

April 10, 2007  
Issue 11-02



## SKAPA Newsletter

### Articles:

KOI Talk  
By Don Harrawood

Springtime Bioactivity  
By Ken Austin

Turtle Cove  
By Elaine Hengen

SKAPA  
Appreciating Koi Through  
Friendship and Knowledge  
Since 1996

*Celebrating our 11<sup>th</sup> year*

## 26<sup>th</sup> Annual AKCA Seminar

Don't forget that the 26<sup>th</sup> annual AKCA Seminar is coming up June 21-27<sup>th</sup> in Mesa Arizona. This is a rare occasion to gain a lot of knowledge and have some fun close to home. Mesa Arizona is a great place to visit and is only 6 or 7 hours by car or a short plane ride. There are many top seminars on just about everything to do with KOI and pond keeping plus you get a chance to mix with a bunch of crazy KOI people. If you are looking to build or improve a pond or your skills at KOI Keeping, there will be vendors from all over the country showing the latest and greatest stuff. Follow this link to learn more or sign up on line.

<http://www.akca.org/seminar/seminar.htm>

From our  
President



## A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS Gaston and Olympia Cyr We are pleased to have you join us!!!

What a great meeting to start off the new year with old friends and guest at the home of **Patti and Darrell Dodd**. The Dodd's warm hospitality was very much appreciated as we all enjoyed there two beautiful ponds. By the way, the Dodds garden will be one of five of El Paso's Best Private Gardens in this years **Garden Conservancy's Garden Tour**, May 5 & 6. For more information, go to [www.opendaysprogram.org](http://www.opendaysprogram.org) or call 1-888-842-2442.

Remember, **SKAPA's KOI OF THE YEAR** will be selected at our April meeting. Bring a regular picture or digital print (min 3mp) no larger then a 4 x 6 of your favorite Koi to the meeting. You may enter as many Koi as you would like, but please be sure your name is on the back of each print. The winning Koi will be entered in this year's **AKCA** seminar in Phoenix, AZ. Also, we will be electing **SKAPA's KOI PERSON OF THE YEAR**.

We wish to send our condolences to new member Walter Tippin, Dr. Tippin's mother passed away recently, our deepest sympathies go to the Tippin family.

Have you ever had a snake get into your pond and feast on your fish? To get rid of this pest, put a minnow trap in your pond (available at sporting goods stores or from **SKAPA's** inventory). The snake will eventually find its way inside, where it will be safely trapped. You can safely remove it from your pond.

**CLUB MEMBERS...WE NEED YOUR HELP.** We urgently need volunteers to help with this year's pond tour. If you can provide an hour or two of your time on Saturday and/or Sunday, September 29 or 30, Please contact any of our committee members. We need volunteers to greet people and take tickets. Pond Tour Committe Members are: John Manns, Elaine Hengen, Dennis Reiter, Larry and Jeannette Lockard, Don Harrawood, Ken and Susie Austin, Patti and Darrell Dodd, Alberto Martinez and Olga Portillo.

See you all, Saturday, April 21th with **Dr. Mike Masser at the HONG KONG BUFFET**, 1188 N. Yarbrough at noon with photos of your Beautiful KOI.

Happy Pondering,  
SMITTY



**Mazuri**  
The Exotic Animal Feeding Resource

EXOTICS RULE OUR ANIMAL KINGDOM

**MAZURI® KOI DIETS:**

- Top quality fish and soy protein
- Complete and balanced nutrition
- Astaxanthin, canthaxanthin, spirulina, shrimp and beta-carotene for brilliant color
- Each bag is date coded for guaranteed freshness and is produced in the United States

For your nearest dealer or to order online, call 1-800-227-8941 or visit us at [www.Mazuri.com](http://www.Mazuri.com)

MAZURI® KOI DIETS:  
Koi Platinum O-gels, Koi Platinum Wheat Nuggets, Koi Platinum Nuggets, Koi Pond Nuggets, Koi Platinum Bits

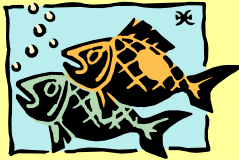
## SPECIAL PURCHASE Koi Food

Hai Feng Koi Food, 11 pound bags.  
Each bag contains 5 sealed equal portions.

**Sale Price \$21.95**

This is a real bargain at \$2.00 per pound

Available at Nash Gardens (150 E. Sunset Rd.)  
587-6000



## KOI Talk

By Don Harrawood  
Koi Health Advisor

### UPGRADING YOUR POND

Do you wish you had installed a filter when you first built your pond? Many ponds built today have only the bare essentials with no filter, skimmer, no bottom drain, or U.V light. The pond may be of concrete construction or liner construction. Either way, it is thought to be very difficult to revise the pond to include filtration and/or a skimmer after the fact. I'm not talking about a simple filter pad inside the skimmer or an in-pond filter pad. I am talking about a pressurized filter outside the pond that will clean up the pond water and keep it clean.

In most cases, it is possible to install good filtration in ponds that have already been built without filtration. This is accomplished by adding components to your pond without disturbing the concrete or the liner, whichever the pond construction may be. In some cases where the pond already has a bottom drain, an installer may hook on to the bottom drain plumbing and install a pump, filter and U.V with little or no problem. In other cases, a bottom drain can be installed in the pond bottom and piped outside the pond to a pump and filter. The drain and pipe installed inside the pond can then be mostly or completely hidden by the addition of stones to hide it from view. Pressurized filters can be almost completely buried in the ground to hide them from view. Only the top of the control head must be exposed for controlling the necessary back washing process.

If you already have a filtration system and do not have a skimmer, skimmers are available that can easily be added to your pond. Again, this is done without disturbing the concrete or the pond liner. These little skimmers are only 10 inches in diameter and 10 inches tall, but they do a marvelous job of skimming. They can be connected to an already available bottom drain plumbing, or can be installed with their own small pump to furnish adequate flow for skimming.

Many ponds in the El Paso area have already been upgraded to include these improvements with great success. True, there is a cost involved for these improvements, but the results have been better water quality with much less maintenance. The decision to upgrade your pond is like all decisions, is it worth the maintenance time, and can I afford the cost?

**JAC'S REPTILE RESCUE**

RESCUING ALL DOMESTIC REPTILES  
IN ALL SHAPES, SIZES AND AGES.

**TOURS AVAILABLE** **(915) 584-2543** **ANIMALS FIRST**

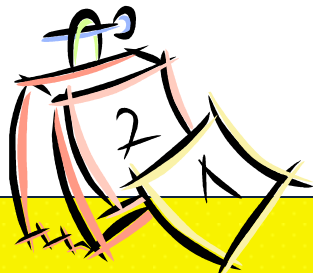
FROZEN FEEDERS AVAILABLE: JUMBO MICE TO JUMBO RATS

**WE PERFORM POND CLEANING, MAINTENANCE AND RENOVATION OF ALL POND SHAPES AND SIZES.**

- WE RELOCATE POND LIFE
- PRESSURE WASH ALL SURFACES
- FEATURING A ONE OF A KIND PORTABLE BIOLOGICAL FILTRATION SYSTEM DESIGNED LOCALLY

**MAKING YOUR POND BETTER THAN NEW!!!**





# Calendar of Events 2007

**APRIL 21 SKAPA meeting** to be held at the **Hong Kong Buffet** 12 noon, 1188 N. Yarbrough Dr. with guest speaker **Dr. Michael Masser** of **Texas A&M University** Texas Cooperative Extension Aquaculture Specialist, writer and contributor to many articles on pond and fish management, will speak and answer questions on just about anything to do with Water garden and pond management. **Dr. Masser** is a favorite speaker at **SKAPA** because of his down to earth, understandable approach to Water Garden and Pond management. **This will be a big meeting as the KOI of the year and KOI person of the Year will also be selected at this meeting.**

**APRIL 28 9th Annual FeatherFest** at the **Keystone Heritage Park** from 10am to 3pm. Members, we need a few volunteers to help represent **SKAPA** at this event. Please contact **Smitty** at **494 - 4KOI**.

**APRIL 28 Koi Pond Construction, Do's and Don'ts** featuring **SKAPA's Don Harrowood** at **NASH GARDENS**, 150 E. Sunset at 2pm.

**MAY 6 Tucson Watergardeners Annual Plant Sale:** from 8am to 1pm at the SW corner of Reid Park (look for signs at the entrances on Country Club and 22nd)

**MAY 26 SKAPA meeting** to be held at the **Dorris Van Doren Library**, 551 Redd Road at 2pm.

**JUNE 17 SKAPA meeting** to be held at the home of **Larry and Jeanette Lockard**, 5250 Hunter's Glen Ct. at 4pm.

## JULY IS NATIONAL WATER GARDENING MONTH






**SEPT. 29 - 30 SKAPA 6TH ANNUAL POND TOUR**

**26th Annual AKCA Seminar**  
June 21 - 24, 2007 In The Greater Phoenix Area

**HAVE FUN IN THE SUN**  
Relax Your Body and Soul





Marriot Phoenix Mesa  
200 North Centennial Way  
Mesa, Arizona  
Phone (480) 898-8300  
Fax (480) 964-9279  
Web site: www.phoenixmarriottmesa.com

To Find Out More About This Fantastic Seminar And Vacation, contact: Tom Ayers - azkoiboy@yahoo.com or Robbi McCleney - rmccleney@cox.net

Hosted By The Valley Of The Sun Koi Club and the Southern Arizona Koi Association

photos courtesy of the Phoenix Visitors Center


3136 Bolton Rd.  
Marion, Texas 78124  
800-682-6098  
210-659-5841  
FAX 210-659-1528  
www.watgardengems.com

### ATTENTION SKAPA MEMBERS

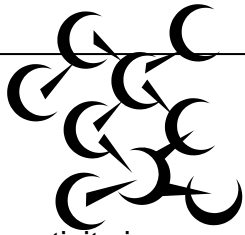
(Your SKAPA I.D. Card is valuable to you)  
As SKAPA members, you are entitled to **10% discount** on any item at Nash Gardens, including pond supplies, pond equipment, koi, koi food, plants, trees, patio furniture, statuary, ceramic pots, garden supplies, statues, fountains, and numerous other items.  
You must present a valid 2007 SKAPA I.D. card.



**Denco, Inc.**  
Nash Gardens  
150 Sunset Road, El Paso  
Your Full Line Pond Supply Store

PUMPS	POND CHEMICALS
FILTERS	KOI MEDICINES
U.V. STERILIZERS	POND LIGHTING
KOI	AQUATIC PLANTS
KOI FOOD	BOTTOM DRAINS
AERATORS	CHECK VALVES
SKIMMERS	FLEXIBLE PVC

MANY OTHER ITEMS  
(915) 587-6000 Cel. (915) 727-1166



## Springtime Bioactivity

By Ken Austin – Advanced Koi Health Advisor



Bioactivity is a word that refers to whether or not the bacteria in your pond and filter system are doing their job of converting toxic ammonia to nitrate. During the winter when water temperatures got down into the low 40's, bioactivity came to a halt. There is credible evidence that the bio-film (the place where the bacteria colonize more or less) does not actually die off, but sits out the cold only to restart its activity when the water warms. Being inactive was OK because if you were not feeding your fish, there was very little ammonia to worry about. And since ammonia was not being converted to nitrites, the nitrite level were essentially nil.

If you ran your filters all winter (and in the El Paso area you should), when the water temperatures got back up into the 50's you could start feeding your fish again (small amounts). There should be little if any measurable ammonia because at these temperatures the bacteria activity is restarting. In addition the toxic effects of ammonia are less.

Now that spring is here, water temperatures are moving up into the 60's. At these temperatures bioactivity is getting back into full swing. At these temperatures you can also get back to your normal feeding rates because the filter should be ready to take on all that ammonia. If you are testing your water and finding measurable levels of ammonia, cut back on the feeding for a while. Make sure your filter is clean (back flushed) and make sure the flow rate through the filter is normal. Feel free to contact one of SKAPA's Koi Health Advisors if you have questions.



## April Is National Frog Month



What better way to celebrate National Frog Month than to pay tribute to our undisputed heavyweight champion of amphibians, the American bullfrog.

Here are some fun facts about this frog:

- Bullfrogs have voracious appetites. In the wild they have been known to overpower and swallow birds, fish, snakes, other frogs and even young turtles.
- The American bullfrog can reach a weight of 1 to 2 pounds.
- A female American bullfrog can lay as many as 25,000 eggs that are fixed together on the surface of the water.
- American bullfrogs are capable of leaping up to 6 feet.
- Bullfrogs may remain at the tadpole stage for up to two years. A longer tadpole stage means a larger frog after metamorphosis, which usually means a better chance of survival.
- The American bullfrog is the state amphibian of Oklahoma and Missouri.
- In 1970, two bullfrogs were launched into orbit on the Orbiting Frog Otolith spacecraft.



Locally Owned With 8 Locations To Serve You In El Paso & Las Cruces

368 Yarbrough • (915) 591-9415	1360 Lee Trevino • (915) 592-7443
5500 N. Desert • (915) 833-1178	636 Sunland Park • (915) 584-3468
9828 Montana • (915) 594-9144	1790 N. Zaragosa • (915) 849-0653
9807 Dyer • (915) 751-3553	1600 S. Valley Dr. • (505) 541-8300
	Las Cruces, NM

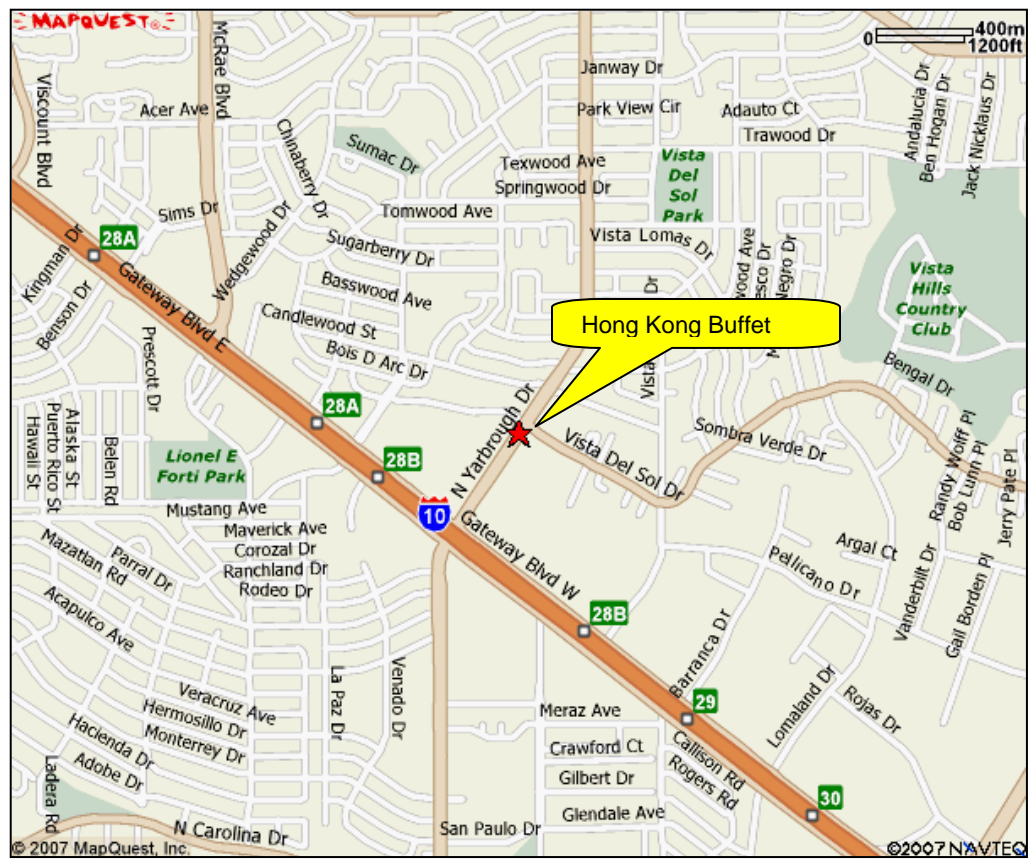
EMPEROR AQUATICS, INC.  
www.emperoraquatics.com



High Quality  
Truthful Info.



Directions to 1188 Yarbrough




**BRETT'S**  
FISH FARM  
BREEDING CHAMPIONSHIP KOI

*Brett Rowley*  
Owner/ Fisheries Biologist

Tel: 979-922-1570

Post Office Box 261  
Liverpool, Texas 77577 USA

[brett@brettsfishfarm.com](mailto:brett@brettsfishfarm.com)

Serving the Koi Community

Don't forget to go and see our own **Don Harrawood** speak about **Koi Pond Construction, Do's and Don'ts,** at **NASH GARDENS,** April 28<sup>th</sup> at 2:00P.M., 150 E. Sunset.

### **Quick pond tips to make your fish and other aquatic residents happier!**

Frequent water changes of 10-20% help renew water quality.

Know the true pond volume in gallons before adding pond treatments.

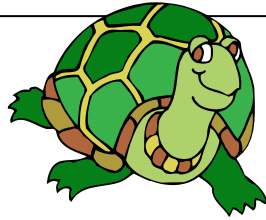
Frogs, turtles, and plant material add organic load to a pond. Keep this in mind when sizing your filter.

Larger ponds are easier to maintain than small Ponds.

Avoid a disaster, shut-off water by using a timer or automatic meter when re-filling pond water.

Smaller more frequent feedings are better for fish digestion.

Know your fish loads. Filter sizing is dependent the fish load, not just pond volume.



## **Turtle Cove** by Elaine Hengen

This is my third spring with outdoor turtles and I'll never get used to the mixed feelings of trepidation and excitement that accompany the emergence of the turtles from hibernation. Two years ago, we lost Rambow from pneumonia. Last year, Snoopy did not make it through the winter. This year, Rose was the sick one. Rose is a medium-large adult female red eared slider who came to live with us late September. On March 7<sup>th</sup>, I saw her upside down at the bottom of the pond. I was sure she was dead as I pulled her out, but amazingly, she was still alive—barely. She hung on until we could get her to the veterinarian and after an x-ray, she was diagnosed with pneumonia.

For the last seven weeks, she has lived in the bathtub and made twice weekly visits to the vet for shots. As she got better, we had to force feed her for about a week, until she started eating on her own. That was such a relief, as none of us liked the force feeding process. She now loves a good worm and a stroll into my sewing room, where she can look out the sliding glass doors into the backyard. Hopefully, she'll be back in the pond very soon, fully recovered. It is very difficult to save a turtle as sick and near death as Rose, so her re-entry into the pond will be a very happy day.

The rest of our turtles have been very confused by the weather this spring, but all appear to be healthy. All of our box turtles emerged in mid-March—three weeks early, only to dig back into their favorite spots when the weather turned cold again. Our two three toed box males began fighting with each other a week before the female emerged from her hole. Fortunately, they cooled off for a while, along with the weather.

The first priority for emerging box turtles is plenty of fresh water. After that, they'll start looking for food and wanting special treats such as strawberries and dark leafy greens (other than spinach and iceberg lettuce). Turtles cannot and should not live by dog food and hot dogs. I know that many of us, including myself, will feed canned dog food to our desert box turtles. The current thought in the turtle world is that dog food is too high in fat, and should not be fed to turtles—or at least only sparingly. Cat food and hot dogs, however, should never be on your list of things to feed your turtles. They are definitely too high in fat and unhealthy additives. Keep the fresh water flowing all summer long, as having adequate water to drink and bathe in is important to their health and happiness.

I continue to give my aquatics as much variety in their diets as possible. While I like to feed various meats, veges and fruits, every third day I only feed dark leafy greens, apples and pellets. That way, I can be sure that they eat plenty of vitamin and calcium filled dark leafy greens and pellets. I include apples, just because they float like the greens. I know that the experts say that turtles don't need to eat every day, but when they look longingly at me with those green reptilian eyes, I give in. My aquatics particularly like a pellet called Repto Treat suprema. I am using these pellets to try to make friends with the other two other red eared sliders that arrived with Rose last fall. One is now timidly surfacing to eat these yummy treats—at least when she thinks that I'm not looking.

Do you have turtle stories to share? Send them to me and I'll include them in next month's article.