

HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 14 issue 9

November 2022

HOTWGPS Events

Our September Meeting was at the Petersons. Harv gave a talk on water clarity after we enjoyed Deli-sandwiches and sides. The October meeting was at Luigi's Italian Bistro. A BIG THANK YOU to Keith & Marji for their hospitality and fantastic meal on the 29th of October. Our "Holiday Party" will be at the Galts home. HOTWGPS will provide the meat & beans catered by our own members Katherine & Marvin Matthys catering service. More info on this later.



<https://webbsonline.com/>

Webb's graciously donated money to sponsor our 2022 pond tour, so your continued support of their business is appreciated!



Pond Vac

As a reminder, this is a "Members Only" benefit. You can rent (\$5.00 for up to 72 hours) 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!!



This is from the Pond Guy Blog along with their advertising

This is my first winter with a pond. Do I need to bring in my plants?

A: You've been watching your aquatic plants flourish all year. Your water lilies put off big blooms, your irises and cattails became homes for frogs and dragonflies, and your submerged plants provided a home for your fish and snails.

With the cold weather on its way, now what do you do with them? Well, it all depends on where you live and what types of plants you have.

In the Zone

What's your hardiness zone? The [USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map](#) will help you determine which plants will thrive in a particular location. The map is based on the average annual minimum winter temperature, divided into 10-degree Fahrenheit zones.

In general, if you live in a hardiness zone that's frost-free, congratulations! All you need to do is trim off dead foliage with your [Scissors & Pliers](#), [fertilize](#) the plants as necessary and enjoy them all year round.

If you live in an area that freezes, however, you have some work to do. Like terrestrial plants, aquatic plants – whether floating, marginal or submerged – are sensitive in varying degrees to freezing temperatures.

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Some species will overwinter just fine in frostier hardiness zones, while others will wilt and die at the slightest hint of ice.

So before you do anything, get to know your plants and identify which ones are in your zone and which ones aren't.

Overwintering Your Plants

Winter care of water lilies, marginal/bog plants and submerged plants will depend on if they're tropical (anything that likes temperatures above your hardiness zone) or hardy (anything geared for temperatures in your hardiness zone or lower).

Tropical Plants: These sensitive beauties, including tropical water lilies and canna, will need to be removed from the pond and replaced next season, or removed and relocated to a warm indoor space for winter.

Hardy Plants: These easy-care troopers, including hardy [water lilies](#) and submerged plants, only need to have dead foliage removed after the first hard frost. Simply use your [AquaGloves](#) and [Scissors & Pliers](#) to trim away any spent leaves, lily pads or flowers. Once trimmed, sink the plants to the deepest part of your pond. Hardy plants will go dormant in the winter and regrow in the spring.

Floating plants, like hyacinth and water lettuce, can be treated like an annual; they will die over the winter, so remove them from your pond once they begin to yellow. Luckily, they're inexpensive to replace and will grow quickly once re-added. Please note: hyacinth and water lettuce are invasive so be sure to dispose of them properly and never release them into public water.

Good luck caring for your first winter pond!



Another Pond Guy article

What items need to come out of my pond before winter?

A: You probably spent a pretty penny on your pond equipment, and so there's no doubt you want to make that gear last as many seasons as possible. Certain components will survive longer if you remove them from your pond during the winter, including:

All-In-One Filtration Units: Submersible mechanical, biological and ultraviolet filtration systems such as the [ClearSolution G2](#) should be pulled from your water feature, cleaned and stowed away for the winter in a place that will not freeze.

Pressurized Filters: As with the All-In-One Filtration Units, plan to remove pressurized filters such as the [AllClear G2](#) and put it up for the cold-weather season. Doing so will prolong the life of your unit's temperature-sensitive parts.

Editor's note: here in Central Texas, it really doesn't get cold enough to warrant taking the pumps out of the pond for winter storage. When the temperature gets below freezing, be sure to keep an eye out for the possibility of "ice dams" forming that can divert water out of your pond.

Pumps: Whether your pump feeds a waterfall, fountain, or some other decorative

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item in your pond, it will need to be removed and stored in water in a spot that won't freeze, like a heated garage or basement.

UV Clarifiers: If your [ultraviolet clarifier](#) is separate from your mechanical and biological filtration system, be sure to remove it from your water feature and store it until spring, when you should plan to replace the bulb.

Ion Clarifiers: Algae won't likely be growing out of control in the winter, so you can disconnect your ion clarifier and keep it stashed until the warm weather arrives.

Once all of your gear is removed and stored away, blow out the water lines with your air compressor and cap the ends until spring. You wouldn't want that water to freeze and crack your pipes!

Add Winter Gear

While you're doing some winterizing chores, now is the perfect time to add an aerator to your pond to keep the water oxygenated for your finned pals during the winter months.

[CrystalClear PondAir Aeration Kit](#) is designed for water gardens up to 2,000 gallons. It's powered by an energy-efficient diaphragm compressor and includes an airflow control valve, air stones and flexible black vinyl air tubing.

[The Pond Guy Pond Aerator](#) is designed to aerate medium sized water gardens and koi ponds up to 4,000 gallons. It's powered by an energy-efficient aeration pump and includes a diffuser plate for maximum oxygen uptake and a weighted airline.

Completing these simple tasks will prolong the life of your pond gear and ensure your fish and other pond critters stay happy and well all winter long.



And another

What do you really mean when you say fish are dormant for the winter? Do they sleep?

A: When the days shorten and temperatures drop, koi and other pond fish enter into what's called torpor, or a period of decreased physiological activity that allows them to save energy. They don't sleep the winter away, but they do essentially hibernate—their metabolism slows, they require less food, their activity level drops and their body temperatures reduce.

How do they know they need to hibernate, and what can hobbyists do to make their finned friends' winter torpor restful? Read on to learn more.

Mother Nature's in Charge

Fish don't use calendars to decide when to take their winter snooze. Instead, they follow Mother Nature's lead. Because fish are cold-blooded, their metabolism reacts to the external environment. When the water temperature falls, so does their activity level: Their appetite dwindles, they digest food more slowly, and they expend less energy. In the spring when temperatures warm back up, the fish will naturally come out of their torpor. They'll start to seek out food as their

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Volume 14 issue 9

November 2022

metabolism increases, and they'll become active once again.



Suspended Animation

You'll know when your fish go dormant. They won't lie down on the pond's bottom or curl up in their cozy [Koi Kastle](#), but they will float upright, tuck in their fins and remain suspended in the water. As the fish hover there, you may still see some *super* slow movement, and they may also wind up facing in the same direction as if they were heading somewhere at less than a snail's speed.

Sweet Dreams, Koi!

Here are four ways to give your koi a peaceful winter rest:

Set up an [aeration system](#) to keep the water pumped full of oxygen. Even though they're hibernating, your fish will still need some fresh O₂.

Install a [de-icer](#) to keep a hole open in the ice and allow for gas exchange. If the pond freezes over, use warm water to reopen a hole; do not bang on the ice to crack it, as doing so can stress your fish.

Keep as much debris out of the pond as possible to prevent muck buildup over the winter.

Let the fish be. Don't try to get them to move or swim or wake up from their slumber. Keep an eye on them but leave them alone until they wake up on their own.

And one more

How can I tell if my fish are ready for a lighter diet?

A: When feeding your koi and pond fish, a "lighter diet" doesn't mean that your finned friends need to switch to low-cal, low-fat foods. Instead, it refers to an easy-to-digest wheat germ-based diet that's formulated for the fishes' slowed activity and metabolism during the transitional fall and spring months.

Wheat germ-based diets, such as [The Pond Guy Spring & Fall Fish Food](#), are packed with vegetable protein, amino acids and digestive enzymes. These diets, which help them ease into and out of winter, are gentle on their digestive systems while keeping their constitutions strong to fight off disease.

How do you know when it's time to switch diets? Here are three clues:

Temperature: When your water temperature is 50 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, you should feed your active, hungry fish protein- and carbohydrate-balanced foods, like [The Pond Guy Growth & Vibrance Fish Food](#). But when water temperatures dip to between 40 to 50 degrees, they require the lighter, wheat germ-based foods. Use your [Pond Thermometer](#) to keep an eye on the water temperature as the days and nights get cooler.

Fish Mobility: Are your koi and goldfish moving a bit more slowly than they normally do? That's another clue that it's time to switch

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Volume 14 issue 9

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to a lighter food. Fish will naturally begin to slow down their activity in cooler water as their bodies begin to prepare for their annual "hibernation."

Feeding Interest: As the fish slow their activity and require less food to fuel their metabolisms, they won't be as interested in the tasty morsels as they are in the summer. So if your koi and goldfish seem to have turned into picky eaters, that's your third clue that it's time to switch to a lighter diet.

When water temperatures fall to below 40 degrees, that's when it's time to stop feeding your fish altogether. Don't worry: They won't starve! Their bodies, which need very few nutrients to sustain them during the cold months, have plenty of fat stored—but you can bet they'll be ready for a nice, big meal when spring arrives.



On the lighter side

I'm teaching my kids to read to help them succeed in school. I'm teaching my kids to read because it's quality time spent together. But most of all I'm teaching my kids to read so they won't ask "What does XJ49PB2 spell?" every time we pass another car on the road.



A Parisian, a Londoner and a New Yorker are captured by cannibals and told that they're to be eaten and their skins used to build a canoe.

"But," says the chief, "you get to choose how you die."

The Parisian says,

"I take zee sword." The chief gives him a sword, he says "Vive la France!" and stabs himself.

The Londoner says

"Right, a pistol for me." The chief hands him a pistol. "God save the queen!" he says and shoots himself.

The New Yorker says,

"Gimme a fork." The chief is puzzled, but he gives him a fork. The New Yorker starts jabbing himself all over with the fork, yelling, "This is what I think of your @#!\$%A& canoe!"



If rock bands ran the country, here are the departments they'd run:

Joint Chiefs of Staff:

Motley Crue

Mission to the United Nations: Foreigner

Environmental Protection Agency:

Green Day

Nuclear Regulatory Commission:

Canned Heat

National Transportation Safety Board:

Crash Test Dummies

U.S. Patent Office:

The Mothers of Invention

Federal Aviation Administration:

The B-52s

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Amtrak:
Grand Funk Railroad



I had my eye on a gorgeous silver jacket for a long time and was thrilled when my sister bought it for me as a gift. I immediately threw it on and strutted off to my job at a restaurant, where I paraded around the kitchen soaking up the oohs and aahs. But it was our boss who paid me what for him, a chef, was the ultimate compliment: "Great jacket. You look just like a baked potato."



This actual text exchange proves that some wrong numbers turn out right:

Matt: Hey Dr. Park, this is Matt from the vascular lab, I have a patient here with an external iliac occlusion with cold foot pain and numbness that started three days ago. What should I do with her?

Hannah: Hi, this is Hannah. I think you have the wrong number, but I Googled it and I'm pretty sure you need to put a stent in her left radial artery, best of luck Matt!

Matt: Sorry wrong number Hannah. She ended up actually getting a stent. Took about three hours longer for trained medical professionals to figure out what took you about five minutes, great job.

Hannah: Are Ya hiring?



WHAT TIME DOES MY BRAIN WAKE UP?

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Sometimes when we go on vacation, we remember to pack everything but our good sense. Here are a few questionable questions tour guides at vacation hot spots have had to field.

Does the sun set every night?

Are the Amish in season?

When do they turn off the waterfalls?

How many miles of undiscovered caves are there?

Why is the Closed for Cleaning sign on the restroom?

How come all of the war's battles were fought in national parks?

Why don't you have better marking in the places where trails do not exist?

Is that the same moon we see in Vermont?

If it rains, will the fireworks be held inside?

What is the altitude? (On a boat passing through the fjords of Alaska's Inside Passage)



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

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Volume 14 issue 9

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