

HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 9 Issue 2

February/March 2017

March Meeting

This month's meeting will be at Bonnies Greenhouse at 6PM. if you plan to attend, please let Doris Coffee know. doris.a.coffee@gmail.com

Membership Dues

As of this writing, only 7 of 33 memberships have been renewed!!

As a reminder, our 2017 membership dues were due January 1, 2017. In accordance with our Bylaws, membership becomes delinquent if dues are not paid by the last day of February. You can either bring your dues to the March meeting or mail them to HOTWGPS, P.O. Box 852, Lorena, TX 76655.

Membership levels are:

- a. Individual -- \$18 per year
- b. Family -- \$24 per year
- c. Associate NON - Voting membership -- \$12 per year.
- d. Corporate/business -- \$100 per year.

Pond Vac

As a reminder, this is a "Members Only" benefit. You can rent this super-duper pond cleaning machine very reasonably! John Enders is the "official pond Vac keeper". Call him 254-848-9596 or send him an email at jnenders@aol.com to schedule your

time with the machine. One note of caution when using the pond Vac, watch how much water you are removing from your pond!! It works so well sucking up the yuk that one can easily forget how much water is also being removed! That is the voice of experience talking!!

The following articles from the 1-15-17 Pond Guy blog



Q: What is the difference between a waterfall filter and a waterfall spillway?

Ashley – Forest Grove, OR

A: Waterfall filters and waterfall spillways both generate a flowing waterfall in your pond or water feature – but they have different designs and purposes. Here's what you need to know about including them in your waterscape.

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Waterfall Filter

A waterfall filter, like [The Pond Guy® ClearSpring™ Waterfall Filters](#), serves two purposes: it generates a waterfall, and it houses your biological filtration system. The waterfall filter provides a starting point for the waterfall itself as the water fills its deep basin and pours evenly over the spillway. That basin is also spacious enough to hold filter media, which houses countless beneficial bacteria – a.k.a. your biological filtration system.

These two-in-one units work well for hobbyists who are building a new pond or are in need of additional filtration. Once you install one, be sure to seed the filter media with [PL Gel](#), a bacterial inoculant that contains beneficial microorganisms and naturally occurring biopolymers that reduce filter startup time.

Waterfall Spillway A waterfall spillway, like the [PondBuilder™ Elite Cascade Spillways](#), also provides a starting point for an evenly pouring waterfall, but the basin itself is smaller and provides no room for filter media. But because it creates the environment-enhancing movement and sound of flowing water, a waterfall spillway makes an excellent addition to a pond that's already filtered. It also works well for pondless waterfalls and in ponds in areas with little room to work.

Customizing Your Flow

Whether you install a waterfall filter or waterfall spillway, they can both be used in conjunction with a [skimmer](#). You can also easily blend them into your landscape with [rock covers](#) or [aquatic plants](#) while still allowing you to access the unit. Some models even offer a planting shelf or basket to house additional aquatic plants. Check out our entire selection of [Waterfall Filters & Waterfall Spillways](#).

*The following articles from the 1-22-17
Pond Guy blog*

What can I do to prevent string algae from growing in the winter?



A: Even in the cold of winter, string algae

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can grow in your water garden. All that the green nuisance needs to thrive is the right amount of nutrients and sunlight. So what can you do to prevent it? You have three options in your pond management toolbox: Seasonal Defense[®], barley straw extract, and a three-in-one pond tool.

Boost Your Bacteria First of all, you'll need to control the nutrients – or the food that the algae eat – in your pond. Because the beneficial bacteria that break down those nutrients go dormant in the winter, now's the time to add some [Seasonal Defense[®]](#) (as long as your pond isn't frozen over, of course). It contains bacteria that prefer cooler temperatures. They'll accelerate the decomposition of leaves, scum and sediment that feed algae, reducing its growth to a minimum.

Add Barley Straw If you have a small water garden, like a koi pond that's less than 10,000 gallons, [The Pond Guy[®] Barley Extract](#) provides an all-natural solution for maintaining clean, clear water throughout the winter. Available in bales, pellets and as an extract, it works by releasing compounds that improve water clarity, leaving you a clean and healthy pond. The extract form is easy to use: Pour directly into the water and repeat every few weeks.

Manually Remove It Should string algae form, you can manually remove it by wrapping it around an algae brush, like the one included in the [3-in-1 Interchangeable Pond Tool](#), and yanking it out of the water. The telescoping handle will add 5 feet to

your reach, allowing you to reach those hard-to-access patches of weeds. Unfortunately, if ice is covering your pond, there's not much you can do to remove that string algae. Plan to remove it during your spring clean-out process. The sun will return soon enough!

We had a couple of warm days. Is there anything I should be working on for the spring?



A: We may have another month or two of winter ahead of us, but that doesn't mean you can't head out to the pond on sunny days and get a jump-start on your spring cleaning and maintenance chores. Here are a few ideas:

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Tidy Things Up Rain, snow, wind and winter precipitation do a number on landscaping, so take some time to clean up the foliage around your pond. Remove fallen branches, rake leaves and debris, cut down cattails and pull out any pond weeds you can reach. Two great all-purpose tools to use for the task are the [Weed Cutter](#) and the [Pond & Beach Rake](#). The cutter slices through floating debris like aquatic vegetation, weeds, cattails and phragmites; the rake, which works on land and in the water, allows you to mechanically remove those cut weeds, algae, muck and debris.

Inspect Mechanical Parts Sunshine is a perfect excuse to tinker with outside toys, like your aeration system. Head out to the pond and check your air filters. Do they need changing? How's the airflow from the lines? Is it what you expect? Is your air compressor operating properly? If needed, install new air filters, clean out your lines, and tune up your air compressor with a maintenance kit. Keep your system performing optimally – even if it's still winter.

Add Pond Dye Pond Dye can be used all year long. Even though the sun isn't as strong in the wintertime, some UVs still get through – and they can fuel algae blooms that could affect your water quality. [Pond dye](#) shades the water and prevents those blooms from happening.



WHY IS MY POND CLOUDY IN THE SUMMER AND CLEAR IN THE WINTER?

A: Frustrating, isn't it? During the summer when it's warm and inviting outside by the pond, the water looks cloudy; when it's too cold to enjoy the outdoor scenery, the water appears crystal clear. What's the deal? Let's look below the water's surface to see what happens during the two seasons.

Murky Summer A lot happens in your pond during the warmer months. Fish are actively feeding and creating waste. Pond critters, like turtles and frogs, are digging around in the mud and stirring up muck at the bottom of the pond. Rainstorms wash sediment into the pond along with fertilizer

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residue – which provides fuel to algae and pond weeds growing prolifically in the summer sun. With all that activity, it's no wonder the water looks cloudy!

Clear Winter During the winter, however, activity slows. As your fishes' metabolism decreases, they fast and hibernate through the cold season. Turtles, frogs and other pond residents reduce their movement, too, which allows the muck and sediment to settle at the bottom. Ice and snow cover the pond, limiting water movement and blocking sunlight. Algae still grows, but at a much slower rate. As everything settles and slows down, the water clears.

Extending Winter If you want that crystal clear water all year long, follow this three-step formula, particularly as the days get longer and spring warmth thaws the ice:

Feed Your Bacteria: First, be sure to add some bacteria enhancer, like [EcoBoost™](#), to the water. It binds suspended organics, provides trace minerals to fish and other pond dwellers, and helps break down fertilizers from rain runoff. It has no temperature restrictions, so you can use it throughout the seasons.

Shield the Sun's Rays: Next, pour some [Pond Dye](#) in the water. The color reduces the amount of rays that go into the pond. Like [EcoBoost](#), [Pond Dye](#) has no temperature restrictions, so you can use it throughout the season.

Add Oxygen: [Aeration](#) is the final – and most important – step in maintaining clean, clear water. By aerating your pond from the bottom up, you will circulate the water, improve the dissolved oxygen levels in your water column, and allow for increased levels of beneficial bacteria to accumulate in your pond.

Country Chuckles

Vacation Days

My daughter, son-in-law and my two grandsons, Ethan and Esteban, 12 and 14, took a vacation in Texas to visit the kids' other grandfather. We picked the boys up from school on their first day back.

After a few minutes of driving, I asked Ethan what the teacher had said about missing two days of school. He replied, "Grandpa, I did not miss school. I missed my friends, but I did not miss school."

Edward Gill
Beloit, Wisconsin

Obedient Turkey Thief

Grandma Hamilton raised turkeys, and she ordered a special one from Chicago costing a healthy \$35. It was the Thanksgiving season, and one morning she realized that her valuable prize turkey was missing. Quickly she put a notice in the local newspaper that said, "Will whoever took my

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prize Bronze tom turkey please return it and exchange it for another one?"

Sure enough, the next morning, there stood her bird, and another was missing.

Sharon Hamilton Norton
Harrison, Idaho

Sensitive Songbird

I was toweling off a wren I had found in a mud puddle on a brisk day when my neighbor asked me, "Do you want to hear the latest gossip?" I replied, "Not in front of the chilled wren. "

Brad Wesner
Simpsonville, South Carolina

The Money Tree

A country boy kept asking his dad for money. Finally Dad said, "Money doesn't grow on trees around here."

The boy then asked what money was made out of. "Paper," Dad replied. "And what is paper made out of, Dad?"

Daniel Shirk
New Holland, Pennsylvania

Bridal Bewilderment

A young girl attending her first wedding carefully observed the entire ceremony.

When it ended, she asked, "Why did the lady change her mind?"

Her mother asked what she meant, and the girl explained, "Well, she went down the aisle with one man and came back with another one."

Frieda Ketterling
Wishek, North Dakota

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Making outdoors awesome

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