



April

Newsletter

Welcome to Spring!

It was wonderful to see so many of you at our first meeting of the year. Thank you to Linda Pfafflin for her fine presentation on spring bulbs. We've included some of her information in this newsletter. And thanks to Cactus & Tropicals for a lovely venue and giving us all a much-needed dose of flowering plants and greenery.

Our next meeting will be at Michael and Linda Pfafflins' lovely yard on May 18.

Read on to find articles on mosquito fish, monkey flower, spring cleanup of your ponds, and water-efficient gardening, in addition to Linda's info on spring gardening tips and bulbs.

Finally, a huge thank you to each of our sponsors, and to Lewis Wayman for coordinating with them. Please remember to show your support by purchasing from them whenever possible.

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Tips for Opening Your Pond in the Spring

When the days lengthen, temperatures rise and the air has that unmistakable balmy feel of spring, you may be eager to open your pond. Taking the proper steps to restart your pond after a long, cold winter is essential to keep your equipment in good working order and preserve a healthy water balance. With a good opening, your pond can thrive right from the first day of spring.

Easy Steps to Reopen Your Pond in Spring

Taking it slow and steady is key to opening your pond properly in spring. To get your pond lush and alive after a dormant winter...

- **Inspect the Pond and Surrounding Area.** At the end of winter, check your pond and the area nearby for any fallen branches, frost upheaval, dead plants, loose pavers or other general damage that needs repair. Many of these tasks can be taken care of even before you open your pond, and will make the entire landscape look refreshed. At the same time, inspect the pond's liner for any tears or holes, and check your pond maintenance equipment such as skimmers, poles and other gear.
- **Clean Out as Much Debris as Possible.** Minimize algae growth and avoid overloading your pond's filter first thing in the spring by removing as much dead material, fallen leaves, spent plants and sludge from your pond as possible. This includes vacuuming the bottom of the pond, pruning any dead leaves from aquatic plants and scrubbing any submerged pots.
- **Check Pumps and Filtration**As the water temperatures in your pond rise to 45-50 degrees Fahrenheit, it is time to inspect any pumps and filters. Be sure they are clean

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 – Horrocks' Pond – Annual BBQ and Plant Exchange.
- ◆ September 21 – Larson's pond
- ◆ October 19 – Annual Banquet!

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

2023 Membership

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

Get Involved

We'd love for each of you to get more 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!

and operating efficiently, and repair, replace or upgrade the equipment if necessary. At the same time, check any aerators, sprays, fountains or waterfalls to ensure they are also working well.

- **Test the Water Quality.** Start testing your water quality in early spring to judge the amount of nitrates and ammonia, as well as the overall pH level. If necessary, partial water changes can help bring your pond back into a better balance, but make any water changes or other adjustments slowly and carefully to allow your aquatic ecosystem adequate time to compensate or you risk shocking plants and fish.
- **Consider Using Supplemental Bacteria.** Your pond will have lost much of its beneficial bacteria over a cold winter, so you may wish to add nitrifying bacteria to the water as your water temperatures rise above 50 degrees Fahrenheit. This will help as your pond eases out of dormancy, but it should be done slowly and gently to avoid any fast, dramatic changes.
- **Evaluate Fish Health.** If koi or other fish are part of your pond, you will want to inspect the fish carefully in spring to be sure the population is healthy and not showing signs of injury or disease. Remove or replace dead fish, and begin



2023 Pond Tour

We've tentatively scheduled the 2023 Pond Tour for August 12-13. But we can only have the tour if enough members and other homeowners open their yards for the tour, and if enough members get involved in putting it on. If you'd like to be involved in planning the tour, or if you'd like your pond or water feature to be on the tour, please let us know! You can call Richard Cobbley at 801-641-0179, or Julie Matis Flint at 801-27r-3040. The Tour can only happen with your participation!

feeding your fish sparingly as the water temperatures rise. Do not overfeed the fish, however, which will only promote algae growth. Take care to keep the stress to your fish minimal, since they can be much more vulnerable as they come out of dormancy.

- **Add Plants to the Pond.** As the water temperature consistently remains above 50 degrees Fahrenheit or warmer, you can begin to reintroduce hardy plants to the pond and position them where you'd like them to flourish through the spring and summer. Floating plants can be added when the water gets warmer as well, but be sure there is no risk of late spring frosts or freezes before you add more delicate plants to the pond.

Once you've added plants to your pond, you're ready to enjoy the beauty of your aquatic ecosystem all spring long. By following the proper procedures to open your pond in spring, you can easily appreciate its beauty and diversity in the weeks and months ahead.

Adapted from brockfarms.com

KNOW YOUR FISH: MOSQUITOFISH

The western mosquitofish (*Gambusia affinis*) is a North American freshwater fish, also known commonly, if ambiguously, as simply mosquitofish or by its generic name, *Gambusia*, or by the common name gambezi.

Mosquitofish are small in comparison to many other freshwater fish, with females reaching a maximum length of 2.8 inches and males a maximum length of 1.6 inches. The female can be distinguished from the male by her larger size and a gravid spot at the posterior of her abdomen.

They have a dull grey coloring, with a large abdomen, and have rounded dorsal and caudal fins and an upturned mouth.

They are called "mosquitofish" because they eat mosquito larvae, and have been used more than any other fishes for the biological control of mosquitoes. They typically eat zooplankton, beetles, mayflies, caddisflies, mites, and other invertebrates; mosquito larvae make up only a small portion of their diet.

Many mosquito abatement districts, including the Salt Lake City and the South Salt Lake Valley districts,

distribute mosquitofish at no charge to residents with human-made fish ponds and pools as part of their mosquito abatement programs. The fish are made available to residents only and are intended to be used solely on their own property, not introduced into natural habitat.

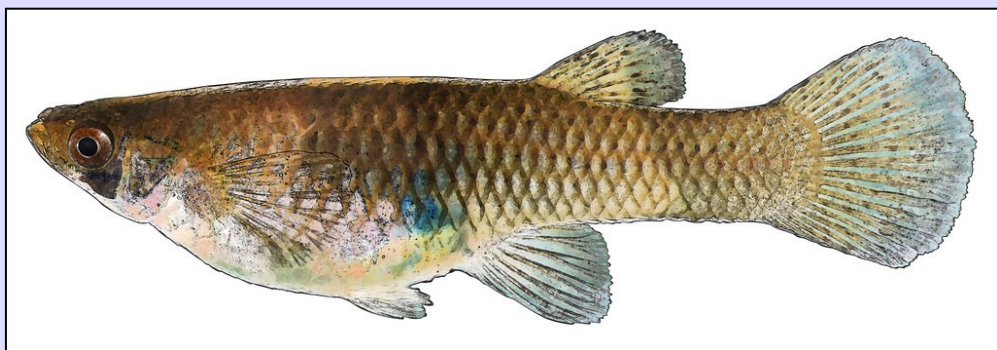


Mosquito fish are prolific breeders and, within 16 to 28 days after mating, the female gives birth to about 60 young. The males reach sexual maturity within 43 to 62 days.

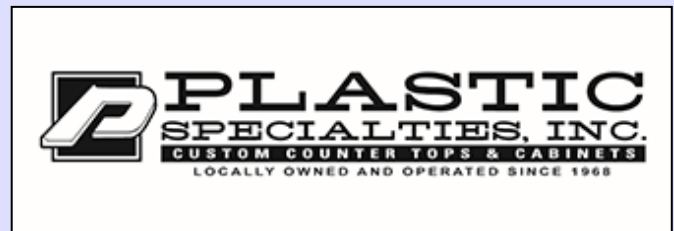
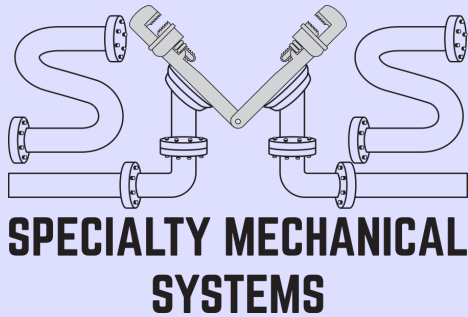
Mosquito fish are

compatible with most ornamental pond fish including goldfish, koi and carp and will not harm them. But, lake and stream sport fish, birds, frogs and turtles will eat them if the habitat doesn't have adequate places for them to hide.

While mosquito fish are hardy and can tolerate wide temperatures and water quality ranges. They generally will not survive freezing temperatures. As a result, they need to be restocked each spring.

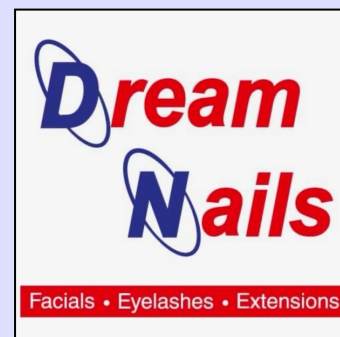
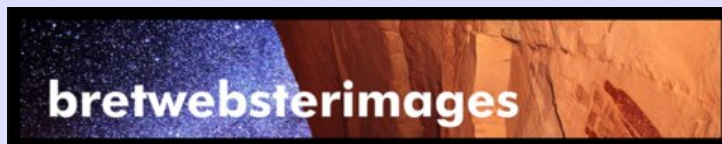
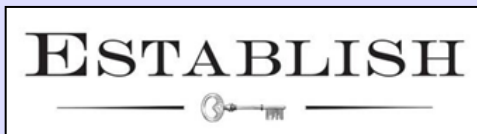


Thank You to Our Sponsors!



Draper Location





KNOW YOUR WATER PLANTS: GOLDEN MONKEY FLOWER

The Golden Monkey Flower (*mimulus guttatus*) is a spreading, mat-forming perennial boasting bright yellow, snapdragon-shaped flowers spotted with red on the lower lobes. Borne in succession from early spring to late summer, the showy blossoms appear on leafy stalks. Also known as Yellow Monkey Flower, they are pollinated by bees, butterflies and hummingbirds.

Monkey Flower is a perennial in warm zones and a half-hardy annual in colder places (like Utah). It spreads vigorously by seed and rhizomes. Putting on a show in wet, sunny places, this water-loving plant is perfect as an excellent pond plant, and is a great choice for a waterfall or stream. Not only is it a great plant for spring and summer color but is also a perfect selection for plant filtration.

Spreading best in the cool running water, the Monkey Flower puts out a succession of yellow flowers from mid spring through late summer. As the flowers appear on the spikes, another plantlet is creeping out further into the stream, ready to produce the next flowers. The dense carpet of foliage trails along the water and even into the damp edge of the stones along the outside of the stream.



Any plant that grows in a streambed grows a mat of fibrous roots into the bottom of the stream. The roots are just like filter mats; they are loaded with surface area that harbors beneficial bacteria, turning the stream into an efficient biological filter. The Monkey Flower has fine roots that grow into a tight, thick layer, making this plant one of the best filter plants of all.

If another patch of Monkey Flower is needed elsewhere in the water garden, simply pull up a clump of plants and plug them in somewhere else. The Monkey Flower is not just for the waterfall, it makes a nice addition anywhere along the edge of the pond where a low-growing accent is needed. The best thing about planting these little beauties in a waterfall or in the rocks surrounding the pond is they do well with their roots inserted between the stones without soil. It's like rooting a houseplant in a glass of water. Once the roots

spread out, they capture soil that is suspended in the water so the plant ends up with soil around its roots.

Monkey Flower is worth trying as an excellent streamside plant, but better yet, as an extremely valuable filtration supplement.

Adapted from PondTrade magazine and gardenia.net

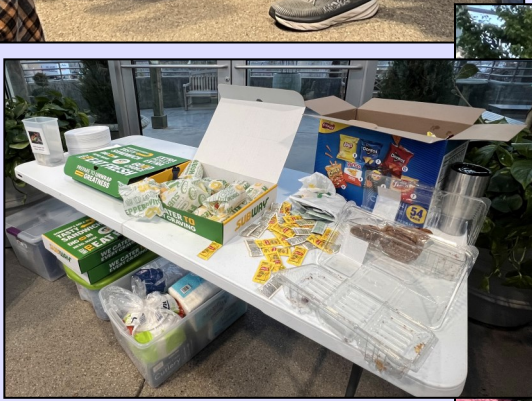
OUR APRIL MEETING

CACTUS & TROPICALS

Our first meeting of the year was at Cactus & Tropicals' Draper store. We renewed friendships, enjoyed Cactus & Tropical's great store, and heard an informative and entertaining presentation from Linda Pfafflin on spring plants and bulbs. Two of Linda's handouts — *Bulb Types* and *Spring Tips* — are included on the following pages.



OUR APRIL MEETING





Spring Tips & Checklist

- Consider taking soil samples to determine fertilizer needs. soiltest.usu.edu
- Plant seeds of cool season vegetables (peas, lettuce, radishes...) as soon as garden soil is workable. Plant peas in the garden every 2-3 weeks (until early May).
- Check out over 55 different vegetable fact sheets produced by USU Extension.
- Learn how to plant and harvest asparagus and rhubarb.
- Add organic matter to the vegetable garden to help build and amend the soil.
- Avoid compacted soil by avoiding tilling wet or saturated garden soil.
- Consider backyard composting or vermiculture (composting with worms).
- If storing bulbs, check the bulb's condition to ensure they are firm, no soft or rotten bulbs.
- Plant bare root local trees and shrubs, keeping the exposed roots moist until planted.
- Remove protective trunk wrap and burlap from trees after snow has melted.
- Fertilize spring flowering bulbs such as tulips, daffodil, fritillaria and crocus.
- Plant cold hardy hellebores (Lenten roses), pansies and primrose.
- Subscribe to the Utah Pests IPM Advisories for timely tips on controlling pests
- Prune berries/fruit trees such as apples, pears, peaches, cherries, plums and apricots.
- Apply Horticulture oils at bud break (delayed dormant) in fruit trees to control pests.
- Apply pre-emergent herbicides in late March – mid April to control annual weeds in your lawn (crabgrass, spurge...).
- Sharpen mower blades and prepare for the season. **Set mower height to mow 2 1/2 to 3 inches tall, mow at this height for the entire summer.**
- Consider including a native fruiting species in the landscape, including chokecherry, elderberry, serviceberry or currant.
- Mechanically control young garden weeds by hoeing/hand pulling. Especially bindweed.
- Protect fruit blossoms and tender garden plants from late critical freezing temperatures.
Don't plant tomatoes until Memorial Day!
- Prune roses until after buds begin to swell to avoid late frosts damaging new growth.
- Prune spring flowering shrubs (those that bloom before June) AFTER they have bloomed to encourage new flower buds for next season (forsythia, lilacs, mock orange)
- Divide crowded, fall-blooming perennials and cool season ornamental grasses when new growth begins to emerge. Use twine and loppers on tall grasses.

- Use organic (wood chips or bark) mulches to retain soil moisture by shrubs and trees.
- Plant a tree to Celebrate National Arbor Day. The USU Tree Browser treebrowser.org offers an interactive list of tree species adapted to the Intermountain West.
- Apply pre-emergent herbicides in late March – mid April to control annual weeds in your lawn (crabgrass, spurge...).
- Aerate with hollow core aerator when turfgrass is actively growing (April – June).
- Check sprinkler systems for leaks, clean filters, fix and align heads.

Pests and Problems:

- Download 'Utah Home Orchard Pest Management Guide'.
- Damping off is a fungal disease that affects new seedlings.
- Aspen leaf spot and Anthracnose may be prevalent during cool, wet springs. Control measures should occur at bud break.
- Control rust mites in apple and pear trees after leaves have emerged/expanded by ½"
- For pears, apply dormant oil when leaf buds swell. This smothers eggs of the Pear psylla that are laid on buds by overwintering adults
- Learn about common problems in: apples, peaches and nectarines, cherries, pears, plums or apricots.
- Reduce chemical use to promote beneficial insects in your landscape.
- Treat for Coryneum blight in stone fruits (cherries, peaches, nectarines, apricots and plums) at shuck split (approximately 10 days after flower petals drop).
- Treat for powdery mildew on apples beginning when leaves are emerging (at 1/2 inch green) until June.
- Monitor wet weather during bloom in apples, pears and hawthorns to determine whether to treat for Fire blight.
- Treat fruit trees for cat facing insects (stink bugs...) to prevent dimples and pucker marks
- Preventative control for Peach twig borer in peaches, nectarines and apricots helps reduce twig and fruit damage later in the season.
- Control spring flying bark beetles in pine trees and other conifers.
- Protect birch trees infested by the Bronze birch borer with systemic pesticides.
- Watch for Cutworm damage in turfgrass and new vegetable starts.

Join the Facebook Group "Utah's Gardening Experts" — get advice backed by research. Consider becoming a Master Gardener next year! Registration begins in January 2024 at <https://extension.usu.edu/saltlake/garden/master-gardener>



Small early spring blooming bulbs

Plant in fall; February to March bloom time

Glory-of-the-Snow



Chionodoxa forbesii

Dwarf Iris



Iris reticulata

Siberian Squill



Scilla siberica

Snowdrops



Galanthus

Winter Aconite



Eranthis hymalis 🐇

Grecian Windflowers



Anemone blanda

Uncommon spring bulbs

Many of these are pricey, but order early (in spring for fall delivery).

Blue Fools Onion



Triteleia aquarius

Sicilian Honey Lily



Nectaroscordum siculum

Alpine Rosy Bells



Allium oreophilum

Uncommon spring bulbs

Search by *Latin name* to find sellers

Lavender Mountain Lilies



Ixiolirion tataricum

'Blue Melody' Camassia



Camassia quamash

Vegetable Firecracker



Dichelostemma ida-maia

Starflower



Ipheion uniflorum

Early Stardrift



Puschkinia libanotica

Toad Lily



Tricyrtis

English Bluebells



Hyacinthoides non-scripta

Trout Lily



Erythronium

Turk's Cap Lily



Lilium martagon

Bigger spring bulbs

Fritillaria

These give off a distinct skunky smell, but that makes them deer-resistant

Crown Imperial



Fritillaria imperialis, 'Rubra'/'Lutea'

Checkered Lily, Guinea-Hen



Fritillaria meleagris.

Foxes Grape Flower



Fritillaria uva-vulpis

Persian Lily



Fritillaria persica

Foxtail Lily



Eremurus

- Unusually large octopus bulb
- Field of foxtail lilies at Red Butte by creek behind Rose Garden
- Will multiply

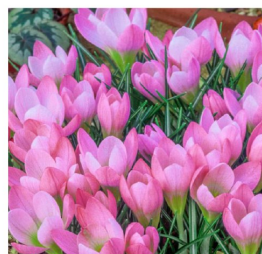


New Crocus colors

There's more than just purple, white, and yellow



'Orange Monarch'



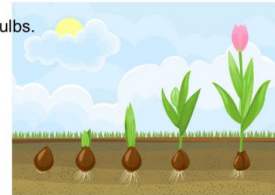
'Firefly'



'Pickwick' Giant stripe

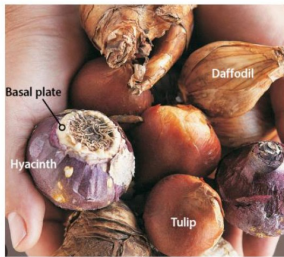
Bulb resources

- Brent and Becky's brentandbeckysbulbs.com You must know what you are searching for. Sometimes fall or spring bulbs not available until season begins. Beloved by local gardeners.
- QFB Gardening gbfgardening.com Major supplier for Keukenhof Gardens, worldwide supplier of high quality bulbs. Pricing is in euros. Free shipping over €250, only €30 for orders to €125, €15 for €125-€250
- K. van Bourgondien dutchbulbs.com High quality wholesale supplier of Dutch bulbs since 1845
- Breck's brecks.com Largest American importer of bulbs from Holland since 1818. Consider their shipping fees before you submit your order.
- Dutch Grown dutchgrown.com Lots of the lesser known bulbs.
- Burpee burpee.com Known for their seeds, but carries a standard collection of the most common bulbs at reasonable prices.
- White Flower Farm whiteflowerfarm.com Large selection of specialty bulbs.



- Michigan Bulb Company michiganbulb.com Lots of "other flower bulbs."
- American Meadows americanmeadows.com Has category of "unique spring bulbs," plus specializes in wildflowers and deer-resistant plants.
- John Scheepers Inc. johnscheepers.com Many uncommon bulbs (their address is 23 Tulip Drive!)
- Schreiner's Iris Gardens schreinersgardens.com Specializes in iris.
- Longfield Gardens longfield-gardens.com Has very esoteric bulbs (crinum, nerines, acidanthera).

Search by *Latin name*



Sign up for newsletters, texts to get deals on shipping or end-of-season closeouts (by June, these companies are concerned about next year's summer dahlias and want to pack up the leftover fall planted inventory for shipping).

No one will know if you buy your bulbs from Costco, Home Depot or Lowe's — use for mass displays (just please don't buy their blueberries, they do not grow in Utah's alkaline soil)

The tulips you buy at grocery stores year round (Costco, Trader Joe's) are part of the **55 million tulips** grown in northern Virginia greenhouses and are not from Holland!

Include Water-Efficient Practices in April Gardening Plans

There is a wealth of resources available to us in Utah regarding gardening and water conservation, including Utah State University's Extension Service.. This article is from USU's website: extension.usu.edu.

As drought concerns in Utah continue this year, it's important to begin the gardening season with water-efficient practices in mind. USU Extension provides a website with drought information and resources at drought.usu.edu. Topics include in-home water conservation, landscape and garden water conservation, range and livestock drought resources, crops resources, economic resources available during a drought, and general information on water conservation. In addition is the Center for Water-Efficient Landscaping website, cwel.usu.edu. It includes information about the webinar series "Water Well with CWEL," designing a water-wise landscape, the #Wait2Water campaign, and more.

Keeping water-efficient practices in mind, consider these tips as you prepare your yard and garden this year. Included are links from the Utah State University Extension Gardeners Almanac.

- Plant peas in the garden every 2-3 weeks (until early May) to extend the harvest.
- Check out the fact sheets produced by USU Extension. There are more than 55 on herbs and vegetables!
- Mechanically control young garden weeds by hoeing or hand pulling.
- Protect fruit blossoms and tender garden plants from late freezing



temperatures. Click here for critical temperatures for frost damage on fruit trees.

- If storing bulbs, check their condition to ensure that they are firm, and remove any that are soft or rotten.
- If locally available, plant bare root trees and shrubs, keeping the exposed roots moist until planted.
- Wait to prune roses until after buds begin to swell to avoid late frost damage to new growth.
- Prune spring flowering shrubs (those that bloom before June) after they have bloomed to encourage new flower buds for next season.
- Divide crowded, fall-blooming perennials.
- Divide cool-season ornamental grasses when new growth begins to emerge.
- Apply chelated iron to plants with prior problems with iron chlorosis.
- Use organic mulches (wood chips or bark) to retain soil moisture around shrubs and trees.
- Plant a tree to Celebrate National Arbor Day. The USU Tree Browser offers an interactive list of tree species adapted to the Intermountain West.
- Apply pre-emergent herbicides in late March to mid-April to control annual weeds in your lawn, such as crabgrass and spurge.
- In compacted sites, aerate with a hollow core aerator when turfgrass is actively growing in April to June.
- Check sprinkler systems for leaks. Also, clean filters, and fix and align heads.



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 or be on the tour, please let us know! The 2023 tour can only happen with your participation!

Check out the Club's website at UtahWaterGardenClub.org.

Club Officers & Directors

Officers

President: Daniel Peel
435-660-0784
danielpeel@me.com

Vice-President: Kelly Flint
801-680-3040
kflint3040@msn.com

Secretary: Zoe Godbois
435-623-5100
zoecast@gmail.com

Treasurer: Lewis Wayman
801-916-2500
Lewwayman@gmail.com

Board of Directors

Ty Rosser
801-995-8521
ty@utahlights.com

Gil Avellar
801-572-0853
trout42@hotmail.com

Michael Pfafflin
801-652-0386
michaelpfafflin@mac.com

Richard Cobbley
Past President
801-641-0179
randcobb@comcast.net



Call Lewis Wayman at
801-916-2500