



PONDERINGS

Official Newsletter of The Tucson Watergardeners (TTW)

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Greetings From
The President!

We have our first four water gardens for the 2007 TTW Public Tour! Two more to go!

Congratulations to the following TTW members who have put so much effort into their interesting family gardens and are generously sharing them with the public in September.

Bamba and Cuestas-Thompson - *Feng Shui Style*
Bonito - *Rescued Pond & Child's Pond*
Jenks and Mosman - *Ponds & Ramadas Oasis*

My garden, which is European-style with a formal pond, will also be included. Now we need one to two more water gardens, preferably between Cloud and 22nd Streets and Houghton and Country Club --*yours, maybe?* If you are interested, please call Gail Barnhill immediately: 296-1074.

Volunteers are also needed to take tickets and give information about the club and the tour at each garden. The shifts are two hours in length and a sign-up roster will be circulated at our public meetings. I would love to see the rosters fill in quickly and early! Thanks!

Elizabeth Good

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Board Meeting. No July board meeting.

General Meeting: Thursday, July 26th
7:30pm @ Jr League of Tucson
2099 E River Road

Program: "**Bees & Water Gardens**" by
Tom Martin, AAA Africanized Bee
Removal Specialists (guest speaker)

Refreshments: Pat & Don Bunker; D. McMacken

Door Prizes: Share your "extra" plants & "stuff"

BEElieve It Or Not

- Bees require a clean supply of water.
- Some bees main task in life is carrying water.
- Bees collect water and spread it throughout the colony in droplets.
- In hot weather, bees cool the colony and wax combs much like a swamp cooler by evaporating droplets of water.
- On a hot day, bees carry over a quart of water back to the colony.
- Bees use water for thinning honey to feed the larva.
- Water plants, such as salvinia, azolla and frogbit are excellent platforms for water foraging bees.
- Africanized honey bees guard hives more aggressively and tend to swarm more easily.

12-20-8

What's in a number? Aquatic plants, like their terrestrial-based relatives, need a boost of nutrients to maximize their spectacular flowers and lush green foliage. That boost is usually in the form of a fertilizer with a series of three numbers, such as 12-20-8, 8-24-8, 10-26-1 --or some other combination.



This series of three numbers signifies the macronutrients required for plants. The numbers will *always* be in the same order, and stand for the following:

N (left number) is **Nitrogen**, which insures good vegetative growth and the plant's general health.

P (middle number) is **Phosphate**, which insures healthy roots and used more heavily during blooming and seed setting.

K (right number) is for **Potash**, which also ensures general plant health and disease resistance.

The 3-digit number is based on the percentage by weight of each of these nutrients in the fertilizer product. Trace, minor elements, and filler products make up the difference in percentage between the total of these numbers and 100.

Aquatic plant fertilizers usually have a higher middle number to support the heavy, seasonal blooms. These fertilizers can be in pellet, tablet, spike or even liquid form --all with different feeding cycle directions. For the solid fertilizers, be sure to poke the product down into the planting medium, about 3" from the crown of the plant and cover the hole to allow time-release action. Liquid fertilizer is used for unpotted aquatic plants.

Non-flowering aquatic plants can be fertilized with a lower middle number and higher first number, perhaps a time release like Osmocote when first planted (but can't be added later in that form.)

Aquatic Plant Profile

Featuring Plants That Love Our Desert Water Gardens



Spider Lily (*Hymenocallis occidentalis*)
(Photo courtesy of Rod Minami's (member) garden.)

The Spider Lily (also known as *Hymenocallis caroliniana*) is an excellent bog garden plant for our desert region, loving wet, rich soil. *Hymenocallis* literally means "beautiful membrane" and refers to the corona that connects the stalk of the stamens. It is a native to the New World, and, for cultivation purposes, there are three categories of Spider Lilies, including Tropical, Mexican, and Southeastern U.S.

This perennial is from the Liliaceae family, with white bloom color. It can be grown in partial shade to direct sun environments, and has strappy green foliage that can reach 2-3 feet in height. Its blossoms look like a spidery daffodil, and a single scape will often bear four to nine flowers. Its fragrant flowers usually appear at dusk, bloom all night and through the following morning.



PROFILING MEMBERS PROJECTS

This feature is about two people who *absolutely, absolutely* love plants, and their generosity. When their truck drives up for TTW monthly meetings, you can count on **Sheri Anderson** and **Johnnie Guy** (members) having a whole assortment of aquatic plants to share with the membership.

As native Tucsonans, Johnnie and Sheri have lived about a mile apart their whole lives. Growing up, Sheri also carries fond memories of playing in her grandfather's pond. So, when Johnnie and Sheri bought their present home 29 years ago, the discovery of a cement-lined flowerbed that had been a pond, some feeder gold fish, and a white lily and cattails gifted from a friend enticed them into water gardening on a grand scale!



"We have almost everything that will grow here!"

All of their ponds are built out of wood (Johnnie's a master carpenter) and lined with 6mil black plastic. The largest 2000-gallon pond was constructed with a wood frame at the shallow end of a swimming pool that no one was using. Concrete blocks on the deck support a Featherstone waterfall, with the stone inherited from her grandfather's waterfall. There are three other good size ponds, one being 1000 gallons; the other two, 500 gallons each. To top it off, there are countless buckets, half wine barrels and about anything else that will hold water for the overflow of plants.

And, what does this couple do differently to achieve their abundant and lush aquatic plant environment? "I don't know... we really don't do much...maybe that's it. We add water, fish and plants and let nature take its course. Once a month or so we do a partial water change," Sheri offers. Because both of them are so busy, they're not very consistent in fertilizing, but the plants thrive. "Maybe it's because we don't use any filters," she further adds. Her advice to fellow water gardeners is trial and error to find what works for you.



A variety of water ponds!

The 6mil plastic liner has had its moments. A hole discovered about midnight required a quick-fix patch job of bubble gum and duck tape over the gum, as water pressure was causing the gum to blow bubbles!



Johnnie and Sheri have been active TTW members for over five years. Many of the club members' ponds have plants that at one time or another resided with this couple. "*We love all plants, that's part of our problem!*" Oh! That we all should have their "green thumb" in our desert water gardening! Thank you, Johnnie and Sheri!

This and That....

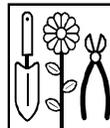
2007 Future Programs

August: "Pond Biofilter Panel" By **TTW Members** and Chaired by Gail Barnhill
 ...So many biofilters, so many approaches! Come learn, ask questions and have fun!

September: "Koi Keeping – Rules of Thumb" By **Eddie Hoggan**, Guest Speaker, Desert Pet Center
 ...Understanding a favorite pond creature!



name
that
aquatic
plant...



Watergardening Classifieds

FOR INFO TO GO

Helpful articles such as *Watergardening 101*
www.tucsonwatergardeners.org

See You
At Our
Meeting!



Reminder! Monsoon time is mosquito control time! Make sure you have mosquito-eating fish, that your ponds and water garden containers have good circulation, and use Mosquito Dunks™. Empty anything that can hold standing, stagnant water.



A Big Thanks! For each of you who have so regularly and generously brought in plants of every kind, fish, and most recently frogs, may we say thanks? Your generosity has made our little pond a happy success. - The McMackens

Attention Watergardeners! If you need something or have something you want to sell or trade related to water gardening, your deadline is the 4th of each month, and it's free! TTW members contributing news articles are also most welcome.



July's For Celebrating History!

Some historical facts about the TTW Club:

- Established in 1999 – we're 8 years old!
- Original By-laws ratified July 15, 1999!
- Club meetings moved from the Tucson Botanical Garden to the Jr. League of Tucson in February '04
- Four presidents *emeritus*:

<i>Gail Barnhill</i>	1999-2001
<i>Jean Lewis</i>	2002
<i>Joe Bonaparte</i>	2003-2004
<i>Ed Campbell</i>	2005-2006

TTW Contacts

- President:
- Vice Pres:
- Treasurer:
- Secretary:
- Membership:
- Webmaster:
- Editor: