



The Water Garden

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Fall 2022 Newsletter

September 2022 & October 2022 Meetings

By: Dorothy Martinez

Please join us for our two upcoming fall meetings scheduled for Thursday, September 8th from 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm and Thursday, October 20th from 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm. Both meetings will be held in Classroom 2 in the Freyer-Newman Center located within the Denver Botanic Gardens.

About the September meeting. We will host a pot luck starting at 6:00 pm. Please bring an appetizer, salad, side dish, main dish, or dessert to share. Also, please be sure to bring a drink for yourself and any guests. We will be holding a brief meeting, starting at 7:00 pm to cover our Annual Board Elections, and the presentation should begin at approximately 7:15 pm.

Please park in the parking garage and enter through the Visitor Center. Let them know you are here for a meeting in the Freyer-Newman Center.

Are you curious about what to do with your water feature or container plants in preparation for winter? If you answered yes, then this is the presentation for you. We will have experts on hand to answer your questions about what to do with plants, fish, and your pumps and other equipment.

If you have any questions, please contact Dorothy Martinez at (303) 279-3137 or dam@johnfunk.com.

About our October meeting. We will host a pot luck starting at 6:00 pm. Please bring an appetizer, salad, side dish, main dish, or dessert to share. Also, please be sure to bring a drink for yourself and any guests. The presentation will start at 7:00 pm. Please note, Glow at the Gardens will be taking place this night as well, try to arrive early and allow ample time to park.

Please park in the parking garage and enter through the front entrance of the Freyer-Newman Center. The Freyer-Newman Center is located north of the Visitor Center. The building is on the corner of 11th Avenue and York Street.

Do you have success stories from this year's growing season? Do you have a horror story about what went wrong this year? Have questions on how to fix those nagging water feature or plant problems you encountered in 2022. Please come and share your successes and failures from the 2022 growing season.

We'll have experts at the ready to answer any questions you have or problems you may have encountered. We will also have a presentation of what different plants look like in the beginning of the season and what they look like at the end of the season.

If you have any questions, please contact Tamara Kilbane at (720) 865-3556 or tamara.kilbane@botanicgardens.org.

Fall Pond Tune Up & Maintenance

By: Jean M. Fogle

Fall ushers in on a breeze. Morning temperatures drop and trees begin their change from verdant green to lush fall colors. Now is the time to do the fall maintenance your pond requires to retain a healthy environment for all that lives within.

Once the leaves begin to fall, remove them from the pond. When they settle to the bottom, the leaves decompose and increase the pond's levels of dissolved organic compounds. These compounds rob the water of oxygen that fish need to remain healthy.

Use a long-handled scoop net to retrieve leaves that have settled at the pond bottom. Check the net for young fish that might have gotten trapped with the leaves. You can also wear waders and get into the pond to collect the leaves.

After cleaning up the initial leaves, drape a net across your pond to keep out other leaves. Also, empty our skimmer frequently throughout the fall months.

During the growing season, other debris builds up in the pond bottom. Waste material from fish and decaying plant debris add to the bottom muck. "Limiting the amount of organic waste in your water garden should be the main focus of pond maintenance," said Richard Koogler, Director of Operations at Lilyponds Water Gardens in Adamstown, MD.

Fall provides a good time to remove the muck. "Debris removal should be done all year; however, most people find it to be a large task and put it off", said Robert Lewis, owner of Serenity Koi Pond in Johns Island, SC. "The decay of the plant debris and fish waste builds hydrogen sulphide, a gas that is very bad for any fish living in the pond. Scooping the debris with a net will help, but I recommend using a vacuum to get as much of the debris as you can."

Pruning Plants

All season your water garden plants have added an incredible amount of beauty to the garden. As the days shorten, they stop blooming and prepare for the colder weather. They too need attention to ensure their survival through the winter.

While hardy plants seem self-reliant, taking care of them now ensures that they return even more beautiful next year. Remove all the dead foliage from the plants and trim live foliage back to 2 to 3 inches above the water surface. Trim water lily leaves and stems back 2 to 3 inches from the plant base.

Hardy water plants can be lowered to the bottom of the pond through the winter. Depending on the pond's depth, these plants can be lowered manually by removing them from the ledge and placing them in the deeper water. The water temperature stays warmer in the lower depths, which protects the plants during winter's frost.

As the temperatures drop, bring in your tender tropical plants. You can store them over winter in containers that hold water. Place them near sunny windows and check the water level often. Many pond keepers treat their tropical lilies as annuals, but they can be overwintered. "Tropical lilies begin to go dormant when water temperatures go below 70 degrees," Koogler said. "If the water temperature drops to 55 degrees, the tropical lilies will die, so be sure to remove them before the water gets too cold if you are going to overwinter them."

To condition your pond's water, consider adding a cool-temperature bacterial additive. "Aerobic microbes begin to go dormant when the water temperatures drop below 50 degrees," Koogler said. "Fall bacterial additives have strains of beneficial bacteria that continue to work in cold water." Some products are formulated specifically for fall use. The fall additives help accelerate the decomposition of sediment to help create a healthier living environment.

When winter arrives and temperatures plummet, many water gardens freeze. "Pond keeping is not an exact science, so pond keepers need to use their best judgment based on their own pond's situation," said Nathan W. Brunk owner of Practical Garden Ponds who has performed pond maintenance for more than a decade. Living in Downingtown, PA, Brunk understands cold winters and recommended that pond owners keep an air hole open. "This will allow methane gas to escape and fresh oxygen to enter," Brunk said.

Some owners choose to leave their waterfalls running during the winter to keep the water open. Running the pump in freezing temperatures can cause ice damming, Brunk said. This means that ice could change the water flow, directing it out of the pond and possibly pumping the pond dry. If this occurred under a sheet of ice, the owner might not realize it, he said.

If you stop the pump for the winter, you must find another way to keep the air hole open. "The bubbling action of a heavy-duty, outdoor air pump keeps a hole open in the ice, and fresh air will be forced into the pond," Brunk said. Deicers also keep the water open, and I recommend the floating type. Locate your deicer or air pump over a deep area of the pond where you want the fish to stay."

Do not simply pound a hole into the ice. The sound waves produced by banging on the ice can shock and kill fish.

Once you get your pond ready for winter, you can relax and enjoy the season.

The four main things to do are:

1. Use a long handled net scoop to remove leaves and other debris from the pond
2. Consider adding a net over the pond during autumn to keep leaves out of the water
3. Check the skimmer frequently to ensure there is no a buildup of debris
4. Keep an air hole open during the winter to allow the exchange of oxygen and other gases

Jean M. Fogle is a writer and photographer living in Virginia. She specializes in gardening and pet topics.

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For more information about pond maintenance and care, check out information from the Colorado Water Garden Society's Reference Library located on our website <https://www.colowatergardensociety.org/Category.cfm?CategoryID=135>. Note, you must be an active member to be able to access this area of the website.

2022/2023 Board Elections

By: Dorothy Martinez

Yes, it's that time of year again! We will be holding our Annual Board of Directors' Election during our September 9th meeting. The elections will take place at 7:00 pm, in Classroom 2 of the Freyer-Newman Center located within the Denver Botanic Gardens.

There is one open position on the Board - Member-At-Large.

Member at Large's duties include:

1. Act as liaison between the Board of Directors and the Society membership.
2. Direct the activities of the committees/or subcommittees of the Society.
3. Shall report to the Board on activities pertinent to their area(s) of responsibility.
4. Attend Board of Directors' meetings.

The Board of Directors usually meets independently 4 times per year, usually in September, October, January, and February. Members are always welcome to attend any Board meetings. The fall meetings are primarily for elections and planning meetings and events for the next year. The early year meetings are primarily for the planning/logistics of that calendar year's meetings and events.

We ask each Board member to attend at least 50% of our meetings/events and to serve on at least one committee. Board members are responsible for at least one meeting per year and they act as the primary contact for that meeting as well as being responsible for the planning and set up for that meeting.

We welcome any new faces joining the Board. New Board members inject fresh ideas and allow our meeting and event topics to stay relevant to what our members want and are most interested in.

If you would like to serve on the Board, please give me a call. If you have any questions about what serving on the Board entails, I would love to answer any of those questions. We do have Professional Liability Insurance coverage for all Board members through Travelers Commercial Insurance. You can reach me at (303) 279-3137 or dorothy.martinez@colowatergardensociety.org.

Thank you for your consideration!

2022 Rocky Mountain Koi Show

By: Chris Goumas

Hey everyone, the Rocky Mountain Koi show will be held this year on September 16th – 18th. Friday will be for setup and checking in Koi, Saturday will be from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm, and Sunday will be from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm. The Show is open to the public and admission is free!!

We will be at the Douglas County Fairgrounds again this year, but in a larger building. The Show will take place in the multi purpose room North. Take exit RT 25 at Plum Creek (exit 181) and head East.

500 Fairground Dr. Castle Rock, CO 80104

If you would like to show fish, please register on our website:

<https://www.rockymountainkoiclub.org/>

For a copy of the Koi Show Exhibitor Packet, please go to:

<https://www.rockymountainkoiclub.org/resources/Documents/KoiShow2022/2022KoiShowExhibitorPackage.pdf>

We're also having an awards dinner at the venue on Saturday night. To register and pay, please do so on our website.

We will have Show pins and shirts available for sale at the event and at least one vendor selling fish. Another vendor will be selling top quality viewing bowls and measuring tanks.

We hope to see you there!

For more information and questions, please contact Chris Goumas at chrisgoumas@yahoo.com or 440-823-6301.