

HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 15 issue 5

September 2023

HOTWGPS Events

Our September meeting will be on the 19th at 6:30 PM at the Lake Waco Wetlands 1752 Eichelberger Crossing China Spring, TX.



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!!



The following articles from The Pond Guy including their advertising

Choosing a Fish Food



Fish are a rewarding addition to any water garden. They add color, excitement, and if you are lucky a few fry (babies). Feeding your fish is a great way to interact with them. Koi, goldfish, comets, and most other pond fish are omnivores meaning they will eat plant and protein food sources. Because they are cold-blooded, environmental triggers can change their metabolism meaning that some foods are easier to digest than others. To help you decide which food to use and when, check out our tips below.

Getting Started

Begin slowly, adding only one or two pellets to the pond until your fish show interest. The ripple action will help get your fish's attention. Ponds with large amounts of fish will have more aggressive eaters due to increased competition and lack of natural resources. Ponds with fewer fish tend to eat less aggressively as they can slowly munch on natural foods such as algae and bugs. New fish or fish going into or out of hibernation

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will eat less too. Only feed your fish what they can consume in 5 minutes; if they cannot eat it all, net it out so it does not become muck.

Pellet Size

The Pond Guy Fish Food and most CrystalClear brand foods are available in 3 mm pellets that are ideal for fish 4" or larger. If your fish are 8" or bigger, opt for the [CrystalClear Platinum Large Pellet Fish Food](#) as it is 5 mm in size. For fish smaller than 4" you can crush up pellets into smaller pieces.

Buffet Options

When selecting a food, make sure to double check the temperature recommendations on the package. You will also want to use a thermometer so you know the water's temperature. Never feed your fish when the water is less than 40°F. At this point they will be in hibernation, and they will not be able to digest it.

Seasonal Shifts: For cooler water, wheat germ based diets, like [Spring & Fall Fish Food](#), are the best bet. It's packed with easily digestible plant matter and lower protein level. Feed when water temperatures are between 40-50°F to transition them in and out of cold weather. When water temperatures are over 50°F, you can begin feeding your regular summer food.

Promote Size and Color: [Growth & Vibrance](#) and other color-enhancing foods are high in nutrients to make reds more vibrant, blacks deeper, and oranges richer.

These foods are also protein-packed to help your fish grow quickly.

Summer Staple: Staple food is great for mature fish, giving them a diet that is full of vitamins, minerals, and amino acids. Foods like [Staple](#) will help your fish maintain their size without adding bulk as they become more active during the summer months.

Vacation: Make sure your fish get fed while you are away. [TetraPond Vacation Food](#) will continually release fish meal and shrimp algae from a gel-based block over a 7 day period.

Play With Their Food

Did you know that you can train your fish? Fish naturally are wary of large shadows over the pond, since they perceive them as predators. You can teach them that you are a friend – and not a foe – by feeding them at the same time and place each day. This will get them accustomed to your visits and soon they will be greeting you the pond's edge, ready to grab a tasty morsel. Feel free to sneak in some treats too, like fresh watermelon or lettuce. It will round out their diet and help to build your relationship.



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

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 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.

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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.



On the lighter side

This from the Farm Show magazine

Worlds “most expensive” fruit

There's a story going around about the Yubari King Melon, grown in a small town in Japan, that is the “world's most expensive fruit”. Reportedly a pair of the hybrid cantaloupes recently sold for \$45,000.00.

This story might be the most successful farm-related PR stunt ever!

Fruit production is often tied into the gift giving culture in Japan and it can also have spiritual connotations, with the best produce sometimes offered up to the gods within Japanese temples.

One thing that makes Yubari melons so sweet is that the area is surrounded by volcanos, and the ashy soil provides excellent drainage. The town also experiences extremes between daytime and nighttime temperatures, which leads to sweeter melons.

Each plant is cultivated to produce just a single fruit, which farmers wipe clean daily. The growing melons are even capped with paper hats to prevent sun scald and other blemishes. Each is harvested by hand, with the stems carefully snipped with scissors.

After harvest, Yubari melons are classified into one of four grades: yuki, shiro, yama, and fuji. Only one out of 1,000 fruits make

the highest fuji grade. Certified melon inspectors tap and smell the melons, seeking out a low, deep sound and sweet fragrance. So the melons ARE special, but they're not \$45,000 special.

What happened with the \$45,000 melons is that a Japanese produce company bought the melons as part of a special promotion and then got lots of publicity when they served up the tasty melons at a public event. The result was millions of dollars of publicity for the sweet little melons that typically retail for the very high price of \$28 to \$71. That's still very expensive but it's not \$45,000.

The lesson here is that if you can come up with a really good story, you might be able to sell your fruits or veggies for a fortune



Points to Ponder

Light travels faster than sound. This is why *some* people appear bright until you hear them speak.

A fine is a tax for doing wrong. A tax is a fine for doing well.

Have you heard of the 50-50-90 rule? Anytime you have a 50-50 chance of getting something right, there's a 90 percent probability you'll get it wrong.

Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he will sit in a boat all day drinking beer.

Definition of a flashlight: A case for holding dead batteries.

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When you go to court, you are putting yourself in the hands of twelve people who weren't smart enough to get out of jury duty.

I used to eat a lot of natural foods until I learned that most people die of natural causes.

Being healthy is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.

Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in a hospital dying of nothing.

When weeding your garden, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it's a valuable plant.



Liberty Quotes

"Each man must for himself alone decide what is right and what is wrong, which course is patriotic and which isn't. You cannot shirk this and be a man. To decide against your conviction is to be an unqualified and inexcusable traitor, both to yourself and to your country." Mark Twain

"Facts are stubborn things; and whatever may be our wishes, our inclinations or the dictates of our passion, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence. President John Adams

"A nation that destroys its soil destroys itself." Franklin D. Roosevelt

"Liberty, when it begins to take root, is a plant of rapid growth." George Washington
"Life without liberty is like a body without spirit." Kahlil Gibran

Freedom is the open window through which pours the sunlight of the human spirit and human dignity." Herbert Hoover

"Everything that is great and inspiring is created by the individual who can labor in freedom." Albert Einstein

"The only real prison is fear, and the only real freedom is freedom from fear." Aung San Suu Kyi

"For what avail the plough or sail, or land or life, if freedom fail?" Ralph Waldo Emerson

"No person is your friend (or kin) who demands your silence or denies your right to grow." Alice Walker



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



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