

## 2009 Water Blossom Festival

By Duff Kerr, Event Chair  
and Lynn Jewett, Board member



Bob Hoffman  
demonstrating plant  
division at an earlier  
Water Blossom  
Festival

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

The Water Blossom Festival returns to Denver Botanic Gardens (DBG) on Sunday, August 16th. Festival pondside activities will operate next to the "Monet Pond" from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. A special audio/visual program will be presented in Gates Hall at 1:00.

The Water Blossom Festival is a joint effort of DBG and the Colorado Water Garden Society. An annual event, the Festival was conceived both to educate and to celebrate the efforts of CWGS volunteers who, under the direction of DBG Water Gardens Curator Joe Tomocik, contribute to the beauty of the Gardens' extensive display.

### About the Festival's pondside activities:

Our goal is to provide Club members and the public an opportunity to broaden their knowledge of water gardening. From 10 am until 1:00 pm CWGS will offer tours of DBG Water Garden features and a demonstration on various aspects of propagation and care of water plants. In the past, members have expressed how much help the demonstrations have been to them.

Throughout the pondside activities CWGS volunteers will be on hand to answer questions you might have about your water garden, and we'll have a wide array of educational pamphlets on pond keeping and plant propagation. We'll even have free water plants (first come / first served) while supplies last. Look for our white tents near the southwest corner of the "Monet Pond."

### About the Festival's program and speaker:

This year the Festival will feature a presentation by noted water garden industry expert Jim Wullschleger. Appropriate to the lavish water garden display that you'll enjoy at DBG, Jim's program will focus on Thailand, a country known for its lotuses and numerous species of tropical waterlilies.

*(continued on page 8)*



**Board of Directors:**

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Vicki Aber	303.423.9216
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Michael Weber	303.322.6769
Lynn Jewett	303.671.7964

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<b>Get Wet Event</b>	
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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](http://www.colowatergardensociety.org)

**CWGS Treasurer's Report:**  
*As of July 28, 2009: \$14,958,28*

**Need to join or renew?**

The application is on page 9

**CWGS BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE  
FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2009:**

Aug. 16 - *Denver Botanic Gardens, time TBD*  
Sept. 20, 1:00 PM - *Oleson residence*  
Oct. 18, 1:00 PM - *Weber residence*

*Club members are welcome to attend!*



## From The President

Here we are at the peak of the water gardening season. We had dodged the hail bullet so far this season, but this last storm made up for that. I hope there aren't too many of you who are in the same boat.

It is heartbreaking to look at the garden you spent so much time tending turned to lily pad salad. Len and Doris Freestone had this experience earlier this year and are already well on the way to recovery. We will be discussing how to recover from hail and storm damage at our next meeting at the Freestone's. (See page 5 for detail on the meeting and program.)

Join us on August 30<sup>th</sup>. Bring your waterlily nik-naks, bring pictures if you have them, listen to other's stories, or just enjoy a beautiful yard and some cake and ice cream.

Our next event, though, is the Water Blossom Festival on Sunday, August 16. We have a great speaker, tours, and door prizes. Then, of course, there is the magnificence of the Denver Botanic Gardens water gardens in full bloom. Come and

soak in the beauty and enjoy Jim Wullschleger's program on the water plants of Thailand. (The lead article on the front page of this issue has details.)

It is not too soon to start thinking of the September meeting. The subject of the program is still in the works, but we also have an election in September. Think about running for one of the Member at Large positions. We really do have a lot of fun putting on all the programs for the Colorado Water Garden Society. There's lots of camaraderie and sharing. The only thing that would add to this would be more people to share the load and some fresh perspective. The current board is getting a little overworked and seriously under paid! (Just kidding; it's a labor of love.)

We have two open board positions that have gone unfilled this last year and three currently-filled board positions that are up for reelection, including President and Treasurer. (A term is for two years so only half the positions are up for election each year.) Please think about joining us. We don't bite, I promise.

*Vicki Aber, CWGS Board President*

### NEW & RETURNING MEMBERS

#### *New members since June:*

**Jana & Lew Artelli**  
Littleton, CO

**Ed Glassman**  
Denver, CO

**Susan Haley**  
Longmont, CO

**Veronica Kertesz**  
Boulder, CO

**Robyn Pauley**  
Lyons, CO 80540

**Jill Richardson**  
Arvada, CO

**Kip Rogers**  
Aurora, CO

**Ann and Jack VerLinden**  
Brighton, CO

#### *Renewing since June:*

**Dennis Coombs**  
Highlands Ranch, CO

**Craig and Deb Dawson**  
Highlands Ranch, CO

**Don & Sue Eloe**  
Littleton, CO

**Doris Freestone**  
Franktown, CO

**Michael & Susie Hawes**  
Englewood, CO

**April & Jonathan Hough**  
Boulder, CO

**Ken Lange**  
Denver, CO

**Carla Littlefield**  
Denver, CO

**Joe & Carla Mascarenas**  
Lakewood, CO

**Steve & Maryann Miller**  
Boulder, CO

**Nancy Novinger**  
Centennial, CO

**Lee & Louise Thomas**  
Centennial, CO

**Bob and Cathy Timm**  
Denver, CO

**Patricia Weis-Taylor  
& Rich Hinrichs**  
Boulder, CO

*Thanks...  
...and welcome!*

## Harvesting Summer

***You don't have to treat your tropical waterlily as an annual. Collect corms for next year.***

By Bill Powell

For those of you fortunate enough to grow tropical waterlilies, you're probably now enjoying the height of the bloom season just as your hardy lilies are beginning to fade. Unfortunately before we know it, the bloom season will be over for this year for both hardies and tropicals. With only scant attention, hardy waterlilies will return next year, but what do you do with tropical lilies in Colorado?

Many people treat tropical waterlilies as annuals. Most tropical waterlilies aren't biologically limited to a single season, but Denver's climate makes over-wintering of tropical lilies problematic. It can be done, of course. If you have a heated greenhouse – even a marginally heated one – you can pull your tropical lily inside.

CWGS club member Bob Hoffman has devised a novel method for over-wintering tropical waterlilies outside in a sheltered location. The plants are kept in a dormant state in water heated just enough to prevent freezing (Bob shared his method in an article published last year in *TheWaterGarden*.)

But there's another way to avoid losing your tropical: Harvest the corms (small tubers) and save them for replanting in late winter or early spring. If this sounds difficult, it's really not. Here's how the process is described by Florida Aquatics, one of the nation's larger vendors of tropical waterlilies.

Once your plant has stopped blooming and its leaves are beginning to yellow, "...remove the tropical waterlily from the soil. Rinse gently to remove any soil. Look closely at the bottom of the plant [crown] for a small, dark, round tuber anywhere from the size of a nickel to a fifty-cent piece (There may be more than one.). If a tuber is present, remove it by twisting. Clean the waterlily tuber... [and] ...store the tuber in damp, clean sand inside of a jar or bag in a cool area that will not freeze. A basement or refrigerator will work well for this."

A couple of provisos about Florida Aquatic's instructions: Probably because of their warmer weather and longer growing season, tropical waterlily tubers may grow to these sizes in Florida, but in

Colorado look for smaller corms. They're often pea sized and found high in the root structure near the crown. Discard the plant after you remove the corms. Although a refrigerator may work for storage, modern refrigerators are somewhat colder than is ideal. A cooler that's set to 50 to 55 degrees is better, as are crawl spaces, basements, or garages that are unheated but which do not freeze.

Luster Aquatic's Craig Presnell offers another tip on the Victoria Adventure website: "*When it comes to storing tubers, I have no doubts but that most people tend to store them too wet and exactly what is moist enough is hard to judge. When I think I have the sand to the right consistency, I push down on the mixture with my thumb. I want the sand moist enough to hold the indentation, but not so wet that the compression squeezes out any visible moisture.*"

And Florida Aquatics has yet one more option: "*If you have an aquarium you can place the tuber in a clean aquarium with no substrate. Give it 12 hours of light and heat the water to about 70 degrees. The tropical waterlily tuber will put up small leaves and remain this way until time to plant in the spring. Do not fertilize because you do not want to encourage growth.*"

CWGS President Vicki Aber has had some success in holding tropical waterlilies in aquaria over winter. She saves the whole plant. Under stress it produces plantlets over winter on the corms. Club members Len and Doris Freestone have considerable experience with the alternate corm harvesting method, which is employed at Denver Botanic Gardens. (By the way, both Vicki and the Freestones are likely to be at both of our two upcoming events on August 16 and 30 should you have questions about their experience preserving tropical waterlilies for the next year.)

In late winter around February, plant your corms or plantlets in small pots and submerge them in heated tanks. Obviously, a greenhouse would come in handy, particularly if you want to get an early start on the plants, but a small aquarium with heated water (around 70 degrees) and good light will suffice. Also, keep in mind that tropicals appreciate a sandier soil mix than hardy waterlilies, which thrive on dense garden loam or even clay.

With some patience and successive up-potting, your new tropical waterlily, grown of last year's harvested corms, can be placed in your pond by June. ■



## Smiles of a Summer Day... About our August 30 meeting

By Bill Powell

Photos by Len Freestone



The Freestone's ponds are devoted to growing of plants, particularly lilies, both hardy and tropical.

Sheltered by pines and situated at 7,000 feet, Len and Doris' water gardens thrive despite the dappled shade and cool temperatures.



I recently saw the Central City Opera's current production of "A Little Night Music." Midway into the performance Ann discovers Hedrick by the Armfeldt's pond. She gushes, "It's so nice to come upon someone enjoying the ornamental waters." In truth Hedrick's actually contemplating suicide, but no matter. Ann's right, even if her rhetoric is overblown. Borrowing her phrasing, this month we have the perfect ornamental waters for YOU to enjoy... served up with ice cream and cake!

Sunday August 30 Doris and Len Freestone will host our second Waterside Program of this season. Doris and Len are longtime members of CWGS. They've maintained their water features – a series of ponds that they built themselves – for more than three decades!

Len writes, "We built our first pond 38 years ago. We dug the hole and used several layers of thin plastic as the liner material. The liner had to be replaced periodically and so we decided to line the hole with 4 inches of concrete and finish with a thin coat of waterproof mortar. Over the years we dug two more holes and lined them with pond liner material."

The Freestone's ponds are almost exclusively true water gardens configured for growing plants, particularly lilies, both hardy and tropical.

"All [our] ponds are 18 inches deep and only one is heated with aquarium heaters for growing tropical lilies. This is necessary since we live at almost 7,000 feet and we are normally 10 degrees cooler than Denver, plus we have a lot of shade from our pine trees. [The altitude and shade pose] a challenge for growing water lilies or any other plants," Len observes.

Despite their cool micro-climate, Len and Doris almost always have a beautiful display of blooming lilies and marginals. Len explains that "Because of these adverse conditions we have learned what plants grow best." This year, though, has been tough. The Freestones sustained a heavy hail storm in mid-season. ... "When hail hits, as it did on July 4<sup>th</sup>., you just have to start over."

Len and Doris have become experienced water gardeners, but you may wonder what first attracted them to the pastime given the challenges of their location? "I guess the reason we decided to have a pond is because the original plan was for a huge stream with a waterfall. We scrapped this idea after trying to lift the first large rock."

### About the Program:

The Freestones are not alone in coping with challenging sites and climates. Many of us have suffered hail damage to our gardens this season. Vicki Aber, Club President, is just now digging out from her own hail disaster. She's taken a few photos. Len and Doris have also  
(Continued on page 6)



**Smiles of a Summer Day...**

*...(continued from page 5)*

kept a visual record that shows the changes from before their storm, immediately after, and periodically during their recovery. Hoping to turn adversity to a chance to learn, Vicki will facilitate a group discussion at the Freestones on the topic of coming back after a hail storm.

Just for amusement...and to take our minds off hail damage...we thought it might be fun as we consume our ice cream and cake to chat about nik-naks that have a waterlily theme. Most of us have them. If you have such and it's portable or you can grab a shot of it, bring it along and we'll have a show-and-tell.

The fun starts at 2:00, Sunday August 30 at the Freestone's. It's a bit of a hike. The Freestone's home is about 50 minutes from central Denver via I-25 to Castle Rock and then east on state highway 86 to Franktown. But it's a trip well worth making to see Len and Doris' gardens nestled under a cool canopy of pines. Join us. Ice cream and cake are sure to take your mind off your worries.

A map and detailed directions follow.

**Directions from Denver:**

Drive south on I-25 toward Castle Rock. Take exit 184 and turn left at the bottom of the ramp onto Founders Parkway.

Stay on Founders for approx. 5 miles to the traffic light at State Highway 86. Turn left (east) onto SH-86 toward Franktown.

At the intersection of SH-86 and SH-83 in Franktown, continue on 86 toward Elizabeth for 1.8 miles. The Freestone's property 8831 E. Hwy 86 is on the left (North) side of the highway. Use the right hand driveway.

From Denver Botanic Gardens in central Denver to the Freestone's is about 50 minutes drive by way of I-25. Parker road is an alternative route but there are over 60 traffic signals along the way. The drive takes at least an hour. If you do come by Parker road, drive south to Franktown, turn left (east) onto SH\_86 toward Elizabeth, and drive 1.8 miles. to the driveway.

The Freestones can park about six cars in the driveway, so car pooling would help. However 86 has a broad shoulder on which it's safe to park.

Len notes that GPS is accurate for their address and that Googlemaps even shows a photo of the driveway from the highway. (I tried it. Their house and gardens are hidden on the slight rise in the pines that you'll note as you pan right (east) from the driveway cut.)

PS: It's fairly shady at the Freestones, but if you're especially sensitive, a hat wouldn't hurt. And if you have a folding chair or blanket for extra seating, please bring it. For directions, call Len and Doris at 303 688-3435.

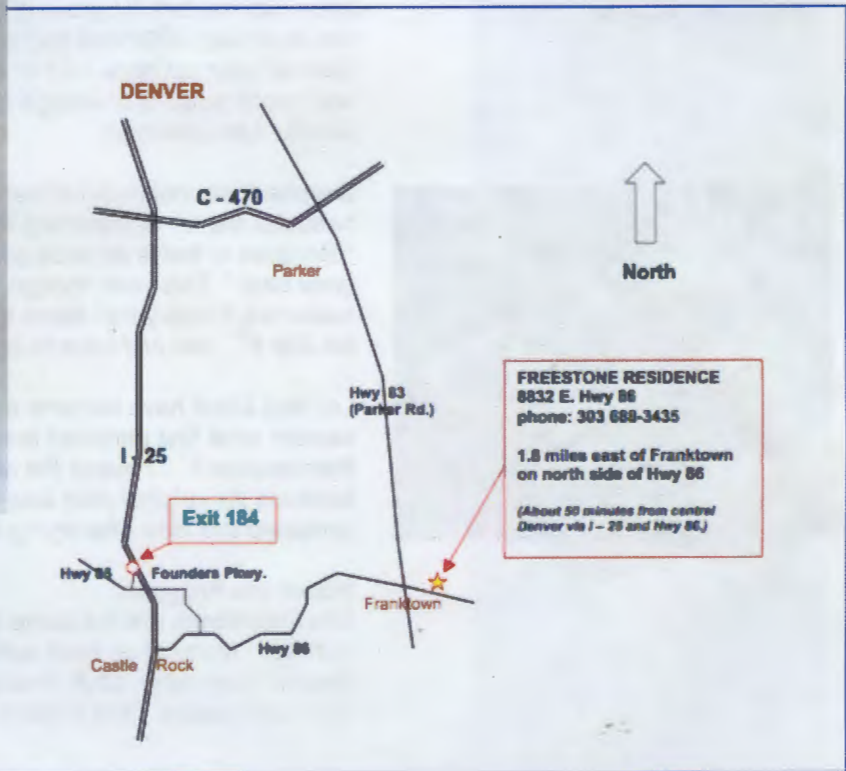
*Example of a nik-nak for the show-and-tell. What's the story behind it?*

*Come and find out!*



**LOCATION MAP**

**Waterside Program  
2:00 pm Sunday, August 30  
Freestone Residence**



**FREESTONE RESIDENCE**  
8832 E. Hwy 86  
phone: 303 688-3435  
1.8 miles east of Franktown  
on north side of Hwy 86  
*(About 50 minutes from central  
Denver via I-25 and Hwy 86.)*



Photo by Jim Arneill



Cyndie and Mike Thomas' water garden (above)

Serpentine stream and pond of Ken Lange and Vince Pesce (below)

Photo by Marge Oleson



More photos follow on page 8

## CWGS Pond Tour Recap

By Michael Webber, Event Co-Chair

The pond tour was a fun day for all who participated. We enjoyed the seven ponds. Each showed creative use of space and design as well as a variety of water plants and aquatic creatures.

Fortunately, late afternoon showers held off and some 45 people showed up for the picnic followed by a plant raffle. Everyone went home with at least a couple of new plants and new friends.

We would like to thank those who put their ponds on tour. We appreciate all of the work required to show your ponds. We'd also like to thank all of the club members who helped set up, buy food, haul plants to the picnic site, and clean up.

If anyone has any ideas/suggestions to improve the pond tour, please go to the club website and "contact us." We would love to hear your thoughts in order to improve next year's tour.

**Editor's Note:** We're only able to publish a few pictures of ponds in this newsletter, but we hope to put many more online soon!

## More Pond Tours Still To Come!

If you missed the CWGS tour or you just can't get enough, August brings two more exciting pond tours – The Rocky Mountain WaterScapes Water Garden Tour on August 8 and 9 and the Colorado Parade of Ponds on August 22 and 23.

These are contractor-specific tours highlighting the craftsmanship of individual local pond builders. Both tours show the work of a single design/build firm; however, every pond is a custom installation, varying in look, size, and purpose in response to site and the owner's interests. These professionally-built water features include the most up-to-date technical innovations. Attending the tours is a great way to learn about the latest pond technology.

Both tours include ponds built for and owned by CWGS members. In fact the Society will have an educational booth at selected Members' ponds on each of these tours.

See the Link to Events (below) for websites that will provide you more information on these special contractor tours.

### Link to Events:

*A calendar of non-club water garden related activities*

Aug 8/9  
Aug 22/23

RMW Water Garden Tour  
Colorado Parade of Ponds

[www.rmwaterscape.com](http://www.rmwaterscape.com)  
[www.brdlandscape.com](http://www.brdlandscape.com)

*CWGS-sponsored activities are listed in the club calendar on the outside of this newsletter.*



**2009 Water Blossom Festival**

*...(continued from front page)*

Thailand hosted the International Waterlily and Water Gardening Society (IWGS) Symposium in 2007, and in recent years the country has become a center for hybridization, including research into cross-pollination between hardy and tropical waterlilies.

Thai hybridizer Pairat Songpanich has been pursuing the elusive "blue hardy." He thinks he may have succeeded, but will the plant prove self-replicating for the blue flower color while maintaining its hardy characteristics? (Mr. Songpanich's initial research and results are covered in detail in an article at Water Gardeners International (WGI) online Journal Volume 3, Number 4 from November 2008.) Jim Wullschleger's Festival presentation on Thailand will include an update on recent findings about Songpanich's *Nymphaea* 'Siam Blue Hardy'.

Jim Wullschleger has been involved in the water garden industry for over 30 years as a retail garden center manager, owner, water garden contractor, and a water garden manufacturer's representative and sales manager (both at Tetra and Aquascape

Inc. industries). During the past 15 years, he's written for industry magazines.

Jim has contributed knowledge and guidance to CWGS since the late 80's. He also helped to stage the International Water Garden Society Symposium held in Denver in 1997. And... he's been an active member of the IWGS for many years.

The Festival speaker's program promises to be informative and is sure to showcase outstanding examples of Thai water gardening. It begins at 1:00 pm in Gates Hall and includes door prizes. Don't miss it!!!

Mark your calendar for the Water Blossom Festival at Denver Botanical Gardens on August 16th! The pondside tours and demonstrations are free with regular admission to the Gardens. Volunteers are still needed to insure the Water Blossom Festival is a success. If you can help, please contact Duff Kerr (303-871-0449).

**Some additional photos of this year's pond tour & picnic...**



*Photo by Marge Oleson*

*Picnic at the Webers (above)*

*Photo by Jim Arneil*



*Jim Carlson's waterfall and pond (above)*



*Jan Belmear's ducks hanging out by the pond (left)*

*Photo by Marge Oleson*





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**Water Garden Tour**  
 Saturday, Aug. 8<sup>th</sup>, 9-5  
 Sunday, Aug. 9<sup>th</sup>, 10-5



**Visit Beautiful Water Features**  
**Call (303) 666-5430 for details**

**Membership Application**

Make checks payable to:  
 Colorado Water Garden Society

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**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 (late July/Aug.) \_\_\_\_\_



# THISYEAR

*A calendar of CWGS Activities and Events:*

**Sunday, Aug. 16: Water Blossom Festival  
Featured Program Speaker Jim Wullschlegler**

Pondside activities 10 AM to 1 PM  
Program at 1 PM, Gates Hall  
Denver Botanic Gardens

**Aug. 30: Waterside Program  
"To Hail And Back"...**

**...With Ice Cream And Cake!**  
2 PM at the home of Doris and Len Freestone  
8832 E. HWY 86, Franktown

**Sep. 21: Annual Meeting, Elections, & Pot Luck**

6 to 8:30 PM, Arvada Church of Christ, Arvada

**Oct. 19: Program (TBA) & Pot Luck**

6 to 8:30 PM, Arvada Church of Christ, Arvada

**Dec. 7: Holiday Banquet**

6 to 8:30 PM, Arvada Church of Christ, Arvada



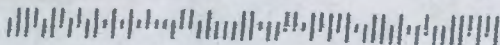
Colorado Water Garden Society

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)



Denver, CO P&DC 802-718

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