

HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 12 issue 6

June 2020

HOTWGPS Events

Our June meeting will be on the 16th at 6:30 PM. We will meet at Rose & Ron Haft's home. Ron will give a presentation on Bonsai trees. There will be a plant swap for those interested. If you bring plants to swap, please plan to take any leftovers home with you. Remember to bring your \$5+ for the pizza & drinks.



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 AquaNooga Tip of the Week

Tuesday, April 14, 2020

When choosing a new pump for your pond, it is important to look at all factors. Obviously, we first want to make sure the pump will provide the needed flow (this involves calculating head pressure). Then we look at purchase price, and warranty. An

often overlooked factor is the cost of operating the pump, that can make a big difference in the lifetime cost of the pump. Our [pump article](#) can help if you want to do the work on your own or we are always happy to help.



The AquaNooga Tip of the Week

Tuesday May 5, 2020

Have you noticed tiny red worms in your pond filter? No need for concern. These harmless creatures are Blood Worms and they can be beneficial to the pond by consuming some of the detritus (sludge) in your filter. Blood Worms are the larvae stage of chironomid midges – a very small fly that resembles a mosquito but does not bite.



This from the May 2020 Invasive I-Wire Newsletter

San Antonio River Draining Targets Invasive Snail



Credit: wwltv.com

In January, the San Antonio River Authority [drained the San Antonio River](#) along a 3-mile stretch in San Antonio to remove the invasive South American apple snail

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(*Pomacea maculata*). Fifty of the snails were removed on one day. The snails were first found in the river stretch the previous October.

In addition, non-native fish such as blue tilapia (*Oreochromis aureus*) and suckermouth catfish (*Hypostomus plecostomus*, aka pleco) were also removed.

Apple snails are voracious feeders on aquatic vegetation that is important habitat for native aquatic species. They can also carry a parasitic worm that can cause meningitis in humans.

If you find apple snails or their pink egg cases, please [report them here](#). You can also report the snails or their eggs, plecocs, or blue tilapia to aquaticinvasives@tpwd.texas.gov.

For more information on apple snails, see the [apple snail's profile](#) at Texasinvasives.org.

For more information on plecocs, see [the suckermouth catfish's profile](#) at Texasinvasives.org.



This from the May 2020 Invasive I-Wire Newsletter

Onionweed (*Asphodelus fistulosus*)



Source: USDA APHIS PPQ - Oxford, North Carolina , USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org



Credit: John Ruter, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org

Onionweed is a perennial herbaceous plant with leaves that resemble, as its name implies, onions or scallions: long, smooth, cylindrical, and hollow. However, they neither smell nor taste like onions. The numerous leaves are dark green and grow 12 to 30 inches tall from the base of the plant and spread to 15 inches wide. Onionweed produces one to several stiff upright, branched flower stem(s) up to 2.5 feet tall. The flowers alternate along the branches and are about three-fourths of an inch across

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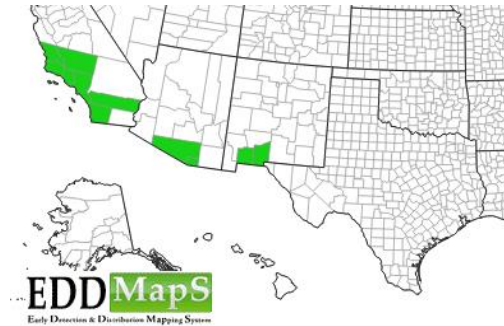
with six petal parts, each white to pink with a brown or reddish stripe along the center. Fruits are spherical capsules divided into three segments. Seeds are brown or black, triangular, one-eighth inch long, wrinkled, pitted and three or six per fruit. The thick root crowns have many fibrous roots and no developed bulb.

Onionweed is native to the Mediterranean area and from western Asia to India. It was introduced in the United States as an ornamental. It is an aggressive invasive, seeding prolifically and spreading relatively rapidly. It excludes grasses and desirable forbs.

Because onionweed infestations pose a serious risk to ecosystems as well as agriculture, it is currently on the Federal and the Texas Department of Agriculture noxious weed lists. It is also one of the “Dirty Dozen” pest species identified by the Texas Invasive Plant and Pest Council. Therefore, it is one of the “Report It!” alert species on the TexasInvasives.org website and reporting app.

Onionweed has occasionally been found in Texas, but there have not been any reported infestations. Let's keep it that way! If you believe you have found onionweed, please [report this species](#).

Follow [this link](#) for more information on onionweed.



The following articles are from THE POND GUY BLOG. Naturally, they recommend their products.

What can I do to help out a fish that was attacked by a heron?



ASKED BY: Lori of Glen Forney, PA

A: Ouch. A heron attack isn't pretty – and it's potentially deadly to your fish. Unfortunately, you can't call 9-1-1 or an emergency fish veterinarian for a pond call, but you can try some things that could save your pet's life.

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Examine, Triage:

The first thing to do is examine the victim and do some triage. Capture the injured fish in a pond net and take a closer look at its wounds without removing it from the water. How severe is the injury? Are there just a few scrapes, or does the fish have an open wound?

Minimal Injuries:

If your fish's injuries aren't too severe and it appears to be normal except for a few scrapes, leave it in the pond and add some **Stress Reducer Plus** to the water. The liquid formula will help to calm the fish and rebuild its slime coat, which defends it against infection. You might also want to add some soothing **salt** to the water.

Remove and Isolate:

If your fish is severely injured, set up a quarantine tank with pond water and an aerator, add some **Stress Reducer Plus**, put it in a shaded and protected area, and gently move the fish from the pond to the tank.

Watch for Infection:

Keep an eye on your fish while it's in the quarantine tank. Because damaged tissue becomes a breeding ground for bacterial and fungal pathogens, watch for signs of infection. If you see split or ragged fins, slimy patches or red ulcers on its body, or any other unusual symptoms, use **CrystalClear® Wipeout™** or **API® MelaFix** to heal the wounds and restore damaged tissue.

While your finned friend is recovering, make some plans for how you'll guard your pond against future attacks. **Predator control**, like a Blue Heron Decoy, Heron Stop Spinner, Reflector and Flags will dissuade the real things from stopping by for a snack. **Pond netting** will prevent birds

from reaching the water. **Floating, submerged and marginal aquatic plants** give your fish somewhere to hide, as do fish shelters, like the **Koi Kastle**. Set your fish up for safety – especially since that heron will be back for seconds!



How to Deter Herons



The great blue heron is well known to many pond owners that stock their pond with fish. While they are easy to spot with their blue-gray plumage, black stripe over their eyes and a thick dagger like beak, they are not easy to keep away from your pond.

Breeding Season

These protected birds can be seen throughout the year here in North America mostly soaring through the air with their 6-foot wingspan and 4-foot long body. Great blue herons can be seen together during the mating season that ranges from the beginning of September and October with a

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return in Mid-March through June, however when it is time to find food they fly solo.

Hunting Techniques

A common hunting technique is to soar through the air looking for a quick bite to eat, usually in wetlands or ponds and lakes. They prefer to sit motionless along shorelines or in shallow waters and wait patiently for a snack to swim by. Another technique is to walk slowly flushing out any potential prey that may be hiding with their feet.

The great blue heron is an intelligent bird so you will need to get creative when it comes to encouraging them to hunt in a different location. Here are some tricks to try:

Decoy:

The first line of defense should be when a heron has yet to discover your pond and should only be used after mating season. *(Editor Note: during mating season, putting out this decoy will/may attract an interested bird!)* The theory is that herons often hunt alone and do not want to fight for their fishing spot so if they see a **heron decoy** near the pond, they will seek an alternative body of water. Remember herons are very intelligent and will catch on quickly if a decoy stays in one spot for too long so keep it moving to keep it guessing.

Add Movement: Adding an **aerator** or a beautiful **fountain display** can do more than adding oxygen to the water and setting a pretty scene. The added movement in the water can challenge the heron's sight when flying above.

Create an Illusion: Herons will typically fly over looking for shallow water to wade in and look for fish. Adding a little bit of **pond dye** can create an illusion that the pond is deeper and will make it harder for fish to be seen from a long distance.

Provide Hiding Places: Just in case a heron chooses your pond for its hunting grounds, give your fish a place to hide. **Fish habitat** like the Honey Hole Shrub or Fish Attractor Spheres can provide an added layer of protection.

Create Obstacles: Herons have the tendency to land around the perimeter of the pond and walk up to the water. Obstacles, like the **Heron Stop** make access difficult by creating an impassable barrier up to 40' of shoreline, without obstructing the view of your pond.

Scare Tactics: Startle herons and other predators to scare them away with a spray of water using a motion-activated sprinkler can protect an area up to 1200 square feet, connected to a garden hose and powered by a solar panel; motion sensors trigger the stream of water.

Cold Weather Relief: Herons are migratory birds, and they have no appreciation for cold weather. So if you're located in the cooler northern climes - particularly where ponds tend to freeze during the winter months - you'll usually notice their absence when temperatures start to drop. Like many of us would like to do during winter, herons that choose to migrate will head for Central America and northern South America to warm up and fill up on fish. If you live in warmer portions of the United States, however, you may see herons all year 'round, provided there's enough open water and food to keep them happy.

As you can see there are many tactics you can use to your advantage in protecting your fish from herons. We recommend using a variety of methods to discourage them from landing on your property because eventually, they will figure out they won't be harmed.

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I'm tired of fighting algae. Will a UV take care of all the algae growth?



ASKED BY: Beth of Casselberry, FL

A: Who isn't tired of battling algae!

Caused by excess fish waste and dead organics from leaves or previous algae blooms combined with excessive sunlight, all that garish green growth looks horrible, ruins your water quality, and creates a headache for you and your fish.

Is an **ultraviolet clarifier** the answer? It depends on the type of algae you're trying to destroy.

Know Your Algae

The algae that forms in your pond comes in two basic flavors: planktonic and filamentous.

Planktonic algae, the source of pea soup algae blooms, are floating, microscopic plants that color pond water shades of green, blue-green, brown or variations in between. In controlled amounts, this type of algae can actually be beneficial. It's considered the start of the pond food chain as the tiny plants feed fish inhabitants, and it can also shade the pond's bottom, preventing subsurface nuisance plants from growing. In uncontrolled amounts, however, planktonic algae can cause oxygen depletions and fish kill.

Filamentous (string) algae are single-celled plants that form long, visible chain, threads or filaments. These threads, which start growing along the bottom of the pond in shallow water or on rocks or other aquatic plants, intertwine and form mats that resemble wet wool. When these mats rise to the surface, they're commonly referred to as pond scum. These mats make great homes for micro- and macro-invertebrates, like bugs and worms, but they're also unsightly.

UV clarifiers work by destroying the ultrafine planktonic algae – but, unfortunately, they do nothing to **combat the filamentous algae**. You'll need a different strategy for the stringy stuff.

Battling Planktonic Algae

So how does ultraviolet light fight planktonic algae? When the algae cells are exposed to the bulb's ultraviolet rays, radiation destroys the plants' cellular walls. As a result, the tiny particles of dead algae clump together, and those clumps are then removed by your mechanical filtration system.

For the **UV Clarifier** to work properly, however, follow these guidelines:

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Replace bulbs yearly.

Worn-out bulbs – even if they still light up – may not be as effective at controlling green water.

Watch your flow rate.

Pushing water past the UV too fast can damage the unit and not allow enough contact time with the UV bulb for it to be effective.

Don't flow too slow.

Running a UV at too slow of a flow will act as a sterilizer and may also have a negative affect on natural bacteria meant to help decompose dead organics and fish waste.

Finding Balance

If you have an algae problem, be it planktonic or filamentous, it indicates your pond is out of balance. An ultraviolet clarifier should actually be one of your last tactics! Add some beneficial bacteria from the **DefensePAC® Pond Care Package** to help reduce the amount of organics in your pond. Start aerating the water. Consider using pond dye. If you have a thriving fish population, think about finding a new home for them (but don't release them into the wild!). Manage the nutrients, sunlight and oxygen levels, and your algae proliferation should naturally level out on its own.



*This from the Microbe-Lift Pond & Aquarium
Newsletter, May 2020*

During mating season, female koi produce thousands of eggs that will be fertilized by males' sperm in the water. Only half of the fertilized eggs will grow to be koi.

Koi fish can grow up to three feet long if raised in appropriate conditions.

Due to their sensitive skin, koi need shade and deep water because they are susceptible to sunburn.



Ole & Lena

Ole called Sven and asked him to come to his house to help with a jigsaw puzzle.

"Dat ting's a killer, Sven," Ole told him on the phone. "I can't figure out where to start." Sven said, "What's it supposed to be when it's done?" "Veil," said Ole, "according to da box, it's a tiger."

Sven decided to help. Ole let him in and showed him where he had the puzzle spread out all over the table. Sven studied the pieces for a moment, looked at the box, and then said, "Ole, I hate to be da one to tell yew dis but ve're not going to be able to make deez pieces look like a tiger."

"And second, Ole, maybe yew should just relax and have a cup of coffee. Den ve'll put all of deez Frosted Flakes back into da box."



Lena phoned her doctor, very upset.

"Is it true," she asked, "dat da medication yew prescribed has to be taken for da rest of my life?"

"Yes, I'm afraid so," the doctor told her.

There was a moment of silence before Lena replied, "Vell, I'm vondering den yust how serious is my condition? Because da prescription bottle is marked 'no refills'."

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During a break on a building project, the construction foreman Sven approached Ole, a fellow worker. "I hear da boys are going on strike," he told Ole. "What fer?" asked Ole. "Shorter vorking hours," answered Sven. "Good fur dem," replied Ole. "I always did tink 60 minutes vas too long fur a hour."



Sven took a trip to Arizona for his health but, unfortunately, he died there. His body was shipped home to North Dakota. "Don't he look vunderful!" commented Ole as he viewed Sven in the casket at his funeral. "Vell, ya, he sure does," said Sven's widow, Olga. "I tink dat trip tew Arizona did him a world of good!"



ANECDOTES & PLEASANTRIES

"When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us."

Alexander Graham Bell

"This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But, it is perhaps, the end of the beginning." *Winston Churchill*

"Better three hours too soon than a minute too late.": *Shakespeare*

"You can't go back and change the beginning but you can start where you are and change the ending." *C.S. Lewis*

"If you always do what you did, you'll always get what you got." *Marian Diamond*

"There is nothing in a caterpillar that tells you it's going to be a butterfly." *R. Buckminster Fuller*

"Courage is the first of human qualities because it is the quality which guarantees all others." *Winston Churchill*

"We are all born ignorant, but one must work very hard to remain stupid." *Benjamin Franklin*



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

<p>Bonnie's Greenhouse Sandra & Johnny Killough</p> <p>5198 Orchard Lane Waco, Texas 76705</p> <p>254-799-7909 254-799-5411 Fax sandrakillough@hotmail.com Bonniesgreenhouse.com</p>	
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