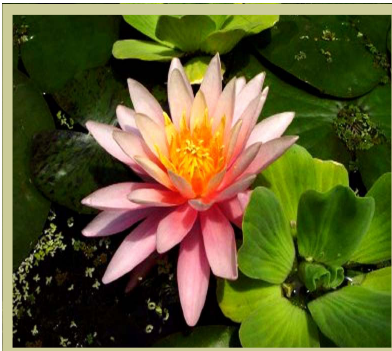


# Ponderings

## It's Almost Here...May 4th Plant Sale

The Tucson Watergardeners Annual Plant Sale is now set for Sunday, May 4th, at Reid Park from 8:00 AM until 1:30 PM. The sale will be back in its traditional location which is the ramada at the southwest corner of Reid Park at the intersection of Country Club Road and 22nd Street. Drop your plants at Reid Park between 7:00 AM and 8:00 AM on the day of the sale.



Hardy water lilies in red, white, pink and yellow will be offered, along with named hardy lilies, such as Sulphur Yellow, Attraction Red, Alba White, and Marliaccea Rosea miniature pink lilies. A few Sioux hardy, Barbara Dobbins and James Brydon lilies will also be available, along with select tropical lilies, including night bloomers. Marginal plants such as snowball, obedient plant, sagittaria, cannas, spider lilies, bog lilies, water iris are expected at the sale, as well as a variety of floating, reed, and rush plants—most raised by club members.

This year a one-stop-shop for planting will be available in the form of a variety of black mesh water plant baskets and small bags of unimproved kitty litter. Barley straw bags will also be available. "We still need cashiers, ticket writers, and plant wranglers for all shifts," says Pam Glenn, Sale Chairperson. "Also, bring your extra plastic grocery bags and remember lilies are sold first come first served, so if you are very particular about what you want, be there early!" was Glenn's advice.

Official  
Newsletter of  
The Tucson  
Watergardeners

Volume X, Issue 3

April 2008

"When we have a large sale with good participation, it allows us to give back to our community by funding grants...and keeps the spirit of watergardening and ponding alive and well in future generations."

—Pam Glenn  
Plant Sale Chairperson

### NOTEWORTHY:

*Plant Sale volunteers still needed! Sign up sheet will be at the April meeting.*



## Ponders Calendar

### General Meeting

Thursday, April 24<sup>th</sup> 7:30 PM @ Junior League of Tucson 2099 E River Road

### Program: "Working With Pollinators

In Your Garden" by Anna Howell, Master's

Degree Student/Research Technician, Department of Entomology, UA

**Door Prizes:** Share your extra plants & stuff!

### Board Notes

Board meeting on April 17th, 7:30 PM. Host is Ken Canada.

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## Bee Facts For The Tucson Area:

- The Sonoran desert is home to about 2000 native bee species.
- The native bee species in this area are mainly solitary. They do not form hives nor have a caste system.
- About two thirds of the native solitary bee species nest in the ground, while others nest above ground in cavities.
- Honeybees are not native to the U.S., but were brought over by European settlers.
- Male bees cannot sting; only females have a stinger.

**20% Membership Discount**  
**Annual Water Plant Sale**  
**May 4th, Reid Park, 8:00 AM-1:30 PM**  
*Good for purchase of aquatic plants.*

*Must be a 2008 member for the 20% discount.*



**Plant Propagation.** Plants, such as sedges and reeds, with creeping roots may be divided by levering apart the roots. Cut off old roots and remove dead leaves, before replanting in individual containers and top-dressing with planting media. Trim top growth back to 3-4 inches. Can be topped with rocks to hold the plant down. Put in pond to a level so the top growth is just above the water.

Visit our web site:  
<http://tucsonwatergardeners.org/>

Thought for the Month: The less help you have  
in a garden the more yours it is.

## President's Forum



*Plants!* We're looking for lots of them for our May 4th Annual Plant Sale. Having plants potted for the sale allows us to charge a bit more, and customers love the convenience of purchasing their plants pond ready!

Thanks to Pam Glenn, Chairperson for our May Plant Sale, *we have black mesh water plant baskets for sale at our April meeting.* The baskets will be sold on a first-come-first-serve basis. The big square or kidney shaped are \$3.50 each; medium round are \$2.25 ea; and the small round or square are \$1.25 ea.

A special thank you to Carl Ragel for being our 2008 season kick-off speaker with his discussion of spring pond start-up and to Catlow Shipek for his March presentation on water harvesting!

*Elizabeth Good*

## 2008 Future Programs

**MAY:** Walkable & Other Ground  
Covers For Around Your Pond

**JUNE:** Unique Tropical Aquatic Plants



**Watergardening  
Classifieds**

**Sell or Trade Water Garden Items.** Ad space is *free* to members! Write-ups on your water garden items must be in to the editor by the 4th of each month.

## Go For Ideas!

Southern Arizona Koi Association (SAKA) 2008 Pond Tour May 3-4 with 17 ponds, featuring water gardens, koi ponds and water features. Check out at: [www.sakoaia.org](http://www.sakoaia.org)

# Flexible Pond Liners: A Tutorial

Spring is the time to be thinking about *another* pond, isn't it? Three general methods of water containment for your new pond include: purchasing a fiber glass or plastic pre-formed pond conforming to your excavation site; lining the pond site with concrete; or, utilizing a flexible pond liner.

For ease of installation, durability and flexibility of design the pond liner is a popular choice after you have excavated, shaped, and leveled that hole in the ground or structure that you are now visualizing as your thriving biological ecosystem in our desert environment. A 2" layer of sand on all flat surfaces, including bog and marginal shelves, is advisable to produce a smooth surface which will not damage the liner. Pond under liner fabric can also be used. A thick layer of old newspaper or cardboard is *not* advisable for this cushioning layer, as it deteriorates rather quickly.

Pond liners come in a variety of material grades, ranging from thin plastic to heavy duty rubber liners. Quality and reliability of the manufacturer should be high on the consideration list, with price relegated to a secondary consideration. Brands of vinyl liners should also be checked for toxicity, as they will be supporting an aquatic habitat. *Not all vinyl liner products are safe for pond use.* For example, durable liner products used in roofing contain algacides and fire retardant chemicals and are not suitable pond liners. Swimming pool liners contain herbicides and biocides that can kill aquatic life.

Pond liners made from EPDM (Ethylene Propylene Diene Monomer) or Butyl synthetic rubbers are significantly more flexible and durable than liners made from plastics such as polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or Polypropylene (PP). *The EPDM and Butyl lining materials are considered the two best lining materials for ponds.*

As a general rule of thumb, the larger the area you wish to cover, the thicker the material should be. Thickness of synthetic rubbers is expressed in mils. In general, the thickness of rubber has little effect on environmental aging characteristics of a liner, but can have a significant effect on the ease of installation and resistance to mechanical abuse. Smaller ponds can be lined with 30 mil rubber; larger free form ponds can be successfully lined with 40 or 45 mil rubber. Very large projects, such as reservoirs, are usually lined with 60 mil. These higher quality vinyl liners can also have warranties for twenty or more years! There are also liquid pond liners, with recommended application of at least one gallon for every fifteen to twenty square feet. Where there are pond liners, there is also a need for pond liner repair kits. These kits are readily available from many sources.

## What Size Pond Liner Do I Need?

*Here's the formula:*

Length of liner required = Max. length of pond + (2 x max. depth of pond) + minimum 2 feet (min. 60 cm) overlap

Width of liner required = Max. width of pond + (2 x max. depth of pond) + minimum 2 feet (min. 60 cm) overlap

## Installing Your Liner

Before installation, allow the liner to warm in the sun for at least an hour to soften before placement. Some lining materials are easier to work when wet. Depending upon the size of your pond, spreading the liner may take more than one person. Do not drag or pull the liner across the yard where it could catch on something and tear:

- Flap the liner over the pool like a sheet (up and down) to force air under and cause it to "float" into place. Smooth the liner out as much as possible; do not pull or stretch.
- Leave small wrinkles in the bottom of the pond. This allows the liner to spread once the soil settles.
- Tuck and fold the liner neatly to fit the contours of the pond. Be sure and leave a lip no less than 6-inches over the outside of the pond; 12 inches is preferred. Use bricks or stones to temporarily hold the liner in place.
- Fill the pool with several inches of water. Readjust the liner as needed; pleat and fold excess material neatly. Move the bricks if required.
- Continue filling the pond to halfway; adjust the liner and bricks again.
- Once final adjustments are made, fill the pond to just below the edging shelf. Note: there is no way to get rid of all wrinkles and folds. Tuck and fold excess lining material as neatly and compactly as possible.
- Trim excess liner using heavy scissors or a utility knife, but leave plenty to overlap and protect the edging shelf.
- Cover the exposed lip of liner with soil or concrete, if edges around the pond must support heavy traffic or heavy edging material. You can now install the edging, overhanging the pond by 2 to 3-inches; use flagstone, brick, cut stone, or other decorative or natural stone. Trim the liner one final time; use soil in behind the stone to conceal visible liner.

*We would love to hear about your experience with pond liners!*



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*To promote an appreciation and understanding of...ponds, bogs, fountains,  
wildlife, and aquatic plants...*



## Aquatic Plant Profile



Common Cattail (*Typha latifolia*)  
*Photo courtesy K. Cserny water garden.*

Cattails are from the Typhaceae family and also go by the name of flags, rushes, bulrushes, and cat o' nine tails. This is one of the most common and easily identified of our water loving plants and has an interesting history. It grows nearly world-wide and is valued for its ability to filter wetlands water, as well as being a wildlife habitat.

Did you know that all parts of the cattail are edible when gathered at the appropriate stage of growth? For centuries the Native Americans have used cattails for food, with its medicinal roots used to treat intestinal maladies and burns. In fact, cattail recipes can be discovered today —anyone for cattail fried

rice?

This bog-loving perennial has to be closely watched in a pond environment because of its prolific growth from underground rhizomes and can quickly colonize a whole pond! For our purposes *Typha laxmanii*, the dwarf variety of cattail, may be more suitable, growing to only 2'-3' in height. A hybridized cattail with variegated foliage can also add interest to your water garden. Be sure that cattails are planted in a shallow container as a marginal plant to control their growth.

Catkin is the correct name for the cattail's cylindrical brown flower cluster with its population of densely packed tiny flowers.