

HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 12 issue 2

Happy Valentine Day!

February 2020

February Meeting

The February meeting will be on the 18th at Wildbirds Unlimited at 6:30 PM. The topic is “Wild Birds Need Love”. Finger sandwiches & desserts provided.



Membership Dues

As a reminder, our 2020 membership dues were due January 1, 2020. Thank you to those of you who have paid yours. To those of you who have yet to pay them, you can either bring them to the February meeting or mail them to HOTWGPS, PO 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 three articles are from THEPOND GUY BLOGS this month. Naturally, they recommend their products.

I would like to build a backyard pond. What do I need to know?



A: Are you dreaming of summertime landscaping projects? Yep, we are too. With the cold season upon us, there's nothing like some backyard pond planning to warm up those chilly days and get excited about diving in to your favorite hobby. Whether you plan to build a half-acre pond with a recirculating stream and fish, expand on your existing feature, or install a petite 200-gallon in-ground aquatic water garden, you should consider these points as you design your backyard dream:

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Start with a Budget

First of all, consider what kind of money you want to spend and develop a project budget. In most cases, the larger the water feature, the more expensive it will be—but some of those top-of-the-line accessories for smaller features can cost quite a bit, too. If you need some help, call a pond-building professional in your area who can assess your needs and determine your budget.

Look for Higher Ground

Next, take a close look at your landscape and plan to position your pond on a high spot rather than a low spot. It might seem logical to locate your water feature in a valley, but it's actually better to situate it on higher ground. This will prevent rainwater from running into your pond, which can cause water clarity and algae growth problems later on.

Size It Right

While you're inspecting your outdoor space, consider what sized water feature will realistically fit within your existing landscaping. Do you have a large yard and want to go big? Do you have a small space that's perfect for a preformed pond with a small fountain? Perhaps the area is best suited for a pondless stream or waterfall. Many seasoned pond hobbyists have admitted that, in retrospect, they wish they had gone bigger with their initial designs.

Consider Your Audience

Who will be enjoying your water feature? When planning your backyard pond, keep your audience in mind. Does it need to be

kid friendly or a peaceful getaway? Pondless waterfalls are great for people on the go. If, however, you and your family have a passion for aquatic plants or fish, it would make sense to go with a traditional pond.

Go with a Kit

As you're planning your backyard dream pond, make the process easier by buying a pond kit, which comes with everything you'll need. Different kits are designed for different types of ponds. *Here are three that we recommend:*

For a large waterfall with big sound: The **RapidFlo™ Ecosystem Pond Kit** is ideal for those who want a large waterfall or stream, lots of sound to drown out nearby noise, and a system with the capacity to deal with heavy debris from nearby trees.

For fish lovers: The **AllClear™ Ecosystem Pond Kit** is designed for hobbyists who want their pond to be all about their fish, not a waterfall. It works well in yards with full sun exposure and few falling leaves.

For easy maintenance: The **Cascading Falls Pondless Pond Kit** is perfect for busy people who want to enjoy the sights and sounds of running water but have little time to maintain a traditional water feature. It's also well suited for small yards or families with children.

Have Fun with It!

The most important thing to know about planning a pond of your dreams is that you should have a great time doing it. You'll enjoy this backyard feature for years, so do your research, think through these points,

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and spend time designing something that you'll love!



My UV bulb was still working when I pulled it out for the winter. Do I still need to replace it?

A: A UV bulb is one of your best weapons in the battle against discolored water. When those ultra-fine particles are exposed to the bulb's ultraviolet rays the tiny particles clump together, and those clumps are then removed by your mechanical filtration system. What's left behind is clean, clear water – as long as the bulb is working efficiently.

For your **UV clarifier** to work its best, it will need a new **ultraviolet bulb** every year. Even though the bulb still illuminates and appears to be working, its effectiveness decreases over time. Your best bet is to replace it when you do your annual spring cleanout, and plan to do so again year after year.

Spring Cleaning

In addition to switching out the bulb, take some time to check the quartz sleeve or glass tube that's housing the bulb. Does it need a good cleaning? Debris can build up on the glass, preventing those powerful UV rays from penetrating the water as it passes through the filter. Use a soft cloth and a **descaler** (if needed) to scrub off the buildup.

Filter Check

While you're at it, check your **biological filter media** and mechanical filter components, like the skimmer, pump sock

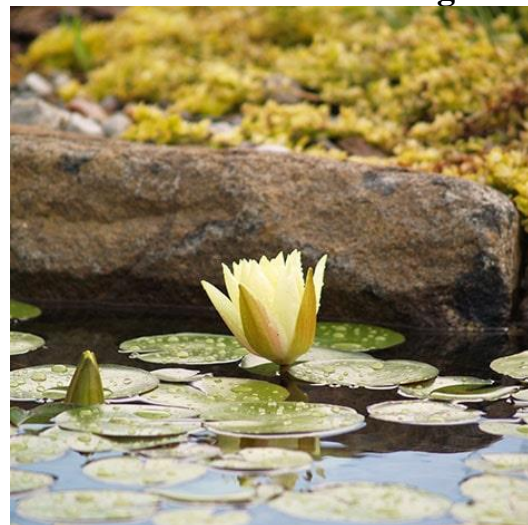
and prefilters. Do they need to be cleaned or replaced? Even though your ultraviolet clarifier is tackling most of the discolored water, your filtration system is still responsible for removing the debris. Make sure they're in good working order before the algae blooms in the spring.

Maintain a Balanced Pond

UV clarifiers do a great job at clearing water, but an even better solution is to maintain a balanced pond the first place. Reduce excessive nutrients by reducing the number of fish in your pond, minimizing the amount of food you feed them and cleaning up the waste they produce, as well as regularly removing the built-up detritus.



My water lilies have lots of leaves but no flowers. What's wrong?



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A: Those lily pads may provide much-needed shade and protection to your pond's underwater inhabitants, but if the plants lack those beautiful pink, peach, yellow and white flowers, that could be a sign that something's amiss. Here, we've outlined some possible causes of your lilies' missing flowers:

Not Enough Nutrients: Curling or yellowing of the leaves or flowers can be signs of nitrogen, iron and magnesium deficiency. Have you fertilized your lilies lately? If not, it may be time to give them a little plant food. **Thrive™ Aquatic Plant Fertilizer Tablets** slowly release nutrients for up to one month, providing your plants with what they need to flourish.

Insufficient Light: Are your lilies getting six to eight hours of partial to full sun a day? Without that sunshine, the plant will appear weak and frail. If they're under a canopy or in a shadier part of your pond, move them to a sunnier location.

Overcrowded Plants: Plants – terrestrial and aquatic – need room to stretch out their roots and grow. If they're placed in a tiny planter or there are too many packed in one area, this can stunt their development. Take some time to pull out those **plant baskets** or **bags** from your pond and divide the lilies into separate pots. Here are step-by-step instructions for **dividing water lilies**, ([click on the link for the instructions](#)) though we recommend waiting until the spring.

Poor pH Levels: Water lilies do best in water that's in the 6.2 to 7.4 pH range. Check pH levels frequently with a **pH Test Kit** to ensure the measurements are within

that range and correct them accordingly. Like your roses or other plants in your flower garden, your water lilies will benefit from some regular trimming and dead-heading. Prune or trim any flowers or leaves that have turned yellow or brown. This will encourage new growth – and hopefully some new blooms! (*Deadheading on a regular basis will also help with your water quality*)



Points to Ponder

"Don't gamble. Take all your savings and buy some good stock, hold it till it goes up, then sell it. If it don't go up, don't buy it."
Will Rogers

"Time is the coin of life. Only you can determine how it will be spent."
Carl Sandburg

"Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap' but by the seeds that you plant."
Robert Louis Stevenson

"Never ascribe to malice that which is adequately explained by stupidity."
Napoleon Bonaparte

"We suffer a lot the few things we lack and we enjoy too little the many things we have."
William Shakespeare

"People seldom do what they believe in. They do what is convenient, then repent."
Bob Dylan

"Rebels and non-conformists are often the pioneers and designers of change."
Indira Gandhi

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"You've got to rattle your cage door. You've got to let them know that you're in there and that you want out. Make noise. Cause trouble. You may not win right away, but you'll sure have a lot more fun." *Florynce Kennedy*

"If you would be a real seeker after truth, it is necessary that at least once in your life you doubt, as far as possible, all things." *Rene Descartes*



Lena went to a lawyer and demanded he help her divorce her husband Ole.

"Do you have grounds?" the lawyer asked. "Vell, yes," said Lena. "Ve haf 10 acres."

The lawyer was silent for a moment and then tried again.

"What I mean is, do you have a grudge with Ole?"

"No," said Lena. "But ve haf a carport."

The lawyer decided to try it from another angle. "Does your husband beat you up?"

Lena replied, "Vell, no. I'm usually up vay before him. But I'm not sure vhy yur asking all dese dumb questions."

The lawyer finally admitted defeat. "Lady, why exactly do you want a divorce from Ole?"

Without batting an eye, Lena said, "Vhy, it's just impossible to have an intelligent conversation vith dat man!"



Lena went to the post office to mail her Christmas cards.

She says to the clerk, "May I haf 50

Christmas stamps?"

The clerk says, "What denomination?"

Lena says, "Uffda. Can't ve all yust get along? OK, vell gif me 6 Catolics, 12 Prodestants, and 32 Luterans."



Sven told Ole, "My vife is like George Washington. I don't tink she could tell a lie to save her soul."

Ole replied, "Yew're lucky. Mine can tell a lie da minute I get it out ov my mouth."



Ole and Lena were checking into a swanky New York hotel. Ole said to the bellboy, "I ain't gonna take no tiny little room like dis wit no bed or windows. Yew can't treat me like a fool yust because I'm from a small town and don't travel much."

The bellboy replied, "Sir, I'm sorry, but this isn't your room. It's just the elevator."



Please support these businesses who have agreed to give our members a discount at their stores

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Making outdoors awesome

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