

HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 15 issue 7

Merry Christmas

December 2023

HOTWGPS Events

Our holiday party at Ron & Lorry Galt's home was a booming success!! Lots of yummy food was provided by members and the meat was provided by HOTWGPS. We had a great turnout, and all enjoyed the Galts hospitality. If you weren't there, you missed out on a fantastic evening of fellowship and fun.



Georgia & Harv's backyard dressed for Christmas.



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.

What can I do to prevent string algae from growing in the winter?



Even in the cold of winter, string algae can grow in your water garden. All that green nuisance needs to thrive is the right amount of nutrients and sunlight. So what can you do to prevent it? You have three options in your pond management toolbox: Seasonal Defense, barley straw extract, and a three-in-one pond tool.

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Boost Your Bacteria

First of all, you'll need to control the nutrients – or the food that the algae eat – in your pond. Because the beneficial bacteria that break down those nutrients go dormant in the winter, now's the time to add some [Seasonal Defense](#) (as long as your pond isn't frozen over, of course). It contains bacteria that prefer cooler temperatures. They'll accelerate the decomposition of leaves, scum and sediment that feed algae, reducing its growth to a minimum.

Add Barley Straw

If you have a small water garden, like a koi pond that's less than 10,000 gallons, [The Pond Guy Barley Extract](#) provides an all-natural solution for maintaining clean, clear water throughout the winter. Available in bales, pellets and as an extract, it works by releasing compounds that improve water clarity, leaving you a clean and clear pond. The extract form is easy to use: Pour directly into the water and repeat every few weeks.

Manually Remove It

Should string algae form, you can manually remove it by wrapping it around an algae brush, like the one included in the [3-In-1 Interchangeable Pond Tool](#), and yanking it out of the water. The telescoping handle will add 5 feet to your reach, allowing you to reach those hard-to-access patches of weeds. Unfortunately, if ice is covering your pond, there's not much you can do to remove that string algae. Plan on removing it during your spring clean-out process. The sun will return soon enough!

Editor note:

I believe the most effective way to get rid of string (filamentous) algae is to manually remove it! I have tried the suggested brush tool with some success but getting it off the brush is a real pain! I have had good success with this small plastic rake that I bought at Home Depot. I added the long handle to accommodate the size of the ponds.



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

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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.

Let the fish be. Don't try to get them to move or swim or wake up from their slumber. Keep

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an eye on them, but leave them alone until they wake up on their own.



A well-known speaker started off his seminar holding up a \$20 bill. In the room of 200, he asked, "Who would like this \$20 bill?" Hands started going up. He said, "I'm going to give this \$20 to one of you, but first, let me do this." He proceeded to crumple up the \$20 dollar bill. He then asked, "Who still wants it?" Still the hands were up in the air. "Well," he replied, "What if do this?" And he dropped it on the ground and started to grind it into the floor with his shoe. He picked it up, now crumpled and dirty. "Now, who still wants it?" The hands still went up. "My friends, we've all learned a very valuable lesson. No matter what I did to the money, you still wanted it because it did not decrease in value. It was still worth \$20. Many times in our lives, we are dropped, crumpled, and ground into the dirt by the decisions we make and the circumstances that come our way. We may feel as though we are worthless. But no matter what has happened or what will happen, you will never lose your value. "Dirty or clean, crumpled or finely creased, you're still priceless to those who love you. The worth of our lives comes not in what we do or who we know, but by who we are. **You are special. Don't ever forget it!**



On the lighter side

This from the Farm Show magazine

Ewww yuk!! **Sven walks into a seedy cafe in Minnesota** and sits at the counter next to Ole, who sits with his arms folded staring down into a large bowl of chili. After a few minutes of watching him, Sven says, "Vell, if yew'r not gonna eat dat, do yew mind if I do?"

Ole looks at Sven and says, "Help yerself." Sven slides the bowl over and eagerly starts eating. He gets nearly to the bottom when he sees a dead mouse in the chili. The sight was so shocking he threw the chili back up into the bowl.

Ole said quietly, "Ya, dat's as far as I got, tew."



The science teacher called on Ole and asked, "Ole, what's the chemical formula for water?"

Ole quickly said, "HI J KL MN O."

"What are you talking about?" the teacher said.

"Vell," said Ole, "yesterday yew said da formula is H to O."



Ole and Lena went shopping together just before Christmas. Lena soon noticed Ole was missing, so she called him on his cellphone.

When Ole answered, she said, "Vere are yew? Yew know ve haf lots tew dew today."

Ole said, "Do yew remember dat jewelery shop ve vent into about 10 years ago and yew fell in love with dat diamond necklace? I couldn't afford it at da time and I said dat one day I would get it for yew?"

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Tears started streaming down Lena's cheeks and she got all choked up, then said, "Yes, Ole. I dew remember dat store." ·Vell," said Ole. "I'm at da yoyo shop right next door to dat place."



Some real students excuses

Jack did not go to school yesterday because he had two teeth taken out of his face.

Please excuse Tommy for being absent yesterday. He had diarrhea and his boots leak.

Please excuse Jimmy for being. It was his father's fault.

Mary was absent yesterday because she had a fever and upset stomach. Her sister was also sick, and her brother had a fever. I wasn't feeling too well either. There must be something going around.



Points to Ponder

You had better live every day like your last because one day you're going to be right! *Ray Charles*

Let us not take ourselves too seriously. None of us has a monopoly on wisdom. *Queen Elizabeth II*

Always do your very best. Even when no one else is looking, you always are. Don't disappoint yourself! *Colin Powell*



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