

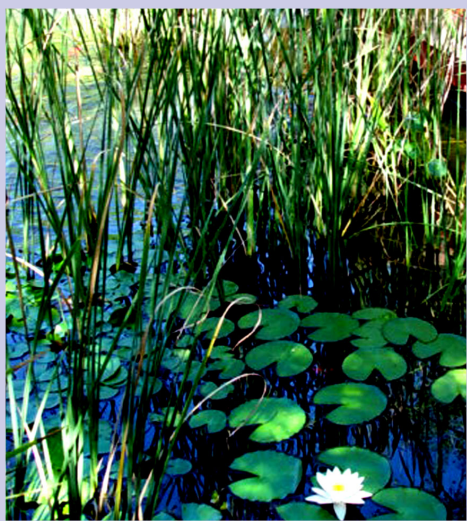
Ponderings

Official
Newsletter of
The Tucson
Watergardeners

Volume XII, Issue 1

February 2010

Let's Start Ponding!



Hello everyone! We have a calendar full of meetings, speakers, and events planned for this year. At the first meeting we will also be looking for volunteers to help with club events. I know your time is valuable, but please consider volunteering. A reminder that annual club dues need to be paid. These dues pay for the building rent, and cover other club expenses. To continue to receive the discount at our annual plant sale, free pond tour tickets, and our newsletter, you must be a member in good standing. *Paul Roberts*

NOTEWORTHY:

- *Welcome back to our 12th water gardening season as a club!*
- *Annual dues payable at our first general meeting.*

2010 Rates:

\$ 20.00 Individual;

\$ 25.00 Household



Ponders Calendar

General Meeting

Thursday, Feb 25th 7:30 PM @ Junior League of Tucson 2099 E River Road

Program: Spring Pond Start-Up Panel Discussion, moderated by Paul Roberts.
Challenge the panel with your questions!

Committee Volunteers Discussion

Facilitated By Casey Case (member)

Refreshments by Betty Blackstock & Klara Cserny
Thank you!

Share your extra pond stuff!

Fertilizer spikes will be sold at this meeting!

Board Notes

Meeting: Thursday
March 11th 7:00 PM
Hosts: Casey Case
& Smokie Steffe

Meeting: Thursday
April 8th 7:00 PM
Host: To Be Determined

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Clip & Save!

Watergardeners 2010 Calendar*

FEB 25th General Meeting 7:30 PM
Thursday Junior League of Tucson

MAR 25th General Meeting 7:30 PM
Thursday Junior League of Tucson

APR 18th General Meeting
Sunday 2:00 PM-4:00 PM
Canada Residence

MAY 16th **Annual Plant Sale**
Sunday Reid Park 8:00 AM-1:30 PM

MAY 27th General Meeting 7:30 PM
Thursday Junior League of Tucson

JUN 24th General Meeting 7:30 PM
Thursday Junior League of Tucson

JULY 22nd General Meeting 7:30 PM
Thursday Junior League of Tucson

AUG 26th General Meeting 7:30 PM
Thursday Junior League of Tucson

Sep 19th General Meeting
Sunday 2:00 PM-4:00 PM
Minami Residence

SEP 25th/26th **Public Water
Garden Tour**
Saturday & Sunday 9:00 AM-3:00 PM Daily
Locations to be announced.

OCT 17th **Members' Potluck**
Sunday President's Residence

OCT 28th General Meeting 7:30 PM
Thursday Junior League of Tucson

* *Dates & locations for Board meetings
to be announced in Ponderings.*

Tropical Water Lily Mom

There's always a way to improve *anything* is Casey Case's way of thinking. Casey, a long-time member of The Tucson Watergardeners, and her husband, Smokie Steffe, (also a club member) transformed a mostly unused swimming pool into a lush watergarden in 2005.

Since that time, Casey's love of tropical water lilies and their exotic blooms sent Casey on quite another journey of discovery. She began experimenting with water lily propagation, based on an abundance of emerging viviparous plants nodes from the lily pads and corms from her mature water lilies. The plantlets were carefully potted in color coded plastic cups filled with a home made mixture of soil, sand and fertilizer. Other club members also contributed pads with emerging vivips for Casey to pot and hold through the winter. Before the Sonoran Desert winter set in, it was then time to devise propagation "tanks." The many baby water lily cups were housed in plastic kiddy wading pools in a back patio area. Over the winter, they were warmed with *lots* of aquarium heaters, heat lamps, and extension cords. Empty kiddy pools, like a clam shell, covered the top of her water lily nurseries during the coldest of our desert nights!

Enough of her "babies" survived that Casey was able to make a generous supply of these first year tropical water lily plants available to club members throughout the 2009 watergardening season. Her nursery stock included the tropical water lilies Albert Greenberg, Jack Wood, Panama Pacific, Lindsey Woods, Tina, and the night bloomers Red Flare and Texas Shell. Proceeds from the sale of these water lilies were generously donated to the club's Grant Fund.

Now, let's return to Casey's thoughts about a better way. Designed and built by Casey and Smokie, a series of four custom built tanks, totaling 734 gallons, replaced the kiddy pools on the back patio for the 2009 winter nursery.



Story continues on page 3.

Klub Korner

What 2010 Club Success Looks Like:

- Getting membership renewals in by March 15th so that our printed Directory is timely.
- Having enough Volunteers for the May Plant Sale.
- Having your extra aquatic plants for our Plant Sale —donations of pre-potted plants are most appreciated. Remember us in spring plant dividing!
- Finding host water garden candidates *early* for our Public Tour. This is terrific motivation for getting those long dreamt about garden projects completed! All gardens and all locations considered.
- Having enough Volunteer helpers for our Public Water Garden Tour.
- Providing refreshments for our Public Meetings.
- Suggesting topics YOU want to hear about!

Tropical Water Lily Mom...continued from page 2.

These tanks are basically an insulated, framed structure supporting vinyl lined pools that are approximately 18 inches in depth and about waist-high for easy access. A six-gallon recycled water heater and Little Giant 325 GPH pump (PES-300-PW) continuously circulate warm water throughout the whole system.



Best news of all is that the water lilies are thriving in their new winter home! A few very fortunate Gambusias are also being wintered among those lily pads. To retain the warm water temperature, particularly

through the nighttime, Lexan Thermoclear sheets, a twin wall polycarbonate product used in greenhouses, have been custom cut to cover each of the four tanks.

Casey is optimistic that she will have enough tropical water lilies —and certainly the variety, to make available to club members for the 2010 season. Her plans are to set up a demonstration and sales area for the club's annual May Plant Sale. Tropical water lilies add that very special touch of the truly exotic to our desert ponds and watergardens.

A very special thank you goes out to Casey and Smokie for finding a better way!

Your 2010 Board Officers & Directors



Paul Roberts (left) will be serving his second term as The Tucson Watergardeners President. Dan Jenks (center) will serve as Vice President. Mary McMacken (right) will serve as the club's new Treasurer. Not pictured are Regina Nassen, Secretary, and Elizabeth Good, Past President, both serving on the 2010 Board.



Here's your 2010 Directors (from left to right): Klara Cserny, Ken Canada, Betty Blackstock, Cynthia Rae, JoAn Stolley, and HL Swain.



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.

Committee Chairs Wanted! Chairs needed for the following: *Programs, Grants, and Public Pond Tour.* Dennis and Mary McMacken have volunteered as our 2010 Refreshment Co-Chairs. *Thank you!*

President:	Paul Roberts	paulrwi@aol.com
Vice President:	Dan Jenks	pdq211@cox.net
Treasurer:	Mary McMacken	azwhiner@yahoo.com
Secretary:	Regina Nassen	rnassen@cox.net
Webmaster:	HL Swain	hl@swain.net
Editor:	JoAn Stolley	jstolley@cox.net



The Tucson Watergardeners
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Ruby Creeper—Colorful Bog Plant

“To help develop an interest in the creation and care of water gardens...”

Pond Start Up

Algae. With the change in water temperatures, algae can come into full bloom. *Don't drain your pond completely to cure algae problems!* Existing String or “Hair” algae has to be removed by hand—a brush or rake is handy. Some of us love sacks of barley straw sunk to the bottom of the pond to lower the pH of the water and to prevent *new* string algae growth. Side slim algae are the good guys, providing oxygen, as well as nibbling and nursery opportunities. Leave this algae alone. “Pea soup” algae, where your water turns green, can overrun a pond in the spring. There are chemical products and pond dyes to treat this situation. Biofilters are also extremely helpful in controlling “pea soup” algae growth.

Beneficial bacteria. Use beneficial bacteria to jump start the pond's biological cycle.

Fish. Begin feeding fish with a low protein diet when the water temperature is consistently above 50°.

Plants. Clean up dead plants and fallen leaves both in and around your pond. Move plants that have been hibernating in the deeper parts of the pond closer to the pond surface for spring sun. Begin fertilizing aquatic plants (*The club will be selling fertilizer spikes at its general meetings.*) when the pond temperatures reach 55° to 60°. *When you begin dividing plants, remember donations for our May Aquatic Plant Sale.* Assess your pondscape to see if you have a good mix of oxygenators, floaters, and marginals to help control algae through the pond season.

Pond Infrastructure. Check to see that the pond is holding its water level and that there aren't any leaks in the pond or waterfall. Look for any cracks in pump housing. If the filter media looks worn and dirty, replace it with new media, *and* use beneficial bacteria to restart the pond's biological cycle.