and inspect pumps and plumbing**
- ◇ **Clean pump intake and skimmer baskets**
- ◇ **Rinse filter pads and biological media** with pond water (not tap water)
- ◇ **Restart filtration system and waterfall**
- ◇ **Check UV clarifier bulb** and replace if older than two seasons
- ◇ **Test water parameters** (ammonia, nitrite, nitrate, pH, and KH)
- ◇ **Perform a partial water change** (10–25%) if needed
- ◇ **Add beneficial bacteria** to jump-start the biofilter
- ◇ **Divide and repot the aquatic plants** if they outgrew containers
- ◇ **Trim dead plant growth and fertilize** the lilies, marginals, and bog plants
- ◇ **Check aeration system** (air pump, air stones, tubing)
- ◇ **Inspect fish** for winter damage or illness
- ◇ **Begin feeding koi lightly** once water temps are consistently above ~50°F
- ◇ **Install netting if needed** to protect from spring predators (herons, raccoons)
- ◇ **Check outdoor electrical connections and GFCI outlets**
- ◇ **Top off pond** to proper level



## PPKWGS 2026 Plant Sale

This year's [Plant Sale](#) will be on May 30<sup>th</sup> and Bob Oatman has agreed to once again host the sale at his house.

We are looking for someone who would enjoy the challenge of Plant Sale Coordinator. The plant sale is our club's major fundraiser. If you have a good knowledge of water plants, enjoy a challenge, and are willing to lead, WE NEED YOU! Please contact Bob as soon as possible to discuss the position and get any concerns answered. Don't worry, you won't be alone and will have plenty of help.



As you prepare your pond for summer and thin your plants, please save the clippings to donate to our plant sale. And, if you can help us prepare for, set up, and run this event, please go to our plant sale workshop page to [Sign Up for this Event](#). This workshop is on May 29<sup>th</sup> and you are invited to help out at the workshop, attend the plant sale, or both!

# PPKWGS Important Dates for 2026

Board Meetings are held on the Thursday after club meetings.  
You are welcome to join us. Ask any board member for more information.

Special Dates are highlighted and linked to the website

[09 April - 2nd Club Meeting](#)

[25 April - Union Printers Home Spring Workshop](#)

[14 May - 3rd Club Meeting](#)

[16 May - Humane Society Spring Workshop](#)

[28 May - Plant Sale Workshop](#)

[30 May - Plant Sale](#)

[11 June - 4th Club Meeting](#)

[27 June - Koi Re-Homing Auction](#)

[09 July - 5th Club Meeting - Koi Auction and Pizza Party \(6:30PM start time\)](#)

[01-02 Aug - 37th Annual Pond Tour](#)

[13 Aug - 6th Club Meeting](#)

[22 Aug - Evening Soiree](#)

[29 Aug - Union Printer Home Fall Workshop](#)

[10 Sept - 7th Club Meeting](#)

[26 Sept Humane Society Fall Workshop](#)

[08 Oct - 8th & Final Club Meeting - Annual BBQ \(6:30PM start time\)](#)

Board Meetings are held virtually on Thursdays, one week after the regular monthly meeting.

Everyone is welcome at the board meetings. Ask a board member for more information.

## Highlighted Plant of the Month



### Sweet Flag - *Acorus americanus* (Raf.) Raf.

Hardy Marginal

At first glance, a colony of Sweet Flag may resemble cattail (*Typha* spp.) or Blue Flag Iris (*Iris versicolor*). However, its bright green, sword-shaped leaves bearing a greenish-yellow, finger-like structure set it apart from all others.

Most notably, Sweet Flag is easily distinguished by the pleasant fragrance given off when the leaves are broken.

# Club News

## Discover the Convenience of Our Club-Owned Pond Vacs



Introducing the Oase PondoVac 5:

As proud owners of two of these powerful pond vacuums, we're excited to offer them exclusively to our paid club members. If you're planning to clean out your pond and don't have your own pond vac, worry not! Borrow ours, and simplify your pond maintenance. These professional-grade vacuums make the task a breeze.

Do you need a pond vac to help clean out your pond for winter? We have an Oase PondoVac 5 you can borrow for free. To reserve it, reach out to Allen at (719) 574-5176.

## Welcome to our two new Members at Large for 2026!

This year, we have two members who have stepped up to volunteer their energy, brain power, and a couple hours every third Thursday to help out the club. Ellen Simco and Robin Robins have joined the Executive Board to help guide our club into the next two years. It's no small commitment to take on this responsibility, but it is also a fun and exciting role. They now have a voice in the decisions about activities, finances, meeting topics and all the other behind-the-curtain choices that shape our club. Best of Luck and Thanks to Ellen and Robin, as well as the other members of the Board and Coordinators that keep PPKWGS going!

Here it comes...Walking down the street...Getting the funniest looks from...  
Everyone it meets..

### Hey Hey it's the Plant Sale!

It's already April, and it is certain that some or most of us already have plants starting to grow in our ponds. It's never too early to start thinking about how you can help out PPKWGS with one of the biggest fundraisers of the year.



While you're monkeying around in your pond, finding some plants to divide and others to trim, please consider saving those discards or extra plants and donating them to our plant sale.

Also, it's a lot of fun to help prepare for and run the sale. You get to wear the cool green volunteer vests, there are donuts in the morning, and you get the first viewing of all the plants for sale! [Sign Up for this Event.](#)

Plus, the club buys a pizza lunch for all the volunteers who help out!

Where do Koi keep their money?

In the *river bank.*



# Website Spotlight

## This Year We Have Enabled Text Messaging Reminders.

These reminders will be sent to your phone on the following schedule.

Event Reminders will be sent at 7:00 pm the evening before the event.

Club Meeting Reminders will be sent at 12:30 pm the day of the meeting.

We anticipate only sending 2 to 4 text messages per month.

If you want to change your text messaging preference, here's how.

Log into PPKWGS.ORG.

Click on your name in the header and select My Account.

On the My Account page, select Edit Membership Information.

Select the Notification tab, and check or uncheck the receive club reminders by text message.

A mobile phone # must be entered to receive texts.

PPKWGS  
Event Reminder  
Anti-Freeze Party - Begins at  
6:30 PM  
Thu, Feb 26, 2026 6:30 PM  
<https://ppwgs.org/koi/events/event/416>

The screenshot shows the 'My Account' page for Bob Oatman. The user's name is displayed in a purple header. A dropdown menu is open, showing options: Dashboard, My Account, My Contributions, My Profile & Ponds, and Logout. An arrow points to 'My Account'. Below the header, there are tabs for 'Primary Member', 'Secondary Member', 'Notification', 'Privacy', and 'Newsletter'. The 'Notification' tab is selected. Underneath, there are two checkboxes: 'Receive club reminders by email?' (checked) and 'Receive club reminders by text message?' (checked). A 'Save' button is visible at the bottom of the notification settings. An arrow points to the 'Save' button. The 'Name' field is also visible, containing 'Bob Oatman', with an arrow pointing to it. The 'Edit Membership Information' button is also visible.



New Membership Applications and Membership Dues can be submitted via our website at [PPKWGS.ORG](http://PPKWGS.ORG) . Or, you can fill out the Application/Renewal form below and mail it and your payment to the address listed.

Memberships are considered inactive if dues are not paid by May of the current year. (Remember, if you purchased your membership after the pond tour, your membership includes the rest of that year and all of the next year.)

We are meeting in person again, so it should be a great year. Please continue supporting your club by continuing to pay your membership dues.

**Pikes Peak Koi & Water Garden Society  
2026 Membership Application / Renewal**

- DATE \_\_\_\_\_ RENEWAL \_\_\_\_\_ NEW \_\_\_\_\_ (Please write legibly)
- NAME \_\_\_\_\_ NAME \_\_\_\_\_
- EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_
- HOME PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_
- MOBILE PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ MOBILE PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_
- MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_
- CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_
- LIST PROGRAMS that would be of interest to you \_\_\_\_\_
- YES! I would like to help with PLANT SALE \_\_\_\_\_ POND TOUR \_\_\_\_\_ TOUR EXHIBITOR \_\_\_\_\_  
 CLUB MEETINGS \_\_\_\_\_ WORKSHOPS \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER \_\_\_\_\_
- ANNUAL DUES INDIVIDUAL \$10 \_\_\_\_\_ FAMILY \$15 \_\_\_\_\_
- PAY TO: PIKES PEAK KOI & WATER GARDEN SOCIETY
- **MAIL TO:** PPKWGS Membership - c/o Allen Burbidge, 4314 Meadowview Court, Colorado Springs, CO 80918
- Phone: 719-574-5176 Email: [membership@ppkwgs.org](mailto:membership@ppkwgs.org) WEB: [www.ppkwgs.org](http://www.ppkwgs.org)
- For PPWGS Use: Cash \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check \$ \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_ Membership # \_\_\_\_\_ Card Y N

# Peak at Ponds

Is published monthly during the summer months and is the official newsletter of the Pikes Peak Koi & Water Garden Society (PPKWGS)

## PPKWGS Board of Directors for 2026

**President:**

Bob Oatman

[President@ppwgs.org](mailto:President@ppwgs.org)**Vice President:**

Cathy Bulf

[VicePresident@ppwgs.org](mailto:VicePresident@ppwgs.org)**Treasurer:**

Phil Goulding

[Treasurer@ppwgs.org](mailto:Treasurer@ppwgs.org)**Secretary:**

Brenda Walth

[Secretary@ppwgs.org](mailto:Secretary@ppwgs.org)**Member at Large:**

Allen Burbidge

[Memberatlarge@ppwgs.org](mailto:Memberatlarge@ppwgs.org)

Ellen Simco

[Memberatlarge@ppwgs.org](mailto:Memberatlarge@ppwgs.org)

Nicholas Simco

[Memberatlarge@ppwgs.org](mailto:Memberatlarge@ppwgs.org)

Robin Robbins

[Memberatlarge@ppwgs.org](mailto:Memberatlarge@ppwgs.org)

## PPKWGS Coordinators

**Fund Raiser:**

Allen Burbidge

**Refreshments:**

Robin Robbins

**Membership:**

Allen Burbidge

**Door Prizes:**

Allen &amp; Linda Burbidge

**Koi Food Buy:**

Phil Goulding

**Rehoming Auction:**

TBD

**Plant Sale:**

TBD

**Koi Auction:**

TBD

**Pond Tour:**

TBD

**Webmaster:**

Bob Oatman

**Newsletter Editor**

Rachel Lentz

**Social Media Coordinator:** Jonah Macaspac

## Peak at Ponds Submissions

The deadline for contributions to the Newsletter is the **20th day of the month** prior to distribution. Please submit all articles for publication in the newsletter via email to:

[editor@ppwgs.org](mailto:editor@ppwgs.org)

Your contributions are always welcome and encouraged. Editing of your submission may occur as content is reviewed and as space permits.

Spring is Here, Let the Water Flow!  
Justin and Kendra French's waterfall

