Utah Water Garden & Koi club

February, 2018

Welcome Everyone! We are looking forward to seeing all our friends again at next week's first club meeting of 2018! We hope current members, members-to-be, and friends can break away from your normal routines to join us at the **Conservation Garden Park on February 15 at 7:00 pm**. (See map on page two). We will have one of their experts talk about Utah perennials and we look forward to seeing you all there.

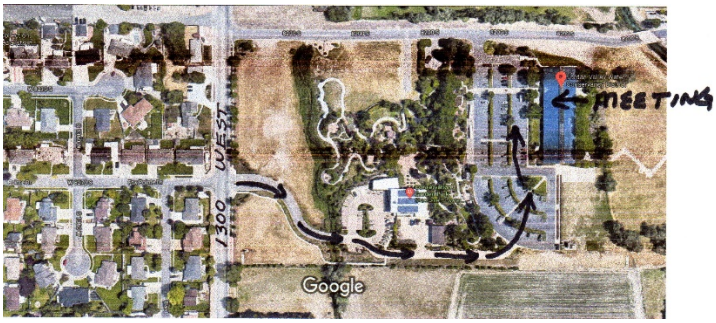
Please remember to pay your membership dues for 2018. We will have a credit card reader available at the meeting and we can also accept checks and cash. Dues for 2018 are $45 for couples and $35 for singles. We encourage you to become genuine members so you can receive the all the benefits the club offers.

If any member wishes to help the officers and the board with activities and events this year, please contact any officer. We could use the help and it is a great way to get to know the members. We promise we won't take advantage of your precious time by asking for more than you may be willing to provide.

Countdown to spring (March 21, 2018) is 41 days

February

February 15, 2018 7:00 pm
Conservation Garden Park
8275 South 1300 West
West Jordan
Speaker: Cindy Bee
Topic: Utah Perennials
Meal Provided
No Adult Beverages
Wheelchair Accessible



Our meeting will be held in the rear building Board Room. Park in rear parking lot.

March

March 15, 2018 7:00 pm
Red Butte Garden
300 Wakara Way
Salt Lake City
Speaker: To be announced
Topic: Red Butte's New Conservation Garden
Dessert Provided
No Adult Beverages
Wheelchair Accessible

April

April 19, 2018 7:00 pm
Utah Water Gardens
3674 South 900 East
Salt Lake City
Speakers: Sheida Hajarian-Maguire and Rosie Cobbley
Topic: Pond Plants for Utah Ponds
Meal Provided
Adult Beverage Friendly
Wheelchair Accessible

DOWN IN THE GARDEN WITH ROSIE

By Rosie Cobbley

Spring has sprung! N0--------Winter is back! Where are we?? Will that rodent back East give us a clue? I'm confused, and I'm pretty sure our plants are VERY confused.

I found a hellebore in my garden blooming on Jan 15th- usual bloom time March, and my Witch-hazel shrub bloomed at Thanksgiving- usual bloom time in Utah is early March. This is indicative of an entirely different climate zone (i.e. the UK), so if you were the least bit doubtful, is also evidence that we are in the midst of global weather changes.

The biggest concern should be our lack of snowpack this Winter, followed by lack of water in the Summer, and how to garden away to our hearts content, with the serious thought of water conservation at the front, not the back of our minds.

Don't panic! I'm not suggesting that our Water Gardening doesn't fit with this concept- quite the reverse. A small, well built, well maintained (no leaking) water feature, run on a low voltage pump, will lose less water than an OVER WATERED lawn - yes, most people put too much water on their grass, not realizing that by doing that, they don't promote deep root growth, keeping the roots in the hottest, driest part of the soil. A pond will also cool the surrounding air in Summer, and warm it in the Winter, not to mention the hours of enjoyment we get from the sight and sound of water. What to do you say? I believe that everybody needs some' Green' for the soul, so a small area of lawn for many of us is a necessity, but not half an acre, not on a steep incline, and not in the shade.

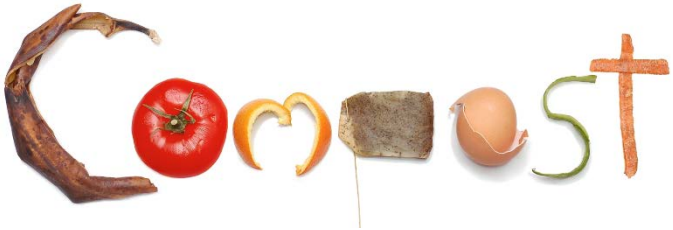
- Consider what you really need, and use, for your lifestyle, and then look at these options for your outdoor living spaces.
- Heavily shaded areas- patio/sitting area with bench, flagstone and ground covers, surrounded by shade loving plants
- A flagstone sitting area by the pond, shaded with a pergola or small tree.
- Destination gazebo/ potting shed-take a walk on a gravel path to a part of the garden farthest from the house, and build a 'Retreat'. The secret is to make people explore.
- Use ornamental grasses, perennials adjusted to our climate, along with the more attractive of our Native plants. Roses can thrive on less water, and ground covers will help reduce evaporation (not to mention weeds!)
- Water non-lawn areas on a separate station, using ¼ inch drip lines.

- Rock Gardens- especially on slopes, using some larger ‘focal’ rocks for interest.
- A bubbling rock by a sitting area will give you a water ’fix’, and be beneficial to birds and bees (and sometimes cats!)
- Low water does not mean only Cactus- by all means go for it if you love them, but restrict them to a separate area, as they really thrive on ‘conscientious neglect’, and are not too people friendly-Ouch!
- Zen gardens- a little water, a couple of rocks that ‘speak’ to you, a pretty steppingstone/gravel path, maybe clumping bamboo, a large planter.

Our local Nurseries and rock/gravel companies have a comprehensive selection of the plants and hardscape materials you need to complete these projects, plus are a great source of advice. The sky’s the limit, and if you need some more inspiration, visit the Jordan Valley Water Conservation Garden, and the new Red Butte Water Conservation Garden. OK- enough nagging guys- let’s look forward to Spring (6 weeks), and be hopeful that we can adapt, and still have fun ‘Down in the Garden”

IHOP The Ponder Frog…

Ponders…



During the growing season, 30% or more of landfill waste is organic yard refuse. Home composting of yard and garden trimmings eases landfill problems and “recycles” these organics into a valuable soil amendment. The benefits of using compost as a soil amendment include increasing soil tilth, fertility, water holding capacity, aeration, and drainage. Composting is the aerobic, or oxygen-requiring, decomposition of organic materials by microorganisms under controlled conditions. Bacteria start the process and are responsible for much of the decomposition work. Their metabolism creates the heat of the compost pile. Fungi, protozoans, earthworms, centipedes, beetles, and millipedes assist the bacteria in breaking down plant tissues. During composting, microorganisms consume oxygen while feeding on organic matter. Active composting generates considerable heat, and large quantities of carbon dioxide (CO2) and water vapor are released into the air. The CO2 and water losses can amount to half the weight of the initial materials, thereby reducing the volume and mass of the final product.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING COMPOSTING Composting begins as soon as the raw materials are mixed together. During the initial stages of the process, oxygen and the easily degradable components of the raw materials are rapidly consumed by the microorganisms. The temperature of the windrow or pile is directly related to microorganism activity and is a good indicator of what is occurring inside the pile. The temperature of composting materials generally follows a pattern of rapid increase to 120-140oF where it is maintained for several weeks depending on conditions. As active composting slows, temperatures will gradually drop until the compost reaches ambient air temperatures.

STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL COMPOST The composting process is affected by the compost pile site, compost container type and size, raw materials, and the amount of water and oxygen in the materials.

Step 1 - Select Composting Site: A good location is helpful for a successful compost pile. The compost pile should be exposed to at least six hours of sunlight each day. The location should not detract from the landscape. Water should be readily available. Good drainage is important; otherwise, standing water could impede the decomposition process.

Step 2 - Select Compost Container: Many containers are suitable provided they are accessible, resist decay, and allow air flow. How do you decide which container will work best for you? Consider the amount of time and space you have, and the quantity of materials you will be composting. Most compost containers fall into one of these categories: heaps (simple stacked piles), hoops (caged enclosures), bins (boxed enclosures), and barrels (drum enclosures). For fast, hot compost, the ideal pile size is one cubic yard (3 feet x 3 feet x 3 feet). This volume effectively retains the heat generated by the bacteria. The volume of a single pile should not exceed two cubic yards in order to maintain proper ventilation of the pile. If space is a limiting factor, the pile sides can be insulated so that higher temperatures can be maintained in a smaller volume.

Heap It (no cost, good if you have ample space) Simply pile your materials in heaps, ideally at least one cubic yard in volume. If well-constructed, heaps are good for “no turn” composting. Just leave the pile for several months or more.

Hoop It (low cost, tidier than heaps) Woven wire mesh or fencing make good enclosures and keep the pile tidy. If you secure it with hooks or twists of wire, you can undo the hoop, set it up next to the pile, and turn the pile back into the hoop in its new location.

Box It (looks good, easy to cover, low to moderate cost) You can use almost any type of scrap or new lumber, bricks, or cinderblocks to build an attractive and functional bin for compost. Make sure to leave spaces in the sides for air to get through, and make the front removable for easy access to turn or retrieve the compost. Construct several bins side-by-side to facilitate turning of the compost.

Barrel It (good for limited space, easy turning, moderate to high cost) If you don't have enough space for piles or elaborate bins, a modified 55-gallon drum can work very well. By perforating the drum with air holes and cutting an access hatch on the side you can create a system which will compost small amounts of material quickly. Usually these systems are equipped with a stand and rollers to facilitate turning, although some people just roll their barrel around the yard to achieve the same effect.

Step 3 - Select Raw Materials: Almost all natural, organic material will compost, but not everything belongs in the compost pile. Some wastes attract pests; others contain pathogens that can survive the compost process.

Acceptable: Grass clippings, weeds, manures, coffee grounds, wood chips, sawdust, bark, stems, stalks canning waste, fruits and vegetables

Not Acceptable: Meats, bones, large branches, dairy products, synthetic products, plastics, pet wastes

Another consideration in choosing materials to go into the compost pile is the time they need to break down. Woody materials, such as chips, branches, twigs, and paper, can take up to two years to decompose unless they are finely chipped or shredded. Chopping your garden trimmings with a shovel or machete, or running them through a chipping machine or lawnmower will speed their decomposition. Optimum composting conditions are obtained with particle sizes ranging from 1/8 to 2 inches average diameter. The compost pile will require carbon-rich and nitrogen-rich materials for efficient decomposition. Microorganisms use carbon for both energy and growth, while nitrogen is essential for growth and reproduction. Carbon is found in dry, brown materials, such as leaves, chipped woody brush, sawdust, and straw. Nitrogen is most abundant in fresh, green yard and garden trimmings, vegetable scraps, and livestock manures. The proper compost mixture contains approximately 2 parts carbon-rich materials to 1 part nitrogen-rich material. Do not put pet wastes in your compost pile. If the pile has too little carbon, the available carbon is fully utilized without stabilizing all of the nitrogen (N), which can lead to the production of excess ammonia and unpleasant odors. If the pile has too little nitrogen, not enough N is available for the growth of microorganisms and the composting process slows dramatically. If additional nitrogen is needed, add approximately 1 pound of actual nitrogen to each cubic yard of material being composted. Mix the nitrogen with the compost as the pile is constructed.

Remember: when using compost in a lawn, the nutrients that were once discarded are now recycled. It's the ultimate recycling action!

Step 4 - Aerating the Pile: Aerobic composting consumes large amounts of oxygen, particularly during the initial stages. If the supply of oxygen is limited, the composting process may turn anaerobic, which is a much slower and more odorous process. Oxygen levels within the windrows or piles may be replenished by lifting and turning the materials with a pitch-fork or by means of a mechanical turner. Try to put the outside, drier materials in the center of newly-turned piles. Turning a pile weekly can produce compost in one to two months with the right combination of materials and moisture level; monthly turning will produce compost in four to six months. Without turning, composting may take six months to two years. Aeration is generally the main factor affecting the time necessary to produce finished compost.

Step 5 - Keeping the Pile Moist: Moisture is necessary to support the metabolic processes of microorganisms. Composting materials should be maintained within a range of 40% to 65% moisture. As a rule of thumb, the materials are too wet if water can be squeezed out of a handful of compost and too dry if the handful does not feel moist to the touch. If the compost pile is too dry, the process slows down. If the compost pile is too wet water will displace much of the air in the pore spaces of the composting materials which limits air movement and leads to anaerobic conditions. Moisture content generally decreases as composting proceeds; therefore, you may need to periodically add water to the compost.

Step 6 - Keeping the Pile at the Proper Temperature: Composting will essentially take place within two temperature ranges known as mesophilic (50-105oF) and thermophilic (over

105oF). Keeping temperatures between 110o and 150o destroys more pathogens, weed seeds, and fly larvae in the composting materials. If the temperature of your compost pile is in the mesophilic range, try mixing the pile. If the temperature still does not reach the thermophilic range, review the steps described above to determine whether one or more of the essential factors is limiting the composting process. If you are still unable to increase the compost's temperature, the active stage of composting is complete.

Step 7 - Curing: Finished compost is dark, crumbly, and has an earthy and non-offensive odor. Pile temperature in finished compost may still be slightly higher than ambient air temperature. Most finished composts will benefit from an additional curing phase. Curing refers to leaving finished compost in a pile undisturbed for up to one month to allow any final chemical and de compostion reactions to occur and stabilize the compost. Improperly or incompletely composted materials may release ammonia and other gases, or continue to heat upon application to soil, damaging plants. Curing ensures that the composting process is indeed complete and that these potential problems are minimized. View the curing phase as extra insurance against problems arising from using compost.

Random Thoughts

The Pond Trading Post

The Pond Trading Post is a forum to trade or adopt plants, fish, amphibians, single socks or small children. Please email Sherry and Gil Avellar at trout42@hotmail.com with a short description of what you would like to adopt out or what you might be seeking for your pond. Please provide contact information as well.

Have a good fishy recipe? Submit it for our newsletter to **trout42@hotmail.com**

English Fish Pie

Rosie Cobbley

Ingredients:

1lb firm white fish (cod or halibut) cut into bite sized pieces
8 oz peeled shrimp, tails removed, cut into bite sized pieces
4 oz small mushrooms, sliced thinly
2 ½ to 3lbs Idaho potatoes - peeled, boiled, and mashed.

Parsley Béchamel Sauce:
1 ½ cups 2% milk
1 cup (8 fl oz) clam juice or fish stock
4 tbls Butter
¼ cup flour
1 Tbls chopped parsley
1 teas Salt
¼ teas White pepper

Topping:
Mashed Potatoes
Grated Cheese (cheddar, manchego, or gruyere-or a mixture of them all.)

Method
Heat the milk and fish/clam stock in the microwave
Sauté the mushrooms in 2 Tbls butter for 2 mins. Set aside.
Melt 4 Tbls of butter over a Med heat, and add the flour, stirring it together fast.

To this roux, add the hot milk/stock gradually, stirring constantly, until it thickens. Cook for 5 mins on a low heat. Add the fish and shrimp and mushrooms to the sauce, along with 1 Tbls parsley, and the salt and pepper. Cover, and simmer on a low heat for 15-20 mins, stirring occasionally.

Let the mixture cool for a while, then pour into a 2 Qt , deep sided casserole dish, and top with the mashed potatoes and then the grated cheese.

Bake in a 350 Degree oven for half an hour, or until browned on the top.

Serve with your favorite green vegetable - Asparagus, green beans, broccoli, peas.

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