

**This Year:**  
*CWGS at 25*  
**Our Silver Anniversary**

**May 18: "Plant Swap and More!"** 1:30 to 3:30, Gates Hall. See this issue's cover article for details.

**June 8: Annual Plant Sale**  
9:00 to 3:00, Morrison Ctr.

**June 22: Waterside Program**  
2:00, Home of Nancy and Werner Neupert, Boulder  
Program: *"The Naturalized Pond"*

**July 12: Pond Tour/Picnic**  
11:00 to 4:00 Picnic at 5:00

**July 26 and 27: Water Blossom Festival and 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Festivities, DBG.**

**Aug. 17: Waterside Program**  
2:00, Home of Deirdre Parker, Boulder

**Sep. 14: Annual Mtg. And Board Elections**  
1:30 to 3:30, Gates Hall

**Oct. 5: Possible Extra Mtg.**  
Time, location and Program to be determined

**Dec. 7: Holiday Banquet**  
6:00 – 9:00 Morrison Ctr.



Volume 25 Number 3

*25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year*

May 2008

## Hello, fellow water garden enthusiasts.

*May brings a "Plant swap and More!"*

*By Vicki Aber, CWGS President*

Spring is finally here. In my ponds, the fish are starting to beg for food, and the leaves on the lilies are stretching for the surface. It's always wonderful to see the signs of life returning in our gardens. And...it's also the time we see signs of life returning to our club.

Our April 9<sup>th</sup> "Get Wet" event was a great success. (Jim Arneill's recap is on page 3.)

Coming up on May 18<sup>th</sup> we hold our "Plant Swap And More" in Gates Hall at Denver Botanic Gardens. This meeting was a big hit last year. We had lots of participation and everyone went home with a new treasure.

Bring something you have an abundance of and trade for something you'd like. Trades will be one for one. If you bring six items, you'll get six items. Swap items should be pond related but don't necessarily need to be plants. If you have a piece of equipment or decoration that you don't need anymore, that would be fine.

You might be called upon to talk about the plant you brought and explain what has worked for you in growing it.

If you don't have anything to trade, come anyway and bring your questions. We plan on having a

roundtable discussion about favorite plants. We'll discuss the favorite plant vote that's been ongoing in the newsletter and maybe have a little 'caucus'.

We'll also have reference materials and experienced members on the 18<sup>th</sup> to address problems you may be having.

**Program Sunday May 18<sup>th</sup>  
1:30 to 3:00 pm - Gates Hall, DBG**

## "Plant Swap and More"

**Bring a plant you have too many of.  
Trade for something you'd like.  
Questions or problems? Bring those,  
too! ...The roundtable will help.**

It isn't too soon to start thinking about the Society's plant sale June 8<sup>th</sup>. We've started sign-up sheets for help with the sale. We will need helpers on Saturday, June 7 to get the plants unpacked, labeled and ready to put out. And, we'll need help the day of the sale to organize and assist shoppers.

If you haven't signed up yet, do so at the May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, or you can contact me by phone (303.423.9216) or by email at docvicki@msn.com. We will provide donuts in the morning and a lunch both days for the workers on that shift.

*(Continued on second column of page 8)*

Visit us online at [www.colowatergardensociety.org](http://www.colowatergardensociety.org)

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## Water Gardening Opportunities at Hudson Gardens

A longtime volunteer for Hudson Gardens and Denver Botanic Gardens, Past CWGS President Bob Hoffman leads the volunteer water gardening effort at Hudson Gardens in Lakewood. Each year Bob and a handful of helpers including Lynn Novitsky, another Society member, bring the water features at Hudson Gardens to bloom.

At present Bob and his volunteers are beginning to up-pot plants and, perhaps, starting the division of the Garden's collection of hardy waterlilies. Later in the season work may turn to the horticulture of lotus, for which Hudson Gardens is noted, or to the annual display of tropical waterlilies and marginals. In recent years, Hudson Gardens has enjoyed great success raising *N. Victoria*, the famously prickly genus of giant tropical waterlily that in our climate must be planted outdoors anew each year.

There's a lot to be done and much for novices and experienced water gardeners, alike, to learn from this expert team. Why not join them? It's a great way to receive hands-on training while you help the water gardening community maintain a valuable resource.

Generally, Bob and his crew meet once a week, mid-week, during the growing season. However, they adapt to need and weather so the schedule may vary from week to week. For information about upcoming workdays and water gardening opportunities at Hudson Gardens, call Bob Hoffman 303.987.0124.

## Mark your calendar for These Water Plant Sales:

### May 9 & 10:

For your early season water gardening purchases, visit the Water Plants Division of the DBG Spring sale. The Division booth, which is operated by members of CWGS, will offer a wide range of hardy waterlilies, hardy and tropical marginals, floating and emergent species, water garden supplies, and lotus.

The majority of the plants are flown in immediately prior to the sale, and we'll also have some "garden grown" plants that offer the benefit of being somewhat larger and acclimatized.

A wide range of species will be marketed, including one of CWGS President Vicki Aber's favorites, the Rain Lily. (See Vicki's focus article on page 5 of this issue)

### June 8:

CWGS holds its annual sale in the Morrison Center at DBG. This event is always the Metro's largest and most diverse water gardening market. It includes both commercially raised and locally grown species, as well as gardening supplies.

The CWGS Plant Sale offers a wide range of tropical lilies that cannot be marketed at the earlier DBG sale and are unlikely to be found at local nurseries. Our prices can't be beat. Your purchases help to support the Society while you enjoy the convenience of one-stop water garden shopping. Look for details in next month's issue (June) of *The Water Garden*, but mark your calendar now. The sale lasts only one day!

## "Get Wet..." A bit soggy, but better than ever!



Keith Funk discusses Green Gardening (below)

Cyndie Thomas (left) narrates her presentation on "Best Water Plants for Colorado"

Photos by Jim Arneill

By Jim Arneill

When water gardeners set out the evening of April 9<sup>th</sup> to attend this year's "Get Wet – Water Gardening Fun in 2008!", they probably didn't expect to get wet literally. Nevertheless, more than 50 people braved the weather to enjoy a very informative and entertaining evening.

Representatives from many of the Metro's garden and pond centers operated displays before and after the formal program. CWGS greatly appreciates the support of these retailers. As one of its goals, "Get Wet" seeks to kick-off the season by raising awareness of the valuable resources that are available from these centers. Their knowledgeable staffs showed that they have lots to offer Denver's water gardeners!

Keith Funk, Garden Wise Guy, began the evening's program with an excellent conversation about "Green Gardening," an approach that strives to use products that are both

environmentally friendly and effective. Keith blended knowledge with his signature humor to highlight the diverse product lines now available to water gardeners interested in environmentally sensitive and sustainable practices.

Past CWGS President Cyndie Thomas followed with a visually lush and extensive presentation on plants that she knows to perform "best" in our climate. And, of course, Cyndie included her own personal favorites developed from many years of experience. The list of plants that Cyndie covered in her PowerPoint presentation is available at <http://www.natures-water.com>

**CWGS thanks the garden centers and pond stores that participated in Get Wet 2008:**

**Arapahoe Acres  
City Floral  
Falls by Fox  
Highlands Garden Center  
Jared's Garden Center  
Nick's Garden Center and Farm Market  
Tagawa Garden Center and Florist  
True Pump and Equipment  
Wilmore's Garden Center**

Joe Tomocik, Curator of Water Gardens at Denver Botanic Gardens (DBG), shared a bit about plans for major construction at the Gardens. He also highlighted the "Rocky Mountain Legacy" collection of hardy waterlilies - plants that are trusted performers in our climate. Joe is very willing to share his expertise with the general public. He encouraged interested newcomers to learn as they participate in Sunday morning water

(continued on page 4)

*("Get Wet"...continued from page 3)*

gardening sessions held in spring and fall at DBG.

At the end of the program, Jim Arneill gave an overview of upcoming CWGS events. Jim encouraged everyone to take advantage of the exciting Society programs planned in 2008, including the "Water Blossom Festival 2008," which also celebrates CWGS' 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Throughout the evening there were drawings for the many door prizes provided by Keith, Cyndie, and Highlands Garden Center. We thank them for their generosity!

"Get Wet" concluded with opportunities to visit some more with local garden and pond center representatives or to learn from concurrent demonstrations by Society members.

Joe Mascarenas shared his portfolio of beautiful photographs and gave tips for capturing the allure of water features using digital photography. Bill Powell demonstrated proper dividing techniques for different types of pond plants, and Bob Hoffman shared his expertise at the "Ask the Experts" table.

It was a fun and productive evening. Those attending left excited about the interesting plants and novel products they can now add to their ponds to make this year better than ever!

**Treasurer's Report**

CWGS Balance  
As of mid April  
**\$ 17,363.37**

**New and Renewing Members**

- Bill & Janet Bathurst**  
Arvada, CO
- Chris & Sue Blakeslee**  
Centennial, CO
- Gail Goldberg**  
Santa Fe, NM
- Nancy Novinger Hagerty**  
Centennial, CO
- Keith & Terry Grisham**  
Elizabeth, CO
- Trina Jacobson & Les Petrash**  
Denver, CO
- Nancy & Lynn Jewett**  
Aurora, CO
- Melba Johnston**  
Lakewood, CO
- Kerstin Karloev**  
Lakewood, CO
- Bud & Debbi Kiebler**  
Franktown, CO
- Ken Lange**  
Denver, CO
- Cathy Manley**  
Lafayette, CO
- Ed Moore (New)**  
Denver, CO
- Dierdre Parker**  
Boulder, CO
- Mike & Vickie Pervich**  
Centennial, CO
- Lynn Novitsky**  
Littleton, CO
- Melissa & Joseph Shopnitz**  
Loveland, CO
- Bob and Cathy Timm (New)**  
Denver, CO
- Chauncey Walden**  
Parker, CO
- Jim & Bev Wohlenhaus (New)**  
Westminster, CO

*Welcome new members!*

**Coming July 26 & 27...**

**The 2008 Water Blossom Festival And 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration!**

...Look for announcement of the keynote speaker in the Journal's June issue.

**You Need Ponds...**

**... In Order To Have a Pond Tour**

I'm writing this article as I look out on my pond through falling snow. Why in the world am I thinking about the 2008 CWGS Pond Tour? It's months away!

Well... very soon a map showing the ponds on the tour and the location of the picnic needs to be finalized. The picnic site will either be at one of the ponds in the tour or at a park situated reasonably close by the tour circuit.

We learned last year that municipalities reserve park sites early in the spring for summer activities. Alas, a park site cannot be reserved until the ponds in the tour are known. So, you see the need to devise the tour roster soon.

This year we return to a stand-alone, single day CWGS pond tour. Last summer's piggy-backed two-day tour and picnic with the Rocky Mt. Koi Club was a success worth repeating we thought, but logistics make that impossible this time round.

We're open for suggestions for ways to make the 2008 tour and picnic memorable and fun. In the past we've solicited ponds in a given quadrant of the metropolitan area, so as to make for less driving. That approach requires identifying a cluster of nearby sites. It would also be possible to have a scatter-shot tour with sites occurring all over the metro area, including both small Capitol Hill gardens and larger suburban properties, but of course more driving would be entailed.

In any case we need some ponds...somewhere!

Please nominate your feature for the Tour this summer. Remember, your water feature can be large or small - the classic professionally constructed naturalized pond and waterfall, or a quirky and intimate water garden of your own device. We welcome, and really want to solicit, a wide variety of water garden types. Ponds, cascades, reflecting pools, wildlife sanctuaries, bog gardens, containers - all are great nominations.

And, if you happen to know of someone with an interesting feature, but who is not a member of the Society, twist their arm. Everyone who shows a feature on the Tour will receive a year's free membership and thereby become a member or extend their membership for a year at no cost.

**Remember?**

*Don and Sue Eloe's pond from the '07 tour*

The Pond Tour and Picnic will take place on July 12. Call Gary Blubaugh (303-989-4464) or Jonathan Hough (303-499-6578) to nominate your pond, or if you have any questions or observations about this year's tour and picnic plans.

*Gary Blubaugh,*

*For the Pond Tour and Picnic Committee*

**The Urban Water Garden...**

...(continued from page 7)

Even if you do choose to dig a traditional pond, it need not be large or naturalized in appearance. Small rectangular ponds are often more suited to traditional settings and contemporary architecture than are the irregular shapes associated with the "English" landscape tradition.

Looking for some ideas? Denver Botanic Garden's theme for this season ("Urban Nature") explores alternative visions for gardening in the confines of the built environment. (See Sarada Krishnan's article on page 6.)

For additional inspiration you might consult "The Water Garden" by Anthony Paul and Yvonne Rees and the "Complete Guide to Water Gardens, Ponds, and Fountains" by Kathleen Fisher. For \$8 you can buy "Great Gardens," a Taunton Press publication now on the local magazine racks. Although, or perhaps because, the magazine doesn't focus exclusively on water gardening, it includes a wealth of novel ideas for incorporating water into the urban (and suburban) landscape.

Two of "Great Gardens" entries are particularly innovative. An El Paso residence that's featured for its colorful, walled dry garden also includes a contrasting rill and Koi pond as a transition to traditional landscaping. And a magical "Urban Diversion" in a small California backyard offers visitors, as a reward for negotiating its quirky jungle, the sudden relief of open space in the form of a raised concrete pond fitted with pottery and chards of found concrete ornaments. It's the perfect urban oasis.

**Hello, fellow water garden enthusiasts...**

...(continued from front page)

Volunteers at the June sale will be awarded 'Lily Bucks' to use toward purchase of plants and products. For each hour that you work, you'll get one Lily Buck worth one dollar off the price of your purchase at the sale!

We can also use donated plants. If you have plants to donate, we ask you bring them Saturday so we can get them ready to put out.

So far I haven't heard much about what people want at the sale this year. If we don't hear from you, I don't want any complaints that we didn't have what you wanted!!!!

**Online Container Water Garden Competition:**

Taunton Press, the publisher of Fine Gardening Magazine and "Great Gardens" (the publication mentioned in the article at the left of this box) is currently running a competition for the best water garden in a pot.

For more details visit:

[www.taunton.com/finegardening](http://www.taunton.com/finegardening)

Then, click on "Magazine extras." From the list, select the active link entitled:

**"Enter the 2008 Container Design Challenge Create a water garden in a pot."**

The contest, which continues until August 16, awards products and a \$100 Lilypons gift certificate to the winner.

**Focus on:  
The Rain Lily  
Zephyranthes candida**

By Vickie Aber

I'd like to try something new in the way of newsletter articles. What I hope for are short little snippets about one particular plant. I'll get it started with a plant I got a few years ago and really like. I have a couple more ideas for articles like this but all you water gardeners out there, feel free to add your two cents about a plant that's featured or a favorite of yours.



**Zephyranthes candida**

**Common names:**

- Zephyrlily
- Autumn Rain Lily
- Peruvian Swamp Lily.

**Zone 7-10**

The Rain Lily is native to Argentina. The natural habitat varies from desert to bog depending on

the time of year. The plant has adapted by going dormant in the dry periods and springing to life when the rains come.

I purchased my plant 3 years ago at the CWGS plant sale. It has deep green leaves that are roundish and look like chives. The flowers on mine are white, but there are pink varieties also. The flowers are held erect and shaped somewhat like a crocus.

The show starts in mid to late summer and continues throughout the growing season. I've had up to twenty blooms at a time on my plant. I bring it inside in the fall and continue to enjoy the flowers through December. Judging from what I have read about the native environment, it would probably be ok to let them dry out and die back during the winter months. I haven't been brave enough to do this and continue to enjoy my lily as a houseplant all winter.

My Rain Lily is planted in garden soil and submerged slightly in the pond in the summer months. It may get an occasional fertilizer tablet but I'm bad about fertilizing my marginals.

The Rain Lily can be propagated by seed or division. I don't know much personally about seed propagation. I haven't tried that, but my Rain Lily is now ready to divide. Hmmm, there just might be some at the swap in May!

**Board Business Meetings in 2008:**

- May 18: 12:00 PM - Gates Hall, DBG
- July 20: 2:00 PM - Classroom B, DBG  
(Note location change)
- Sept. 14: 12:00 PM - Gates Hall, DBG
- Oct. 5: 2:30 PM - Waring House, DBG

**All members are welcome. Please join us!**

## Urban Gardening: Incorporating Nature into Urban Landscapes

By Sarada Krishnan, Director of Horticulture Denver Botanic Gardens

Humans are innately connected to other living organisms. In his famous book 'Biophilia', E.O. Wilson describes biophilia as "the connections that human beings subconsciously seek with the rest of life." He proposed the possibility that the deep affiliations humans have with nature are rooted in our biology. In today's rapidly developing urban society, the need to connect with nature has become increasingly apparent.

Many urban dwellers today live in apartments or small spaces with limited opportunity to view wildlife or engage in organic activities like gardening. Using available space, a small part of nature can be brought into our lives through specialized gardening techniques. Plants can be grown inside the house or on rooftops, terraces and balconies. Container gardens, hydroponics and rooftop gardens are some of the ways that urban gardeners have adapted to coping with limited space.

Container gardening is one of the best solutions for the urban dweller. Containers of varying sizes and shapes can be used to grow almost anything from flowers and vegetables to even water plants. The container water garden displays at Denver Botanic Gardens feature some of the best combinations of aquatic plants that any urbanite can recreate in their own containers. One installation that is popular with our visitors, both children and adults alike, is the 'Flytrap Feast' featuring carnivorous plants in

containers aesthetically displayed in the Oak Grove.

The 2008 exhibition at Denver Botanic Gardens, "Urban Nature," debuting April 19<sup>th</sup> will feature many horticultural installations depicting ways in which urban dwellers can bring nature to their own lives through container gardens, balcony displays, community gardens and container water gardens. The horticultural displays will go up in May after the danger of frost is past. ■

Reference:  
Wilson, E.O. 1984. *Biophilia*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

### In The Pond This Month:

**Perhaps you've already begun your spring pond chores, but if not, here's a short list.**

*Even if you cleaned your pond in the fall, dredge for leaves, detritus, and fish mulm.*

*Test water quality. PH should be around 7.*

*Get the pond filtration and aeration running.*

*Make a partial water change. 10% is usually adequate. Don't completely empty. Be sure to treat with de-chlorinator capable of neutralizing chloramine.*

*Begin feeding fish once the water reaches 50 degrees, but don't overfeed, and use a low protein wheat germ based food.*

*Begin division or up-potting of hardy waterlilies and marginals as the weather and cool water temperatures will allow.*

*Once the air temperature stays above freezing, add some tropical floaters to provide early shading of the water. This will reduce algae growth.*

## The Urban Water Garden... ...doesn't have to be "natural"

By Bill Powell

Although the phrase "water garden" often calls to mind the image of a large, naturalized basin lush with waterlilies at its center and marginals punctuating a rocky shore, you don't need acreage and romantic vision to create an appealing water garden in your yard. You don't even need a yard; a balcony will do.

Many home gardeners are inspired by direct observation of mountain ponds and streams or, indirectly, by the ingrained tradition of the English landscape tradition that extends from the landscape paintings of Claude Lorraine through eighteenth century estate "improvers" William Kent and Capability Brown, to Frederick Law Olmsted, the father of American Landscape Architecture. Olmsted's idealized man-made "natural" lakes in New York's Central Park popularized a look that's since become a norm.

There's nothing wrong with the model this tradition presents. It's an appealing, although highly stylized, interpretation of nature that's successfully embellished many a home or park, large and small.

The success of the genre is such that lots of people have come to view a naturalized pond and cascading waterfall as the sole approach to water gardening, and consequently a major obstacle to their interest. They'll say "Oh, we don't have the room for a pond; our yard's too small," or "I'd love to water-garden, but I can't because I live in condo." Whereas, the reality is that almost any outside space can accommodate a water garden. You need only think creatively and consider some other cultural models.

Latin cultures, influenced by both climate and Persian horticultural motifs that spread with Islam, offer alternative water garden approaches that are well suited to courtyards and small side yards. Instead of a wide cascade across boulders that take a backhoe to place, consider a narrow waterway or rill, accented by a disappearing fountain.

Or try another historic device common to arid areas - container gardens. They fit in any yard, patio, or balcony.

In tight spaces hang your water garden on a wall or fence. Italianate and Mediterranean traditions often decorate the walls of a



Top: The "rill" leading from my fountain to a small rectangular pond beyond in the shadows.

Right: a grand Moorish precedent – photo from [www.gardening-uk](http://www.gardening-uk).

courtyard, house, or retaining structure with a projecting fountain. The device can be self-contained or overflow into a basin filled with plants, but it takes little room and offers additional benefits for tight urban sites: The sound of water helps to mask street noise. And water also provides evaporative cooling for sun-drenched walls that would otherwise radiate heat to your patio or entry.

(Continued on page 8)

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Pond Experience (Beginner) \_\_\_\_\_ (Some Skill) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pro) \_\_\_\_\_

*\* Note: Providing your e-mail address authorizes and enables CWGS to send you notifications of interest from time to time. CWGS does not share e-mail addresses with other entities.*

Contact me concerning volunteer opportunities I have checked below:  
DBG Volunteer Sundays \_\_\_\_\_ Water Plants booth, DBG May Sale \_\_\_\_\_  
Hudson Gardens \_\_\_\_\_ Newsletter \_\_\_\_\_ CWGS Plant Sale (June) \_\_\_\_\_ Pond Tour (July) \_\_\_\_\_  
Water Blossom / Anniversary Festival (July) \_\_\_\_\_ Holiday Party (Dec.) \_\_\_\_\_

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using **PayPal****

**YOU CHOOSE 2008**  
**Plant Primary**

Fill out and bring to  
**“Plant Swap & More”**  
May 18 - 1:30 pm  
Gates Hall, DBG!

In keeping with the election year we thought we'd hold an election of favorite plants. To nominate your favorite plants in the following categories, just tear out this form and mail it to:

**Vicki Aber**  
8046 Parfet Way  
Arvada, CO 80005

*If you really can't decide, you may nominate more than one per category. We'll have an 'election' later this year once we have the nominees in.*

Favorite Hardy Lily \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite Tropical Lily \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite Hardy Marginal plant \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite Tropical Marginal plant \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite plant that you would like to have, but don't \_\_\_\_\_

*Nominate now; don't leave your favorite plant high and dry. Let's see what a versatile group of plants we can assemble for the election. (Who knows, if you reveal a plant you'd really like, but don't yet have, maybe another Member will share a piece with you?)*