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Online at:  
[www.colowatergardensociety.org](http://www.colowatergardensociety.org)

## Remembering Stan



## Get Wet 2011 program explores Colorado's wetlands

*By Jim Arneill*

If you think of Colorado's landscape as predominantly "high and dry" - all high plains, plateau and rocky ranges, you're overlooking a significant and unique habitat - our wetlands. On the evening of Thursday April 21, Get Wet 2011 kicks off the water gardening season with a program that explores the intricate web of botanic life along Colorado's wetlands and rivers.

Admission to Denver Botanic Gardens for the program is free, as is the program itself. When you arrive at the Gardens, enter through the after-hours "group" entrance to the south (left) of the new Visitor Center. Look for CWGS signs that will direct you to the main education building. Walk through to the rear of the lobby court garden display. Gates Hall is located in the back left corner.

From 6:30 – 7:00 pm in the foyer outside Gates Hall, representatives from major garden centers and pond businesses in the metropolitan area will have displays and information about local water gardening resources and services.

At 7:00 Megan Bowes, botanist and plant ecologist with the Colorado Native Plant Society will present "Colorado's Wild and Wonderful Wetlands." Megan's program will comment on the distinctive nature of Colorado's wetland and riparian ecosystems and how they result in unique plants and soils. Her audio/visual presentation will also feature many common wetland plant species, especially those appropriate for water gardens.

*(continued on page 4)*

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[www.colowatergardensociety.org](http://www.colowatergardensociety.org)

**CWGS Treasurer's Report:**  
Balance as of March 31  
\$11,431.35

**Need to join or renew?...**  
... The application is on page 9

**Does CWGS have your current email address? If you're not sure, contact us.**

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[Dorothy.Martinez@colowatergardensociety.org](mailto:Dorothy.Martinez@colowatergardensociety.org).

Photos courtesy of Lois Mayerchak



**Above:**  
Stan Skinger in the Monet Pond at DBG examining the after-math of a hailstorm that destroyed the lily collection just before the IWGS symposium in 1997

**Below:**  
Stan explains the tropical lily propagation program to visitors at the Gardens' greenhouse.



## Stan Skinger...

### ...Waterlily Heaven

When a dear, close friend passes I am initially shocked and saddened. As time goes by I miss him or her differently and more. Next I begin to cherish the memories. And finally ... inspiration rules.

Genuinely kind, humble and noble is how Lois Mayerchak described Stan Skinger. Sweet and beautiful!

#### Stan and Lookout Mountain

Enthusiastic, - that's what sticks in my mind of our first meeting. Stan was excited about water gardening, volunteering, and the Gardens.

He talked about his work with the troubled kids at Lookout Mountain Youth Services center. If the kids were old enough, they would have been in prison. I had so much respect for what Stan was doing for the kids. Increasingly, he had so many questions about water gardening.

And I always wanted to know what was new with the kids.

Stan dodged nothing. He took on the hardest things without a whimper. Soon he was volunteering and bringing the kids (as many as six or seven) with him. Stan would work with them and the dividing and potting chores were done quickly and efficiently.

Stan and the kids brought their lunches and they always had one for me. We had a good time.

#### Tropical Waterlilies

I could see Stan had his eyes on the tropical waterlilies, especially the propagation of tropical waterlilies. He was a great student, always curious and doing his best. Soon he was really good and getting better. He befriended the most astute water gardeners and hybridizers. Nancy Styler, Kit Knotts, William Frase, Andreas Protopapas, Bruce McLane and Verena Lichti were some of his favorites.

Like many of us, Stan could not resist the sight of a waterlily, and his propagation talents were many. He was really fond of the species plants. The hail during the 1997 IWGS Symposium did little to dampen his spirits. He basked amongst the confetti-like leaves lecturing on the merits and propagation strategies of such gems as *Nymphaea micrantha*, *N. caerulea* and *N. gigantea*.

#### Lotuses and Victorias

Stan's enthusiasm was not limited to tropical waterlilies. Lotuses and Victorias soon became favorites as well. He made a trip to the Amazon and even had aspirations of moving there.

*(continued on page 8)*



## About Megan Bowes, Program speaker at Get Wet

by Bill Powell



**Above:**  
Megan Bowes, principal speaker for Get Wet, caught in her natural wetland habitat near the summit of Trail Ridge Road in Rocky Mountain National Park.

As the photo shows, seasonal wetlands are not limited to river valleys.

Megan Bowes, our principal speaker at Get Wet 2011, is a botanist and plant ecologist who serves as the Chair of both the 'Education and Outreach' and 'Horticulture and Restoration' committees of the Colorado Native Plant Society. Through these efforts she has developed educational programs and trainings for the general public and individual groups like the Colorado Native Plant Master Program and the National Wildlife Society's Habitat Stewards Program.

Megan is employed with the City of Boulder's Open Space and Mountain Parks Department, where she mapped a good deal of their wetland vegetation; she is currently working with others to develop restoration plans for many of their riparian corridors.

### Return of the native:

Megan's program and this year's focus for Get Wet coincide with increased interest in native species and related concerns about the impact of non-indigenous plants on natural habitat. (The article "Invasive Or Valuable" in last month's issue of *The WaterGarden* covered recent legislative approaches to restricting invasive non-native species in Texas.)

The 2011 Annual Plant Sale at Denver Botanic Gardens (May 5 – 7) is also highlighting native plants. The Sale's theme "*Return to your roots with plants native to Colorado*" promotes the joys of going native. For more details about the sale, see the articles on page 7 and 8 of this issue.

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## Get Wet 2011 *(continued from front page)*

The evening will include updates on the ever-changing water features at DBG and other topics of interest by Joe Tomocik, Aquatic Collection Curator. In addition, CWGS Honorary Life Member Lois Mayerchak will present a short memorial tribute to Stan Skinger, a former CWGS member who made notable contributions to the Club, Denver Botanic Gardens, and the international water gardening world. Jim Arneill will also preview upcoming water gardening events in 2011.

From 8:30 – 9:00 you can visit again with resource representatives in the Gates foyer or speak with knowledgeable gardeners from the Colorado Water Garden Society or Denver Botanic Gardens at the "Ask the Experts" table. If you have the odd botanic

or pond-keeping question that's been bugging you, here's a chance to ask it. If you have a question regarding native species, you're really in luck for not only will Megan be available, so will members of the Colorado Native Plant Society, which will also have display space in the Gates lobby.

And, along the way just for fun, we'll have complimentary refreshments and drawings for several fun pond-related door prizes. We hope you will join us for an entertaining and informative evening.

For more information about Get Wet, contact Jim Arneill (303) 843-9619.

## Perils of having a pond...

*...Making it safer for children and easier care for the aging.*

*by Cyndie and Mike Thomas*

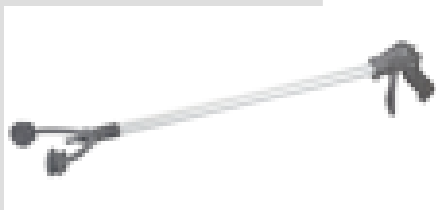
*Photo by Bruce Polkowsky*



**Above:**  
Mike and Cyndie Thomas, honorary life members of CWGS, beside one of their many water features.

Stacked tubs like these are one way to introduce plants, water, and even fish to your landscape without sacrificing child safety. Above-ground tubs and ponds also provide for easier maintenance access by aging or disabled people.

**Below:**  
“The grabber” – a commercially available device that can help aging pond owners continue to care for their water features.



Pond design plays a major role in its long-term enjoyment. Safety of children is one important consideration; ease in the care and maintenance of the pond by aging adults is another. Asking many fellow pond owners, persons wanting a pond, pond builders, and nursery personnel, we found these two age-related perils are a common concern to all.

Safety was at the top of the list. Often a family with small children fears putting-in a pond because it seems to present too many risks. Even pond owners cringe when friends with young children visit. You even hear of ponds being removed because of this peril.

Conclusively, everyone agreed that all small children need supervision, with a pond or without one. We don't let kids eat dirt – why? They can get worms or other diseases from the soil, but we would most likely tell our kids that dirt isn't good to eat. Children need to be taught about many things – not to run into the street, not to eat plants, not to reach out to pet a stray animal, not to throw rocks (especially not into the pond). The list goes on and on. Parents have to teach children about these dangers. Parents also have to teach kids about the dangers around a pond and water in general.

Following are some good suggestions from respondents on how to help with pond safety.

- Toddlers are less at risk if a designated play area is created for them away from the pond.
- Young children can be brought into shallow ponds and shown that they can stand up. This helps to eliminate a panic reaction.
- All children should be taught some general water safety rules.
- Walk-in ponds “with a beach” are often more inviting for children to explore than tiered ponds with shelves.
- Above-ground pond designs make it less likely for a child to fall into the water.
- Flat coping stones used to abut the pond edge can increase possibilities of falling into a pond if the stones are uneven.

Pondless waterfalls were thought to be safe for children but, by design, they present an overwhelming temptation for children to climb. Rocks are slippery and, with the addition of rapidly running water, a waterfall can pose an equal safety hazard to the pond.

*(continued on page 6)*

## Perils of having a pond...

(continued from page 5)

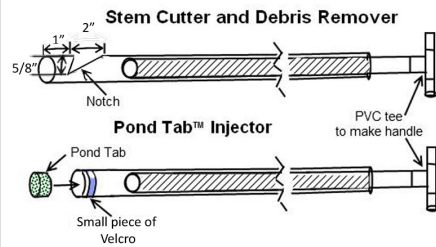
And always remember: It is important to check city ordinances for fencing and placement of ponds for public safety.

### ...Aging gracefully with your pond:

With age comes diminishing ability. Many aging pond owners choose to hire pond cleaning. Some pond care specialists will only clean ponds, but there are a few who will repot waterlilies and marginal plants. Larger ponds with minimal numbers of plants that need to be repotted present less care needs.

Additional suggestions for pond care and maintenance as we age include:

- To decrease back strains, dispose of 12-inch and larger pots. Smaller pots decrease weight and are easier to handle. Use 10-inch pots for waterlilies and only one-gallon pots for marginal plants. After dividing waterlilies, pot up more than one of the same cultivar. This will increase the "wow" blooming factor when several are grouped together in the smaller pots.
- Allow enough space between pots (or groupings) for ease of movement in the water, thereby decreasing the possibility of an undesired plunge. To assist with balance, an aluminum quad cane with good rubber tips can be helpful.
- Make a clear path into the pond by clearing obstacles such as irregular edging stones and any pots on a shelf or in the bottom of the pond at the step-in location. It is a good idea to have a buddy to assist with exiting the pond.
- Above-ground ponds also provide a ledge on which to sit.
- For ongoing maintenance, removal of dead material can be done using a pick-up tool commonly referred to as "The Grabber." Many styles are available. (see illustration on page 5).



### Above:

You can make your own labor-saving tools to help with the placement of fertilizer tablets and cleaning your lilies of dead leaves and stems.

Illustration shows how parts (listed below with instructions) fit together to create a cutter and an injector from common PVC piping.

## Make Your Own help-saving tools...

Here is an easy do-it-yourself project to make a pad stem cutter and Pond Tab™ injector using PVC pipe. (See above illustration, as well.)

### Materials required for pad stem cutter:

- One 5ft. section of 1 in. thin-wall PVC pipe
- One 5ft. section of 3/4 in. thin-wall PVC pipe
- One 3/4 in. tee
- PVC cement
- Hand saw or a jig saw

Cut 4 to 6 inches off the 1" PVC pipe. Cut a notch approximately 1" from one end of the pipe as shown in the illustration. The 3/4" pipe is used as the slide insert for cutting. The tee is cemented on the end for a handle. This device can also be used for grabbing the cut stem and other debris for removal.

### Materials required for Pond Tab™ injector:

- One five ft. section of 3/4 in. thin-wall PVC
- One five ft. section of 1/2 in. thin-wall PVC
- One 1/2 in. tee
- PVC cement
- 1/2" piece of Velcro
- Hand saw or a jig saw

Cut 2-3 inches off the 3/4" pipe. Inside one end of the pipe place a small piece of Velcro (loop side) to assist with holding the pond tab. Cement the tee on one end of the 1/2" pipe. Insert into the 3/4" pipe.

Photos courtesy of  
Victoria-Adventure.org



**Available at the DBG May Sale:**

*Above:*

**Nymphaea. ‘Maria’, winner of the IWGS competition for Best Hardy Waterlily in 2005**

*Below:*

**Nelumbo ‘Ben Gibson’ a double blossomed, small to medium sized lotus plant.**



**DBG Annual Plant Sale offers an early source for aquatic plants**

Whether you’re looking for native plants, exotics, or just some quick coverage to minimize spring algae bloom, the Aquatic Division of the Denver Botanic Gardens’ Annual Plant Sale (Thursday May 5 through Saturday May 7) will have a selection of water plants and related supplies at affordable prices. Hardy waterlilies, tropical and hardy marginal plants, carnivorous species, and floaters and submerged plants will be available, as will pots and fertilizer.

Have a question or a persistent water gardening problem? The Aquatics booth is staffed by knowledgeable CWGS volunteers. If we don’t know the answer to your question, we can probably direct you to someone who does.

This year the Aquatics booth will open in a new location within a changed layout for the Sale as a whole. We’ll be on the plaza just outside the exterior entrance to Marnie’s pavilion along the sales path, which circumnavigates the education building and greenhouses.

The sale opens on Thursday, May 5 at 4:00 for the Patrons’ Preview Party. That’s a ticketed event (tickets start at \$35), but on Friday and Saturday the sale is free and accessible to both DBG members and the general public during all hours of operation. Friday hours run from 8:30 to 6:00. We’re open Saturday from 8:30 to 4:00 pm.

For more detail on the Sale, visit DBG’s website, The url is ([www.botanicgardens.org/content/spring-plant-sale](http://www.botanicgardens.org/content/spring-plant-sale)) At the bottom right of the Spring Plant Sale page you’ll see a table of plant lists. Select the active link to Aquatics and you’ll be taken to a list of the plants we’ve ordered from vendors. (For a quick taste, also read the article on page 8 of this newsletter.) In addition to vendor-grown plants we’ll also have selections of divisions from DBG Garden-grown hardy lilies. They’re proven growers and are especially affordable.

**Volunteering to help the sale:**

If you’d like to volunteer to help the Aquatics Division, contact Bill Powell at 303 355-8098 or via [wbpow@comcast.net](mailto:wbpow@comcast.net). We welcome all levels of experience from novice pond-keeper to expert.

*Bill Powell*

Co-Chair, Aquatics Division of the DBG May Plant Sale

**New and Returning Members for March:**

**Melba Johnston**  
Lakewood, CO

**Gary & Judy Reid**  
Boulder, CO

**True Pump, Inc**  
Denver, CO

**Carolyn Lupe**  
Denver, CO

**Bob & Cathy Timm**  
Denver, CO

*Thanks, all!*



Photo courtesy of paghat.com



Above:  
**Rumex sanguineus (Bloody Dock)**

*Focus on ...*

## Plants of interest at the DBG May Sale:

Among the many aquatic plants that will be offered at the May Sale (May 5 – 7) is “Ben Gibson”, a longtime favorite lotus. (For those of you who missed having a CWGS lotus sale this year to fill your lotus needs, Ben Gibson is one of a number of smaller lotuses we’ll be offering.)

We’ll also have Bloody Dock, a hardy marginal plant that proved very popular at last year’s CWGS June sale. It has striking red and green foliage and is somewhat shade tolerant. (See photo at left.)

And we’re offering for the first time Nymphaea ‘Maria,’ an Andreas Protopapas hybrid that won the coveted IWGS Best Hardy Lily prize in 2005. It’s a medium-sized plant with a light yellow bloom that’s said to have a faint red stripe along the edge of the petals.

Photos of ‘Maria’ and ‘Ben Gibson’ are shown on page 7. ■

Photo below and on front page courtesy of Water Gardeners international.



Above:  
**Stan Skinger in Amazonia examining a great platter of the Victoria waterlily**

## Stan Skinger...

*(continued from page 3)*

He did so much for CWGS, IWGS, Denver Botanic Gardens, Lookout Mountain and everyone who was lucky enough to know him. For seven years Stan reigned as chairman of the Lotus and Plant Sale. He was most generous with his time, always eager to make a friend, learn something new or teach a lesson.

Stan authored the ‘Stately Lotus’ and also “Propagation of Tropical Waterlilies” for the Gardens’ quarterly publication *Water Gardening Mountain, Plain and Garden* (volume 54 no.1 spring 1997).

He was devoted to CWGS for sure, serving as Vice President of the Board for five years and as an At-Large member for four years.

### At the Gardens

Stan was in love with Denver Botanic Gardens and everyone associated with it.

The closer he got to the waterlily propagation greenhouse the faster he walked and the bigger his eyes got. After dealing with the draining (he never complained about it) challenges at Lookout Mountain, he confided volunteering at the Gardens and working with the waterlilies was just what the doctor ordered.

As devoted as he was to his role in propagating the waterlilies, Stan’s devotion to the team was always paramount. I do not remember a single time when he refused to give a helping hand when asked. He cared about everything and everyone.

I was humbled and deeply moved upon reading that Stan, in lieu of having flowers sent to the funeral home, requested that donations be made to Denver Botanic Gardens.

*Joe Tomocik,*

Curator of Water Gardens, DBG ■





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*For details regarding rates, sizes, and formats of ads, contact Bill Powell [wbpow@comcast.net](mailto:wbpow@comcast.net)*

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\_\_\_\_ Check here if you are also a member of Denver Botanic Gardens

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**\$15.00 Individual; \$20.00 Family**

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 \_\_\_ I would like my contact information included in a membership list that will be distributed only to the members.  
 \_\_\_ I do not want my contact information published in the membership list.

**Contact me concerning volunteer opportunities I've checked below:**  
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 Water Plants booth, DBG May Sale \_\_\_  
 Hudson Gardens \_\_\_  
 CWGS Plant Sale (June) \_\_\_  
 Pond Tour (July) \_\_\_  
 Water Blossom Festival (August) \_\_\_

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## THISYEAR

*A calendar of CWGS Activities and Events:*

**April 21: Get Wet – Program on native wetland species;  
concurrent vendor fair, Gates Hall, DBG. 6:30 PM – 9:00 PM**

*Megan Bowes, botanist and plant ecologist and principal speaker for Get Wet, begins her program "Colorado's Wild and Wonderful Wetlands" at 7:00.*

May 19: *Potluck Dinner and Plant Swap, DBG*

June 12: *CWGS Annual Plant Sale, DBG*

June 26: *Waterside Program on turtles at Majestic View, Arvada*

July 23: *CWGS Annual Pond Tour and Picnic*

Aug. 6: *Water Blossom Festival – Dan Johnson speaks on the place of water in the dry landscape, DBG*

Aug. 28: *Waterside meeting, Coleman home, Longmont*

Sept. 15: *Potluck dinner and Annual Board Elections, DBG*

Oct. 20: *Potluck dinner and meeting, DBG*

Dec. 15: *Holiday Banquet, DBG*



From...

TheWaterGarden  
c/o Journal Editor  
1210 Clayton Street  
Denver, CO 80206-3214

*The Colorado Water Garden Society (CWGS) is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization founded in 1983 to encourage appreciation and interest in the use of water in the landscape.*

To learn more, visit us at  
[www.colowatergardensociety.org](http://www.colowatergardensociety.org)

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