

# HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 13 issue 8

November 2021

## HOTWGPS Events

The November meeting will be our “Holiday Party”. It will be at Ron & Lori Galt’s home at 6:30 PM November 16<sup>th</sup>. We will have a potluck meal and HOTWGPS will be providing the meat.

We will be presenting the proceeds from our pond tour to Nora Schell for the Waco Wetlands.

There will be a gift exchange (Chinese Christmas, Bad Santa) as we have done in the past. One gift per person (\$20.00 max).



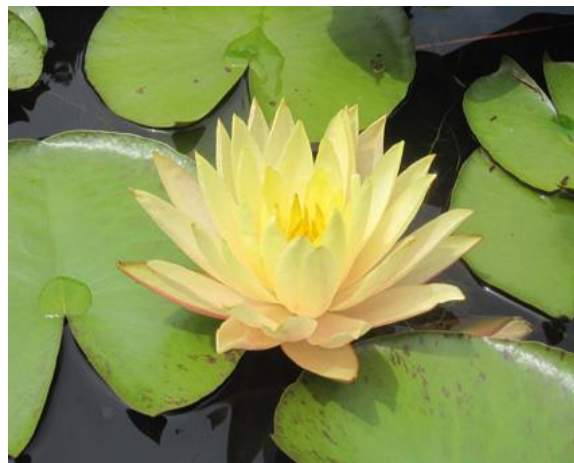
### Pond Vac

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](mailto: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 is an article from the San Angelo paper. Sadly, Ken Landon passed away this summer. He was the guy who made the beautiful lily displays at the city park. The city has a “Lily Festival” every year and have been the host for the International Water Lily Festival a couple of

times. Several HOTWGPS members went to the last international one and it was a fantastic experience.



Texas Dawn State Water Lily

SAN ANGELO, TX –For decades, Ken Landon was an integral part of the San Angelo community. Some knew him as the master behind every Fourth of July fireworks display, while others will remember him as the genius that created the internationally renowned waterlily collection in City League Park. But the most important legacy Mr. Landon leaves behind is the love and generosity he gave his family, friends, and community.

Landon was born in San Angelo in 1946 to Kenneth Miller Landon and Ineta Ruth Morris. At the age of 17, Landon began working with waterlilies. In an interview with the New York Times, Landon told the newspaper he purchased his first waterlily, a *Nymphaea Rose Arey*, at a pet store.

Landon would go on to major in industrial engineering and minor in botany in college. During the 70s, Landon conducted extensive research on waterlilies for the University of Texas — eventually cultivating an

DISCLAIMER: While the information contained in this newsletter was carefully collected and compiled to be as accurate as possible, there are no expressed or implied warranties that the information contained herein, including paid advertisements, is correct, of any value, or suitable for any purpose. If you use this information in any way, you assume full responsibility for the results of your actions. In no event will the author or others be liable for any results or the lack thereof

# HOTWGPS Newsletter

*Volume 13 issue 8*

*November 2021*

impressive collection with many of the world's rarest species.

Around that same time, Landon worked at Olive's Nursery in San Angelo — more than 45 years ago.

"Ken could propagate anything, things that nobody else could...It was an honor to know him," said Tommy Olive, as he remembered Landon's ability to create beautiful hybrids, ultimately attracting international waterlily enthusiasts to San Angelo. "He was a very kind and generous man."

It was then that the City of San Angelo reached out to Landon and asked for his help with Civic League Park.

At that time, the park only had one pool built in 1933 that was in dire need of help. When city officials asked for suggestions to revitalize the area, Ken Landon suggested adding waterlilies — a decision that would put San Angelo and Ken Landon on the map with the international water garden community.

With time, dedication, and hard work, Landon helped design and build additional pools that are admired at the park today. During peak season, visitors can view some of the world's most rare and beautiful water lilies in full bloom. Landon gained his international notoriety after he hybridized the flowers to truly become one of a kind.

Landon named those waterlilies after people he loved and admired. He named flowers after some of the most important people in his life, like Jennifer Jackson and her siblings who met Landon as little kids.

According to Jackson, Landon was a father figure who offered love and support to a little curious neighbor who caught a glimpse of his lilies.

Jackson remembers meeting Landon after accidentally stumbling into a kiddie pool filled with beautiful lilies. At first, she remembers being scared because she thought Landon would be upset that she was looking at his flowers, but was surprised to find him knocking at her door with a lily as a gift. From that point on, Landon became a friend and a teacher who shared his love and affection with her family.

"One day, I told a friend he's my God-given father," said Jackson. "He wasn't born to us, but God brought him into our lives."

During his decades of caring for the pools at the park, Landon traveled around the world collecting new and rare species. His work with the Lily of the Nile allowed the beautiful flower to be reintroduced to the Egyptian ecosystem after it was almost wiped out.

"He was just an amazing genius of a man," said Larry Jolley, one of Landon's closest friends. "Because of Ken, there are more water lilies in San Angelo than in any other water lily collection in the world."

His adventures would earn him the nickname 'Indiana Landon' after stories of his dangerous excursions became widely known. Landon gained fame for crazy acts of bravery, like diving into alligator-infested waters to retrieve a rare water lily that only existed in the most remote areas of the world.

DISCLAIMER: While the information contained in this newsletter was carefully collected and compiled to be as accurate as possible, there are no expressed or implied warranties that the information contained herein, including paid advertisements, is correct, of any value, or suitable for any purpose. If you use this information in any way, you assume full responsibility for the results of your actions. In no event will the author or others be liable for any results or the lack thereof

# HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 13 issue 8

November 2021

Along with the exotic trips to find the rarest water lilies, Landon developed the famous Texas Dawn. The beautiful yellow-toned lily would become the official waterlily of the State of Texas in 2011.

Landon created the Texas Dawn in 1985, making it the first water lily to be named for the state. The gorgeous flower frequently blooms 10 inches above the surface of the water in clusters of 6 or more. In early spring, the base of the petals produces a light orange glow that slowly changes to pink in the summer.

The Texas Dawn is known for its resilient character that can withstand the West Texas heat. These attributes have earned its place as a top-ranking aquatic plant in the rigorous Texas Superstar program of the Texas Cooperative Extension of Texas A&M University.

"The [Texas Dawn] is uniquely a Texas creation," said Texas Representative Drew Darby who represents District 72 where San Angelo is located. "The flower's reputation and distinctively Texas roots make it worth of distinction."

Representative Darby worked closely with Landon and remembered him as someone who will leave a lasting legacy in San Angelo both at home and abroad.

"What a unique individual. You'd see him out there on hot days laboring in the ponds. You'd see him in July trying to create the firework display we all love," said Darby. "Ken Landon was a genuine, hardworking, caring person. He cared about his

community, he cared about his profession, and he cared about our country."

Today, a copy of House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 24 adopted in 2011 designating the *Nymphaea Texas Dawn* as the official State Water Lily of Texas hangs in Darby's office at the Texas Capitol. Darby also has a painting by Katherine Pittman of San Angelo. The painting is titled "Texas Dawn" and was created in recognition of the designation.



Texas Dawn at Texas Capitol | Courtesy of Rep. Drew Darby

Landon was also known for his extensive experience and expertise with fireworks. For years he prepared the pyrotechnic displays enjoyed by thousands at the annual July 3 Pops Concert in the downtown River Stage and a second, and larger, show at Lake Nasworthy on the Fourth of July. One of the last shows put together by Landon was the A Star-Spangled Banner Concert and Fireworks show hosted at the Riverstage. The last July 3 show was the biggest with over 11,000 people in attendance throughout downtown San Angelo.

Landon was the only pyrotechnician licensed to work with fireworks in San Angelo. In addition to his engineering

DISCLAIMER: While the information contained in this newsletter was carefully collected and compiled to be as accurate as possible, there are no expressed or implied warranties that the information contained herein, including paid advertisements, is correct, of any value, or suitable for any purpose. If you use this information in any way, you assume full responsibility for the results of your actions. In no event will the author or others be liable for any results or the lack thereof

# HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 13 issue 8

November 2021

degree, Landon helped build jet engines during the Vietnam War — further expanding his expertise.

“Ken Landon’s passion and talents brought great joy to many citizens, as well as visitors. Everyone loved the great firework shows that he put on for decades. His passion and knowledge of lilies brought San Angelo international attention, said Mayor Brenda Gunter in a statement. “San Angelo was fortunate to have him in our community and we were fortunate that he was willing to give us access to his talents. He is irreplaceable in so many ways. Finding someone to follow in his enormous footsteps is going to be very difficult.”

But beyond his genius with flowers and fireworks, Landon was the best known to his family and friends for his giving heart. While he never had any biological children, he impacted the lives of many young people who shared his love of nature. For years he mentored San Angelo youth who were interested in his work with the water lilies.

He was well known for his 'quirky' sense of style that made him memorable to those who knew him. According to Jolley, during the last years of his life, a plaid, pearl snap cowboy shirt, and camouflage pants were his go-to outfit. According to Jackson, Landon loved color and patterns — which is likely why he was inspired to work with colorful water lilies.

In addition to his work cultivating beautiful flowers, Landon helped found the International Water lily Collection and the International Water lily Preservation Repository. His work made San Angelo a

must-see stop for water gardening enthusiasts who travel the world seeking out rare and beautiful water lilies.

The City of San Angelo had the distinct honor of hosting international guests during an official IWG event twice. This year, the annual Lilyfest will honor Landon's life and legacy on September 18.

“Landon will deeply be missed. I have known him for more than 20 years, first as a part-time employee, then as a contractor, providing the wonderful aquatics display. “He was ever-present at either the greenhouses at our parks shop or at the collection at Civic League Park,” Parks & Recreation Director Carl White said in a statement. “But if folks remember him for anything, it would be for the spectacular beauty he created in the blooms of the numerous varieties of water lilies, many which he hybridized and created himself.” Today, someone suggested it seemed odd that someone would both create water lilies and fireworks. I responded, ‘It makes perfect sense to me, he used his knowledge of chemistry to create beauty, both in the sky and in the water.’ He will deeply be missed.”

Landon touched the lives of countless people during his time on Earth. Whether he is remembered for his beautiful flowers, amazing fireworks displays, or eccentric outfits, Landon made a lasting impact in this community as everyone remembers one of his memorable phrases, "It's going to be okay, just be happy."

DISCLAIMER: While the information contained in this newsletter was carefully collected and compiled to be as accurate as possible, there are no expressed or implied warranties that the information contained herein, including paid advertisements, is correct, of any value, or suitable for any purpose. If you use this information in any way, you assume full responsibility for the results of your actions. In no event will the author or others be liable for any results or the lack thereof

# HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 13 issue 8

November 2021



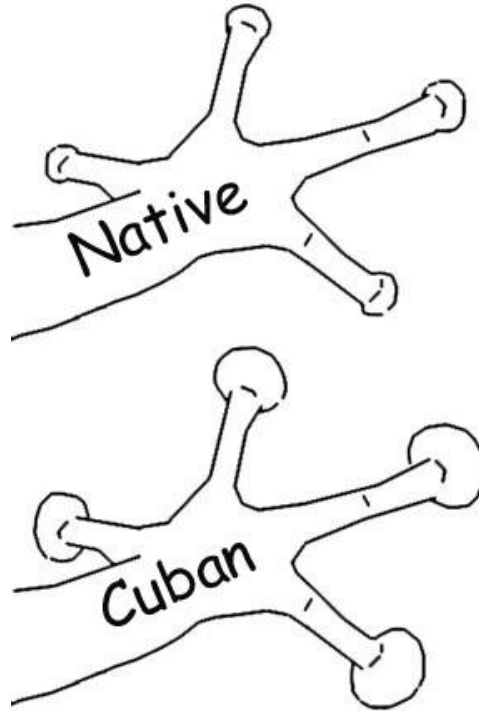
## Cuban Tree Frog (*Osteopilus septentrionalis*)



Cuban tree frog (*Osteopilus septentrionalis*). Credit: Joseph Scopino. Note the large toe pads.



Cuban tree frog. Credit: Leanna Powers. Note the variation in color and pattern compared to the first image.



Treefrog toe pad illustration depicting cuban vs. native species. Credit: Monica E. McGarrity, TPWD.

The invasive Cuban tree frog (*Osteopilus septentrionalis*) is the largest tree frog in North America, with adults ranging from 1.5 to 5 inches in body length, and females sometimes growing upwards of 6 inches. This is much larger than any native Texas tree frog. It has bumpy skin on the back, similar to that of a toad, and the skin on top of head is fused to its skull. This fusion is a key distinguishing characteristic and can often determine the difference between a Cuban tree frog and a similar looking native. A second key identifying characteristic is its enormous adhesive toe pads which are much larger and wider than its toes (as large as its eardrum) and are larger than the toe pads of native tree frogs in Texas. There are two Texas native tree frog species that are often mistaken for the Cuban tree frog, the Mexican tree frog (*Smilisca baudinii*) and

DISCLAIMER: While the information contained in this newsletter was carefully collected and compiled to be as accurate as possible, there are no expressed or implied warranties that the information contained herein, including paid advertisements, is correct, of any value, or suitable for any purpose. If you use this information in any way, you assume full responsibility for the results of your actions. In no event will the author or others be liable for any results or the lack thereof

# HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 13 issue 8

November 2021

the Gray tree frog (*Dryophytes versicolor*); however, both of these species are smaller in size, have smaller toe pads, and do not have the skin on the top of the head fused to the skull.

Cuban tree frogs can be highly variable in color, ranging from gray, gray-green, tan-brown, cream colored or yellow, or pale green without any markings to dark green or brown with an even darker color pattern on the back and legs. Sometimes they almost look white when they are inactive or cold. Individuals are able to color change rapidly. Small, juvenile Cuban tree frogs typically have greenish bodies with light side stripes, red eyes, and blue bones that are visible through the skin on the underside of the legs.

The breeding season lasts from May to October. This species prefers habitat that is moist and shady, such as in trees, shrubs or around houses. It is commonly found near ornamental ponds and well-lit patios. The voice, or call, of the Cuban tree frog is variably pitched, slightly rasping or like grating stone. The breeding event usually lasts only one night. Eggs are deposited as thin floating sheets into still water that lacks predatory fish. Tadpole's hatch 2 days later. They metamorphose into froglets 3-8 weeks later. Adult males typically live 2 months, but females can live for up to 2 years.

The Cuban tree frog causes ecological problems as a predator of a wide range of native frogs, toads, and lizards, in addition to insects and spiders. This species was introduced to southern Florida from the Caribbean and has continued to spread. There is a breeding population in New

Orleans, and they have been found in Texas! **It is very important that those of you in the Houston area and along the coast from the Texas-Louisiana border to past Galveston keep an eye and ear out for these frogs.**

*Wear gloves or put your hand in a plastic bag when handling the Cuban tree frog.* They secrete a slimy film to protect their skin, which can irritate the skin and eyes of some people.

If you think you found a Cuban tree frog, please collect it if possible (using gloves) and **REPORT IT!** to [invasives@shsu.edu](mailto:invasives@shsu.edu). Please include a photo, a description, and the location.

For more information review the following informative links: [HERE is a flyer](#) from Louisiana describing the Cuban treefrog, Informative web page from Louisiana [HERE](#), [TexasInvasives.org](http://TexasInvasives.org) [information page](#).



## AquaNooga Tips of the Week

October 05 2021

As the pond's water temperature drops below 60F it is time to decrease the amount of fish food given (no more than once per day) and to feed a **food that is formulated for cold water**. This helps transition the fish into their winter dormancy.

October 19, 2021

Winter chill is on its way. For our fish, it's important to not allow ice to completely cover the pond this winter. Some icing can

DISCLAIMER: While the information contained in this newsletter was carefully collected and compiled to be as accurate as possible, there are no expressed or implied warranties that the information contained herein, including paid advertisements, is correct, of any value, or suitable for any purpose. If you use this information in any way, you assume full responsibility for the results of your actions. In no event will the author or others be liable for any results or the lack thereof

# HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 13 issue 8

November 2021

occur, but at least one small area needs to remain open.

Warmer climates (usually USDA zones 7 or warmer) can simply leave the waterfall running all winter. If you do this, you want to make sure your pump draws water from a shallow area.

Colder climates want to avoid super chilling the water and should use an air pump and/or a pond deicer. If using an air pump in the winter, make sure your diffuser is placed in a shallow area of the pond.

October 26, 2021

When the water temperature in the pond drops below 50 degrees it's time to completely stop feeding your goldfish and koi for the winter. The metabolism of fish slows drastically at this point and the fish cannot properly digest food. Also, your biological filter is becoming less active and cannot breakdown the food and ammonia.



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

**Bonnie's Greenhouse**  
Sandra & Johnny Killough

5198 Orchard Lane  
Waco, Texas 76705

254-799-7909  
254-799-5411 Fax  
sandrakillough@hotmail.com  
Bonniegreenhouse.com



**Barrera's**  
Nursery & Landscape Co.

Seasonal Plants • Shrubs • Trees • Bulk Material  
Landscape Rock • Perennials • Ferti-lome Products  
Pavestone Products

201 Sun Valley  
Hewitt, Texas 76643  
FAX (254) 666-0919  
barrerasnursery@yahoo.com

**(254) 666-9806**

**Robinson**  
GREENHOUSE

254.662.0311

628 North Robinson Dr. • Robinson, Tx 76706  
RobinsonGreenhouse@gmail.com • Fax 254.666.0919

Steve Kainer  
Owner/General Manager

HILL COUNTRY  
**WATER GARDENS**  
& NURSERY

Phone 512-260-5050  
Fax 512-260-5060  
steve@hillcountrywatergardens.com

1407 N. Bell Blvd. (Hwy 183 N)  
Cedar Park, TX 78613  
www.hillcountrywatergardens.com

Making outdoors awesome

DISCLAIMER: While the information contained in this newsletter was carefully collected and compiled to be as accurate as possible, there are no expressed or implied warranties that the information contained herein, including paid advertisements, is correct, of any value, or suitable for any purpose. If you use this information in any way, you assume full responsibility for the results of your actions. In no event will the author or others be liable for any results or the lack thereof

# HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 13 issue 8

November 2021

**Landscape**  
SUPPLY

**Brian Sikes**

brian@landscapesupplywaco.com

☎ 254-753-7900 📠 254-753-7907  
1900 W. Loop 340 - Waco, TX 76712

[www.LandscapeSupplyWaco.com](http://www.LandscapeSupplyWaco.com)



**NORTH WACO**  
EST 1964  
**TROPICAL FISH**

Aquariums Supplies Service

Wide selection of Freshwater  
& Saltwater Fish & Corals

[NorthWacoTropicalFish.com](http://NorthWacoTropicalFish.com)



Phone (254) 754-2718

1521 N. 15th st  
Waco, Texas 76707  
Tues.-Fri. 10-6  
Saturday 10-5  
Sunday 1-5

DISCLAIMER: While the information contained in this newsletter was carefully collected and compiled to be as accurate as possible, there are no expressed or implied warranties that the information contained herein, including paid advertisements, is correct, of any value, or suitable for any purpose. If you use this information in any way, you assume full responsibility for the results of your actions. In no event will the author or others be liable for any results or the lack thereof