

Ponderings

Official
Newsletter of
The Tucson
Watergardeners



Our desert environment is the perfect opportunity to create a personal water garden oasis. Stretch your gardening imagination to its very limits this summer!

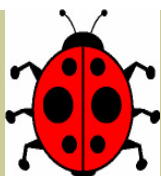
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NOTEWORTHY:

Please note that the deadline for 2010 membership renewals is June 30th to be eligible to receive complimentary tickets for our annual Watergarden Tour scheduled for September 25th & 26th.



Ponders Calendar

General Meeting

Thursday, June 24TH 7:30 PM

@ Junior League of Tucson

2099 E River Road

Program: **Pond Bingo!**

Hosted by Your Board.

Here's your opportunity to play the ever popular **Pond Bingo**; cover a variety of watergardening topics; and, best of all — win **PRIZES!** This is also your opportunity to share ponding experiences (*the good, the bad & the ugly*) and to ask questions.

Refreshments: Bob & Arnelle Publicover *Thank you!*

Share your extra plants & stuff!

Board Meetings Date/Location

Change! Change!
Thursday, **July 15th**,
7:00 PM
The McMackens

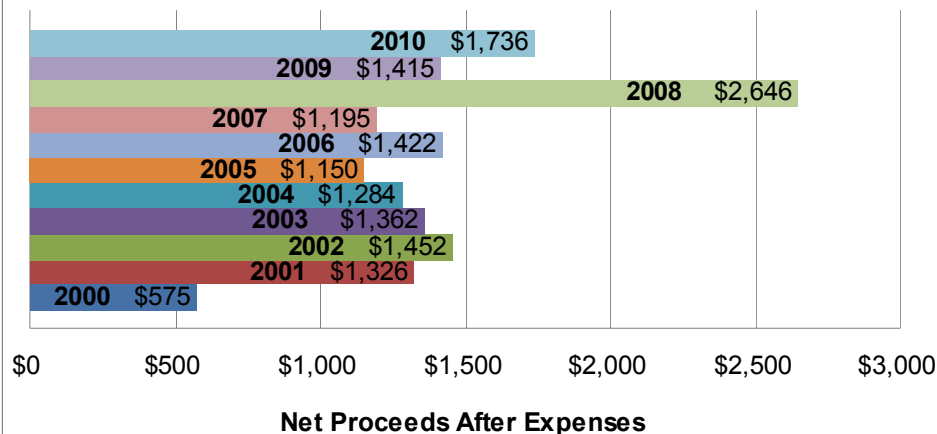
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Plant Sale In Review

The club's annual Plant Sale was held at Reid Park on May 16th. *This was one of our most successful sales ever, with lower expenses than in previous years.* Most of the water lilies were raised and donated by Jane Canada (hardies) and Casey Case (tropicals), which reduced the club's need to purchase plants. Rather than sending hundreds of post cards out by "snail" mail, the Board elected to try different advertising media this year, including Craig's List, flyers distributed through the local library system, and ads in local newspapers and magazines. Dan Jenks and Jane Canada co-chaired this event.

Annual Plant Sale



Kudos to all who contributed to our Plant Sale!

Fabric Pond Pots

Fabric pond pots –as opposed to the plastic pots that we, as water gardeners, commonly use, are an alternative to consider when potting up your favorite water lilies or dividing your aquatic plants. This more natural alternative is made of a porous polypropylene fabric that breathes. This allows water to pass freely through the fabric pot, creating more aeration for the soil –and better soil means healthier pond plants and root systems. Available through a variety of sources, the pots generally run the range of 8", 10", 14", and 16" sizes. Their cost is usually between \$3.00 - \$5.00 for an individual pot, depending on the selected size.

What are some of the advantages for this type pot? In addition to improved soil aeration, algae can grow on the fabric, helping to clean your pond and give it a natural look. New white root growth can penetrate the fabric pots,

further filtering your pond. Fish may eat this root growth back. Fabric pots are more flexible and will sit better on uneven surfaces. The fabric pond pot can also be folded down to adjust height. While plastic containers become brittle over time



and may crack, exposing sharp edges that can harm fish, the fabric pots are durable and have no sharp edges to harm the pond's fish population.

If you have had experiences with the fabric pots –good or bad, let us know, so we can share with our fellow ponders!

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Nymphaea mexicana-Mexican water lily flowering in Spur Cross Solar Oasis

Photos courtesy of Mr. John Gunn.



**Spur Cross Ranch
Conservation Area
Maricopa County**

Last August our club provided Spur Cross over twenty native water lilies (*Nymphaea mexicana*) to help shade and provide breeding places for native and endangered fish. Mr. John Gunn, Supervisor of this area, provided feedback that the lilies didn't seem to "take hold" in 2009 and that there were doubts that the plants would make it through this past winter.

It looks like a happy ending from the May 2010 photograph (*far left*)! We hope to follow the water lilies' progress through the end of the 2010 growing season.



Watergardening Classifieds

Wanted: *Final call* for water & bog gardens for our September 25th/26th Public Tour! All types of water and bog gardens are still being considered throughout the Tucson Valley. Call Paul Roberts, Tour Chair, 730-4601, email: paul.robertstwg@yahoo.com or JoAn Stolley, Co-Chair, 760-5565, email: jstolley@cox.net.

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.



Horsetail Rush (*Equisetum hyemale*) **Family:** Equisetaceae

A lot of us have this curious plant around our pond's marginal and bog areas, but know very little about it. The Horsetail Rush, also known as the Scouring Rush, is one of the oldest plants to be used by man.

It is neither a rush nor a fern, but belongs to a class of plants that dates back some 350+ million years! This evergreen perennial will spread aggressively by branched, creeping rhizomes. It reaches heights up to 4 feet, and is best contained in pots. Horsetail Rush thrives in a shallow water environment.

With jointed, hollow stems that have a high silica content, Scouring Rush –as its name implies, has been used to scour cooking utensils and polish furniture. Garden designers love it because of its distinct bamboo-like appearance and strong vertical lines.

Gardenisms

"The trouble with [water] gardening is that it does not remain an avocation. It becomes an obsession."

-- Phyllis McGinley



The Tucson Watergardeners
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"To promote an appreciation and understanding...ponds, bogs, wildlife, and aquatic plants."

President's Corner

Hello Everyone!

A very **BIG** thank you to everyone who contributed to our May Plant Sale —whether that contribution be in raising and donating aquatic plants; helping with set-up and take-down of the Reid Park Pavilion site; working the administrative and financial background requirements; or, donating hours at the actual sale. **Wow!** If you have suggestions for how we can improve next year's sale, please speak up.

It's now time to turn our thoughts and energy to the upcoming September 25th-26th

Public Tour. Last year was our first time for a two-day event, and, setting up a "Tour Central." While most water gardens were open for both days, we are looking at clustering gardens by zip code/geographic areas, with half the tour gardens open on Saturday and the other half, on Sunday. "Tour Central" would be open both days. If you have any thoughts or comments as to this direction, please let me know.

I hope you are enjoying your ponds and water gardens. From my perspective, it has been a terrific growing season, so far!

Paul Roberts