

May Newsletter

Ducks and a Virus

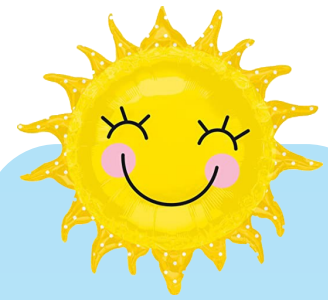
Welcome everyone to the month of may. Hasn't the weather been a nice start to the year! I hope each one of our club members are going out and enjoying their gardens. Lewis and I have been out enjoying our pond and fish as well. Some of the new additions to our pond are new lily pads and a few new koi fish we've introduced into the pond this year.

We've also had two new guests. Getting to know these new guests I feel like are similar to the coronavirus. We have had a couple of ducks decide to make our pond their home. They are very beautiful and majestic animals to look at but they love to poo on everything. Our little schnauzers have tried to chase them off but to no avail the ducks do not even give them the time of day nor do our dogs even care to chase the ducks away any more.

both have agreed not to bother each other anymore.

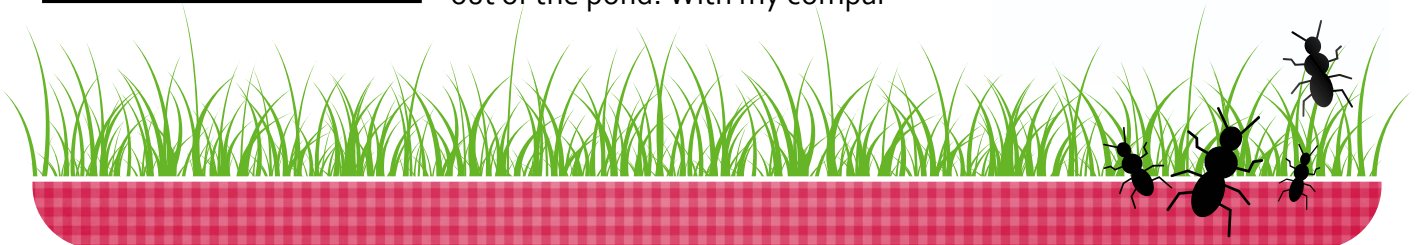


In reflecting about these ducks and the difficult times we are in with this virus, it's almost like I can compare these ducks to the coronavirus. In life we've been worried about this virus. We've adapted to it, and changed are day-to-day lives for it. In the long run we will get past this coronavirus just like my little schnauzers have got past chasing the ducks out of the pond. With my compar-



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OUR MAY MEETING

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in keeping with Governor Herbert's Stay Safe, Stay at Home directive and various County orders, we cancelled the May meeting.

We're continuing to look for options to hold virtual meetings or provide recorded talks. Watch your email and our website for updates and further information.

Stay Safe and Healthy!



Ducks (continued)

ison I don't want to discount the severity of this virus but I also want us to look around and find the beautiful things in life just like these beautiful ducks have made our Pond their home.

My hope is that everyone can get back to a sense of normalcy and we can put this virus chapter behind us. That being said we are canceling our meetings in May and possibly June, which breaks my heart but in the health and safety of each one of you. We've also made the difficult decision to postpone the Pond Tour and evening tour till next year. With the uncertain change in events we would hate for members to put all their work into getting their pond ready for the tour only to be canceled at the last minute.

Instead of a traditional Pond Tour that we drive around to each house this year we thought it would be fun for everyone who is willing to send some pictures or videos and a small write up of their ponds. The pond club will publish a virtual tour for the Pond Tour this year. Please send your pond info to Utahwatergarden@gmail.com by July 31st. I hope everyone can participate in this electronic Pond Tour and make it a great success.

As we wrap up the month of May, stay safe and healthy!!! We will see where the rest of the summer takes us. Best regards and happy gardening.

Daniel Peel



My friend talks about her fish coming up to eat from her hand. How can I get my fish to do the same?

Talk about a cool party trick! Feeding by hand is not only a fun way to show your friends how well-trained your fish are, but it also gives you an opportunity to bond with your finned pals.

Teaching your fish how to eat from your hand starts with understanding the temperament of the fish themselves. Are your fish friendly? Do they swim up and say "Glub, glub, hi!" when you visit your pond? Or do they scatter when you approach and your shadow falls on the water?

Friendly fish are easier to train. They already asso-

of day, on a regular basis. They'll get to know your patterns and learn to recognize you – and feeding time.

- **Make Them Work:** Throwing a handful of fish food into the water and walking away teaches your fish an easy snatch-and-run feeding style. Instead, toss them a few pellets at a time and wait for the fish to eat them. They'll rush to get the food first! Even the shy koi will get in on the action. This toss-and-wait style reminds them that you are hanging out and something exciting is happening.

"Set a routine. Fish are creatures of habit."

ciate you as an approachable face that brings them tasty food every day. Sketchy fish, however, can be more of a challenge. They might be newbies that don't recognize you or your feeding routine, or they might be spooked from predators visiting your pond.

If you've ruled out the possibility of predators (or put up some predator-control measures), follow these steps to help teach your fish to eat from the palm of your hand:

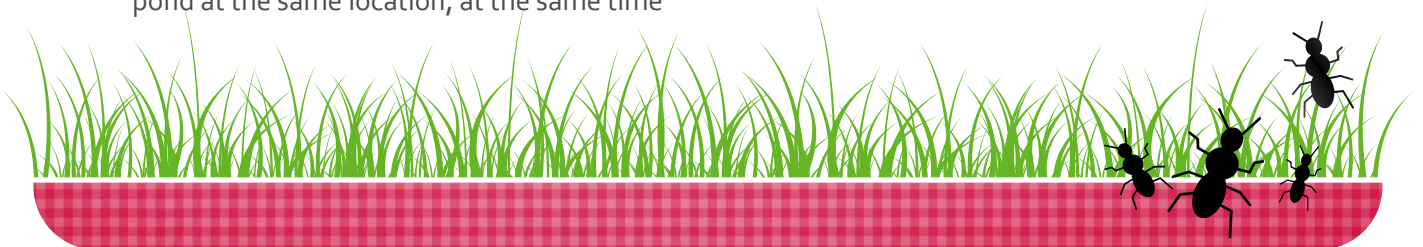
- **Set a Routine:** Fish are creatures of habit. They're more likely to respond to something that happens the same way every day (or frequently, at least). To set a mealtime routine, visit your pond at the same location, at the same time



- **Get Brave - and Get Wet:** Once your fish are used to your feeding routine and race to the pond's edge to greet you, take the plunge!

Hold a few pellets loosely in your hand just at the water surface without making any sudden or quick movements. It takes only one fish to act bravely and let the others know it'll be OK. Before you know it, they'll be racing to your hand to be fed!

Once your fish are trained to eat from your hand, you'll be tempted to keep offering them food. Prevent overfeeding them by measuring out a predetermined amount of food – and stop when it's all gone. Clean up the leftovers after dinner.





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What can I do to help out a fish that was attacked by a heron?

Ouch. A heron attack isn't pretty – and it's potentially deadly to your fish. Unfortunately, you can't call 9-1-1 or an emergency fish veterinarian for a pond call, but you can try some things that could save your pet's life.

- **Examine, Triage:** The first thing to do is examine the victim and do some triage. Capture the injured fish in a pond net and take a closer look at its wounds without removing it from the water. How severe is the injury? Are there just a few scrapes, or does the fish have an open wound?
- **Minimal Injuries:** If your fish's injuries aren't too severe and it appears to be normal except for a few scrapes, leave it in the pond and add some stress reducer to the water. The liquid formula will help to calm the fish and rebuild its slime coat, which defends it against infection. You might also want to add some soothing salt to the water.
- **Remove and Isolate:** If your fish is severely injured, set up a quarantine tank with pond water and an aerator, add some stress reducer, put it in a shaded and protected area, and gently move the fish from the pond to the tank.
- **Watch for Infection:** Keep an eye on your fish while it's in the quarantine tank. Because damaged tissue becomes a breeding ground for bacterial and fungal pathogens, watch for signs of infection. If you see split or ragged fins, slimy patches or red ulcers on its body, or any other unusual symptoms, use a medication like MelaFix to heal the wounds and restore damaged tissue.

While your finned friend is recovering, make some plans for how you'll guard your pond against future attacks. Predator control, like a

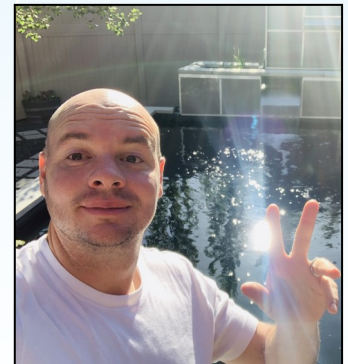


heron decoy, heron stop spinner, reflectors and flags will dissuade the real things from stopping by for a snack. But the best bet is to use pond netting to prevent birds from reaching the water. Floating, submerged and marginal aquatic plants give your fish somewhere to hide, as do fish shelters, like the Koi Kastle. Set your fish up for safety – especially since that heron will be back for seconds!

Scam Alert

I hope everyone has been well and healthy. I've been notified and I received an email myself. There is a person in personating myself asking for gift cards for the veterans hospital. This is a scam! If you did not receive an email or it went to your junk folder please disregard this email. If you did receive the email please DO NOT respond back to this email.

The Utah Water Garden and Koi Club, would never ask for gift cards. Our official communication is only done through newsletters. This is a great reminder that there's people trying to take advantage of this terrible time with the COVID-19 virus. Please stay healthy and strong the real Daniel Peel. Included is a picture of myself next to my pond to



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Why is my water foamy?

Is foamy water making your pond look more like the inside of a washing machine than an aquatic oasis? All that bubbly white or gray buildup is likely being caused by an excess of organic material in the water.

Accumulation happens when too many fish are living in the pond, you're overfeeding them, filtration is inadequate or there's runoff seeping into your water garden. It can also be caused by spawning fish. Then, as the water flows down your waterfall, air and water collide, causing the proteins and other organics to be trapped inside

foot of surface area, so if you have too many koi or goldfish in your pond, you might want to think about finding new homes for some of them.

- **Cut Back on Meals:** If you're feeding your fish too much or too often, the excess food adds to the extra organic material in your pond's water. Only feed your fish an amount they'll eat in a few minutes.
- **Add Nutrient-Eating Bacteria:** To help break down the nutrient load in the water, add ben-

"All those foamy bubbles are caused by an excess of organic material in the water"

bubbles rather than turning into ammonia and nitrites. Air-water collision is why the foam forms, particularly the base of your waterfall.

What's the solution?

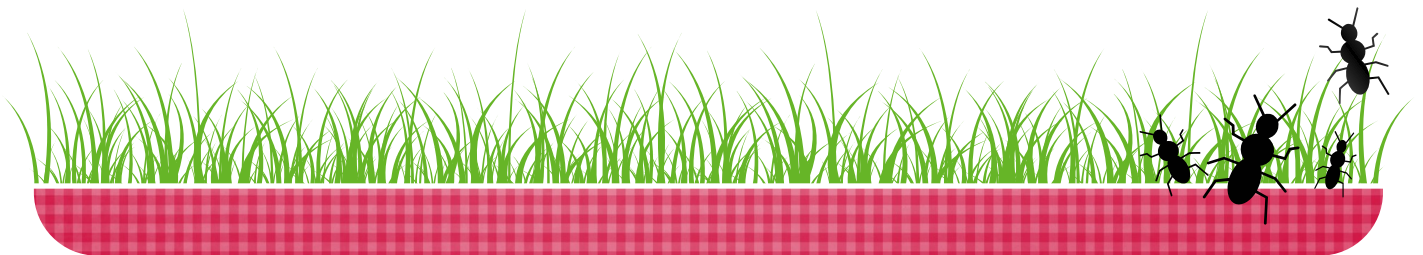
Short-term, you can change out part of the pond's water to remove the foam. When you do, be sure to add some anti-chlor and perhaps some stress reducer to the fresh water, which will form a beneficial slime coat on your fish and make tap water safe for them. In addition, add Defoam™ to your water.

- **Long-term, you have several options:**
- **Increase Filtration:** Boost your filtration by adding plants to your pond or increasing the capacity of your existing filtration system.
- **Relocate Fish:** Too many fish will produce excess waste, which means more foam. The rule is to allow 1 inch of adult fish per square

feet of surface area. A number of products are commercially available. They digest the dead organics in the pond, and can help make the water clear and foam free.

- **Aerate the Water:** Aeration will also help reduce the nutrient load by circulating the water column and feeding fresh oxygen to the busy bacteria.
- **Install a Protein Skimmer:** Protein skimmers or foam fractionators are commonly used in salt water or marine aquariums. They create foam to which proteins "stick" and can be skimmed off. Units are available at retail (search for "pond protein skimmer"), or you can [build your own](#).

Foamy water can be a nuisance, but once you achieve some balance in your pond's ecosystem, those bubbles will disappear in no time.



Thank you to our sponsors!



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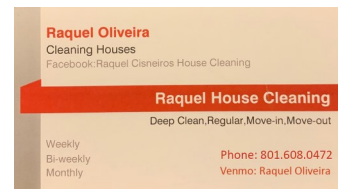
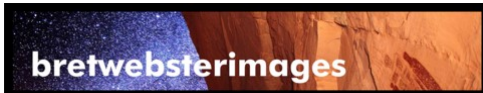


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The 2020 Pond Tour is going virtual!

That's right – we will have a 2020 Pond Tour, but it will just be a bit different. **We're going virtual!** And we invite each of you to participate. Send us a couple of photos or short video of your pond, together with a description, by **July 31st** to Utahwatergarden@gmail.com. We'll put it together in a video and post it on line for all to enjoy!

What's all this algae?

Algae is a common nuisance to pond owners, especially in the summer. Sunshine, warm temperatures, reduced oxygen levels and an abundance of nutrients nurture the tiny organisms, and in no time they may take over your pond.

Algae Explained

Algae does not have a defined root system and often floats on the pond's surface in mats, although it may emerge at the pond's bottom before floating to the surface or even turn the water green. Before treating it is important to understand the varieties of algae and where they live in an aquatic ecosystem before you treat your pond.

The three most common types of algae found in large ponds or lakes are:

- Planktonic Algae are floating microscopic plants that are suspended in the water column and can quickly alter the water different shades of green, blue-green, brown or variations in between. Commonly referred to as pea soup, planktonic algae can shade the pond's bottom, preventing subsurface nuisance plants from growing, but it can also be a great danger to fish, possibly causing a fish kill if the oxygen depletion is great enough.
- Filamentous Algae are long threads that grow from the bottom up and intertwine to form

mats. Most commonly called pond scum or string algae, the mats will often float to the surface of the pond and will not break apart in your hand. The floating algae can easily cover the entire surface of the pond if left untreated.

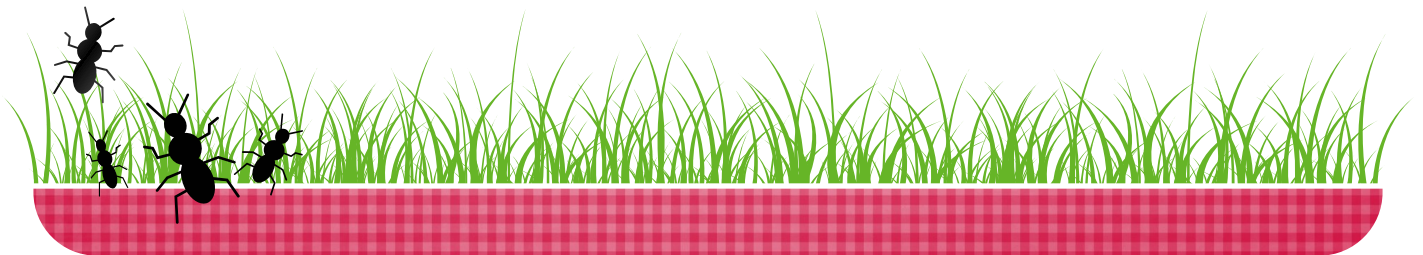
- Chara is an advanced form of algae and has gray-green branched multicellular algae. Chara has 6 to 16 leaf-like whorled branchlets that grow in spirals around the stem with thorn-like projections. Chara will not grow to the surface and is often mistaken for submerged plants like Naiad but lacks flowers, true leaves and roots. It is easily identified by its strong musky odor when crushed and the gritty texture due to calcium deposits on the plant.

Algae Pros and Cons

Surprisingly, algae has many benefits: The tiny plants feed fish and make great homes for micro and macro-invertebrates like bugs and worms. But algae has its definite drawbacks. Besides being unsightly and odorous, uncontrolled blooms can cause oxygen depletions, affect fish health, and in extreme circumstances, cause fish kills.

Algae Control

Learn more on our website [here!](#)



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, and koi. Our members range from novices to commercial professionals.

Our annual Water Garden Tour is a self-guided tour of outstanding local garden. Due to the current pandemic, we are holding a "virtual" 2020 tour!



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