



Water Garden & Koi Club

April Newsletter

Welcome to Summer!

We're excited to watch our ponds coming back to life and for our summer season! Our first meeting will be May 20 at Utah Water Gardens (which has been enlarged and restocked over the winter). We look forward to our summer BBQ (August 19), our pond tour (August 14-15), and the annual banquet (October 21). Most of all, we look forward to seeing each of you and renewing our friendships and swapping pond stories. This will be a great year!

In the meantime, enjoy your tulips and other spring flowers, and please contact us if you would like to be on the pond tour. It will be awesome, and we would love to feature YOUR pond. Also, let us know if you would like to host one of our monthly club meetings.

See you May 20!



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DATES OF INTEREST

- Our first meeting is May 20 at Utah Water Gardens
- The first day of summer is Monday, June 21
- The 2021 Pond Tour will be August 14-15
- The annual banquet is on October 21



THE GEORGE S. & DOLORES DORÉ
ECCLES WILDLIFE
EDUCATION CENTER
— at —
FARMINGTON BAY

Eccles Wildlife Education Center

The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources invites you to visit the new George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Wildlife Education Center and immerse yourself in the wonders of the Great Salt Lake wetlands! Its urban proximity and lush, actively managed habitat make the site of the education center a unique marvel, always teeming with wildlife.

The education center — located in Farmington, on the Robert N. Hasenyager Great Salt Lake Nature Reserve — provides students and educators with special opportunities for hands-on wetlands education. In addition to unlimited learning opportunities, the center and its surrounding nature trails provide visitors a tranquil escape from the hustle and bustle of life.

What you'll find:

- a 1.6-mile nature trail loop (wheelchair and stroller friendly) that winds through wetlands that you can enjoy, even on days when the buildings are closed
- a Conservation Hall, where guests can view an array of wetland birds and visit with Division staff
- the L.S. Skaggs Wetland Discovery Classroom, where students of all ages can discover the creatures that call this spectacular wetland landscape home
- a roomy auditorium, where the Division hosts events for all kinds of wildlife enthusiasts
- never-ending opportunities to see some of the five million birds (more than 200 species!) that visit Farmington Bay year after year

The Farmington Bay area is a birder's paradise that everyone can enjoy – from families and locals to hunters and tourists.

Wildlife is for everyone and no matter what the season, there's always something exciting to discover at the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Wildlife Education Center!

[Eccles Wildlife Education Center](#)

Great Salt Lake Bird Festival

The 23rd Annual Great Salt Lake Bird Festival will be held on May 12-16, 2021.

Festival attendees will have the unique opportunity to go beyond the habitats and trails of this premier birding location with trips that take them around the Wasatch Front to areas with open water, shores of fresh and saline lakes, sagebrush foothills, and, depending on weather, to aspen and ever-

green forests. The Festival offers over 27 field trips during this year's festival, each designed to create a uniquely different experience. Some trips even offer exclusive access to areas that cannot be visited by the general public. Attendees will be able to experience some of Utah's most beautiful State Parks, State Wildlife Areas, and National Refuge areas.



**GREAT SALT LAKE
BIRD FESTIVAL**

[Great Salt Lake Bird Festival](#)

Hérons

Great Blue herons have returned to the Great Salt Lake! Herons nest colonially on the wetlands. Their group of stick nests is called a rookery and are large. They are very industrious and (as long as they stay away from our ponds) beautiful.



Know Your Koi – Bekko!

About 30 years ago, when Koi keeping began to take off outside of Japan, the Bekko variety was quite fashionable, but like most fads, the popularity of this Koi diminished over time and their popularity has begun to diminish and nowadays the breed is quite underrepresented at most shows. Though they may be hard to find, good specimens are truly stunning in their simplicity and beauty.

The Bekko is a solid colored non-metallic koi fish with black (sumi) spots on the body. Bekko koi are produced in three colors; white, red and yellow. The white variety is called a Shiro Bekko. It is a

“Like most fads the popularity of the Bekko koi has diminished over time. Good specimens are truly stunning in their simplicity and beauty.”

clean white koi fish with the addition of black spots. The Aka Bekko is a red or orange koi with black spots, and the Ki Bekko is a yellow koi fish with black spots. The Ki Bekko or yellow version is the rarest.

Sumi placement is important

when evaluating a Bekko koi fish. The sumi patches on a Bekko should appear uniformly on the Koi's back. They should be only located above the lateral line, and never ahead of the shoulder region. The Bekko head should be free of any black pigment, spots or pattern. Its fins, however, are generally white and may have intermittent sumi stripes which often help to maintain balance of the sumi pattern.

The Bekko is generally one of the first varieties that a beginner koi hobbyist learns to recognize and is a very popular fish for Japanese koi ponds and water gardens.



Aka Bekko



Shiro Bekko



Doitsu Bekko



Ki Bekko

Water Lilies

Water lilies (*Nymphaea* spp.) are the perfect finishing touches for a garden pool or pond, adding practicality as well as beauty to a water feature. Fish use them as hiding places to escape predators, and as shady retreats from the hot summer sun. Plants growing in a pond help keep the water clean and aerated, so you'll spend less time on pond maintenance. Let's take a look at how to grow a water lily.

Water lily plants can be divided into two types:

- **Hardy** – Hardy types are best for northern climates where the water freezes in winter. As long as the roots of hardy specimens are below the level where the water freezes, they will reappear the following spring.
- **Tropical** – Tropical water lilies won't survive in cold water and must be brought indoors for winter in all but the warmest areas. Many growers treat them as annuals, replanting them each year. Otherwise, remove them from the pond, clean them up, and store them in a bucket of moist sand in a cool basement before the first freeze. Tropical water lily plants can be further divided into two groups: day bloomers and night bloomers. White night bloomers look spectacular with nothing more than moonlight to illuminate them, but blues, purples, reds and pinks are very difficult to see in the dark. Avoid these colors unless the pond is illuminated by artificial light at night.

How to Grow a Water Lily

A pond or pool covered in water lilies is attractive, but complete coverage prevents light from penetrating into the water, choking out other plant and animal life. Growing water lilies in containers helps keep them from spreading and taking over a small pond and it makes water lily care much easier.

When you are growing water lilies, use a large plastic pot with several holes punched in the sides and bottom. Fill the pot to within 3 inches (7.6 cm.) of the top with silt, loam or clay soil and mix in a small amount of slow-release fertilizer labeled for use with aquatic soil.

Plant the rhizome close to one side of the pot at a 45-degree angle with the eye pointing up. Cover the soil with a layer of pea gravel, keeping the gravel away from the top of the rhizome as much as possible. The gravel keeps the soil from floating off or washing out of the pot.

Place the pot in the bottom of the pond, adjusting the depth to that recommended for your specific variety. Most call for a depth of between 6 and 18 inches (15 and 45.7 cm.) . If necessary, you can raise the depth by placing the pot on top of rocks.

NOTE: For those having fish in their water garden, water lilies should NOT be potted in regular potting soil, as this contains a lot of organic material that will eventually rot and foul the water. Remove any rotting organic material from your pond or water



“Water lily plants can generally be divided into two types: Hardy and Tropical. New inter-subgeneric hybrids improve the cold tolerance of tropical water lilies

Water Lilies (continued)

garden, as this is a breeding ground for anaerobic bacteria and pathogens and may add unwanted excess nutrients to feed algae blooms. Instead, pot water lilies, and any other pond plant, in a heavy clay soil and cover with fist sized rock, and then river rock to prevent fish from rooting around in the pot and sending the planting medium into the pond. A few simple preventative steps up front are far easier to take than trying to treat sick and dying fish later.

Water Lily Care

Once planted, taking care of water lilies is easy. In fact, most require no care at all, other than fertilizing them from time to time, and dividing them every three or four years to rejuvenate them and to keep them from spreading into unwanted areas.



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What's that green stuff in my pond?

What's that green stuff? Algae can take a pond from incredible to icky. Not only does it look kind of gross, but algae can also ruin your water quality and make life more difficult for your fish.

We can treat algae, but it's easier to prevent it in the first place. Here's how.

Types of algae

This gunk can have two sources. The first is too much organic material, like fish waste or leaves. The second is previous algae blooms. Combine either of these with excessive sunlight and you have a recipe for green goo.

There are two types of algae:

Planktonic algae – This floating microscopic vegetation is what makes some ponds look like pea soup. It turns water shades of green blue-green, brown, or any color in between. Planktonic algae are the start of the food chain, so small amounts in your pond are helpful. They feed fish and help shade the bottom of the pond. But when planktonic algae get out of control, they can deplete the oxygen in your pond. This can be fatal to your fish.

Filamentous algae – Also called string algae, these plants are made of single-cell plants. They then connect to form long chains. These threads can grow at the bottom of shallow water, on rocks, or on other plants. Filamentous algae intertwine to form mats that look kind of like wet wool. When the mats rise to the surface, they're what we call pond scum. Sure, the mats make great homes for bugs and worms, but they detract from the beauty of your pond.

How to prevent algae

Make sure your pond ecosystem is healthy. These five factors can keep algae in check and help you enjoy a beautiful, balanced pond.

1. Fish – Overpopulation can be problematic for any neighborhood – including your pond. If your fish reproduce and the pond starts to get a little crowded, it's going to contain more fish waste, too. What you feed your fish and how often can impact the amount of fish

waste. And algae love fish waste. Try to keep your fish population under control.

2. Plants – Like algae, plants chow down on the nutrients in a pond. The more plants you have, the less food there is for algae. Plants can also help shade your pond from direct sunlight, which can also keep algae at bay. Keep in mind that you've got to remove dead plant material from the pond. Otherwise, you're offering up a buffet of organic material for algae.

3. Filtration – This is the secret to a clean, healthy pond. The right filtration system helps keep the water clean and keep the yuck out. Filtration is especially important for ponds that have lots of fish or tend to attract a lot of debris. An ultraviolet light can help with floating (planktonic) algae. If you're not sure if your filtration system is doing its job, take a look at our [website](#).

4. Beneficial bacteria – Consistent treatment with beneficial bacteria can keep algae at bay. These tiny microorganisms break down excess nutrients that thrive in highly oxygenated water. These nutrients include nitrogen and phosphorus, and they're the stuff algae love to eat. When you consistently add beneficial bacteria to your pond, you're establishing and strengthening an ecosystem that limits the dining options for algae.

Aeration – They live underwater, but fish still need oxygen. And a fountain or waterfall might not do enough to oxygenate your pond. An aeration kit will get more oxygen into your pond. Plus, these kits are cheaper to run than pumps. Aeration is also a big hit with beneficial bacteria. These bacteria will be more active and do their job better.

When bad algae happens to good ponds

Despite our best efforts, algae can get out of control. If that happens, don't give up! There are things to do. For more info, see algae control on our [website](#).

"Filtration is especially important for ponds that have lots of fish or attract debris."

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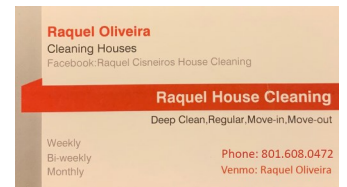
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Who we are

The Utah Water Garden and Koi 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 gardens. Due to the pandemic, we held a “virtual” tour in 2020. You can view it on the Club’s website at

UtahWaterGardenClub.org

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