

Ponderings

Official
Newsletter of
The Tucson
Watergardeners

Our Sunday Meeting Coming Up May 1st!



Ponders Calendar

General Meeting

Sunday, May 1st 2:00 PM—4:00 PM

Wayne & Anne-Lee Tomczyk Residence

12296 N. Paseo Penuela, Marana, AZ
(Access Off of W. Tangerine Crossing Drive)

Major crossroads:

East/West: W. Tangerine Road

North/South: N. Thornydale Road

Program:

- *Refreshments!*
- The Tomczyk's talk about their pond, surrounding gardens, and collection of box turtles. *Get ideas! Ask questions!*
- Your opportunity to "Paint a 4" Pot," sign & date, which will then be raffled. *It's free!*

See more information on pages 2 and 3.

- Opportunity to purchase club-sponsored fertilizer spikes & tabs for aquatic plants. \$5.00/package; exact change appreciated.
- *Please bring your own lawn chairs!*

NOTE: We will also have our regular monthly public meeting on **Thursday, May 26th** at the Junior League of Tucson, 2099 East River Road. The meeting will convene at 7:30 PM.

Board Meetings Date/Location

Next Board meeting date to be set.

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NOTEWORTHY:

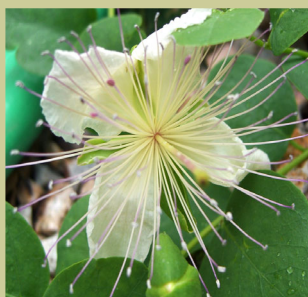
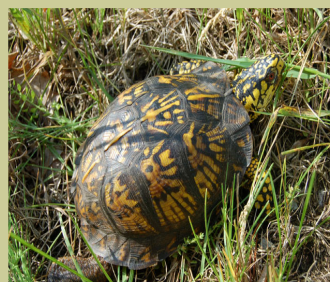
For the third year in a row, our April Public Meeting will be held at a member's residence. Please note that our April meeting is on Sunday, May 1st. Yes! We're stretching April a wee bit! Mark your calendars accordingly!

There will be no 4th Thursday evening meeting in April.

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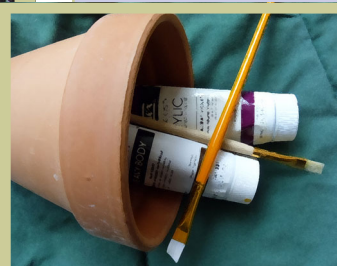
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A Watergardening Oasis



The Tomczyk's stylish backyard sanctuary has so many points of interest, ranging from a watergarden in the truest sense of the word, to a habitat for their collection of terrestrial box turtles. Their 2000 gallon freestyle pond is home to numerous water lilies and marginal plants. They also are avid container watergardeners. You will see Anne-Lee's artistic touch throughout their gardens.

This is an outstanding opportunity to visit with Wayne and Anne-Lee about their lessons learned from years of watergardening experience. Wayne has served in various elected club positions, including as a Board member, and, currently, as the club Secretary.



Your artistic, signed pot creation will be raffled. Those who paint a pot will receive a pot—but not your own. Sample pots will be available; great with a plant, but also nice with a votive candle. (See accompanying plant exchange information on page 3.)

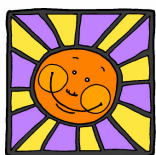
Plants For The 4" Painted Pot Raffle!



For our Sunday meeting at the Tomczyk residence, please bring a terrestrial plant, herb, or item suitable to fit into the 4" painted pots; and,

you will take home something unique! Yes, it is hoped that we will all take a hand with the brushes and paints for this very interesting "Pot" raffle!

(See more information on page 2)



Watergardening Classifieds

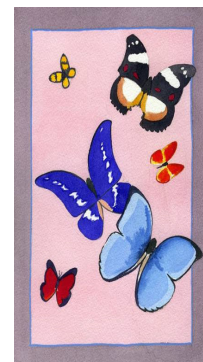
Reserve your "extras" for our **May 22nd Annual Aquatic Plant Sale!** Remember that bringing already potted aquatic plants to our sale allows the club to charge a bit more and helps our Grant Fund coffers. *Questions should be directed to the following Co-Chairs: Dan Jenks 245-1324 or Ken or Jane Canada 760-1036.*

Tropical Water Lilies. These lilies are now available from Casey Case. She has been raising and housing this fabulous set of lilies through our desert winter. Casey is selling them for the club. Prices are \$20.00 each, or three for \$55.00. Casey can be reached at casey@dakotacom.net or 886-7211. *Get there early for the best selections!* The tropicals will also be available at our May Plant Sale.

Aquatic Plants For Butterflies

Aquatic plants that attract butterflies include:

- Water Snowball (*Gymnocoronis spiralanthoides*)
- Pickeral Rush (*Pontederis cordata*)
- Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
- Aquatic Mint (*Mentha aquatica*)
- Ruellia (*Ruellia brittoniana*)
- Water Hibiscus (*Hibiscus coccineus*)
- Arrowhead (*Sagittaria latifolia*)



Annual Plant Sale Date Change

Please mark your May calendars for Sunday, May 22nd, 8:00 AM—1:30 PM for our annual Aquatic Plant Sale at Reid Park. Members receive a 20% discount on all plants purchased. This is a change from the original May 15th date.

Officer & Board Directory

President: Paul Roberts paul.robertstwg@yahoo.com
Vice President: Dan Jenks pdq211@yahoo.com
Treasurer: Mary McMacken azwhiner@yahoo.com
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Aquatic Soils

As we begin our spring activities of dividing and repotting our aquatic plants, it's time to think about the do's and don'ts of aquatic soils and fertilizers. Not just any soil will do for our pond environments! For example, potting soils are unacceptable for our water gardens; they are too light and contain too many organics, accelerating water pollution and algae build up.

Soil has two main purposes: anchoring the plant and holding nutrients. A favorite medium of water gardeners is unimproved, unscented kitty litter which contains only clay. It moistens quickly and can be rinsed and reused. Clay soil is one of the best options for aquatic plants. Our desert "sandy" soil can also be used. Sand can anchor shorter plants well, but not tall plants. It will hold some nutrients, but not as well as a clay-based soil. Gravel can be used for short plants, but is very poor at nutrient retention. Gravel can work when the plants are for filtration purposes, but any fertilization, will generally be released into the water. Our hardy and tropical water lily gardeners generally do their own mixes of soil and planting media to assure a nutrient rich environment, e.g., the "muddy pond bottom" effect. Ask around! Commercially sold packaged aquatic soil, usually made up of kiln-fired clay particles, is another good planting alternative. Pea gravel or small rocks are a great topper to any aquatic plant pot and lessens the possibility of planting media or soil being released into the water.

Those aquatic plants with heavy blooms, such as the water lilies and iris, are heavy feeders and need a dedicated regimen of fertilization throughout their growing season. Fertilizer can be in the form of slow release tablets/spikes or granules. Fertilizer comes with a series of three numbers, such as 8-24-8. This series of numbers signifies the macro-nutrients required for plants. The higher the middle number for aquatic plants, the better it is to support heavy seasonal blooms!