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August 2011

TheWaterGarden

Journal of the Colorado Water Garden Society

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PONDSIDE MEETING
Sunday, Aug. 28
2:00 – 5:00
Coleman home in
Longmont.

See article on page 5

Online at:
www.colowatergardensociety.org



At the Water Blossom Festival Curator Dan Johnson will explore ways to...

"...use water creatively in an otherwise xeric setting".

The Festival runs from 10 AM to 1 PM Saturday, August 6

*Left:
The El Pomar Waterway at DBG combines water and xeric plants as surprising, but effective, companions.*

Photo by Bill Powell

Surprising Companions...

Cool waters and dry landscape, tropical aquatics and water-conserving native plants combine to create a lush oasis

by Bill Powell

For some years Denver Botanic Gardens and the Colorado Water Garden Society have co-sponsored a late summer celebration of the extraordinary seasonal aquatic displays made possible at DBG through the combined efforts of staff and CWGS-sponsored volunteers. The 2011 Water Blossom Festival returns on Saturday, August 6.

This year's Festival continues the Garden's 2011 focus on native plants. In conjunction with morning activities pondside, DBG's Curator of Native Plants Dan Johnson will speak at 1:00 pm on "Oasis Gardening." His PowerPoint presentation will explore ways to *"use water creatively in an otherwise xeric setting,"* and he'll also talk about companion terrestrial planting for water features – *"...hardy native and adapted plants that can look lush even though they need very little water."* (There's more about Dan and his presentation in the accompanying article on page 6.)

The Festival begins at 10:00 am pond-side near the "Monet Pond" and Monet Deck Café. Look for the Club's tents. Throughout the morning and continuing until 1:00 we'll be offering docent-guided tours of DBG's many water gardens and perhaps a behind-the-scenes peek at the newly completed aquatic propagation greenhouse. Interested in honing your skills at hardy lily propagation? We'll have a hands-on demonstration of division and potting techniques. And there will be lots
(Continued on page 5)

2011 Board of Directors:

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Vice President	
open	
Secretary	
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The Water Garden is published eight times a year and is made available to current members both in printed form and online. Past volumes of The Water Garden are archived online at:

www.colowatergardensociety.org

CWGS Treasurer's Report:
Balance as of June 30
\$13,278.81

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.

2011 Committee and Event Chairs:

Newsletter Editor	
Bill Powell	303.355.8098
Membership	
Ken Lange	303.393.8410
Dorothy Martinez	303.279.3137
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Marge Oleson	303.989.4809
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Dorothy.Martinez@colowatergardensociety.org.

President’s letter

by Vicki Aber

The summer is in full swing with crazy weather and now... hot, hot, hot. I hope everyone’s gardens are surviving ok. We had a lovely pond tour and picnic. There were some truly wonderful water features and the picnic at Jim and Tudi’s home was very nice with great surroundings and great food... oh yea, and a few free plants! Thanks to everyone on the committee that organized and staged the event and to all of you who helped at the picnic. And special thanks to the members who opened their gardens to us.

The next two meetings are not to be missed. The Water Bossom Festival at DBG on Sat., Aug 6 always has something for everyone - tours, demonstrations, a chance to ask the experts and this year an intriguing program about oasis gardening. See the articles on the front page and page 6 for details.

On August 28 we will be going up north to Ben Coleman’s place outside of Longmont for a pond-side meeting. I have never been to his house but have been hearing about his ponds for years. I am really looking forward to this one. No lectures, just a day to get away and join good friends and appreciate another’s pond while enjoying a cook-out and potluck. There’s more on page 5 about the meeting.

Looking forward to the Annual Meeting, we will be holding Club elections in September. Several years ago it was decided (wisely) that to keep from becoming stagnant, the club needed new blood periodically. Each of the officer positions are for a 2-year term with a maximum of 4 years. I have been very honored to help steer this ship for 4 years. It is time for a new helmsman. The president’s position is really not that difficult. With such an active and dedicated board and membership, it really isn’t that hard. Some coordinating, introducing programs, occasionally a flood of emails, then step back and watch it all come together. At least that is my way of being president; the next person may have different ways. Variety is good and that is why we need a change now and then.

Believe me when I say that you get more out of Board service than you put in. Not quite ready for the Presidency? We have nine member-at-large positions. These are also for a 2-year term. There will be at least two of these positions open. Consider getting your feet wet with one of these. You won’t be sorry. The treasurer position is also up for election. Our current treasurer, Jim Wohlenhaus is finishing his first 2-year term, Jim is willing to run for another 2-year term. I’m sure if someone wanted to arm-wrestle him for the position, he would step aside, but he has really done a great job. The Vice President position is currently unfilled so we would like to have some one take that for one year to complete the current 2-year term. Please consider becoming more active in the club. Don’t worry, I will be sticking around in some capacity. To put your hat in the ring, just contact any Board member. Contact information is on page 2 of this newsletter.

After we get the business completed on September 15, we’ll have a retirement party for a very important member of the club, and curator of the aquatic display at the Denver Botanic Gardens, Joe Tomocik. Joe was instrumental in getting the ball rolling for what was to become CWGS. The September issue of the WaterGarden will have more details on the Annual Meeting and Joe’s party, but reserve the evening of September 15. You’re all invited to what promises to be a festive and memorable evening!

New and Returning Members for July:

Vicki & Dan Aber
Arvada

William & Jayne Bittman
Arvada

Davic Brunell & Susan Fayad (new)
Denver

Sandra Ellsworth
Boulder

Lois & Jeff Meinerz
Denver

Brenda Parsons-Hier & Peter Hier
Golden

Bill Powell & Bruce Polkowsky
Denver

Michael Weber & Sandy Berenbaum
Denver

Thank You!

Photo courtesy of
Tamara Kilbane



Tamara Kilbane,
Senior Horticulturist of the
DBG aquatics collection

Meet Tamara Kilbane

DBG selects a new head for its aquatics program

by Bill Powell

Denver Botanic Gardens has selected Tamara Kilbane to be the Senior Horticulturist in charge of the Gardens' extensive water garden collection. Curator Joe Tomocik recently retired after more than 30 years of responsibility for the aquatics program.

Tamara worked most recently as a horticulturist with Duke Gardens in North Carolina where she also directed the International Waterlily & Water Gardening Society (IWGS) annual New Waterlily Competition. CWGS members who were able to attend the "brown bag lunch" that was given in August of last year will recall Tamara's detailed slide presentation explaining the Competition's history and operational protocols.

Sarada Krishnan, Director of Horticulture at DBG, writes: *"Denver Botanic Gardens is pleased to announce that Tamara Kilbane will be joining the Horticulture team as Senior Horticulturist responsible for the maintenance, care and display of the aquatic collections. She brings great potential for the expansion of DBG's aquatic program within the framework of the excellent foundation laid by retired Curator, Joe Tomocik."*

About Tamara – in her own words:

"While growing up in southern Oregon, I would often spend long summer days exploring the irrigation ponds on my grandfather's farm. It was there that my fascination with ponds and ornamental water gardens began. My family built our first pond on our property when I was a teenager, and there were always aquariums overflowing with tadpoles, fish, and plants on our porch and in our house as a result of my growing interest. My mother was less than thrilled at first, but she saw how much I loved the hobby, and so resigned herself to living with all things aquatic."

"When it came time to attend college, I chose Oregon State University, where I studied horticulture. Shortly after receiving my bachelor's degree, I began working at Hughes Water Gardens in Tualatin, Oregon. The staff there was excellent and taught me so much about aquatic plants, pumps, filters, container water gardening, pond building, koi - you name it."

"Eager to put my new knowledge to work in a garden setting, I applied for a position at Sarah P. Duke Gardens in Durham, NC as a horticulturist. Over the past six years at Duke, I have had the opportunity to grow waterlilies and marginal plants in large ornamental ponds, design and plant a new bog garden, create interpretive materials and teach classes to educate our visitors, and to work as the grower and subsequently the director of the IWGS New Waterlily Competition."

"Shortly after coming to Duke, I was also tasked with co-managing a display that Duke Gardens was asked to design and build at the U.S. Botanic Garden in Washington, D.C. It just so happened that Denver Botanic Gardens had the exhibit space right next to ours, and I was put in touch with Joe Tomocik, who kindly offered to provide a few plants to accent the small pond we were building for our exhibit."

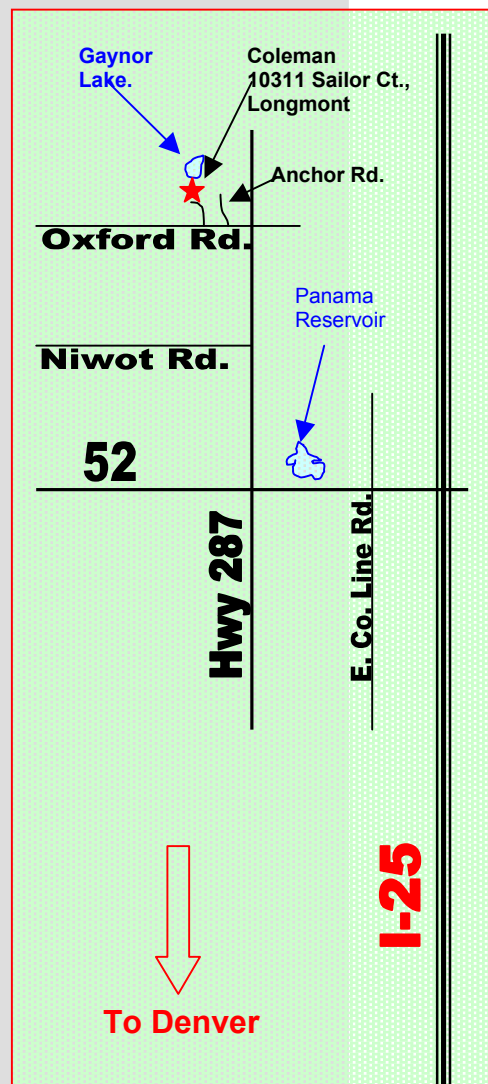
"The following summer, I visited Joe at Denver Botanic Gardens, and was impressed with the size and quality of the aquatic plant collections and display ponds. Joe shared knowledge and insights he had gained over the years he spent managing the collections, and he also emphasized the history of the Colorado Water Garden Society's involvement in the program and the dedicated service that your group provides to DBG."

"I feel very lucky to be given the opportunity to take over where Joe left off in the management and curation of this special collection. I am also looking forward to meeting those of you who I have not already, and to working with you all in the ponds in the coming years!"

Tamara Kilbane

Waterside Pot-Luck Cookout Sunday August 28th

by Bill Powell



Our last “Waterside” program of the season (August 28) is literally waterside. At Ben and Olga Coleman’s home near Longmont we’ll be on the shore of Gaynor Lake. It’s a perfect location to spend a hot late summer afternoon.

As Vicki Aber points out in her President’s Letter, there will be no lecture this time – just an afternoon of relaxation with friends enjoying a member’s ponds and wonderful location. Ben and Olga have generously offered to prepare brats and burgers. The Club will provide soft drinks, water, and setup. All you need is to bring a side dish or dessert and enthusiasm! (You might bring a folding chair as well.)

Ben has six ponds of various sizes fashioned from cattle watering stations. When he first had the idea of adding water gardens to his landscape, Ben’s notion was to create a cascade of water down the slope adjacent to his house. As he began construction he reconsidered the maintenance of a waterfall and changed his mind. Using commercial stock tanks sunk into grade, Ben connected them visually with the (now) dry landscape rock stream that he’d already begun.

Ben, a long-time volunteer to DBG’s aquatic program, grows a variety of hardy waterlilies and a few lotuses along with the occasional marginal in his ponds. Over the last couple of years he’s expanded his planting to Gaynor Lake that borders his property. Ben has found planting in a large, natural soil-bottomed lake to be a bit of a challenge. Agitated water from boat wakes and the wind takes its toll. He also suspects the local muskrats have developed a taste for lilies. But see for yourself. Ben will be offering motorboat trips of the lake during our afternoon, along with S’mores by the fire pit if you hang out until evening.

The fun starts at 2:00 PM on Sunday, August 28th. Ben and Olga’s home at 10311 Sailor Court, Longmont is not far from the intersection of Hwy 287 and 52. From Denver probably the easiest route is to drive north on I-25, then west on 52. Those of you in the Boulder area might drive NE on 110 (Diagonal Rd.) to access the area via Niwot Rd. See the schematic or the map posted online for more detail. If you lose your way, call Ben at 303 722-7220.

Ben says they have room for three or four cars in their drive. Others should park on the roundabout. Come to the front door and follow the signs. For more information on the day, call Bill Powell at 303 355-8098.

Water Blossom Festival – Surprising Companions

(continued from front page.)

of information and brochures, as well as experienced aquatic gardeners to tackle your most vexing pond problems.

Admission to the Festival is free with your purchased ticket to the Gardens. Dan Johnson’s program, which will be held in the main room of the Waring house at 1:00, is open to the public without buying admission to the Gardens. Waring house is immediately south of the Gardens (to the left as you face the new Visitor Center from York St.). You can park in the Gardens’ new parking facility for both the pond-side activities and the program in Waring House.

The Waring house is accessed separately from outside the Gardens. Follow the city sidewalk south from the Visitor Center building to the first driveway. Follow the driveway to the door of Waring house that abuts the small parking area. (You can also park here, but spaces are limited.) Enter the vestibule and walk to the main hall adjoining the stairs. The program will be in the room on the left. Light refreshments will be served.

For those of you who come early enough to the CWGS tent located pond-side, we’ll be offering some free water plants...while the supplies last! For additional information about the Festival or Dan Johnson’s program, call Bill Powell at 303 355-8098.

About Dan Johnson and “Oasis Gardening”

by Bill Powell



This photograph of Dan, reprinted with the permission of the “Front Range Living” online newsletter, was titled “Dry Land Dan”, and indeed he is.

As Curator of Native Plants, Dan is passionate about native plants from the arid mountain west, but he also enjoys water plants and the impact that “even a small amount of water” can have.

On August 6 at 1:00PM Dan will present a program on “Oasis Gardening” in Waring House, which abuts DBG to the south.

As part of the Saturday, August 6 Water Blossom Festival at Denver Botanic Gardens, Dan Johnson will give a program in Waring House at 1:00 PM. Dan is the Curator of Native Plants at DBG. His lifelong horticultural passions include *“everything from trees and shrubs to grasses, aquatics, cacti – pretty much anything that grows!”* His interest in native plants has led him to investigate and grow other species from the arid mountain west.

Fascination with western dry landscape began early for Dan. *“One of my first plant obsessions was cactus around age 8. (I still have one plant that my dad gave me in 1968.)”* That first plant was followed by *“a string of other plants that continues today.”* Dan’s tastes are diverse, though, and encompass aquatic species, including nymphaea. An early interest in waterlilies *“...was inspired by some white and pink ones growing wild in a pond in Vermont. I was probably about 12.”*

Dan has merged his diverse horticultural interests to examine and promote “oasis gardening,” an approach that economically combines the beauty of ornamental water features with water-smart and native companion plantings. He observes that *“the effect of even a small amount of water can make even a desert garden feel like a lush little spot, and will add motion and activity to a garden and be irresistible to wildlife.”*

Dan’s program on Oasis Gardening will begin at 1:00 in the main room of the Waring House, located just to the south of the Gardens. The presentation will include photographs of local gardens, including Dan’s own, as well as desert gardens located in Tucson and across the southwest. These gardens excel in their clever marriage of small features of water and dry landscape to create an oasis that’s easy to maintain.

“Oasis Gardening” is open to the public and does not require admission to Denver Botanic Gardens since Waring House lies outside the Garden boundaries. To access Waring from York Street, walk south (to the left as you face the visitor’s center.) to the first drive. Walk down the drive to the rear door that opens directly onto the parking. You can also park here, but spaces are limited. Go through the vestibule to the main hall. The meeting room is on the left. We’ll have light refreshments as well.

Note:

If you’re interested in learning more about native plants, Dan, and dry-land gardening, check out “Return Of The Native: A Native Plants Curator Shares His Passion” by Heather Grimshaw in the July issue of the online newsletter Front Range Living. Here’s the link to the article:

<http://www.frontrangeliving.com/garden/DanJohnson.htm>



Photo courtesy of Wikipedia

Nepenthes attenboroughii has one of the largest pitchers known. It's football-sized and yet was only discovered in 2010

New carnivorous species found

by Bill Powell

Carnivorous plants (or insectivorous plants as they were first described in Charles Darwin's 1875 treatise) are aquatic by default. They exploit wet environments where soils are low in fertility, leached of nitrogen by plentiful, often stagnant, water. Water gardeners value carnivorous plants for their novel habits, surprising forms, and for their suitability to both pot gardening and bogs.

Species of carnivorous plants are found throughout the world and in a variety of climates. Apparently some even rather large species remain to be found. Attenborough's Pitcher, named for naturalist Sir David Attenborough, was only discovered last year. The International Institute for Species Exploration notes the reason for the plant not having been previously discovered despite its impressive football size: *Nepenthes attenboroughii*'s habitat is so limited that it was declared "Critically Endangered" the moment it was found on the slopes of Mount Victoria in Palawan, Philippines in 2010.

The plant's "pitcher" is an example of a "pit-fall trap", one of five common trapping mechanisms evolved by carnivorous plants. Attracted by a scent, insects fall into the pitcher, drown, and are digested by plant enzymes. In the case of large *Nepenthes*, like *N. attenboroughii*, even sizable mammals can become prey. Prey provides nutrients that the plant is not able to obtain from poor soils, enabling the species to succeed in a niche environment left unpopulated by most plants.

Got something to swap or sell?

by Dorothy Martinez

Do you have a pond-related item you would like to sell or swap (equipment, fish, plants, etc)? CWGS can help you with that. There is an area on our website specifically designed for this purpose; it is titled "Member Sales Area". To access the "Member Sales Area," simply go to our website at www.colowatergardensociety.org and look for the "Member Sales Area" listed on the right hand side of the Home Page. Click on the "Member Sales Area" tab and you will be taken directly there. (Passwords are not required.)

If you have an item for sale, we can post it on the website for you. To post an item for sale, please e-mail Dorothy Martinez at dorothy.martinez@colowatergardensociety.org the following information:

- **Detailed description of the item**
- **Digital picture of the item (no larger than 400 x 400 pixels)**
- **How long you want the item up on the website** (If no time is given, the item will remain on the website for 60 days.)

It's that simple! This is another great resource CWGS offers to its members. If you have additional questions, please call Dorothy Martinez at (303) 279-3137.



A Sampling of the 2010 Tour & Picnic

Photos by:
Gary Blubaugh
Marge Oleson
Bill Powell

More photos of all of
the Tour sites will be
posted on the CWGS
website.



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Annual advertising in the newsletter also includes a listing on the CWGS website with an active link direct to your commercial webpage.

We also run single-event ads.

*For details regarding rates, sizes, and formats of ads, contact Bill Powell
wbpow@comcast.net*

Membership Application

Make checks payable to:
Colorado Water Garden Society

Return this form with your payment to:
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100 Glencoe St.
Denver, CO 80220

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Address: _____

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State: _____ ZIP _____

Home Phone: (____) _____

Email* _____

* Required for electronic receipt of newsletter.
(note: CWGS does not share or sell email addresses)

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

Membership Fees:
\$15.00 Individual; \$20.00 Family

Check one:

____ *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:

DBG Volunteer Sundays _____
Water Plants booth, DBG May Sale _____
Hudson Gardens _____
CWGS Plant Sale (June) _____
Pond Tour (July) _____
Water Blossom Festival (August) _____

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____ *I request to receive a paper copy of the newsletter*

THISYEAR

A calendar of CWGS Activities and Events:

- Aug. 6:** *Water Blossom Festival, DBG 10AM –1PM*
Dan Johnson speaks on “Oasis Gardening”
1PM in Waring House
- Aug. 28:** *Waterside meeting Coleman home, Longmont*
2PM – 5PM
- Sept. 15:** *Potluck dinner and Annual Board Elections, DBG*
Plus a party for Joe Tomocik!
- 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

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