

March 2023

## SUMMER IS ON THE WAY!

Hello friends!

It's hard to believe another pond season is nearly here! After what has felt like a long, cold, snowy winter, we have warmer and sunnier days ahead. And with that comes another pond club season. We look forward to getting together with you.

Our first meeting will be on April 20. We'll meet at 7:00 pm at Cactus & Tropicals' Draper location — 12252 Draper Gate Drive in Draper. Come out and join us. This is a great time to renew old friendships and make new friends. You'll find a schedule for the year on page 3.

With spring around the corner, our fish and plants finally are beginning to awaken. That means it's time to start thinking about spring maintenance on your ponds and water features. Take a look at some suggestions on pages 2 –3.

We hope you enjoy our monthly newsletters. This year, we're expanding our "Know your koi" column to include other pond fish. We're also expanding "Know our lilies" to cover a broader range of plants for ponds, water features and water gardens. Please contribute; this is a great opportunity to share your knowledge and experience. And let us know if there is a particular plant or fish you'd like us to address.

See you in April!

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# SPRING — IS IN — SIGHT

Spring is nearly here. We've had a long cold winter. While we're more than grateful for all the snow, it's finally time to start thinking about spring maintenance on your ponds and water features.

## When do I start?

Once ice has thawed and water temperatures begin to rise above 50°F, you should start to see your fish becoming slightly more active – this is when you should start your spring pond and water feature maintenance routine!

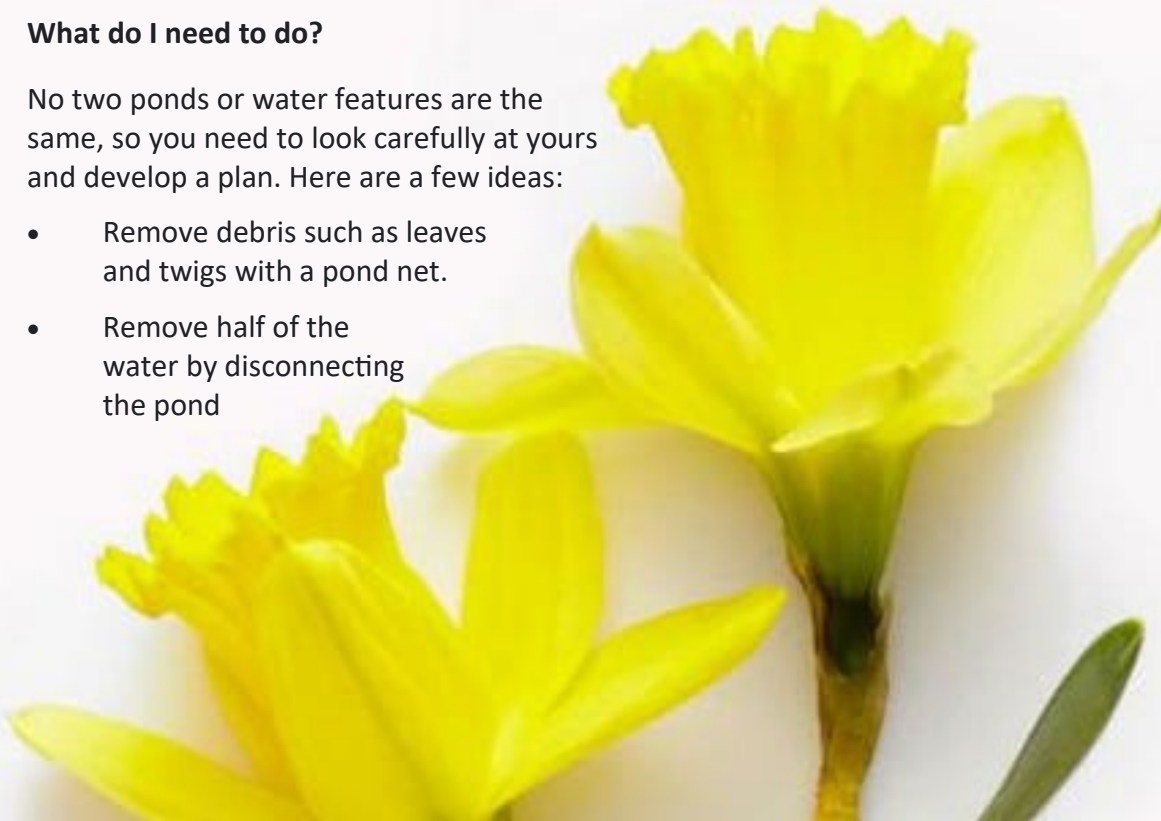
## What do I need to do?

No two ponds or water features are the same, so you need to look carefully at yours and develop a plan. Here are a few ideas:

- Remove debris such as leaves and twigs with a pond net.
- Remove half of the water by disconnecting the pond

pump so that it drains out of the pond rather than recirculating the water. You can also use a clean out pump for this.

- Remove debris and excess sediment from the bottom of the pond. Don't worry about getting it spotless, you want some organic matter to remain to add to the beneficial bacteria.
- Check the pump and remove debris caught in the intake.
- If you have a skimmer box, clean the net or basket and rinse the biological media.



- Rinse the filter. If you use filter pads, they usually last two years, but if they tear easily, replace them.
- Turn on the hose and let the water run for a few minutes to clear the pipes before refilling the pond.
- Add a chlorine eliminator to remove chlorine, chloramine and any harmful metals found in tap water.
- Begin water filtration and re-install your pump or skimmer.
- Consider adding nitrifying bacteria to jump-start your biological filter
- If you have fish, evaluate their health and test your water parameters.

#### What do I need?

- Pond net – Use to remove debris.
- Clean Out Pump (optional) – If your pond pump won't work to remove water use a clean out pump.
- Pond vacuum. This tool makes it easy to clean the bottom and sides of your pond.
- Cleaning Brushes – Small brushes are handy for cleaning inside the pump.
- Vinegar – This is an earth-friendly cleaning solvent for pump parts.
- Garbage Bags – You are going to dredge up some yucky stuff so you'll need somewhere to put it.
- Spare Filters – Have a replacement filter on hand in case the existing filter needs changing. You can always save it for later.

*Adapted from rom PAllenSmith.com and Nualgiponds.com*

## 2023 Meeting Schedule

- ◆ April 20 – 7:00 pm at Cactus & Tropicals, 12252 Draper Gate Drive, Draper. Linda Pfafflin will talk about spring gardening tips and bulbs.
- ◆ May 18 – Pfafflins' pond
- ◆ June 15 – Stokes' pond
- ◆ July 20 – Cobbleys' pond
- ◆ August 17 – Annual BBQ and Plant Exchange. Location to come.
- ◆ September 21 – Larson's pond
- ◆ October 19 – Annual Banquet! Details to come

If you'd like to host a meeting, please let any Pond Club officer know!

## 2023 Pond Tour

We're excited for our 2023 Pond Tour. Watch for details. If you'd like your pond or water feature to be on the tour, please contact any officer. It's lots of fun!

## 2023 Membership

We've simplified our membership. 2023 dues are \$15 per person.

## Get Involved

We'd love for each of you to get move involved in the Pond Club. We *always* need more help. Opportunities are endless, and include recruiting new members, coordinating the Pond Tour, coordinating monthly meetings, helping with food, helping with our website and other publicity, and much more!



# KNOW YOUR FISH: GOLDEN ORFES

Orfes, specifically “*Leuciscus idus*,” also known as idees, belong to the family Cyprinidae, and are a freshwater fish native to the rivers, ponds, and lakes of Europe and Asia. The name “ide” is derived from Swedish roots and denotes the bright coloration of the fish, which is typically orange or gold, sometimes with black spots on its neck at the base of the head.

The most commonly kept variety in the pond hobby is the golden orfe (see picture below) due to its brighter coloration, as well as the much less common blue orfe fish. When they're young, orfe typically display a silver scale pattern with small black spots on the head, but as they mature, most varieties develop an overall orange sheen which can range from a subtle hue to brightly golden – similar to goldfish.

Orfe are a pretty active shoaling fish (meaning they prefer to live and move about in groups or schools), and can grow to over two feet long. In addition, they are adept at and enjoy catching insects, so this in combination with their size and social nature means they'll need a pretty large pond (at least 1,000 gallons is recommended) to allow them to move about and jump out of the water without escaping the pond.

If kept alone, it's not unheard of for orfe to die since they are a social fish preferring to live in groups of at least three or more orfes. Long-lived, orfes can often live up to 20. They're also pretty friendly, getting along with most other fish, goldfish and koi in particular, though they may eat some smaller fish or fry if they're hungry! Their lively nature makes them an entertaining and friendly pond fish to have, and an interesting addition to larger pond communities.

Orfe are, in general, considered hardy, well-adapted fish, doing well in waters ranging from 50 to 77° F and

able to survive in waters that are just above freezing or as high as 90° F (so long as the water isn't kept at either of these extremes for too long). They do best with a neutral to alkaline pH between 7 and 8. Their natural diet is composed of snails and insects, including mosquito larvae.

With voracious appetites, you'll need to supplement their diet with things such as earthworms, bloodworms, and meat-based pellets or flakes with plenty of protein. They have been known to eat small fish fry as well, so perhaps keep them separate from smaller fish either permanently or until the other fish grow larger than a couple of inches in size.

As mentioned previously, orfe can often live up to 20 years, though there are some reports of them



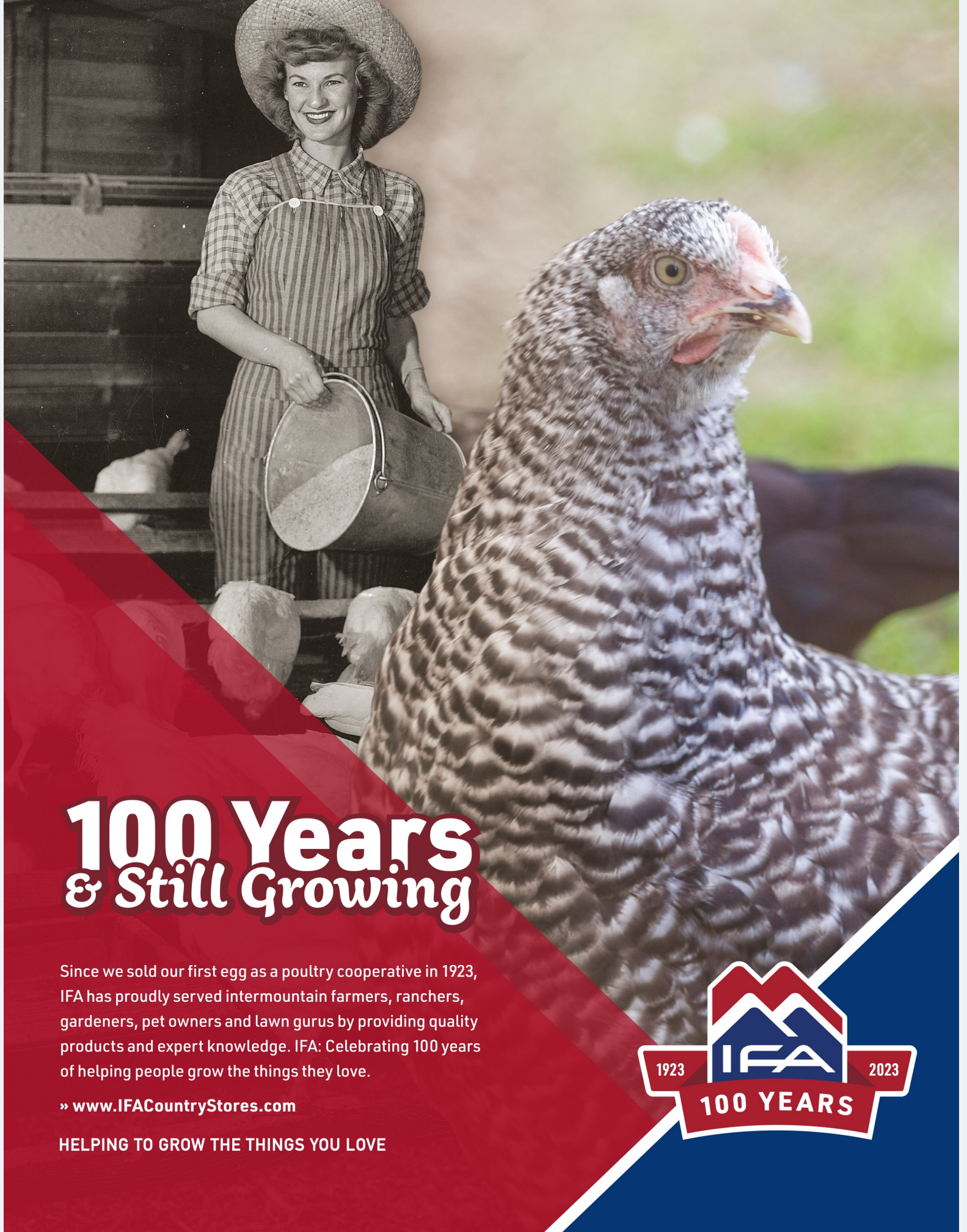
reaching closer to 30 years of age. Their size is somewhat dependent upon the size of the water body they live in, but no matter what they are still a fairly large fish. When initially purchased, orfe are typically only two to three inches in size, and usually reach their minimum adult size (about a foot) within a year or so. In small ponds, they can easily

reach a foot or more (though one to one and a half feet is common in ponds), and if held in too small of a pond they will simply jump out, as they need plenty of space to move about and accommodate both their size and high energy levels. In larger ponds and lakes with plenty of food availability, it's not uncommon for orfe to grow closer to three feet in size.

In captivity, they average a weight between 2 and 5 pounds, though they commonly grow larger in the wild. There are some reports of them reaching as much as 18 pounds in the wild.

*Adapted from Pondinformer.com*





# 100 Years & Still Growing

Since we sold our first egg as a poultry cooperative in 1923, IFA has proudly served intermountain farmers, ranchers, gardeners, pet owners and lawn gurus by providing quality products and expert knowledge. IFA: Celebrating 100 years of helping people grow the things they love.

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# KNOW YOUR WATER PLANTS: PICKERELWEED

Pickerel weed is a graceful and beautiful plant with showy flower spikes growing atop slender, sturdy stems that add visual interest in the water garden. It's super easy to grow and is available in bluish-purple, pink, and white blooms.

*Pontedaria cordata*, also known as pickerel rush or pickerel weed, enjoys full sun to part shade and requires very little care. Its glossy, 10-inch, arrow-shaped leaves are just as appealing as its blooms and you'll often find fish taking cover beneath its greenery.

Pickerel weed does more than add color and beauty to a pond. Its sweet nectar attracts butterflies and bees – and dragonflies and damselflies often lay their eggs on the plant stems near the water. When the flowers fade, they give way to starchy seeds which are edible. Consider drying them and adding them to your next batch of homemade granola. Young leaves from the plant can also be consumed and make an interesting addition to summer salads.

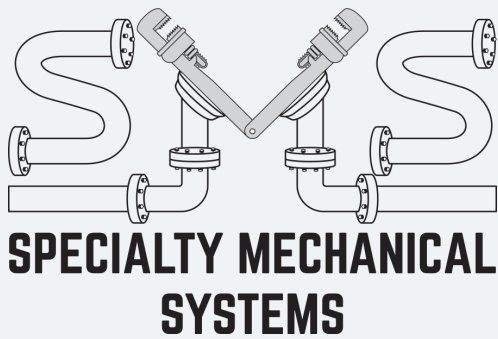
Since pickerel tends to spread rapidly, it's best to plant it in an aquatic pot where you can better control its aggressive growth habit. The plant can reach up to three feet in height and makes a beautiful, architectural backdrop along the edges of the pond. Consider placing shorter pond plants in front, like marsh marigold. You'll rarely need to perform any type of maintenance on a pickerel plant, but you can cut back faded flowers or leaf stems that get bent and flop into the water.

Plant pickerel along the margins of a pond, in a bog, or add it to a rain garden in a sunny location in early spring. Place your young pickerel in a fabric aquatic planter and add fertilizer according to directions. Fill the pot with pond potting media and add a shallow layer of gravel on top to keep the potting media from floating out into your pond. Then set the plant near the edge of your pond in about three to five inches of water. As long as the pickerel gets partial to full sun and doesn't dry out, you'll enjoy its pretty blooms from June through October. Pickerel weed is hardy in zones 3 to 10.

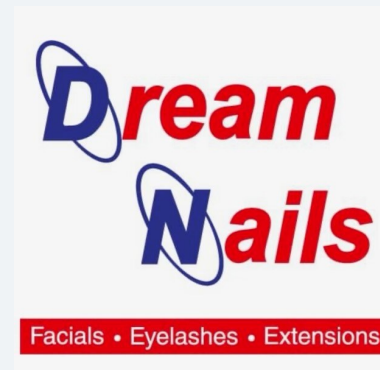
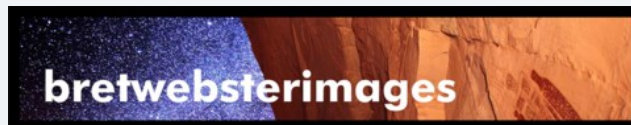
*Adapted from Aquascape.com*



# Thank You to Our Sponsors!



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300,000  
200,000  
100,000



# Help Wrap Ukraine with Quilts!

The Utah Water Garden & Koi Club is proud to support the efforts of Wrap the World with Quilts (WWWQ) to help to “wrap” the children and families of Ukraine with the comfort of a handmade quilt.

WWWQ started in March 2022, a few weeks after Russia invaded Ukraine. Inspired to gather and send quilts to Ukrainian refugees as a handmade gift of comfort and love, they asked for quilt donations from friends and on social media.

One year later, their “quilt drive” has received 25,700 quilts, including donations from all 50 US states and six countries. 25,700 quilts is 32 tons of quilts and equals \$16 million in donated value of time and materials.

In September 2022, they headed a humanitarian service trip to Poland with 35 volunteers. On this trip they established sewing centers for refugees in Katowice and Krakow Poland, securing donations for 30 sewing machines and 2,000 pounds of fabric and supplies.

WWWQ is raising money to continue its efforts in Ukraine and expand its mission to send handmade quilts to others suffering in the world. It is a 501(c)(3) charity. Its EIN # is 88-3144509. You can find WWWW on Instagram and Facebook @WraptheWorldWithQuilts and on its website [www.wraptheworldwithquilts.com](http://www.wraptheworldwithquilts.com)

We will have a donation jar at our April meeting. You can also donate fabric, gently used quilts, new quilts and fleece blankets, and any other items such as warm hats, gloves and jackets.

If you have questions or would like more information, please call Sherry or Gill Avellar at 801-572-0853.



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## Who we are

The Utah Water Garden Club is a non-profit organization serving the greater Wasatch Front. We strive to foster an appreciation for and interest in the use of water in the landscape, through monthly meetings, educational programs, an annual pond tour, and sharing our water gardening experiences. We are a group of volunteers dedicated to water gardening, pond keeping, koi and other pond fish. Our members range from novices to commercial professionals.

Historically, we have sponsored the Water Garden Tour – a self-guided tour of outstanding local gardens. We're exploring options for this year. If you'd like to be involved, please let us know!

Check out the Club's website at [UtahWaterGardenClub.org](http://UtahWaterGardenClub.org).

## Club Officers & Directors

### Officers

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