



The Water Garden

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March 2023 Newsletter

2022 IWGS Symposium & Botanic Gardens in Kauai

By: *Jim Arneill & Vicki Aber*



Entry Garden at Naples Botanical Garden (photo courtesy of Dorothy Martinez)



Taro, known as kalo, was a staple food of the ancient Hawaiians. Cooked kalo corms are mixed with water to make poi. On the north shore of Kauai, there are many taro fields. (Photo courtesy of Jim Arneill)

Get Wet! Can Water Gardens be Xeric?

Please join us for our March meeting in Gates Hall at Denver Botanic Gardens on Thursday, March 16th, from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm. Our usual potluck at 6:00 pm will be followed by an informational and scenic program beginning at 7:00 pm.

Vicki Aber will begin the program by sharing her visit to Naples, Florida where the annual International Water Garden Society (IWGS) Symposium took place last summer. The main part of the Symposium was centered around Naples Botanic Garden. Naples has extensive water gardens that are cared for by some of the best in the business. The terrestrial parts of the gardens were also amazing.

Another visit was to Florida Aquatic Nurseries on the east coast of Florida where we order many of the plants for our annual plant sale. Also part of the virtual tour will be of the renowned Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden and the Kampong National Tropical Botanical Garden.

Afterwards, Jim Arneill will share a powerpoint on his recent trip to Kauai, highlighting four botanical gardens he visited. While the focus was on taro and other aquatic plants, the beauty of the gardens and other attractions on "The Garden Isle" will inspire you with your own water features and landscaping as we transition from a chilly winter.

We hope you will enjoy attending this year's program on March 16th with lots of beautiful scenery and aquatic plants you may want to incorporate into your own water features!

Please park in the Parking Garage located between York Street & Josephine Street and enter the Gardens through the Pinion Gate, located just North of the Visitor Center. DBG's Gates Hall is located within the Boettcher Memorial Center towards the south end of the building, on the left, past the restrooms.

By: *Therese-Marie O'Sullivan*



Koi at Dan & Vicki Aber's House (photo courtesy of John Funk)

With Spring in the air and Daylight Saving Time already upon us, we tend to look forward to that first scene, hinting that Spring is right around the corner and signaling that it's time to think outside the house. Everyone seems to be talking about water, whether it's about shortages, restrictions, drought, the state of the Colorado River, or our reservoirs and how are we all going to transform the landscape. Changing the way we think about our landscape by losing that high maintenance grass, planting native species, and perhaps even going Xeric. For our 2023 kick-off event, the Colorado Water Garden Society (CWGS) has decided to have a panel of experts consider a rather counter-intuitive idea. This year's program is called:

Get-Wet! Can Water Features Be Xeric? Transforming your yard while conserving water!

Our panel of featured speakers will be discussing and responding to questions relating to the following topics:

- Denver's Landscape Transformation Initiative - Bea Stratton, Water Resource Strategist from Denver Water
- Habitat Benefits of Water Features in Urban Landscapes - Shane Hemphill from Art of the Yard, award winning Custom Water Feature & Landscape & Maintenance Company
- Recent Water Policy Changes, Where Do We Go From Here? - Lindsay Rogers, Policy Analyst from Western Resource Advocates. She also serves on the City of Edgewater Sustainability Board/Land & Water Seat, & Colorado WaterWise Board
- Facts vs. Myths: Lawns, Pools, Ponds, Water Consumption Comparisons - Tim Boettcher (President) from True Pump & Equipment, Certified Aquascape® Distributor and 4-time recipient of the Aquascape® Top Distributor Award (2018-Present)
- Sustainable Construction, Integrating Xeric & Water Features - Matt Hiner (Owner & President) from Hiner Outdoor Living & ELITE Award winner from the Association of Landscape Contractors of Colorado (ALCC)

This event is co-sponsored by the Denver Botanic Gardens and will be held on Thursday, April 20th from 5:30 pm

to 8:30 pm at Gates Hall within the Boettcher Memorial Center at Denver Botanic Gardens.

The event is free and open to the public. Get acquainted with the Colorado Water Garden Society, learn what's happening, get some new ideas for ways to transform your yard and let's keep Colorado Wet!

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Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*)



Marsh Marigold (photo courtesy of Dorothy Martinez)

By: Dorothy Martinez

Caltha palustris, or Marsh marigold, is a native rhizomatous herbaceous perennial in the buttercup (*Ranunculaceae*) family that can be found from Newfoundland to Alaska south to Nebraska, Tennessee, and North Carolina. The common name, Marsh marigold, is misleading because it does not look like, nor is it related to, marigolds. The name marsh marigold is only descriptively accurate as to this plant's habitat, because it neither looks like nor is related to marigolds (*Aster* family). It belongs to the buttercup family, and its shiny yellow flowers indeed look very much like buttercups.

It typically grows 12-18" tall on hollow, branching stems. Bright yellow flowers (1-2" diameter) with 5-9 waxy deep yellow petal-like sepals bloom in spring (April to June). Flowers give way to seed pods which split open when ripe to disperse the seeds within. Long-stalked, rounded to cordate, glossy green basal leaves (to 7" across) attain mature size in summer well after flowering. Upper stem leaves are smaller and stalkless.

Marsh marigold is perfect for water gardens, pond edges, rain gardens, and wet, boggy areas in the landscape because it requires constant moisture and tolerates wet soil. It is an early bloomer in the spring. For best flowering, you should site the plant in full sun, however, full sun in the summer may force the plant to go dormant. This can be rectified with a site that provides some afternoon shade in the summer. Marsh marigold is low maintenance, easy to grow, and will spread in your yard by seed or by division of rhizomes dug up in the fall and replanted in early spring. It may also be grown from seed. Marsh marigold is deer resistant.

Its Genus name comes from the Latin name for a plant with a yellow flower, probably *Calendula*. Specific epithet means marsh-loving.

Flower buds may be cooked and pickled in vinegar for use as a substitute for capers. Young leaves are also edible as cooked greens when boiled. No part of this plant should ever be eaten raw however.

This article was compiled from two sources the North Carolina State Extension Office:

<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/caltha-palustris/> and Missouri Botanical Garden:
<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=a635>.

Hybridizer Highlight, IWGS Members Share Their Hybridizing Enthusiasms



Nymphaea 'Detective Erika' (photo courtesy of Zijun Li)

By: Dorothy Martinez

By Hybridizer Zijun Li
Country of Origin: China
Specialty as a hybridizer: Waterlilies

Do you have a favorite category you prefer to work with?
Hardy Tropical ISG (*Subg. Nymphaea* x *Subg. Brachyceras*) and *N. mexicana* hybrids

What are your short and/or long-term goals as a hybridizer?
My goal in hybridizing is to have plants with beautiful flecked leaves and fancy flowers.

Have you learned anything from experimentation that you would like to share?
Harvesting seeds from fertilized pods and cultivating them into full size flowering plants is not difficult to achieve, but to judge if the seedlings are outstanding or recognizable enough to be named is the hardest part. I very much agree with what James Knock says, the art is not what you keep, but what you throw away.

What was your first waterlily?
My first waterlily ever was Nymphaea 'August Koch', bought by my grandma from a local flower shop. Perry D. Slocum and a Taiwanese hybridizer, Padma, influenced me most. Facebook was not so popular when I was very young, so I studied how to cultivate lilies and how to grow them in the Taiwanese gardening form.

What is the hybrid you are most proud of?
Name: 'Detective Erika'
Flower color: Purple
Spread: 2-3 m
Fragrance: Mild
Hardiness Zones: 4a
Type of plant: ISG
Ideal growing conditions: Large pond with sufficient fertilizer and soil
Short description: 'Detective Erika' was named after one of my favorite novel characters (Detective Erika Furundo). It was different from most of the *Nymphaea* x *Brachyceras* waterlilies in the market, as it could produce many huge flowers over 20 cm simultaneously. What's more, its neat petals are always smooth and straight and this plant is also flourishing and totally hardy!

About the Author
As an enthusiast, Zijun Li has been collecting and hybridizing waterlilies for eight years. For further information, contact him at kufu61@163.com.

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2023 Meetings and Events Calendar

By: Dorothy Martinez

The Colorado Water Garden Society has been hard at work planning and preparing for all of our 2023 meetings and events.

Calendar of Events for 2023:

Thursday, March 16th
6:00 pm – 8:30 pm
2022 IWGS Symposium in Naples, Florida & Botanical Gardens in Kauai, Hawaii
Gates Hall, Boettcher Memorial Center, Denver Botanic Gardens

Thursday, April 20th
6:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Get Wet! Can Water Gardens be Xeric?
Gates Hall & Court, Boettcher Memorial Center, Denver Botanic Gardens

Thursday, May 11th, Friday, May 12th, and Saturday, May 13th
Thursday, 4:00 pm – 7:30 pm
Friday & Saturday, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm
Denver Botanic Gardens Spring Plant Sale
Aquatics Booth

Thursday, May 18th
6:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Annual Plant Swap
Aber Residence, Arvada

Sunday, June 4th
CWGS Plant Sale
The Hudson Gardens & Event Center Business Office/Residence, Littleton

Saturday, June 17th
12:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Pond Side Meeting
Front Range Gardens, Broomfield

Saturday, July 15th
10:00 am – 7:00 pm
Pond Tour, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm
Picnic, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm
CWGS Pond Tour & Picnic
Central Denver Area

Saturday, August 12th
9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Water Blossom Celebration
Hive Deck Area, Denver Botanic Gardens

Saturday, August 26th
12:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Pond Side Meeting
Taylor Residence, Colorado Springs

Tuesday, September 26th
Tour of Lauritzen Gardens in Omaha, Nebraska & Board Meeting
6:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Gates Hall, Boettcher Memorial Center, Denver Botanic Gardens

Thursday, October 5th
Photo Contest & Presentation by Scott Dressel Martin, Official Denver Botanic Gardens' Photographer
6:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Location TBD, Denver Botanic Gardens

Tuesday, December 5th
5:30 pm – 8:30 pm
Holiday Party & Gift Exchange
Arbor House - Maple Grove Park, Golden

Make sure to pencil the dates into your calendar. Please, come join us, we look forward to seeing you!