

March 2, 2007
Issue 11-10



SKAPA Newsletter

Articles:

KOI Talk
By Don Harrawood

Rebuild & Repair
By Ken Austin

SKAPA
Appreciating Koi Through
Friendship and Knowledge
Since 1996

Celebrating our 11th year

From our President



A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Dr. Walter Tippin, Kevin & Chimeme Mark, Sharon & Hughes Butterworth, John & Jaimie Harris, Dr. Alan & Roxanne Tyroch, Woody & Gail Hunt, Jose and Lillian Santiago, Victor & Chris Apodaca, Martha Franco and Cliff Stevens

Welcome to our circle of pond lovers! We look forward to getting to know you and your families and hope you will enjoy our association. We are always so pleased to have new members as we can all mutually benefit from more shared knowledge and experience.

A belated happy new New Year to all with my thanks and gratitude for your support in 2006. What a great time everyone had at SKAPA's Annual holiday gathering at the Cattleman's Steak House. A special thanks to Debbie Hartmann, Patti and Darrell Dodd for getting together all the gifts and making sure that all had a great time. FYI..All gifts not given out, were donated to charity. Also, Thanks to Dwight Floyd who showed pictures and talked about his October 2006 Koi buying trip in Japan, and thanks Darrell Dodd for putting this program together.

Our best wishes go to some of our members for a quick recovery, including Paula Wilson, John Lane, Ray Collier and Eddie Abraham.

We wish to send our condolences to Tom McCabe family, as Tom's father passed away recently, and to John Hartmann, as John's brother also passed away. Our deepest condolences to the Southern Arizona Koi Association (SAKA) on the loss of Jack Stone, one of the founding fathers of SAKA. Jack shared lots of knowledge and information with me on running our club when not joking around as he loved to do. Our sympathies go to Jack's son Gary and Family.

Congratulations to our KHA's (KOI HEALTH ADVISORS) Don Harrawood and Ken Austin on their update certification on **NUTRITION** by the **AKCA**.

I am pleased to announce and welcome a new sponsor for SKAPA. Please welcome **Jac's Reptile Rescue**. Thanks to them for cleaning the Keystone pond for us.

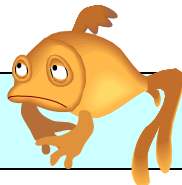
p.s.. 2007 dues are due, many of our members paid their dues at our December 2006 Gala and we appreciate the timely payment. Please send your dues to:

Dr. Dennis Reiter
517 Canyon Springs
El Paso, Texas 79912

Smitty

Spring Algae Bloom

The Spring Algae Bloom occurs when the temperature warms and the pond receives increased sunlight. **Do not be alarmed!!** At this time of year the nitrogen produced by the fish is merely greater than that being used by the plants. As the plants grow larger, they will use more nitrogen and the green water will begin to subside. Adding floating plants, to reduce the surface of the pond that receives direct sunlight, will aid in controlling algae as well. If the Algae Bloom does not go away in a few weeks, it is time to take a look at the ecological balance of your pond.



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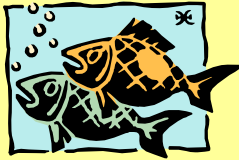
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KOI Talk
By Don Harrawood
Koi Health Advisor

GARDEN PONDS

A typical pond in El Paso, as well as many other places, is known as a "Garden Pond". These ponds are generally of rubber liner construction with a waterfall on one end and a skimmer on the other. The submersible pump is located inside the skimmer. It pulls water from the top layer in the pond and pushes this water to the waterfall. In order to enhance the pond's beauty, and to hide the wrinkles in the liner, the pond is lined entirely with stones along the sides and bottom. In some cases, shelves are made along the pond bank to hold potted plants to make the pond more attractive.

These ponds are said to become balanced, and natural, and will need little or no maintenance in the future. These ponds, when new, will look wonderful for the first couple years, then the problems begin to appear. First, there is a lot of muck settled on the rocks in the bottom as result of stagnant water, decaying plant matter, fish feces, and other matter that has found its way to the pond bottom. Second, we see the water is no longer clear like it was in the beginning. This lack of clearness of the water is generally a result of impurities in the water and/or green algae that caused green water. The filter in the pond is generally only a fiber pad inside the skimmer that catches some of the big stuff in the water, and only from the surface of the pond. The water in the pond bottom is stagnant and nothing is removed from the bottom, causing the accumulation of decayed materials.

In order to keep these ponds looking nice, they must be cleaned at least yearly. When cleaning this type pond, it is recommended to remove all the rocks in the bottom and do a thorough cleaning of the liner and the rocks before returning the rocks to the pond. If you go two years between cleaning, you will discover "crude oil" between and below the rocks. This black muck is a result of decaying materials that is left for a couple years.

There is a solution to the problem; however one must invest some money to make the necessary improvements. Many types of ponds can be made much more maintenance free with clear water year around by adding a bottom drain, a bead filter, a pump, and an ultraviolet light to the system. Bottom drains can be added without cutting the liner. They are placed on top of the liner and hidden from view with rocks. Bead filters can be mostly buried in order to remove them from view. This system removes water from the bottom of the pond as well as the top layer, and filters out the impurities. The filtered water passes through the Ultraviolet light which kills bacteria and green water algae.

Good pond water requires good maintenance and absence of heavy accumulation of muck on the pond bottom. Even though pond water tests ok for ammonia, nitrates, and nitrites, the deterioration of accumulations on the pond bottom produces hydrogen sulfide gas in the bottom layer of water. This gas is poisonous to fish and can cause illness or even death if fish are constantly exposed to it.

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Calendar of Events

2007

Jan 19- May 6	"FROGS! A CHORUS OF COLORS" More than 100 frogs from around the world live in the 15 natural habitats created for this interactive exhibit. Houston Museum of Natural Science..	(713) 639-4629 or www.hmns.org
March 25th	SKAPA Meeting at 5101 Memory Dr. at 1:00 p.m.	Patti Dodd 585-2035
Jun. 2-3	Dallas Koi Kichi Show in Colleyville, TX.	contact Tom or Jan Walker at (972) 377-6825.
Jun. 21-24	AKCA 26th Annual Seminar in Mesa, AZ.	for more information, see ad below
Sept. 28-30	Koi America 2007 in Westminster, MD. (about 50 miles north of Baltimore)	For more information contact Wayne Orchard at (703) 680- 2663 or wbmater@makc.com or www.make.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.

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

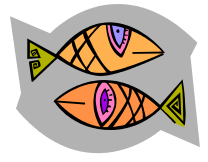
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REBUILD AND REPAIR, BUT KEEP YOUR FISH SAFE

By Ken Austin
Advanced Koi Health Advisor



So you have decided to rebuild or repair your pond. You know, correct all the mistakes you made the first time. This happens to a lot of pond owners. The difference this time is, instead of starting with a hole in the ground, you start with a pond full of fish. The question becomes how do you do construction work in or around the pond without doing the fish any harm.

Your choices are move the fish to a temporary habitat or leave them in the pond. The later option is only available if you do not need to fully empty the pond to do the construction work. For example, you can add or repair a skimmer by lowering the water level a few inches below the level where the work on the side of the pond takes place. Many pond remodeling jobs however require moving the fish out of the pond.

Before construction work starts, consider the various situations that will put your fish at risk:

- Netting and transporting fish can cause stress and possible injury. Do it carefully and gently. Do not lift or carry fish in a net. Lift and carry them in a tub or fish sock designed for that purpose. Fish will jump! Keep them confined as you transport them to AND from a temporary habitat. Keep the temporary habitat covered for the same reason.
- Fish do not tolerate rapid changes in water temperature or pH. The water temperature in the temporary habitat needs to be within 5 degrees F and the pH needs to be within 0.4 pH points of the pond water. The best way to accomplish this is to fill the temporary habitat with pond water.
- Don't forget to maintain water circulation, filtration and aeration, even if the fish are left in the pond during construction. Be prepared for high levels of ammonia and nitrite in a temporary habitat. If possible, use your existing filter for the temporary habitat. Consider transferring your existing bio-media to the temporary filter to ensure ammonia conversion during the construction period.
- During construction, your fish will probably be confined to a smaller volume of water than normal. This means that filter cleaning and water changes on a more frequent basis is essential to maintaining water quality.

When construction begins, make sure there is a clear understanding about fish safety between you and the contractor you have hired. Discuss all the issues listed above with your contractor. Some contractors may not want responsibility for any of those items, so be prepared to take care of them yourself.

SKAPA members have club resources available to help them with pond remodeling and repair projects. You can borrow equipment for use as a temporary fish habitat. In our storehouse we have plastic ponds that hold several hundred gallons. Also available is a box filter and pump. And don't forget one of the club's Koi Health Advisors is available to answer your questions and help with planning your pond remodeling or repair project.



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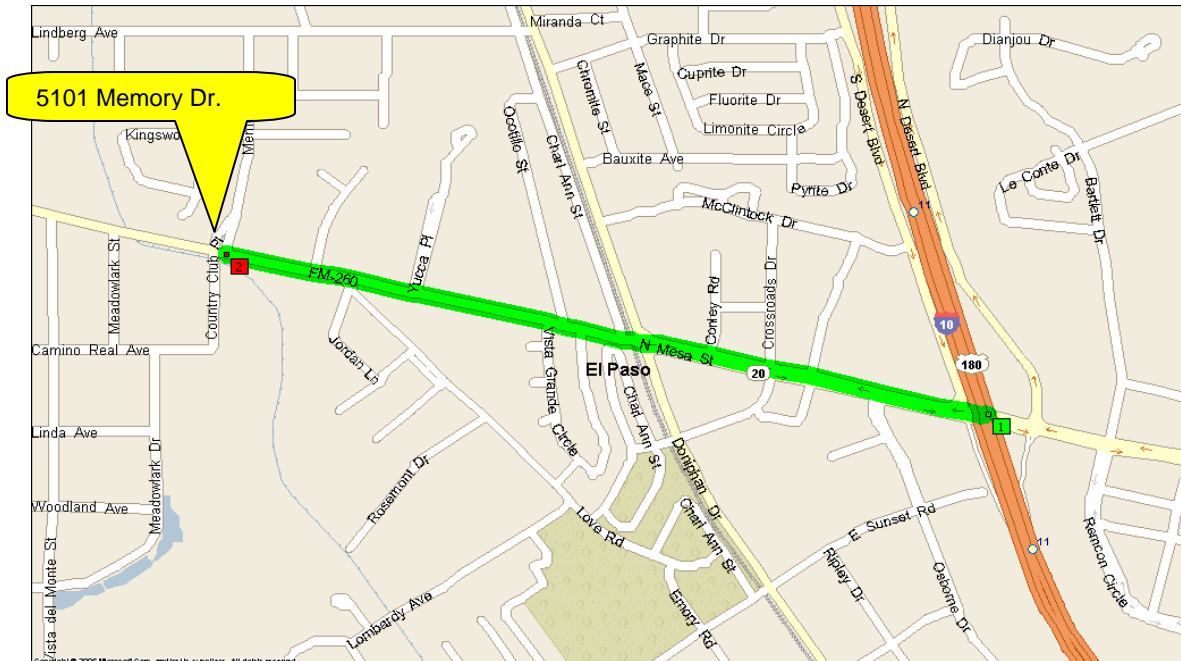
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2007 SKAPA OFFICERS

President:	Ralph Smith (Smitty)
1st VP:	Don Harrawood
2nd VP:	Lalo Aragon
Treasurer:	Dennis Reiter
Secretary:	Elaine Hengen
AKCA Rep:	Debbie Hartmann
Newsletter Editor:	Darrell Dodd
Librarian:	Willie Mae Falcon
Club Activities:	Patti Dodd
Web Master:	Larry Lockard
Club Veterinarian:	Tom McCabe DVM
Pond Tour Chairperson:	John Manns
Historian/Mastergardener:	Linda Doughtie-Lane
Koi Health Advisor:	Don Harrawood
Koi Health Advisor:	Ken Austin

Directions to 5101 Memory Drive.



Just take I-10 to the N. Mesa exit, go west on Mesa which turns into Country Club Road when you cross Doniphan Dr., Keep going until you reach the light at Memory Dr.. Turn right on Memory. 5101 is the first house on the left. Look for tall palm trees.



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Serving the Koi Community



Koi Health Advisors

What in the Heck do those Koi Health Advisors do beside write newsletter articles anyway?

Well, they are one of the most important parts of SKAPA. The health of all of our ponds and fish is very important and our two health advisors are there to council and help with virtually any fish or pond health problem. If you go out to your pond and see a sick fish, they are the first ones you call. Many of us would simply give up on our fish, and in many cases our entire ponds, if it wasn't for their help and advice. They have gone through a lot of training and have experienced just about any situation you will come across in your pond. They are there to help you. Thanks to:

**Don Harrawood
833-9339
and
Ken Austin
584-6293**



Be a Pond Detective Find that Leak!!

1. Leaking pipe work.

Where filters are external to the pond and above the water level, tiny hairline splits in hose or perished washers in hose unions can all be common causes of losing water.

If possible inspect the soil along the run of the pipe and at best inspect all hoses and pipework at first hand. Try to isolate leaking pipes from the other possible causes of a dropping water level by running the pond without the filter over night to see if this has any adverse effect on the water level.

2. Bog areas and sunken rockwork.

Submerged marginal planted areas or partially submerged rock work can act as blotting paper, drawing water out of the pond and into the surrounding soil, cement or lawned area. These problems usually manifest themselves just after a pond has been constructed when such a phenomenon has not yet been accepted as a 'characteristic' of that pond. The rate of 'blotting' will also increase with temperature, being at its most extreme in the summer months. There is little that can be done to prevent water rising by capillary action but it is useful to be able to associate such a drop in water level with capillary action rather than a leak.

3. Splash-out

When viewed for a few minutes, the odd drop of water splashing onto a patio from a fountain, bamboo heron scarer, or escaping from the spray bar of a filter may seem insignificant. Yet such a 'drip....drip....' can soon add up to a loss of several gallons causing the water level to drop. It is vital to try to avoid any splash-out even if it means adjusting or choosing a less adventurous fountain head. This is even more important in a self-contained water feature where the reservoir is much less limited than in a pond.

4. Waterfalls

When constructing a pond, waterfalls can be one of the most difficult features to perfect. Not only must they complement the character and size of the pond, they also have to be watertight. The most straightforward way of ensuring that all of the water that feeds a waterfall runs into the pond is to build the waterfall and pond from the same piece of liner. In this way, if the stepped rockwork of a waterfall were to settle, crack and spring a leak then any leaking water will still return into the pond if only out of sight and under the construction.

If such preventative action is not carried out then water loss from a waterfall can be infuriating leading to quite extensive and costly remedial work. In addition, any prolonged leakage from a waterfall (or a pond) can cause subsidence problems which may manifest themselves as structural weaknesses in the future.

5. Evaporation

Rates of water loss from a pond through evaporation can be quite significant, especially where water is passed through fountains or over waterfalls. Of course, evaporation rates are greatest in warmer weather which should be taken into account when trying to discount it as a possible cause for losing water. To be able to eliminate evaporation as a cause of water loss is difficult but if the pond is mature and such water loss has not been encountered before, it will usually point to your worst fears - a leak!