

# Ponderings

Official  
Newsletter of  
The Tucson  
Watergardeners

## This Month—Plant Sale!

Volume XIII, Issue 4

May 2011



## Ponders Calendar



NOTEWORTHY:

### General Meeting

**Thursday, May 26th 7:30 PM** at the  
Junior League of Tucson 2099 E. River  
Road

**Program: "Wildlife Rehabilitation" By**

**Ms. Darlene Braastad, Founder,  
Forever Wild. She is bringing some  
very special guests!**



Forever Wild Animal  
Rehabilitation Center  
cares for injured,  
sick, distressed or  
orphaned wild  
animals.

*Read more on page 2.*

**Refreshments:** Mary & Dennis McMacken

*Thank you!*

*Share your extra plants & stuff!*

*Our ponds and water gardens attract desert wildlife—including creatures that may be injured, orphaned, or in distress. Please give a warm welcome to our guest speaker and come with your questions. Guests are welcome!*

*Our annual Aquatic Plant Sale and a fascinating program—all this month. It's great to be a watergardener!*



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### Board Meetings Date/Location

Next Board  
meeting date to be  
set.

# Annual Aquatic Plant Sale



**The Tucson Watergardeners Annual Aquatic Plant Sale is now set for Sunday, May 22nd from 8:00 AM to 1:30 PM at Reid Park. Sale will be at the Ramada, southwest corner of the park, at the intersection of Country Club Drive and 22nd Street.**



*If you have plants to donate to this sale, we ask that they arrive by 7:30 AM, so that they can be priced, and placed in the appropriate sales area. Bare root plants are acceptable, however, potted plants are preferred.*

Here's your opportunity to acquire new aquatic plants and fill in those empty gaps in your pond or bog areas! There will be a wide variety of plants available, including over 100 water lilies—both tropical and hardy. Iris, Water Cannas, Horsetail, Obedient Plant, Cattails, Yerba Mansa —are but a few of the marginals in this year's sale. Oxygenators and "floaters" will be on hand. Fertilizer spikes, made especially for aquatics, as well as club t-shirts & hats will also be at this sale. *Come on by and bring all of your ponding friends!*

As a reminder, 2011 club members in good standing will receive a 20% discount on all plants purchased!

## Forever Wild—About Our Speaker

Ms. Braastad has been rehabbing for 16 years, retiring early from a career as a travel agent. She discovered a couple in the northwest of Tucson who did wildlife rehab and became their volunteer for 8 months. She started taking animals in May of 1996 and has never stopped. Forever Wild is now the largest, busiest rehab center in southern Arizona, receiving over 2400 animals each year. The ultimate aim of this 501-c-5 nonprofit organization is to rehabilitate wild animals, so that they are able to survive on their own, and then release them back into the wild, either where they were found, or in a more suitable location. Besides wildlife rehab, Darlene promotes education for people about human/wildlife conflicts and tries to teach hundreds of kids and parents what to do when they come across wildlife. Forever Wild is also a sanctuary for certain domestic species, such as ducks, chickens, geese and domestic rabbits.

**POND CRITTERS :** *Are you able to identify these critters?*

**Water Flea** (*Daphnia* spp.) Appear as quickly moving specks on the water surface and are an excellent source of protein for baby fish.

**Water Skaters** or Striders (*Gerris argentatus*) The "Daddy long-legs" of the water eat dead and dying insects found floating on the water.

**Whirligig Beetles** (family Gyrinidae) They hang around the pond surface in large numbers in quiet places and eat both live and dead insects. They have divided eyes that can see both above and below water.



*Ponds & Plants & Pots & Pizza made for a terrific Sunday afternoon!*

*Thank you, Wayne & Anne-Lee, for hosting a most interesting Sunday club meeting! Any volunteers to host our September Sunday meeting? You set the date!*



## Watergardening Classifieds

**Club By-Laws.** If you are a new member and would like a printed copy of the club's By-Laws, please let your Editor know. The By-Laws are also available on our web site.

### Officer & Board Directory

**President:** Paul Roberts paul.robertstwg@yahoo.com  
**Vice President:** Dan Jenks pdq211@yahoo.com  
**Treasurer:** Mary McMacken azwhiner@yahoo.com  
**Secretary:** Wayne Tomczyk waynet@us.ibm.com  
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**Other Positions:**  
**Membership:** Smokie Steffe smokie@dakotacom.net  
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### Don't Forget The Lighting!

Lighting can add drama to your pond, as many of us kick back and enjoy our watergardens at dusk --and well into the evening. You can start simple, and build from there. Pond safety is first. Lighting systems should be connected to Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI) electric outlets that will protect against electrical shocks and equipment damage. Timers for your lighting system are important. Motion detectors that activate lights may also help to discourage nocturnal pond predators. There are various types of transformers for connecting your lighting system --from photo cell that automatically senses light and dark to digital transformer technology. Underwater light positioning can be done on walls, as well as resting on the bottom of the pond. Mounting brackets are recommended to keep the lights in place. Pond lighting choices are wide ranging --from submersible L.E.D. lights with colored lenses to free floating solar light spheres. Consider placing lights by aquatic plants to highlight them -- such as a night blooming waterlily or to achieve drama with back lighting of a waterfall.



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Our web address: <http://tucsonwatergardeners.org/>

## Aquatic Plant Profile



Photos courtesy the  
Tomczyk garden.



**Watercress.** This aquatic plant is a pungent perennial herb (*Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum*) of the mustard family. It particularly likes growing in freshwater ponds and streams. Watercress loves visibly moving water and does fairly well in our desert climate, until the heat and full sun of mid-summer. For full season growth, a shaded area is preferred.

Watercress can also be eaten, and is used in salads, and as a garnish. This water-loving plant contains significant amounts of iron, calcium, and folic acid, in addition to vitamins A and C. There are many, many Watercress cooking recipes on the web. Be adventuresome and *check 'em out!*