

HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 11 Issue 2

February 2019

Meeting

Our meeting this month will be February 15 at 6:30 PM. We will meet at Waco Transit Downtown and learn about plants to keep and avoid.



Membership Dues

A big THANK YOU to those of you who have already paid your 2019 HOTWGPS membership dues!

As a reminder, our 2019 membership dues were due January 1, 2019. 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 February 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.



This from Webbs Water Gardens

When attempting to catch fish, first position your net well below the pond surface. Use a small amount of food to lure them toward

the surface. Slowly raise the net and close in. If the fish darts away or jumps, never stab the net at a swimming fish. Regroup and start over.



Another one from Webb's Water Gardens



The sounds of a cascading waterfall and birds singing, not a cloud in the sky, the sun is shining and you're resting by the pond feeding your koi. What could be better than this? How about actually hand feeding them! Follow the few easy steps below and your koi will be eating from the palm of your hand in no time.



First, pick a feeding spot and set a designated time for feeding each day. At

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first, gently throw the food into the water and observe, making your presence known.

After a few feedings, start outstretching your hand closer and closer each day. Making it known to the fish your hand is present. Eventually, the fish will associate your presence with receiving food.



Over time, set your hand into the water with food and slowly release the food. This will help the fish become complacent with your hand.

It may take several tries but, eventually the fish will become comfortable enough to feed right from your hand!



This from the Texas Invasives.org January Newsletter

Invasive Spotlight: **Water Lettuce** (*Pistia stratiotes*)



As a floating aquatic plant, water lettuce causes problems similar to giant salvinia: it blocks light to the aquatic ecosystem, reduces oxygen levels, increases siltation, reduces suitable fish spawning habitat and restricts water flow and boating traffic. Also like giant salvinia, after it gets into lakes, ponds and slow-moving streams, it can multiply rapidly and cause severe infestations. Water lettuce spreads by vegetative offshoots that break off, as well as by seeds.

This floating plant native to South America is considered to be one of the worst weeds in the subtropical and tropical regions of the world. In Florida, it was first recorded in 1765; its introduction is linked to early shipping commerce between Florida and South America. Today, water-lettuce is commonly found in the central and southern portions of the state, but new infestations of water-lettuce have been found in North Florida's spring-fed rivers and lakes. Because of intensive statewide management efforts, water lettuce populations are maintained at low population densities. Under optimal environmental conditions, water-lettuce can double its population size

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in less than three weeks. Seed production makes this plant resilient to adverse environmental conditions such as freezing temperatures and drought.

Why water-lettuce must be managed: Water-lettuce populations often form large expanses of dense, impenetrable floating mats limiting boat traffic, recreation flood control and wildlife use. These dense canopies at the water surface shade out native submersed plant species and can uproot native emergent plants that are important to wildlife.

Environmental damage caused by water lettuce populations:

- + Water-lettuce mats can lower dissolved oxygen concentrations reducing aquatic life.
- + Dense populations may lower water levels because water-lettuce increases evaporation rates over open water areas.
- + Water-lettuce mats can restrict water flow increasing flooding along rivers and canals.
- + Dense water-lettuce populations produce ideal breeding environments for mosquitoes.
- + Water-lettuce populations crowd out native plants and animals (lowers biodiversity).

This species (the only one in its genus) commonly forms dense floating mats, with many rosettes of fuzzy-soft, pale-green leaves. New leaf clusters form readily from stolons (runner stems) offset from the larger rosettes.

Leaves: in rosettes occurring singly or connected to others by short stolons. Leaves often spongy near base, densely soft pubescent with obvious parallel veins;

blades slightly broader than long, widest at apex, to 15 cm (6 in.) long.

Roots: long, feathery; bearing long root caps (brown coverings over root tips).

Flowers: inconspicuous, clustered on small fleshy stalk nearly hidden in leaf axils, with single female flower below and whorl of male flowers above.

Fruit: arising from female flower as a many-seeded green berry.

For more information, see the Texasinvasives.org profile, and the UF / IFAS Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants' weed alert, recognition card, and page from *Identification and Biology of Nonnative Plants in Florida's Natural Areas – Second Edition*.



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!!

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Points to Ponder

"A committee can make a decision that is dumber than any of its members." *David B. Coblitz*

"The older I grow the more I distrust the familiar doctrine that age brings wisdom." *HL. Mencken*

"Anything that won't sell, I don't want to invent. Its sale is proof of utility, and utility is success." *Thomas Edison*



On the Lighter Side

Ole and Sven were dragging their dead deer back to their truck. Another hunter approached and said, "Hey, I don't want to tell you your business but it's much easier if you drag the deer in the other direction. That way the antlers won't dig into the ground." After the man left, Ole and Sven decided to try his suggestion.

A little while later Ole said to Sven, "Yew know, dat guy vas right. Dis is a lot easier!"

"Ya, dat's true. But now ve're getting funder and funder away from da truck," Sven complained.



Ole and Sven were sitting at the bar celebrating. The bartender overhears Ole make a toast.

"Vell, Sven, here's tew 17 days!"

Smiling, the bartender says, "Congratulations! What's so special about 17 days?"

With a big smile, Ole says, "VeIl, ve've been spending every night vorking on a jigsaw puzzle! Da box says 3 to 5 years on it but ve finished it in only 17 days!"



Ole applied for a job at the police department. He was given test after test but could pass none of them. The police captain, who was Ole's brother-in-law, had promised Ole's wife Lena he'd get Ole into the department. So he decided to give one more test, which only had one question: "Who . shot Lincoln?"

Ole replied, "Vell, I don't know dat." "Look," said the police captain. "Take this question home ., and study it. Maybe when you come back tomorrow you'll know the answer."

That night, Lena asked Ole if he'd gotten the job. Ole answered proudly, "Ya, I tink I did because dey've already got me vorking on a murder case!"

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I told my 93-year-old brother he should pay someone to shovel his snow. He replied, "Why should I pay someone? My son can do it. He's only 70."



Keeping the Peace

Ever alert to sirens, as his dad is a police officer, my 3-year-old grandson, Sawyer, heard the loud sounds approaching near our intersection. He shouted from the back seat, "MaMa, there's the ambulance!"

Seconds later, the police car followed and I heard Sawyer say, "There goes the peace car!" I thought to myself, how right you are little one, it should be called a peace car!

NANCY SMITH-JONES *Plain City, Ohio*



Editor Needed

A church minister was shaving in preparation for the Sunday service. While doing so, he cut himself and had to apply a bandage. "I will have to explain what happened," he thought.

"Well, folks," he said to his congregation on Sunday, "I cut my face while thinking about my sermon for you."

After the service, one of the deacons said, "Pastor, next time think about your face and cut your sermon!"

GERALD MULLEN *Leetonia, Ohio*



Farm Country Pinups

While on a cross-country drive I headed west through Ohio and Indiana, passing miles and miles of farmland.

The next morning, I drove to The Shack in Sumner, Illinois, for breakfast. After ordering at the counter, I proceeded to the restroom. There on the walls were not one but three pictures of stars that caused me to split my sides. Were they movie stars? No, they were perfectly framed pictures of tractors!

JOHN SCANLAN *Hilton Head Island, South Carolina*



Not for Boys

My sister-in-law Jackie was making grilled cheese sandwiches for my two nieces, Amelia; 4, and Caitlyn, 2. As she was serving them, their little brother was fussing like he wanted a sandwich, too.

Amelia said, "No Levi, you can't have any. That's why it's called girl cheese sandwiches."

LEAH REIMER *Horndean, Manitoba*

Please support these businesses who have agreed to give our members a discount at their stores in addition to being sponsors for our 2018 Pond Tour.

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