



## March 2008 Issue

### JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT 2 EVENTS

These two events offer a rare glimpse into our ponding industry and should not be missed.

#### **ORGANICA BIOTECH**

**705 General Washington Ave, suite 500**

**Eagleville, Pa (Norristown)**

**Tuesday, March 18th, at 7:30 p.m.**

We have been invited to visit the laboratories of Organica Biotech. Organica is dedicated to formulating and manufacturing effective environmentally responsible products. "From nature's own laboratory" they produce products for ponds and household use. Continuous research by their team of notable scientists culminates in the development of the most effective line of organic and natural products available today. These products can help us maintain our ponds in a healthy natural way. Organica Biotech works toward successful "organic plant management". They will show us how their helpful bacteria is produced and how it works. Following our tour, there will be an informative demonstration of pond products and their use.

Organica will be providing hors d'oeuvres for the club, so please

**RSVP to Cindy Weiss at 610-667-7545**

so we will know how many people will be coming.

#### **AQUASCAPES UNLIMITED**

**6255 Potters Lane, Pipersville, Pa 18947**

**Sunday, March 30th, at 1:30 p.m.**

Aquascapes Unlimited is a wholesale grower and a great source for ornamental aquatic plants, native wetland plants and fishes. The majority of their plants are seed-grown, winter hardy perennials. Their plants are grown in containers to provide easy storage and transplanting. During this very special event, DVWGS members will have the opportunity to purchase the best of plants at very reasonable prices. Large and small plant specimens are available. Aquascapes Unlimited offers consultations and many other services. They have specialized in pond and wetland management for estate and commercial establishments for over twenty years.

### **2008 Calendar**

#### **March 18, 2008:**

*Eagleville, Pa.*

Organica Biotech

#### **March 30, 2008:**

*Pipersville, Pa.*

Aquascapes Unlimited,  
wholesale growers.

#### **April 20, 2008:**

*Wallingford, Pa.*

Millers Greenhouses

#### **May 18, 2008:**

*West Chester, Pa.*

Plant, pond and garden  
items exchange

#### **June 1, 2008:**

Bus trip

#### **July 13, 2008**

*New Jersey*

Pond Tour

#### **August 2008:**

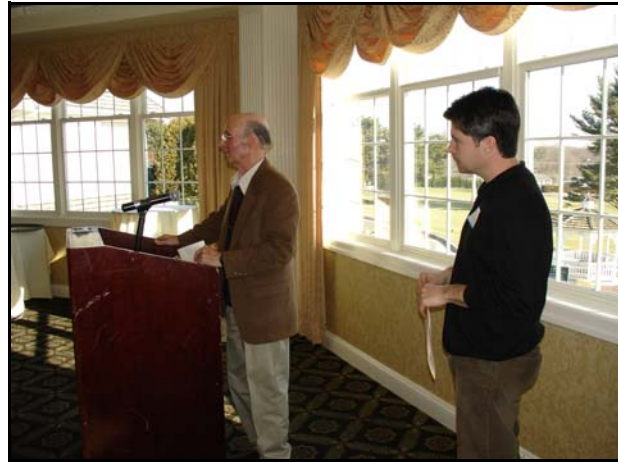
*Audubon, Pa*

Visit to Richard and Ann  
Chung's pond

**LOOKING BACK  
DVWGS ANNUAL LUNCHEON  
AT SPRINGFIELD COUNTRY CLUB**



Colin Hingley gives the treasurers report one last time before he steps down from that office. Thank You Colin for your many years of service and we appreciate that Gail Brewer has accepted the responsibilities for the coming term.



An informative talk on Koi health was given by DVWGS member Bill Fogel. Bill Fogel is an expert on Koi and their surroundings and has been a longtime member of DVWGS.



John McGlade of Bull Frog Ponds followed to share his knowledge and expertise of ponds and landscapes and most interesting ideas of “swimming ponds”.



Alan Letofsky, who was last years recipient of the pond keeper of the year award, announced this years winners, Sandy and John Stouffer.

## MEMBERS BULLETIN BOARD PAGE

THIS YEARS RECIPIENTS OF THE POND KEEPER OF THE YEAR AWARD GOES TO:



Sandi and John Stouffer

*The following note was received from Sandi and John;*

Dear DVWGS members,  
Just a note to say thank you so much for the honor of being chosen Pond Keepers of the Year for 2007!

What a surprise! We absolutely love the miniature fountain and have found the greatest place for it! It graces our master bathroom and the delicate sound of the running water coupled with the mini lights are a perfect addition to the room!

Thanks again and we look forward to the next DVWGS event!  
John and Sandi

### Sunshine Committee

If you have any knowledge of club members in need of the services of the sunshine committee, please call Sharon Deutsch at 856-983-2729 or email her at [maggied989@yahoo.com](mailto:maggied989@yahoo.com)

### Check out our new and improved DVWGS website at: [www.dvwgs.org](http://www.dvwgs.org)

We are very fortunate that one of our members, Sandy Grimwade, has volunteered his time to review and change our web page. Please send any comments to Sandy at [sandy@grimwade.us](mailto:sandy@grimwade.us) and Victor at [petfoodboy@aol.com](mailto:petfoodboy@aol.com).

**Take some time to send in your pond stories, tips, jokes or photos for the member's bulletin board pages.**

**It is always nice to read stories written by other pond club members. Tell us about your past years ponding experience, or any tips you have learned along the way.**

If you want to submit an article, photo or a story for the newsletter, please submit them to Connie Snyder 1255 Buck Lane, West Chester, PA 19382.

Or send them by email to [ccsnyder123@verizon.net](mailto:ccsnyder123@verizon.net). All photos will be returned unharmed.

## SOME INTERESTING FACTS FROM KOIVET.COM

### Crowding formula for Koi ponds - by Doc Johnson

#### **Calculate the total volume of the system using this formula:**

Length (inches) x Depth (inches) x Width (inches) = Product

Divide that product by 231 to give volume.

Or for a cylinder: (Pi) x Radius<sup>2</sup> (inches) x Depth (inches) gives a product.

Divide that product by 231 to give volume in gallons. (Where pi = 3.1416)

#### **Calculate the "inches of fish"**

Inventory each fish, or derive an estimate, and add up the *total inches of fish*.

#### **Golden rule for Koi and Pond fish:**

"One inch of fish per ten gallons of pond water will do well if adequately filtrated and small, regular water changes are done."

#### **What This Means:**

Well, this is true for the quarantine and hospital tanks. This is true for retail tanks. This is true, no matter if you believe it or not. Just like the laws of gravity.

*"When fish are sick, nothing you do will work until you remedy a crowding scenario. You can reduce the stocking density to the above, or Mother Nature will do it for you."*

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### Plecostomus is curative for string algae - by Doc Johnson

**Plecostomus** is curative for string algae. The Plecostomus is a South American catfish which is ugly as sin but very hardy. You should only need one fish in one thousand gallons and it will eat all the string algae, that's its favorite food. When you go to the pet shop, you need the largest Plecostomus they have. These should be pretty cheap. Here's why: When the average tank hobbyist buys a "Pleco" it's five inches long or less. Within the year, it's pushing ten inches. So they trade it back to the pet shop for "next to nothing" - then the pet shop has to 'unload them' if possible. When you come in asking for a large Plecostomus, you get hooked because they will raise the price sensing that you need such a thing, which to anyone else would be an oversized nuisance.

So, ask for a large, 'trade in' Plecostomus.

Two notes of caution: At night, in very small ponds, Plecostomus will rasp on (suck on) the flanks of slow moving fish. If the pond is REALLY small and the algae is all gone, they'll suck on anything they can find, and damage some fish. I would not deploy a Plecostomus in a smaller pond (under 800 gallons). If I did, you should know that the larger Plecostomuses are less likely to rasp on other fish than the smaller more agile Plecostomi. If you have a Goldfish, which by some internal pathology is forced to live on the bottom, it will be eaten by the Plecostomus because it cannot get away. Koi never have this problem where the pond is of any size.

Secondly, Plecostomus will die when the water temperature drops to fifty five DF. Not 56 DF. Like a light switch, in the Fall of each year, they all die when the water reaches down to fifty five. So you should anticipate this and pull the Plecostomus out and put him in a plastic garbage pail with a little sponge filter for the winter. Feed him a disc of Zucchini every couple days and he'll "hang in" 'til Spring for re-deployment in the pond.

## HERONS:

I am a veterinarian who has done a considerable house call practice.

There are a lot of things on the market which are sold to repel or stop herons from coming to your pond for a meal.

I've encountered Herons which will readily eat fish from ponds with:

- 1) Heron decoys
- 2) Inflatable snakes -
- 3) Inflatable or other "Owl Eyes"
- 4) Synthetic owls

It's interesting about the Heron decoy. The USFWS did a study on Herons and they found them to be solitary birds, preferring to travel and fish alone. Recently, marketing weasels have figured out that if they put a decoy near a pond, perhaps that would repel the Heron, since he wants to be alone...Right? WRONG.

The Heron prefers to be alone, however, according to the USFWS the sight of another bird or Heron at water's edge means that **it's safe to land!!!** You'll see Herons landing on the opposite side of the pond, eat their fill and take off without a care.

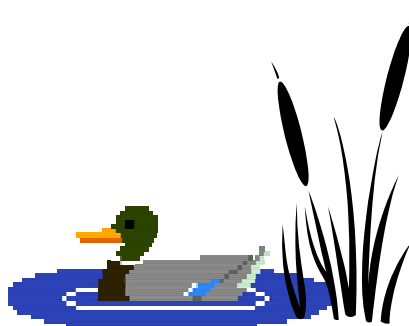
The most effective method is a pyrotechnic Heron scare - which is a unit which fires a pyrotechnical charge ( a little firecracker) every three to fifteen minutes, often at random. They can be heard for miles and the sound repels the Herons. These are the ones they use at Fisheries in the middle of nowhere. They are very effective but they are VERY loud. Wouldn't your neighbors love that?

Probably the very best (and still practical) residential Heron control is the water sprinkler. It is a proprietary branded thing, looks like some kind of a Toucan, and it shoots water when it detects motion. So, the Heron flies in, and all of a sudden the sprinkler comes on. Not that the Heron minds being wet, but it startles them and they take off.

Killing a Heron (which is a migratory bird) is very easy because they have a sizeable body and they think that by staying "stock-still" you cannot see them. However, it's important that you know if you kill a Heron, and your neighbor sees you, they can have you JAILED with the carcass unless you give him your large-screen TV. Don't confer that kind of power on anyone. Repel the Heron before you try anything like killing it.

Best regards

Doc Johnson



### Attention all members:



Do you have any suggestions as to places you would like the club to visit, or fun things you would like our club to do? Please email Victor Barskey at [petfoodboy@aol.com](mailto:petfoodboy@aol.com) or call him at 215-840-0811 with any suggestions.

### DVWGS Officers and contacts:

#### President

Victor Barsky 215-840-0811

#### Vice Presidents

Stephanie McGrory 610-789-9921

#### Secretary

Lamar Wagner 610-527-2277

#### Treasurer

Gail Brewer 610-853-6361

#### Newsletter Editor

Connie Snyder 610-399-1654

#### Sunshine Committee

Sharon Deutsch 856-983-2729

#### Other Members at Large

Rose Ball 610-642-3276

Bill Fogel 610-687-3105

Eric Goldenberg 610-449-5671

Chuck Miller 610-874-3863

Donna Miller 610-544-5625

Cindy Weiss 610-667-7545

Mitch Prince 215-939-3275

Ann Pierce 610-356-4110

# 15 KEY ITEMS THAT SHOULD BE ON YOUR SPRING CLEAN-OUT CHECKLIST

From Aquascape Design, Inc.

Pond projects of any type benefit from advanced preparation. Having all the necessary supplies on hand before you get started always makes it go faster. Realizing it's a good time to fertilize after your pond has been drained, can cause you to run to the store for lily tabs tends to slow down the spring clean-out process, turning a half-day job into an all-day chore. Planning ahead a little means you can spend less time working on your pond, and more time *enjoying* it!

**Fish Net** – Before you drain your pond for the spring clean-out, you'll need to catch and relocate your fish. A good quality net means doing this without injuring your fish during the catch. Don't forget a place to put them while you clean ( see 7 below).

**Planting Pots** – Spring clean-out is a great time to thin and divide plants that have grown out of bounds or crowded a pot. Make sure you have some aquatic plant pots handy so you can re-pot and share your new plants with other water gardeners.

**Extra Gravel/ Rocks** – After the freeze and thaw of winter, you'll inevitably find rocks and gravel that have shifted, exposing bare liner. With an extra bag or two of gravel / rocks, you can cover exposed liner in a jiffy.

**Lily Tabs** – Take advantage of

the water-free accessibility of water lilies, lotus, and other plants that may need to be fertilized, by having a container of lily tabs on hand when you're doing your pond clean-out.

**Container for Plant Debris** – Grab an old plastic plant pot or bucket so you can easily dispose of any debris that you gather from the pond bottom.

**Rubber Gloves and Boots** – Spring clean-outs can be cold, wet, and messy. Arm yourself with boots and gloves will go a long way toward making this chore much less unpleasant.

**Fish Container** – A large tub will be needed so you have a roomy place to keep your fish during the clean-out.

**Net to Cover the Fish Container** – Fish, especially large koi, jump, and they may very well jump right out of the container that you've set up for them. Be sure to cover it with a net that is pulled taught across the top of the container to prevent them from jumping.

**Pump and Discharge Pipe** – To drain the water out of the pond, you will need a pump and some discharge pipe. It's ok to use your pond pump, but even better if you have an extra pump to lessen the wear and tear on your pond pump. Spread the wa-

ter around your garden/ lawn, and you will have some free fertilizer.

**High Pressure Sprayer** – Use a pressure nozzle on your garden hose or a pressure sprayer to dislodge debris and algae from the rocks.

**De-chlorinator** – If you are on city water, you'll need to de-chlorinate the newly filled pond before you put the fish back in.

**Expanding Foam** – Expanding foam may need a bit of a touch up in some areas especially around water falls. Be prepared with a can of it just in case.

**New Filter Mats** – Filter mats should be replaced every three years or so. If you think it might be time, be prepared ahead of time by purchasing replacements prior to your pond clean-out.

**Pruners** – Part of a spring clean-out is pruning back dead plant material from the previous season. Make sure you have a good pair of pruners or scissors to get the job done.

**Plastic Rake** – Rake the leaves right out of you pond with a children's garden rake. The plastic lessens the chance of tearing the liner and the small size makes it easier to maneuver in tight spots than an adult sized rake.

# DVWGS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION:

**SEND TO GAIL BREWER  
101 W. Hillcrest Rd, Havertown, Pa. 19083**

Circle one:           NEW                           RENEWAL  
Circle one:           Family @\$25.00           Commercial @\$35.00

**(PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY) (PLEASE FILL IN ALL BLANKS)**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and year: \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

**Make check payable  
to DVWGS**

As a volunteer organization, we encourage you to be an active participant in our activities.  
Please indicate your interests by checking next to all that apply:

Write newsletter articles	Help with raffle	Program development
Fundraising	Publicity	Host a meeting
Staffing exhibits	Hospitality	Display my pond on Pond Tour
Make telephone calls	Help with pond tour	

Please include any suggestions on bottom of this form. (Thank you for your input!)



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**Calling all DVWGS members.**



**I have enjoyed the position of newsletter editor for the club since June of 2003.**

**Due to recent changes in my work schedules and other interests also, I am looking for a person who would like to take over this fun filled position in the club!! As you can see from my past newsletters, you need not have any experience with the English language, spelling and or punctuation. I will be available to help out as much as necessary in the transfer .**

**If you think you might be interested in taking over this position please email me at [ccsnyder123@verizon.net](mailto:ccsnyder123@verizon.net). Or call me at 610-399-1654. Much Thanks, Connie Snyder**



Connie Snyder/editor  
1255 Buck Lane  
West Chester Pa. 19382

Phone: 610-399-1654  
Email: ccsnyder123@verizon.net



**IF YOU HAVEN'T DONE SO ALREADY, PLEASE  
RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2008!**

**Membership dues have been raised to \$25.00 for family memberships and \$35.00 for commercial memberships. This increase is necessary to cover the cost of increased postage.**

**DVWGS memberships are based on a calendar year beginning on January 1st.**

**All members need to renew their membership on January 1st with the following exception;**

If you joined the club as a new member late in the year during Oct, or Nov, your \$25.00 membership fee will be good for the following year.

All memberships that have not been renewed for the year will eventually be dropped from the membership and email list.

**Please be prompt in mailing in your current dues to prevent missing newsletters and important information!**

**Thank you for your cooperation!**

**A Publication of the  
Delaware Valley Water Garden Society**