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

A Peak at Ponds

June 2026

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Join Us June 11th, 2026

for our 4th [PPKWGS Club Meeting](#)

Things You Can Do

To Be

A Better Koi Keeper

Phil Goulding will lead this presentation



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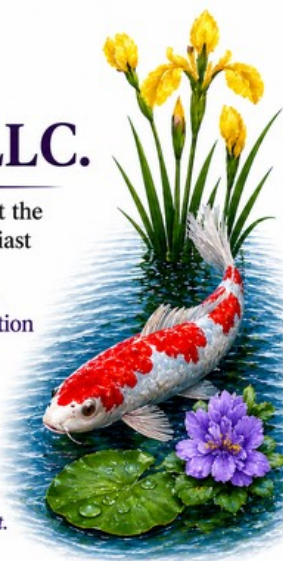
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President's Ponderings



As summer settles in and our ponds begin to hit their stride, I find myself spending more time simply sitting beside the water or looking down from my upper deck. Sometimes I go out with the intention of trimming a plant, checking a filter, or counting Koi — and before long, I'm just sitting quietly, listening to the waterfall, watching the birds, and watching the fish glide by.

One of the things I've come to appreciate over the years is that ponds teach us lessons if we are willing to slow down enough to notice them.

The first lesson may be patience. Nothing in a pond happens instantly. Water does not clear overnight. Lilies bloom in their own time. Young Koi take years to develop size and color. Even solving pond problems usually requires observation, adjustment, and waiting. In a world that expects immediate results, our ponds remind us that good things often develop slowly.

Ponds also teach us balance. Too much food, too much sun, too many fish, or too much tinkering can quickly upset the system. Nature has a way of rewarding moderation and consistency. Sometimes the best thing we can do for a pond is simply maintain good habits and let the ecosystem do its work.

And maybe most importantly, ponds teach us to pause.

Life gets busy. Schedules fill up. News and noise seem endless these days. But somehow, standing beside moving water quiets the mind. Watching Koi cruise peacefully beneath the surface has a way of slowing our breathing and helping us reconnect with simple things. I suspect many of us started this hobby because we liked the beauty of ponds, but stayed with it because of the peace they bring us.

That sense of connection is also what makes our club special. We gather not just to talk about plants, fish, fish food, or water parameters — although we certainly do plenty of that — but because we enjoy sharing experiences, helping one another, and celebrating the creativity and joy that ponds bring into our lives.

Speaking of sharing ponds, our annual Pond Tour is coming up August 1st and 2nd, and preparations are already underway. For those opening their ponds to visitors, thank you for your willingness to share your hard work and creativity with others. And for those of you who would like to share your little oasis, please remember that nobody's pond is ever "perfect." Visitors come for inspiration, ideas, and fellowship — not perfection. For members attending the tour, it's a wonderful opportunity to learn something new, ask questions, and enjoy the incredible variety of ponds and water gardens within our club community. Whether your pond is large or small, formal or naturalistic, every pond reflects the personality and passion of its owner, and **we would love to see yours**. Please consider exhibiting your pond!

As we move deeper into summer, I hope each of you finds time to sit beside your pond and simply enjoy it. The weeds will still be there tomorrow, the filters can wait another hour, and the fish will appreciate your company just as much as your maintenance schedule.

Until next time, Happy Pondering!

Bob Oatman, PPKWGS President, President@ppwgs.org

Plants in Koi Ponds: Beautiful Partners or Green Trouble Makers?

If there is one topic guaranteed to start a lively discussion among Koi keepers, it may be this: “Should you put plants in a Koi pond?”

Ask ten pond hobbyists, and you’ll likely get twelve opinions.

Some pond owners dream of lush water lilies, graceful lotus blooms, and floating hyacinths creating a peaceful backyard oasis. Others prefer pristine, plant-free Koi ponds where the fish are the undisputed stars of the show. The truth is, both sides have valid points — because plants in Koi ponds can be both wonderful and wonderfully frustrating.

Let’s start with the good news. The Benefits of Plants

Plants can transform a pond from a “large outdoor fish tank” into something that feels natural and alive. Water lilies soften the edges of the pond and create beautiful reflections. Marginal plants add texture, color, and movement. Lotus blooms can stop visitors in their tracks.

Plants also provide practical benefits. They absorb nitrates and help compete with algae for nutrients. Floating plants can offer shade during hot summer months, helping keep water temperatures more stable and giving Koi a place to retreat from intense sunlight.

Fish often seem calmer when there is some plant cover available. Small fish and fry especially appreciate places to hide, although many Koi owners will tell you that baby fish become “live snacks” long before they become future champions.

Plants can also attract beneficial wildlife. Dragonflies, frogs, butterflies, and birds all seem drawn to a thriving water garden. Before long, your pond becomes its own little ecosystem.

And perhaps most importantly, plants simply make ponds beautiful. A blooming lily beside brightly colored Koi is hard to beat on a summer evening.

Now for the Other Side of the Story

Unfortunately, Koi did not get the memo that plants are decorative. To a Koi, expensive water lilies are often viewed as salad.

Koi love to dig, uproot, nibble, shred, bump, and generally redecorate anything planted in their pond. A freshly arranged plant shelf can quickly look like a tornado passed through underwater. Many pond keepers have spent good money on beautiful aquatic plants only to watch their Koi enthusiastically dismantle them within hours.

Larger Koi are especially talented at turning pots upside down and spreading planting soil everywhere. Nothing says “weekend pond maintenance” quite like chasing floating lily pads while muttering under your breath.

Plants can also create maintenance headaches. Dead leaves and spent blooms add debris to the pond. Fast-growing plants may clog skimmers or filters if not trimmed regularly or retained in some way. Some floating plants multiply so quickly that they seem to take over overnight.

And while plants can help water quality, overcrowded or decaying plants can also contribute to organic buildup if not maintained properly.

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There is also the issue of visibility. Serious Koi hobbyists often prefer clean, open ponds because they want unobstructed views of their fish. After all, if you spent years raising beautiful Koi, you probably want to actually see them instead of playing “Where’s Waldo?” beneath a jungle of water lettuce.

Finding the Balance

Like many things in pond keeping, balance is usually the key.

Some hobbyists solve the problem by creating separate plant ponds or bog areas connected to the Koi pond. Others protect plants with rock barriers, plant baskets, or floating rings. Some simply accept that Koi and plants are engaged in an ongoing battle.

In the end, there is no single right answer. Some of the most beautiful ponds are lush water gardens with a few Koi gliding among the plants. Others are elegant Koi ponds with crystal-clear water and not a lily pad in sight.

The important thing is creating a pond that brings you enjoyment. Whether you prefer a botanical paradise or a showcase for champion Koi, the hobby has room for both approaches — and probably a few chewed-up lilies along the way. As for me, I love the plants as much as the Koi, and wouldn’t have a pond without both.

Pursue what makes you happy!

Bob Oatman

Are you ready to step up your game when it comes to Koi Keeping?



Become a Certified Koi Keeper (CKK) through Koi Organization International (K.O.I.).

K.O.I. offers this amazing course, and you can take it for **FREE**. Our club promotes education, and we want our members to be the best Koi Keepers in the country, so we will pay for your tuition if you **complete the course within one year.**

All courses and the lab are done online. K.O.I. instructors are hands-on Koi keepers with many years of experience. They have studied the areas in which they teach and have significant personal libraries.

Bob Oatman, Cathy Bulf, and Phil Goulding are all CKK’s, and we want you to join us.

“It is better to teach someone how to keep the water than it is to fix their sick Koi.”

You will gain exponential learning, and your Koi will thank you!

Consider becoming a Certified Koi Keeper!!!

Click here for more information...[CKK Scholarships](#)

Save the Date!

PPKWGS Koi Rehoming Auction

Saturday, June 27th
at Phelan Gardens

Our annual PPKWGS Rehoming Auction is coming this month! This is a great time for members to find Koi and goldfish, rehome fish to adjust their fish load, or just experience the fun of this event.

In order to ensure everything goes swimmingly (see what we did there? Clever, clever!) we need to gather information and resources now. Some things we need to know:

1. Who has fish for the auction?
How many fish, how big are they, and do you need Club assistance to catch and transport?
2. Who can volunteer to help on auction day?
We could use people to help set up, function as cashiers, bag 'n tag the fish, break down after the auction is over, etc. If you want to help we can find something for you to do!

Anyone who has Koi for the auction, please [Click Here](#) for more detailed information and contact Cathy or Nicholas no later than **June 19th**.

Cathy Bulf: 719-440-9906
cathybulf@yahoo.com

Nicholas Simco: 719-244-2655
nicsimco@gmail.com



Whether you will be looking, buying, volunteering or contributing fish, we look forward to seeing you there!

Thank You Volunteers!!!

Thanks to everyone who helped out with the Humane Society Spring Workshop

We were grateful for a beautiful morning and a great turnout—everyone put on their gloves and worked together with enthusiasm to get the job done. Our time, energy, and willingness to help were on full display and noticed by the administration of the Humane Society. Within days after the workshop, we received a call from the Humane Society asking what they could do to revitalize their pond. Our enthusiasm made all the difference, and it was inspiring to see such a strong sense of community in action.



Thank you to these volunteers who helped keep this pond an amazing place for homeless dogs.

Bob Oatman, Robin Robbins, Tim Jardeleza, Miriam Blum, Tom Taylor, Allen & Linda Burbidge, Bill & Dolra Griesinger, Tony D'Amico, Scott Snyder, Harry Riemer, and Jonah Macaspac.

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

[11 June - Club Meeting - Things You Can Do to Be a Better Koi Keeper](#)

[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.

Print out this page and post it somewhere so you can keep track of our events!
(Paid members will receive a personal, pre-printed copy of this in the mail)

And don't forget to use a Name Tag Sticker offered by the club when you come to the next club meeting. It helps to get to know one another when your name is right there!

Highlighted Plant of the Month



Wanvisa Lily - Small Nymphaea Wanvisa

Hardy Water Lily Pink

Glowing pink flower petals are highlighted with bright splashes of yellow.
Dark mottled foliage is the perfect background.

Hardy to Zone 3.

Plant 12-24" depth, Full Sun, 3-4' spread.

Club News



Discover the Convenience of Club-Owned Oase PondoVac 5's

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? We have an Oase PondoVac 5 you can borrow for free. To reserve it, reach out to Allen Burbidge at (719) 574-5176.

Website Spotlight

Do you want to share your pond but aren't quite ready to open your yard on the pond tour?

Share pictures of your pond and yard in our Member Pond Directory.

Log in, click on your name in the header, select My Profile & Ponds, then select Add Pond or Edit Pond. From here, you can name your pond, add a description, and add pictures.

Give it a try, we would love to see your little bit of paradise!

If you have any problems, contact Bob Oatman.

PPKWGS Plant Sale

Our May 30th plant sale was a resounding success! We don't have all the accounting completed yet, but we had a total sales of over \$6200 from 80 customers. This includes 779 plants, 11 memberships, and 34 fundraising items. We have expenses we have to pay from that income, so our profit will be somewhat less, probably in the \$4500 range.

A GREAT BIG THANKS to everyone who helped prep for and managed the actual sale.

Helpers included:

Bob Oatman, Tom Taylor, Phil Goulding, Allen Burbidge, Linda Burbidge, Robin Robbins, Brenda Walth, Carol Hildebrand, Tim Jardeleza, Miriam Blum, Jonah Macaspac, Tony D'Amico, Valerie Roth, Joan Shaeffer, Katie Patchin, William Griesinger, Dolora Griesinger, Julie Driver, Ted Driver, Rebecca Murphy, Harry Reimer, and Malissa Jackson.





New Membership Applications and Membership Dues can be submitted via our website at 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 WEB: 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

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President@ppwgs.org**Vice President:**

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VicePresident@ppwgs.org**Treasurer:**

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Ellen Simco

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Nicholas Simco

Memberatlarge@ppwgs.org

Robin Robbins

Memberatlarge@ppwgs.org

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Allen Burbidge

Refreshments:

Robin Robbins

Membership:

Allen Burbidge

Door Prizes:

Allen & Linda Burbidge

Koi Food Buy:

Phil Goulding

Rehoming Auction:

Cathy Bluff

Plant Sale:

Bob Oatman

Koi Auction:

TBD

Pond Tour:

Allen Burbidge

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

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



From the Editor

Greetings, Fellow Pond Enthusiasts!

What a fun time for ponds this is. I love it when all the flowers and plants from last year start filling in. I always have a little anticipatory anxiety when I'm waiting to see if anything from last year comes back. Even though it always does. Silly of me, but still. A small part of my brain worries that everything died over the winter, even though I am always pleased to discover that things not only return each year, they tend to be bigger and heartier than the year before!

This year, I am amazed by the lilies I bought two years ago. The plant I submerged in the pond had three bulbs. I figured it would be nice to have some color in the front of the pond, to see from the house.

Now, two years later, about 40 purple flowers bloom where I first planted only three. It's amazing! So pretty and Spring-like, even though the sheer volume of lilies makes it a little difficult to reach the pond from the front side now.

That's the hard part for me. When I first buy a fish or plant, they are small and cute, and I think I'd better get a couple so they don't look too tiny. Then, not surprisingly I suppose, they continue to grow and expand, and multiply and pretty soon I'm worried about what to do with it all!

With the plant sale last weekend, I hope you all were able to get plenty—but not too many! - gorgeous plants for your own ponds. I wasn't able to make it, sadly, but with the number of plants in my small pond, that might be for the best. I still need some hyacinth or lettuce, but that won't be a problem.

In any case, I hope your water gardens are looking amazing. Hopefully, we will be able to see a good number of member ponds in the pond tour. That's such a fun time, and such a good opportunity to get to know other members better.

I hope you see you all at one of these meetings, and I hope you are all enjoying your ponds.-Rachel