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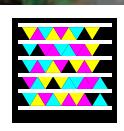
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Whimsy in the **Water Garden**

How to infuse your installations
with personality p. 41

Touhey Hahn



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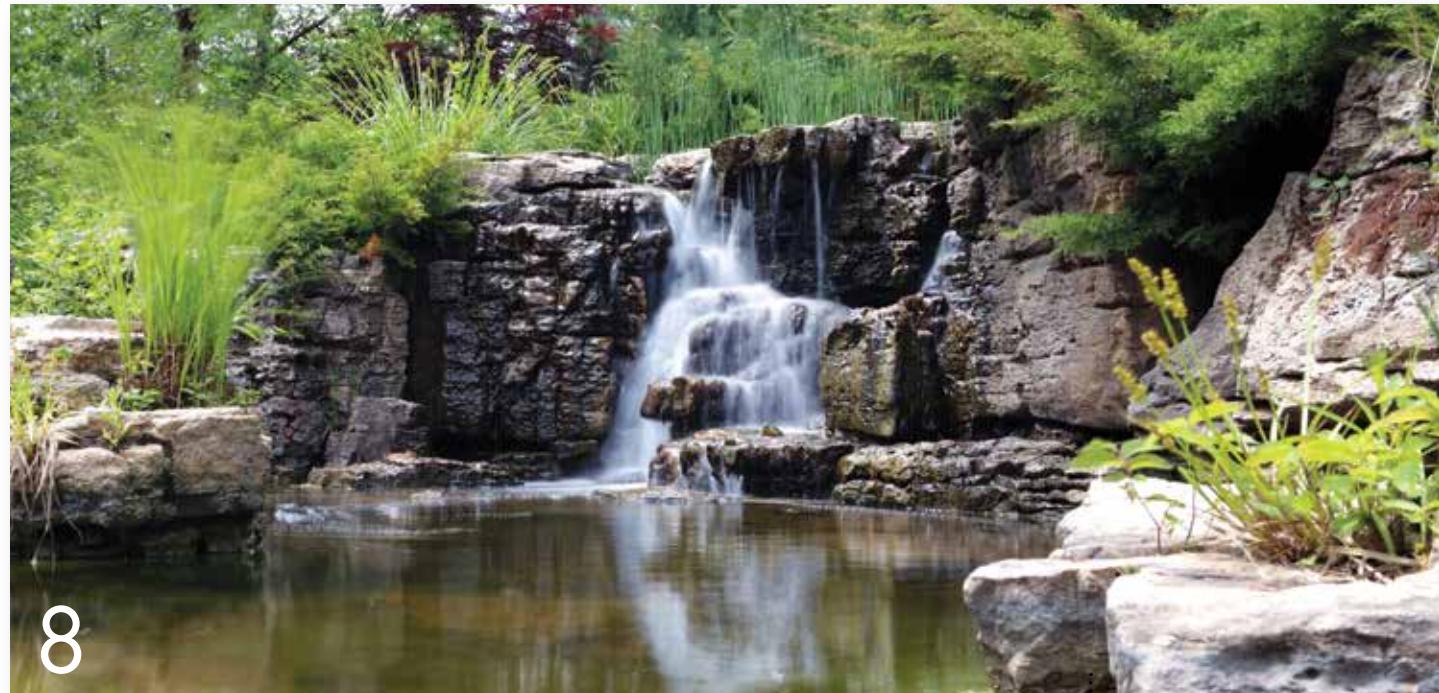


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FEATURES

8 Reflecting Experience POND CONSTRUCTION

From whence does inspiration come? For **Larry Carnes**, there are two major sources of inspiration when building waterfalls and watercourses: Mother Nature and master designers! The president of Reflections Water Gardens explains the research, discipline and artistry required to create truly magnificent water features.



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19 Get Your Feet Wet!

To beginners, entering the world of pond keeping may seem like an intimidating commitment. But it needn't be; with the right materials, you can start learning vital pond concepts (and building beautiful water features) immediately — without even touching a shovel! Here, **Jamie Beyer** of Midwest Waterscapes shows you how to use containers to dive headfirst into water gardening.

26 Take a Cue From Mother Nature

A great pond is far more than a hole in the ground and some water. Streams, rocks, plants, shelves ... a naturalistic pond requires these elements and more, skillfully applied in the right proportions! In this informative overview, Aquascape construction manager **Brian Helfrich** walks you step-by-step through the process of building the perfect pond.



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30 How to Upset Your Clients

Do you love angry customers? Do you thrive on confrontation and miscommunication? Does your business need fewer paid invoices and more checks that come late — or not at all? If you answered "Yes," turn to Page 30, where **Michael Stone** provides seven surefire ways to tank your pond business! But if you answered "No," you need his must-read advice on how to avoid these common pond pitfalls.

34 Koromo & Goshiki LANGUAGE OF KOI

At a glance, Koromo and Goshiki look like two completely different varieties. But these colorful fish have a fascinating shared ancestry, and at most koi shows they are categorized as one. Here, koi expert **Taro Kodama** shares the unique history of the koi with "clothes" and the koi with "five colors."

37 Renaissance Understudy

McDonald's, Carl's Jr. and Del Taco have all stepped up their games by researching industry trends and adapting accordingly. Can you say the same for your pond or koi company? If not, turn to Page 37, where **Eric Triplett** shows why "keeping it fresh" is vital to the health of both your water and your business!

41 Whimsy in the Water Garden COVER STORY

In 1988, **Gerard Touhey** arrived in America with \$400 and no plan for the future. Today, he is a world-renowned pond creator whose beloved handiwork is scattered across the globe. In this intimate piece, the indefatigable Irishman tells the story of how he built his career from the ground up — and explains how you too can infuse your projects with personality and whimsy!

46 You Don't Have to Mow Water!

When **Lloyd Lightsey** first decided to build a pond in his yard, his sole motivation was escaping the tedium of mowing the lawn. Over the next 40 years, that childish plan would evolve into an expansive career — and a new identity! Here, The Pond Monster shares his humble beginnings as "head pond de-mucker" at Slocum Water Gardens and offers a touching glimpse of a life well-lived.

54 Placement, Flow and Fish

Nothing keeps a pond clean and clear quite like a skimmer, and today's models are more efficient and complex than ever before. But are you using them to their full potential? On Page 54, pond pro **Kent Wallace** provides the technical details you need to ensure that you're using the right skimmer in the right place and in the right way.



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Upcoming Events

March 7 - 8

Koi Club of San Diego - 28th Annual Koi Show & Water Garden Expo
Del Mar Fairgrounds Activity Center
San Diego, California

March 13 - 15

Central Florida Koi Show
International Palms Resort
Orlando, Florida
www.centralfloridakoisshow.org

April 25 - 26

13th Annual Waterscape Weekend Garden Pond Expo
Lake County Fairgrounds
Crown Point, Indiana
www.illianagardenpond.org

May 5 - 7

National Hardware Show
Las Vegas Convention Center
Las Vegas, Nevada
www.nationalhardwareshow.com

August 5 - 8

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Are you attending an event that you think others should know about? Are you hosting an event and want more people to come? Send event info to pr@pondtrademag.com.

We have a Correction

► We have a correction to the article by Jennifer Zuri in the November/December 2014 issue. The paragraph should have read:

Top 100 - First Place Overall: TJB Inc. in Hamden, Connecticut.

Top 20 Certified Aquascape Contractors - First Place: Premier Ponds in Burtonsville, Maryland.

Top 20 Certified Aquascape Contractor Retailers - First Place: TJB Inc. in Hamden Connecticut.

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Publisher's Perspective

The POND Trade Mission

Can I get a big, heartfelt, "Yeah! It's spring"? For those of us in cold-weather states, it can't come soon enough. This issue marks the start of spring, and if you're anything like me, I know you're ready to jump into the new season. Bring it on!

I recently entered one of our articles into the annual ASBPE (American Society of Business Publication Editors) awards contest. Each year they choose articles and designs of excellence. As I was filling out the contest

entry, I came upon the section that asks you to state the "mission and readership" of your magazine. I called upon my editor, Peter Celauro, to help me out with his fabulous writing skills, and he delivered by cramming our ongoing mission into a nutshell:

"At POND Trade, our mission is to actively grow the pond and water feature industry by providing actionable information that empowers and inspires pond professionals. With practical, application-oriented content, we aim to serve the industry directly by helping readers make informed decisions in their designs and building projects.

"POND Trade is written and read by pond experts and enthusiasts. From Japanese koi farmers to rock and boulder specialists; from outdoor lighting designers to aquatic botany Ph.D.s; from bloggers to business consultants to purveyors of pumps; these are the people who will shape the pond industry today and into the future.

"When our readers pick up the newest issue of POND Trade, they know they'll find tips, insights and inspiration straight from the industry's best. It's our job and our passion to make sure they never find anything less."

I truly think that says it all ... especially the "empowers and inspires pond professionals" part. That's what I'm talking about! This magazine is FOR and ABOUT you! Keep that in mind, and don't be afraid to reach out. We welcome all your comments and suggestions.

Well, pond experts and enthusiasts – dive in! We've got a lot of great content for you in this issue, starting with a fantastic feature about water-shaping by Larry Carnes. He'll teach you the ins and outs of creating naturalistic waterfalls and watercourses.

Not all of our pond content is instructional, however. If you're a fan of history, check out Lloyd Lightsey's hilarious and heartwarming account of his youth at Slocum Water Gardens — complete with black and white photos! And on page 41, our cover story provides all the color you could ever hope for as Gerard Touhey shows you how to put some "whimsy" in your pond. Between Lloyd's jokes and Gerard's Irish witticisms, I don't think we've ever packed so much personality into one issue! It's just the thing to get you warmed up for another great season of water and wildlife.

Happy PONDering!



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Reflecting Experience

Great watershaping
one project at a time

by **Larry Carnes**,
Reflections Water Gardens

It's generally known that superior results in naturalistic watershaping require a commitment both to the study of natural geological processes and to

figuring out how to mimic those relationships on-site. Just as important is actually getting the opportunity to apply what you've learned in the field.

To me, becoming a good or even a great watershaper means you must have the desire to do something special and put forth your very best effort in each and every

project. That requires personal discipline ... especially in tough times, when finding any opportunities to express yourself creatively at a high level might be few and far between. And it's particularly true if, like me, you've only recently started your professional career.

To a large extent, I think, it's all about being prepared when the time comes. In my case, I've gotten myself ready by

intently studying the art of naturalistic watershaping by studying waterfalls and watercourses found in nature. Along with naturally occurring inspiration, I examine the work of the masters (including Anthony Archer-Wills) who have elevated their work to the level of fine art.

This preparation paid off for me when I created the project pictured here. The project was built for a landscape firm's

client, and my crew has maintained it ever since. All of us look back on this project with a significant measure of pride.

Idea Editing

The project came to us in the course of the Chicago Flower & Garden Show, where I designed and built an elaborate garden display. These clients had called, and we'd invited them to come visit us at



Starting with a blank slate, contours were cut out. Then the fabric and liner were installed.

the show to take a look at our handiwork. They were impressed and let us know they wanted to have something similar on a property where they were building a new home.

After some back and forth, we eventually landed the project. The landscape firm designed the project's original layout. Subsequently, I was tasked with taking things from outline to fruition — and, as usually happens in such transitions, the initial phase of my work involved editing the design to reflect what could realistically be achieved on-site within the client's budget.

In my original design, for example, the site was to include a pond large and deep enough for swimming, with a large rock formation and waterfall composition serving as a primary focus. After a few iterations of this basic scheme, we eventually agreed on a simpler program that was scaled back a bit to fit more easily within the setting. Now the pond and waterfall were to occupy an amorphous area of about 50 by 50 feet.

As we moved forward, we found ways to keep the koi on one side of the pond and create a beautiful planting area in the other portion. The original plan's grotto, however, was set aside as a matter of scale, as well as budget and gave way to a beach entry and shallows for the emergent plants

that would help blend the pond into its surrounding landscape. Across the water, we placed a waterfall that was to cascade into the pond's deepest water.

By the time everything was settled and construction was to begin, a fairly complex design had resolved itself down to a reasonably straightforward watershape program — but one that would involve approximately 80 tons of limestone, carefully selected and shipped from Missouri. This stone was to be placed with the utmost care

to create a setting that would be perfectly at home on the wooded property while still making a strong visual statement.

I've found that even if you do the rockwork well and manage to avoid the dreaded "string of pearls" look, things can still look artificial if a pond is completely surrounded by hard edges.

The property itself is fairly large: a 1.5-acre parcel in an upscale Chicago-area neighborhood. About half the space, however, was taken up by the new house, which is why scale had become such an issue and we had to pare back the original design to make things fit comfortably in the space.

We started our work on-site by contouring the yard and creating a large berm behind the waterfall. Fortunately, this area

was situated in such a way that large stands of (mostly) spruce trees on an adjacent property would serve as a visual backdrop.

From Concept to Reality

While in many respects this was quite a simple pond project, one detail of the work was pretty unusual in that we had to work within a grading plan that had previously been established to ensure proper lot drainage.

One consequence of this was that we had to raise the water level of the pond about six inches above grade. This meant

in turn that we had to build a small retaining wall around a portion of the pond's downslope edge and then conceal it completely with soil and our edge treatments. This worked out well in practical terms, as we made this assembly part of the beach entrance/shallow area and used it for placement of emergent plants and creation of a small wetland space.

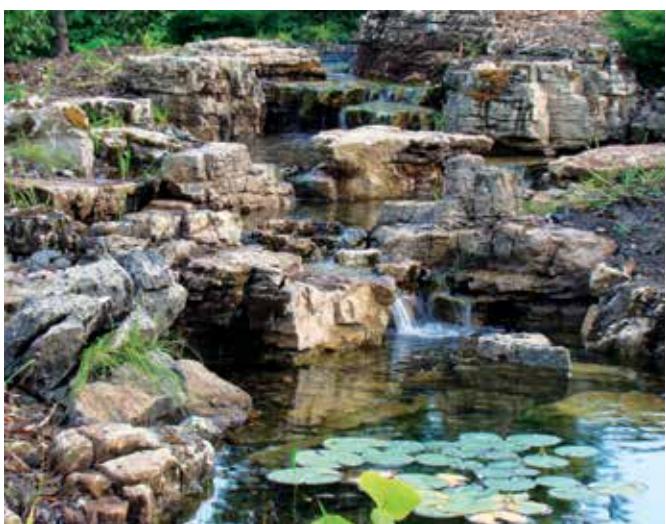
It also worked with my usual desire to



A crane moved and lifted the large feature stones into place. The stones were numbered and mapped out at the quarry.



As construction moved along, the existing grade became our shallow shelf to meet the engineer's plan.



The major construction is completed (top photo), and the pond gets filled while working on edge treatments. The stepped stream/waterfall (above) looks beautiful after planting.

bring variety to my pond-edge treatments and lend the setting a more natural appearance. I've found that even if you do the rockwork well and manage to avoid the dreaded "string of pearls" look, things can still look artificial if a pond is completely surrounded by hard edges. So in this project, the shallow area serves the dual purpose of creating a convenient place to enter and leave the water, while at the same time helping to conjure a more natural appearance.

As I moved along, I applied not only the aesthetic lessons I learned from studying nature and master water gardeners, but also the practical ones I picked up through the years. The pond itself, for example, is configured using the "shelf design" method commonly used on many projects.

As we gradually removed the top few inches of soil to establish the level of the primary shelves, we used the spoils here and from the pond's inner contours to build a four-foot-tall berm on the side opposite the beach entry.

The soil was mostly clay, with

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swale that runs through the property.

Basically, this functional overflow area looks like a dry creek bed.

Stacking Stone

As was suggested above, the core of the project had to do with stone selection and placement. Some might question going all the way to Missouri to get it, as we have good supplies of limestone both in Illinois and in nearby Wisconsin. But in neither case do the nearby sources have stone with the physical features or the visual character we wanted.

First, the Missouri stone has wonderfully complex surface gradations, including patches of lichen, obvious wind-and-water erosion and richly colored veins. Also, unlike local material that comes out of the ground as sheets, the Missouri limestone comes out in bold, block-like chunks that have almost sculptural shapes. This characteristic alone would save us the need to stack up layer upon layer of local stone to achieve the required elevations.

As a bonus, the natural shapes of the stones we acquired made it relatively easy to assemble the rocks in such a way that they seemed to be single formations — as though they'd been there forever and had

Certainly, there was some adjusting and improvising on-site, but my process of visualization paid off in a big way once we started placing the stone. With very few exceptions, the pieces of the puzzle came together in accordance with what I'd imagined — and I'm truly convinced that I set the table for an installation process that went smoothly and didn't require much tinkering along the way.

As it turns out, the seams between stones are distinctly difficult to read. As I had hoped, it looks like a single, large formation fractured through the centuries by freeze/thaw cycles and softened by the elements for generations untold. The pieces

fit together so well, in fact, that it's all dry stacked; no concrete is used anywhere in the pond. We then pulled the liner up behind the stones and locked the stones in place with careful backfilling.

We went to great pains to conceal the water's source — in this case, two units hidden at the top of the waterfall. In one



A combination of water lilies and sweetflag provides color to the shallow side of the pond.



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case, the flow revealed a fissure in one of the main stone pieces that had become filled with soil. The water flushed the fissure and created an unexpected rivulet of water that looks absolutely and naturally perfect.

We exploited other fissures in the stone to guide flows and break up any monotonous sort of sheeting effects. As we moved along, we also extended the look of the falls down into the pond itself, placing smaller pieces of stone in the water, and then around the sides and trailing off into the landscape.

Blending In

All was going nicely at this point. The waterfall, made using a single run of taller pieces we'd selected for the purpose at

the quarry, now rose up about three feet above the pond's level.

It was at this point that we ran into the need to make a major adjustment. As things developed and the homeowners could actually see what they were getting, they decided that they wanted the waterfall to make a more dramatic statement and asked us to add a couple feet to its elevation.

Far from being a problem, this actually made me happy because, thanks to the way the stone was fitting into the scene, we could easily make the structure taller without compromising its natural look. In fact, I saw right away that pushing the falls up to five feet would create a substantially more dramatic look.

So, I ordered an extra truckload of flatter pieces (from 1.5 to two feet thick) and carefully removed the waterfall stones and worked them under the structure and rebuilt the waterfall and surrounding formation. Again, given the naturally flat profiles of the stone pieces, it's nearly impossible to tell that we added even an inch to the height of the formation.

This and most everything else we did on-site revolved around a single touchstone: it was our desire in everything we did to make our work appear as though the pond and its surroundings had been there long before people came along and encroached upon the space.

To manage such an effect, I applied a variety of lessons I've learned through



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The plantings blend from land to water and the perimeter is disguised, avoiding all bare rock edges.

the years: steps such as backfilling the soil behind the rocks along or near the edges to complete the impression that the stones are part of a natural outcropping, for example. This simple detail enabled us to use terrestrial plantings in such a way that they appear to be climbing over the stone to reach into the water; on the flip side, it makes it appear as though the aquatic plantings are pushing to reach beyond the water and fuse themselves with the rockwork and soil.

Ultimately, it's all about obscuring boundaries and leaving the observer guessing about where the body of water stops and the landscape begins. As I see it, this is where good planning and visualizing meet improvisation. You have to look at nature enough to develop an intuitive feel, but at the same time, you need to implement deliberate strategies to piece everything together and

make small adjustments as you go. In addition, I see client education as a key factor, both in managing expectations and in encouraging them to think in naturalistic terms. If they're fully engaged on that second level (as these clients were), then they'll be more likely to make wise decisions about plantings — or, say, about revising the elevation of a waterfall — that make sense with respect to the overall design.

The satisfaction I find here comes from the fact that I was able to apply what I've learned about nature and the practicalities of construction ... and from the certain knowledge that, as time passes and the landscape develops around the pond and waterfall, the impressions we wanted to make will only become more convincing and beautiful as time goes by. ☀

About the Author

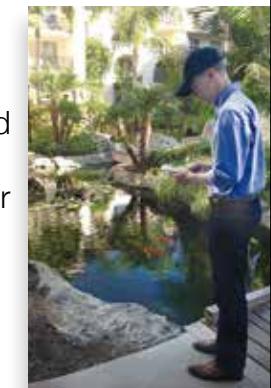
Larry Carnes is the president of Reflections Water Gardens in West Dundee, Illinois. Larry began his career as a student of art and developed an interest in landscaping. He worked for several companies, gaining knowledge in tree care, patio design and installation and landscape architecture. He renders concepts for his clients that are pieces of art as much as they are working designs. After assisting a pond builder in creating a unique in-ground pond/pool for his family, Larry's landscaping interest turned to water features. Larry has taken Genesis 3 courses with Anthony Archer-Wills, learning to design and create natural-looking ponds and water features. Reflections Water Gardens focuses on high-end residential and commercial projects with naturalistic watershaping. To learn more, visit reflectionswatergardens.com.



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Container Gardens



In this close-up of the top of a jar, Helvola is the hardy water lily. Frog-bit and Salvinia are the small floaties. The purple flower is a terrestrial plant called blue mist spirea.

Get Your Feet Wet!

Use containers to learn basic pond concepts

by Jamie Beyer,
Midwest Waterscapes

most people really enjoy. The plants can attain this richness due to their access to an unlimited amount of water.

There is a style of water feature for almost every garden, no matter how small. All a person needs is some space outside that receives sun most of the day. But how do you build a water garden without a hole in the ground? Just find a container!

Even large landscapes will benefit from the addition of container water gardens. A water garden in a container is one of the easiest types of water features to create — and can be very satisfying. We will want to keep this type of water feature simple, which we'll discuss later. And they're versatile; they can stand on their own or be placed on top of a table. For many, this less-permanent type of water garden can be the first introduction to the world of aquatic plants. The lushness and tropical look of aquatic plants has an appeal that

Choosing Containers

Choosing a container is the first and most important consideration. Anything that is glass, plastic, ceramic or sealed wood could work. Of course, if the container has holes, the holes will need to be sealed. A container that does not have holes is even better.

There are containers made just for use as water gardens. Most of these are thick plastic or pottery that is heavily glazed on both the inside and outside. I have heard that these heavily glazed pots are called "jars." They can be pricey, but are very decorative. Containers glazed just on the outside are commonly available and they will work fine if properly sealed.

In fact, most people do choose to use a container designed for other purposes. Good examples of interesting containers are urns,



A Dwarf Papyrus standing among Water Lettuce.



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crocks, half whiskey barrels (a plastic liner placed inside will seal it, if necessary), and even glass pie dishes. Try to avoid anything made of metal. Of course, steel containers can rust. New galvanized containers and any copper container can be toxic to life, although old galvanizing that has been dulled with weathering should be fairly safe. Containers as small as a quart of water work well, but may only hold one kind of floating aquatic plant. These small containers do require more attention due to the need to add water more frequently.

Picking Plants

Displaying beautiful aquatic plants is the reason the container is set up, so what types of plants work best? Almost any kind of floating plants are excellent for containers — especially the small "floaties," like my good friend, Deb Spencer, calls them. They do not require being planted in a pot and they obtain 100 percent of their nutrients from the water. They are easy to plant, too — just toss them into the container! Good

examples of floaties are Water Hyacinths, Salvinia, Azolla and Floating Heart.

Since most of these containers do not have much fish excrement and/or decaying organic matter for plant uptake, we need to add nutrients. Liquid aquatic plant fertilizer can be added to the container to keep these plants looking good.

Potted plants also work well. Two varieties of water lilies, Helvola and Indiana, are very small, hardy varieties that I like because they stay small and are very floriferous. Lotuses of various sizes can be used. A variety of lotus called "small bowl" is suitable for the smaller containers, and the larger varieties of lotus can be devoted to a container all by themselves. Water lilies and most lotuses can safely be placed directly on the bottom of the container. Their leaves will be able to reach the surface.

Marginal plants like Cannas, miniature cattail and Taros are also excellent candidates for containers because they add the vertical element and give a very lush, tropical look.

The most difficult aspect of using marginal plants in containers is getting the plant at the proper water level. Most marginals look and do the best with only an inch or two of



Even really small containers work easily for aquatic plants. This frog container holds approximately 1.5 cups of water. Since it is so small, water needs to be added every day. Water Lettuce and Salvinia work well in this situation.

water over their crown (over the top of their pot). Of course, the plant pot needs to be completely immersed in the container; otherwise, with the pot showing, you will have a faux pas. Very tacky. To get the plant at the

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These companion jars (containers) have Helvola hardy water lily in them. The small jar holds about 1 gallon of water and the larger one holds about 2.5 gallons.

right depth, I recommend using a "stand" under the plant pot. I like to use fired bricks (not concrete since it will alter the chemistry of the water) or small, black plastic storage crates that can be cut to the right height if needed. Wind can create problems with upright plants, so I also recommend using wide plant pots for tall plants.

Variety is Key

The most important aspect of using aquatic plants in containers is to include two or three different forms so that the container has balance and interest. This is just plain good garden design. Be sure to include an aquatic plant that has leaves that float directly on the surface, like a water lily. Then add an upright marginal plant, like a miniature cattail. Finally, you can add a floating plant, like Water Lettuce. Containers with only one plant can also look great, depending on the container and the plants. Miniature cattail in an old-fashioned crock looks very nice, as both the crock and the cattail have upright forms. A lotus in a container that is buried in the landscape can look magical ... like a miniature pond.

These pots are commonly available from water gardening retailers. Remember, a wide pot should be used for tall, marginal plants to keep the plants stable in windy conditions. Narrow, deep plant pots are not a good choice for aquatic plants. Most terrestrial plant pots are the narrow and deep style. They can work, but are not the best choice. Pots with holes can be used, but do cover the holes with landscape fabric to retain the soil. Use regular topsoil, to which aquatic plant fertilizer tablets have been added, as a planting medium. Do not use potting soil, which can have additives that float or can cause anaerobic conditions underwater. After the plant is planted in its pot, cover the rest of the top of the pot with a one-inch layer of pea gravel to keep the soil in the pot.

Livening Things Up

In containers that have a volume of 15 gallons or more, it's fun to add a couple of goldfish that you can purchase for only a dollar or two. As long as you only add one or two small fish (one inch or so) in this size container, you do not need to aerate the water. The plants are critical in keeping the water fresh and aerated enough for this kind of fish population. These fish will eat all mosquito larvae, as well as other insects that may show up. In smaller containers, or if you



Water Lettuce gives a good anchor to the marginal Green Taro.

choose to not add fish, then you will want to add Mosquito Bits or Mosquito Dunks to the water. These floating wafers contain bacteria that will kill many kinds of aquatic larvae, including mosquito larvae. The water is still safe for pets, people and any other life.

Normally, I would not add a water pump. The pump is not necessary to keep the water fresh as long as we have the plants, which are critical in keeping the water fresh. Of course, the reason we are setting up the container in the first place is to display aquatic plants. You can add a pump, but most water plants do not do well when water is constantly splashing over the upper surface of their leaves. So if a water pump is added, then a much larger container should be used so that plants can be kept away from the splashing water. Adding a pump to create the sound of water is appealing, but when plants are present it is more appropriate for larger features.

Easy Care

The ease of maintenance is the best part of a water feature without a water pump. Keep it filled and make sure to add chlorine remover if adding more than an inch or two of treated water at a time. If you are just topping it off, then the chlorine remover is not necessary. The chlorine dissipates quickly and is diluted in the rest of the volume of the container. You will need to add chlorine remover when first filling the container or when adding a lot of water at once.

Place the container in a spot that is "up close and personal," as I like to say, for easy viewing. On a deck, next to a sitting bench, on either side of a door or along a path are ideal places. The container needs to have direct sun for at least 50 percent of the available daylight for the plants to do well. You will get full potential of blooms from the lilies, along with the lush, tropical foliage. If given less sun, the blooming plants will not have as many blooms. Yes, you may get a couple of blooms, but the plants will be more "leggy" as well. It is

also absolutely necessary for the container to be level. If it is not level, it will not look good. The uneven water level in the container will highlight the unevenness of the container.

Debris that may fall into the water will need to be kept to a minimum. Tree leaves or decaying water plant leaves need to be removed. A lot of decaying organic matter or uneaten fish food can cause the water to have a green, single-celled, free-floating algae bloom. So, feed the fish only a very small amount. They will also supplement their diet with natural foods. When feeding, all the food should be gone in less than a minute. Some fish owners will not feed their fish anything, but if you do feed them they will be friendlier. You are the giver of food and they will love you and want to be close to you when you peer into the water. If you don't feed them then you will hardly ever see them because then you are a "predator" to them.

Trim the plants back if they overgrow the container — give excess plants to friends or add them to the compost pile.



This relatively small container is plastic but has the "terra cotta" look. Red-stemmed Thalia is a fast grower, especially when nutrients are added to the container every week. Here, shepherd's hooks are holding onto the container to keep it from tipping over in the wind.

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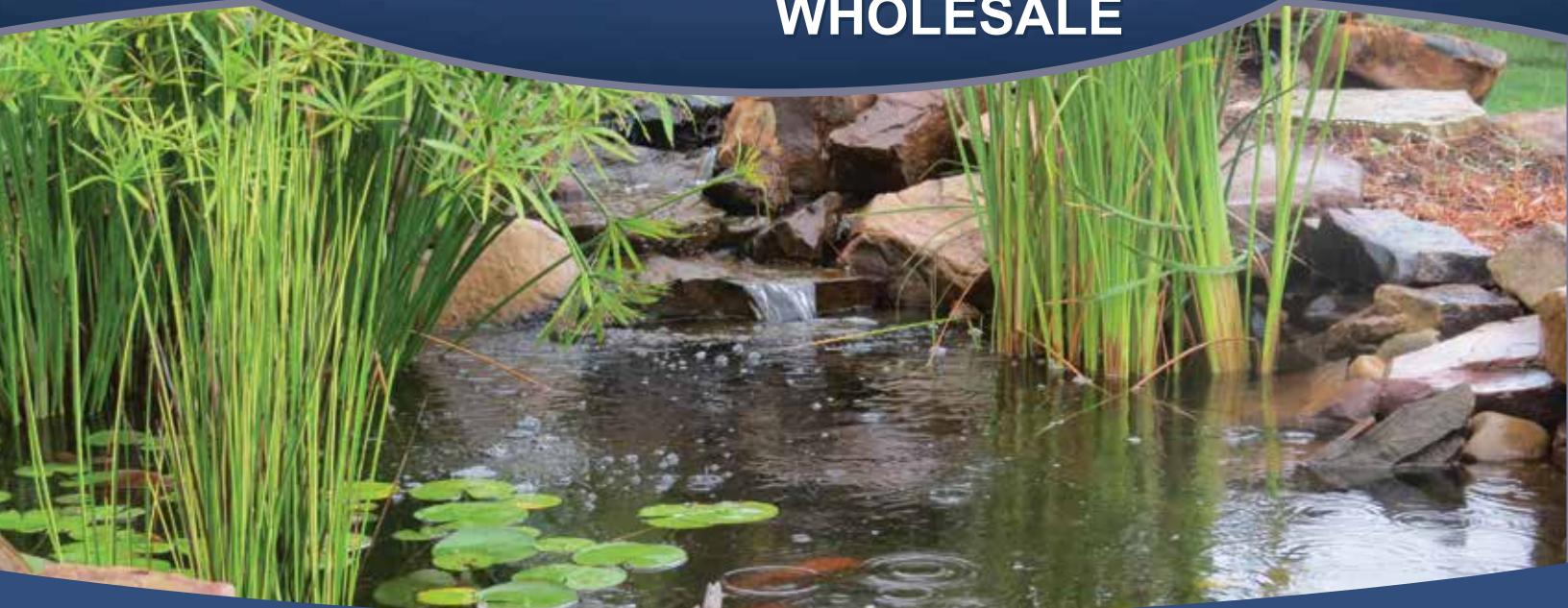
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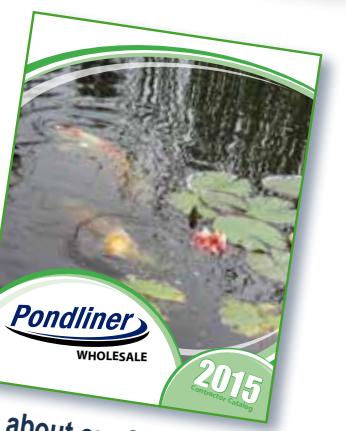
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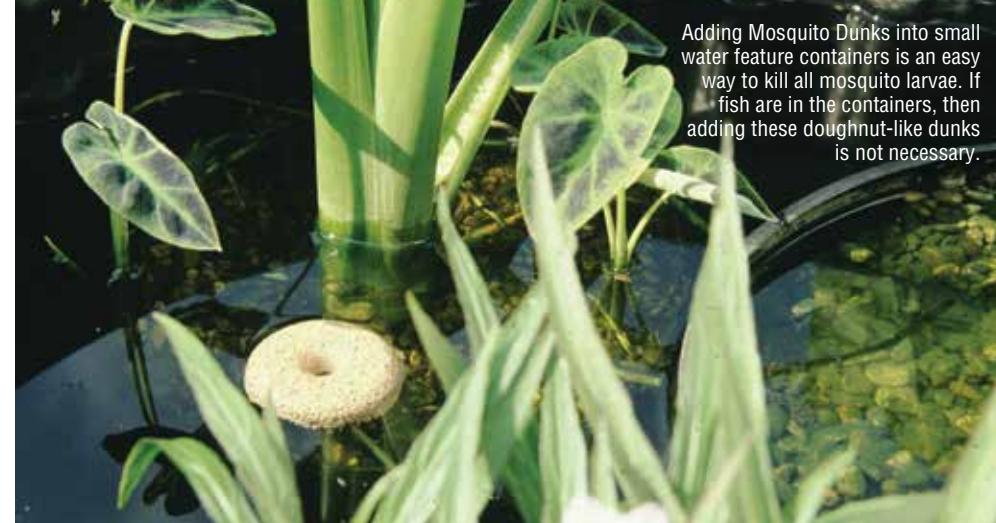
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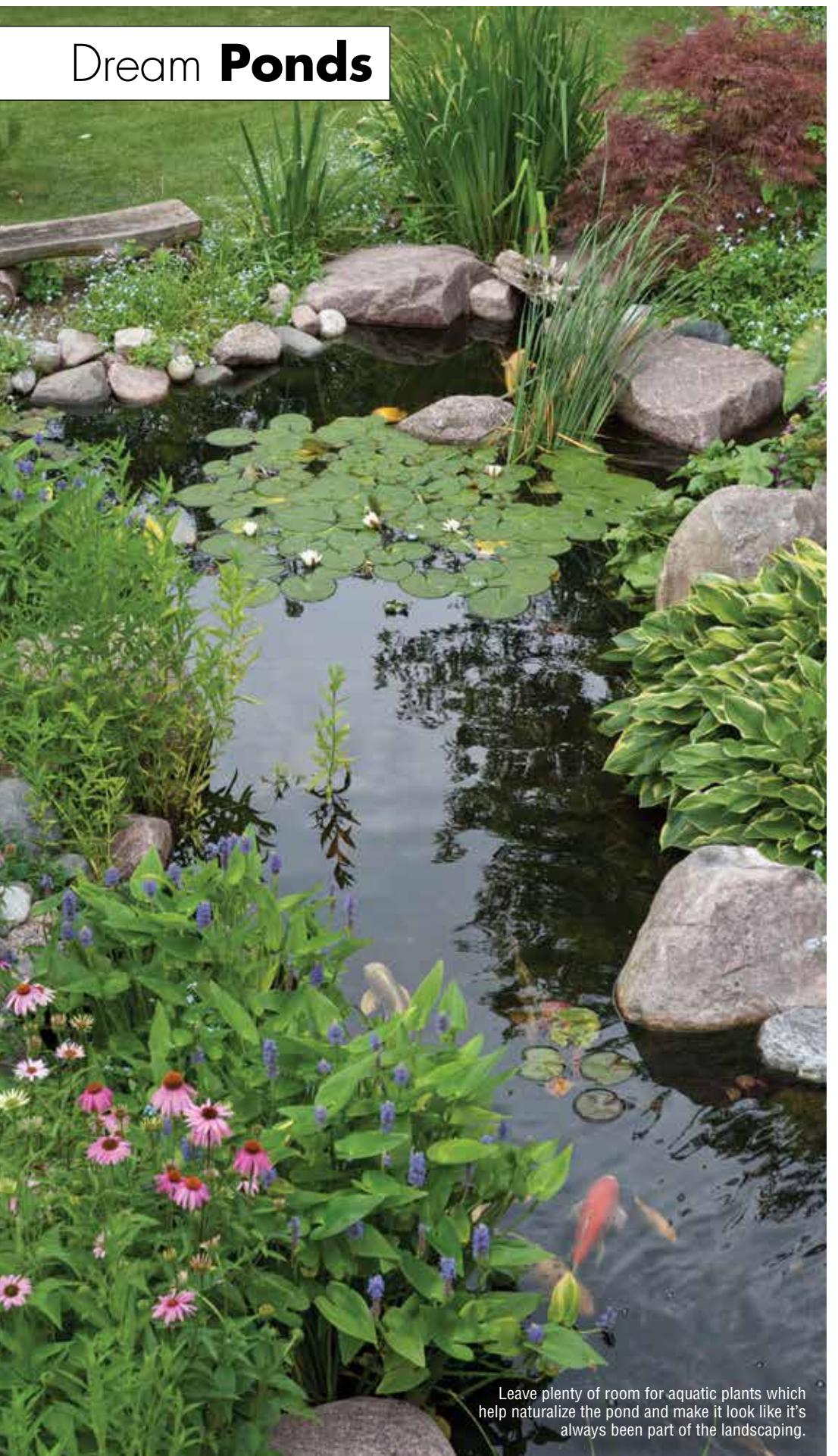
About the Author

Water gardening has been a passion of **Jamie Beyer's** for over 50 years and he has worked on over 1,000 ponds. He personally has several very large ponds, which contain many kinds of water plants and fish. Jamie has a Master's Degree in Fish and Wildlife Biology, is a Lifetime Master Gardener and is founder and past president of the Central Iowa Water Garden Association. He has a broad background in fisheries, the dynamics of water, horticulture and aquatic and wildlife ecology.

He owns a consulting/installation business, Midwest Waterscapes, in which he works as a water garden, fountain and pond consultant/installer.

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Leave plenty of room for aquatic plants which help naturalize the pond and make it look like it's always been part of the landscaping.

by Brian Helfrich,
Aquascape Inc.

With today's busy schedules and the country's slowly rebounding economy, more people are yearning to create outdoor living spaces that help them unwind, de-stress and reconnect with their families and nature.

Backyards around the country

Take a

are being transformed into true paradises, often with a focus on outdoor entertaining. And the single outdoor element that creates the highest sensory experience is a water feature. Not only can you see it and feel its transformative powers, but you can hear the water running from both inside and outside the house! The sound of water draws you outside with its magnetic qualities, luring children as well as adults to enjoy and explore more of what it has to offer.

Designing your customers' dream pond should take into consideration the relaxation and enjoyment they want to experience from the water feature. Bring the feature up close to the house so they can hear the water when the windows are open. Ponds should have interactive areas for feeding fish and dangling feet in the water. But above all, the pond should work with Mother Nature and look as natural in its setting as possible.

The Shape of the Design

Let's start with the shape. Using irregular flowing lines is critical in the planning stages. Homes, driveways, patios and decks are just a few of the items intertwined with a water garden design. Ponds vary greatly in shape and size, and there are many

design considerations that are based on the desired size of the pond.

Large Ponds

When designing large ponds, usage needs to be considered. Why is your customer interested in such a large pond? Does he dream of lakefront property? Lots of fish? Swimming? Keeping in scale with the property? A few other things need to be considered when you're designing

Cue from

Mother Nature

How to
design your customer's **dream pond**

a larger pond. Remember, the only difference is in the size of the project. The process is basically the same; the components are just larger or more numerous.

Smaller Ponds

Building smaller-than-average ponds can be challenging because everything has to be squeezed into a much smaller space. Skimmers and biological filters are still used in the small pond, and a waterfall is still built to provide aeration. Since the ponds are smaller and therefore contain less space, the placement of each component needs to be carefully planned.

The Edge Treatment

One of the most important parts of pond design is the edge, and it's important to transition naturally into the surrounding landscape. There are several different ways to treat the edges of a large pond, but the common goal is always to hide the liner and create a transition from the pond to the terrestrial areas of the property. Be sure to leave plenty of room for landscaping. I love when you can't tell where water ends and land begins because surrounding landscape cascades over the edges of the pond and stream.

On large projects, the perimeter stones are typically larger, but not around the

entire pond. The large rocks look large because of the (relatively) small rocks that surround them. If the entire pond is filled with large rocks, things will look out of proportion. The same goes for using only small rocks. The best ratio is 1:2:1 (1 part small, 2 parts medium, 1 part large). However, your rocks along edges should vary from that 1:2:1 ratio with other rocks that are specifically set to entice people to

from the pond, which will help make a natural transition from the pond to the other landscaping. If this method is used, simply have the water flow back to the main pond as a stream or waterfall.

Skimming the Surface

You'll also want to make sure that there's enough room to place your skimmer

them. Sizes of rock are equally as important as placement. Avoid the dreaded necklace look (a ring of pearls).

Planting

The next thing is planting the pond. Make sure you leave enough room for plenty of aquatic plants, as they not only help naturalize the pond, but they also play a huge role in keeping the pond healthy by removing excess nutrients. Don't forget about the option of plant pockets spaced throughout your pond so that pots can be hidden and plants have somewhere to root.

Rock On!

Rocks and gravel play a critical role in an ecosystem pond by housing beneficial bacteria, and they're a great way to protect your liner from UV light.

Stones can be worked into the pond's perimeter, creating a huge planting area. They can also be located further away

on the end of the pond. Skimmers are essential in drawing in surface debris and keeping it from decomposing and settling on the bottom of the pond, producing noxious gasses. Along those same lines, leave some room for the waterfalls, which should be kept in scale with the size of the project. Thus, larger boulders and berms need to be created.

Designing Your Stream

This is most people's favorite part of the project, and it provides the greatest interest and interaction. Have your customer help to decide on the twists and turns. Streams are highly versatile, and they create nature's music as they change gradients and cross the landscape. Streams can be followed by pathways and traversed with stepping-stones and bridges.

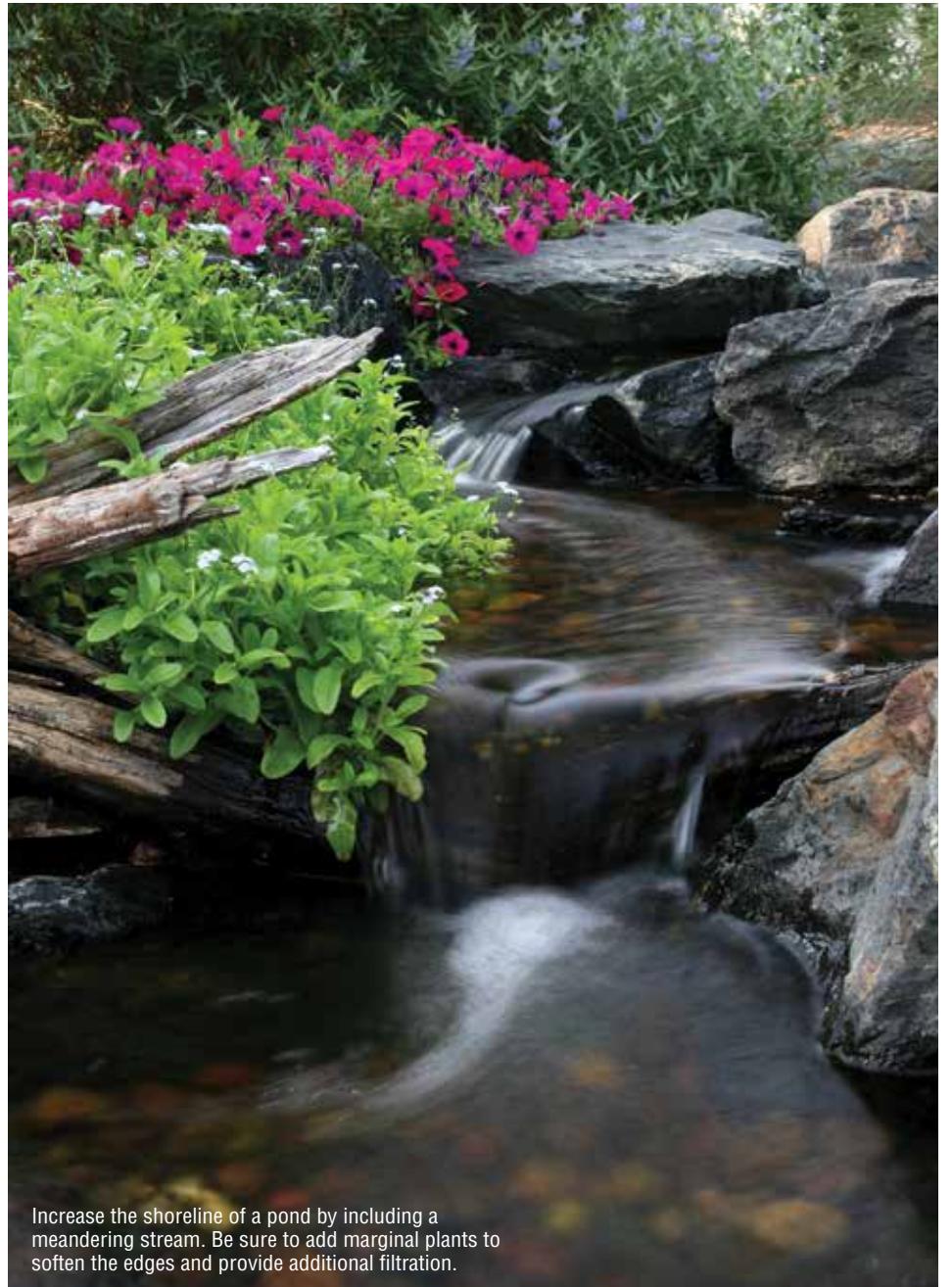
Streams are fairly easy to build, but can become very difficult if a few rules aren't followed. When designing streams, the

main thing to look for is elevation changes that can work for or against you. Elevations working for you will have the slope coming toward the viewing area. You can simply carve out the hillside to create a natural area for a watercourse. Be sure the stream traverses across the slope to increase the

the water. Interactive water features will get the greatest responses because they're fun. We're all drawn to water for many different reasons.

The Benefits of the Stream

The shoreline is where everything



Increase the shoreline of a pond by including a meandering stream. Be sure to add marginal plants to soften the edges and provide additional filtration.

viewing area and exposure, and to create a more natural-looking streambed.

Views from the home and surrounding seating areas are always targeted first when designing streams and falls. If the budget allows, start the stream far enough away from the viewing areas so people are drawn into the landscape to explore the source of

happens. The greater this area, the greater the enjoyment you'll get from your feature. The shoreline is where the marginal plants interact with the terrestrial plantings and where we feed fish, and it's the path we follow during walks.

So how do we increase this shoreline in a small space? With streams. Deep streams

are more pond-like, allowing fish to swim up into them, while shallow streams are fast-moving and produce beautiful sounds. A winding stream will give you the greatest shoreline for your buck. Combining a long stream with a pond is the best scenario. And don't forget about the filtration and oxygenation of the water. Crashing falls will add life-giving oxygen to the anoxic pond depths. And larger projects should always have a stream for this purpose alone.

Building Shelves Into Your Pond

There are several reasons for building shelves into each and every pond:

Safety – Creating ledges allows easy access in and out of the pond for maintenance. This is much better than the traditional sharp dropoff in which someone can slip and get injured trying to get in and out.

Stability – Terracing is much more stable and it reduces the risk of the walls collapsing into the pond.

Pondscaping – Shelves create areas for aquatic plants.

Aesthetics – The shelves create interest on the pond's bottom as well as giving it a more naturalistic appearance.

Efficiency – Shelves create a more efficient utilization of materials and installation practices because it's easier to build a series of small walls over one large one.

Accessibility – Shelves provide ease of accessibility to areas of the pond.

Human Interactions

If nobody is around to hear, see or interact with a water feature, it might as well not exist. Ponds and streams need to be designed with people in mind. Take advantage of human nature and cater to your customer's needs and wants. It may be as simple as aiming a waterfall toward the master bedroom window, or placing a bench in the right spot. One important tip: do not put the pond in a low-lying spot of the yard that already gathers water, no matter how convenient it seems. Allowing "outside" water to seep into a pond could bring in nutrients that could cause excessive algae blooms or other adverse circumstances for your pond and fish.



Use a variety of stone sizes around the perimeter of the pond to make it look natural and provide the greatest aesthetic appeal.

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Terrestrial plants near the pond help transition the water garden into the surrounding landscape. Place taller plants in back and shorter plants in front.

How to Upset Your Clients

Seven ways to cause problems for your business

by Michael Stone,

Markup & Profit

When your clients are upset, two things can happen: you don't make the sale, and you don't get paid. And while there are plenty of ways to upset your client, these seven are among the most common. Avoid these disastrous mistakes to ensure that your business enjoys

many happy (and paying) clients!

1) Not Returning Phone Calls

This is a major complaint. It's not unique to contractors, but it's part of our reputation and that's not good.

It's not good when a potential client can't get a contractor to call him about a project. It's even worse after the sale is made. If your client has a question, or isn't sure about something, or simply doesn't like what is going on in her home or building, the best way to turn her concern into a full-fledged fight is to ignore her.

Calls from potential and existing clients should go to the top of your to-do list. The time spent dealing with their questions is far less than the time spent cleaning up the messes you make when you ignore them.

2) Not Showing Up On Time for Appointments

Consider every appointment you make a promise to the person you're supposed to meet. When you show up late, you're breaking your promise. That's no way to start a relationship.

When you set an appointment, be there —

on time. If you're going to be late, call to let the person know why and to tell him or her when you will arrive.

3) Not Building the Job According to the Contract

What I see in some arbitrations is a situation where the contractor discovered at some point that he underestimated the costs of a job. He's about to lose money, so he goes into damage control mode to try to figure out ways to cut the cost of the job.

Obviously there are all kinds of ways to cut cost, but most of them result in clients not getting the job they wanted or were expecting. That's a surefire way to upset a client.

4) Not Building the Job According to the Plans

I can't tell you how many times I have seen this exact scenario happen on jobs. Someone fails to look at the plans, or willingly ignores the plans and decides to build the job the way he thinks it'll look best. Or, he finds an error on the plans and instead of checking with the owner/architect/designer/whoever drew the plans, he attempts to fix the problem on his own. Bad idea — and one that's guaranteed to get you in trouble.

5) Not Writing Additional Work Orders

This is one of the major reasons that contractors go out of business. The client requests a change and the contractor goes ahead with the change. At the end of the job, the contractor compiles all the changes on one change work order. And then the contractor wonders why the

client is upset about the price. After all, didn't the contractor do everything the client requested?

Clients don't know what things cost. Frankly, most contractors don't either, until they sit with pencil and paper and estimate it. Before making any changes on a project, estimate the cost, write a change work order, get it signed and have it paid before the additional work is done. That way, there are no surprises.

6) Not Enforcing Punch List Procedures

Have you ever gone to collect your final check only to find blue tape or yellow Post-it notes stuck to everything the client isn't happy about? There's an outline on how to handle the punch list in our book, "Markup and Profit; A Contractor's Guide Revisited". If you follow the procedure in our book, this won't happen to you.

7) Not Writing Contracts

And the last — but one of the greatest — mistakes that can be made is not writing detailed contracts for your jobs.

I took a call last week from a contractor asking how to deal with an owner who is refusing to pay overhead and profit on a job his company completed over a year ago. The amount due is over \$100,000. I asked the contractor about his payment schedule and he said, "We don't have a written contract, but I do have XX number of emails from the owner telling us to do the work." He then told me that his attorney was working on the problem. I asked if his attorney specialized in construction law, he said, "No, he's a personal friend."

It is the little things in this business. If they don't get done, or aren't done properly, they'll eat your profit quickly. Do them right and you will be paid on time and in full. ☰

For more information, visit www.markupandprofit.com/newsletter/things-cause-problems-or-how-upset-your-clients.

About the Author

Michael Stone has used his experience to help thousands of general contractors, new home builders, remodelers and specialty contractors build stronger, more profitable businesses. Michael is the author of "Markup & Profit; A Contractor's Guide Revisited" and "Profitable Sales, A Contractor's Guide" and has taught business management, sales and/or estimating classes. Michael also provides coaching and consulting services. Mark has an entire section of his blog focused on Employee Issues. You can find it at www.markupandprofit.com/blog/employee-issues.



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Koromo & Goshiki

Shared ancestry, different looks

by Taro Kodama,

Kodama Koi Farm

Koromo and Goshiki are two separate koi varieties, but at almost all the koi shows, they are categorized as one. At a glance, they may look like completely different varieties. Their roots, however, are the same: Asagi and Kohaku.

Because the Goshiki variety has advanced so much (as you can see in photo 1, above right photo), this shared ancestry may be hard to believe. However, if you look at the old version of Goshiki (as seen in Photo 2, on the opposing page), you can see a lot of similarity. Simply speaking, Goshiki and Koromo both develop Asagi scales on a Kohaku body.

The difference between the two is that Koromo develops Asagi scales only on areas of *Hi* (red), while Goshiki

develops Asagi scales mainly on *Shiroji* (white ground).

Clothes and Five Colors

Koromo in Japanese means clothes, so you have some idea why they are called Koromo: they look as if they are wearing clothes! *Goshiki* means five colors, and it may be hard to understand the roots of the name. Goshiki was originally developed by crossing Sanke and Goshiki. Goshiki Sanke was the first version of this variety (see Photo 3, page 36.) So there were five colors: red, the black and white of Sanke, and the blue and indigo of Asagi. Now you see how they got the name of Goshiki, or five colors.

Koromo now is a general category name of several different varieties. You have heard of *Ai goromo*, *Budo goromo* and *Sumi goromo*. (In Japanese, a “K” sound turns to a “G” sound after a vowel.) We hardly see *Sumi goromo*, as they are not as beautiful as the other two and breeders do not breed them. *Ai goromo* are the ones that have a Kohaku pattern and Asagi indigo scales in a beautiful half-moon shape, only on the *Hi* plates.

Budo goromo are the ones that develop the indigo Asagi scales fully on the *Hi* (as in Photo 4, left.) The mixed color looks like purple or grape. *Budo* in Japanese means grapes. There are also *Koromo Sanke* and *Koromo Showa* varieties, but they are very hard to find. If you find them, you are very lucky.

Goshiki also have several versions, but the most

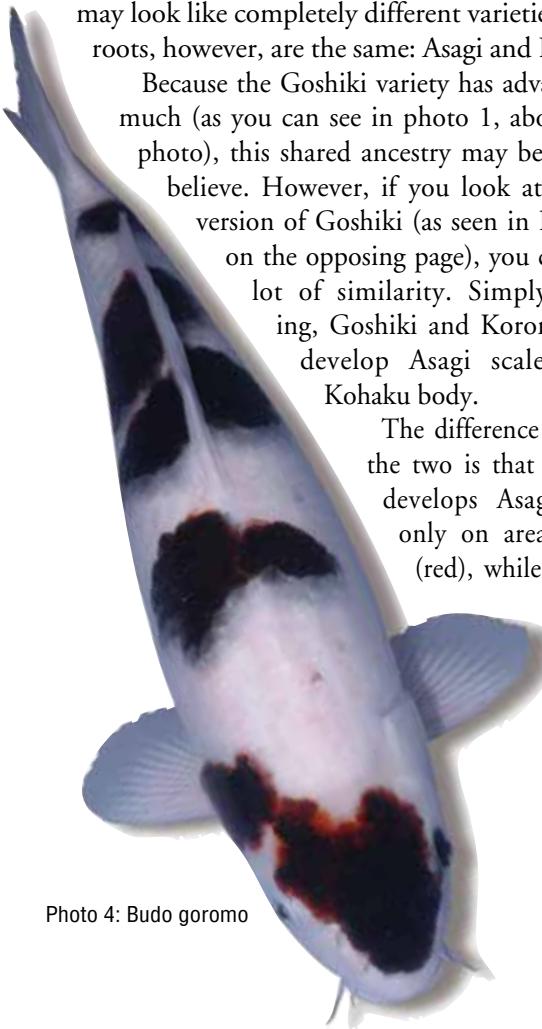


Photo 4: Budo goromo



Photo 1: A new variety of Goshiki

popular one is *Kuro Goshiki* (as seen in Photo 1). When they are born, they may just look like a regular Goshiki. As they mature, the *Asagi* ground turns into a complete black, leaving the *Hi* bright, neon red. Because the contrast of the red and black is so beautiful and striking, they are not only popular but also a regular show-winner. At the All Japan Koi Show, they sometimes win over *Gosanke*.

If you like *Kuro Goshiki*, please make sure you check the bloodline. Goshiki has *Goshiki Sanke* and *Goshiki Showa* as well.

Appreciating Koromo and Goshiki

Although Koromo and Goshiki share similar roots, they have developed differently, so the appreciation points are a little different.

When appreciating Koromo, we need to pay attention to the following:

1) *Ai* appearance

Ai means indigo. The condition of the *Ai* appearance on *Hi* is the life of this variety. *Ai* condition as seen in Photo 5 (above, right) is ideal ... but it is very difficult to find this condition on every part of the *Hi* plates. In the photo, her left shoulder has less

Ai. Her right shoulder has a large *Sumi* dot. These are not really desirable.

As a

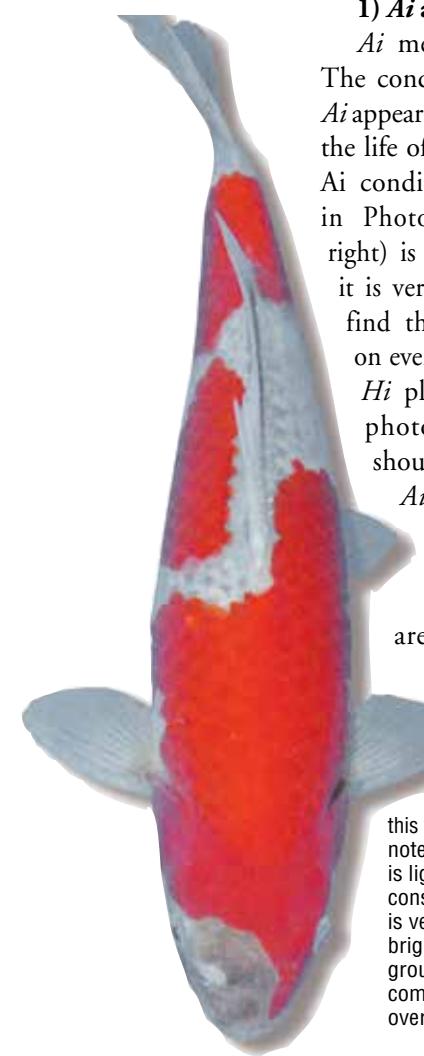


Photo 3: In this young Goshiki, note that the ground is light but very consistent. The *Hi* is very clean and bright. This gray ground will become completely black over time.

whole piece of art, having perfect *Ai* on the entire *Hi* plates is almost impossible. So although this koi has some weak points, she is very beautiful and valuable.

Budo goromo does not really have *Ai*, as its *Hi* is mostly covered with indigo and has become purple. So the key is how well the *Hi* is covered and looks even. The *Budo goromo* in Photo 4 is a good example.

2) Kohaku pattern

Because *Ai* appearance is the number one priority in this variety, they do not necessarily have to have an excellent Kohaku pattern. But good a Kohaku pattern is always an additional plus to this variety.

When appreciating Goshiki, we need to pay attention to the following:

1) *Asagi* ground condition

This condition can vary. Some may be very light, especially when they are young. Some may be black like *Kuro Goshiki*. But it is important that the ground condition is consistent all the way. Some Goshiki may develop *Ai* on *Hi* like Koromo. It is OK if it develops beautifully. Breeders are trying to remove any *Ai* development from the *Hi* because the contrast is more beautiful that way.

2) Clean *Hi*

Because the skin ground of Goshiki tends to become dark or black, clean *Hi* is critical. The cleaner it is, the more beautiful the contrast will become.

3) Kohaku pattern

This is the same as Koromo.

When I joined this industry, I never felt Goshiki was beautiful, nor imagined Goshiki could be this beautiful and popular. The popular varieties have always been *Gosanke* and *Shiro Utsuri*, but now it seems *Gosanke* and Goshiki are the popular ones. I can see the huge efforts of breeders behind this and get excited with the even greater future potential of koi in general. Maybe 20 years from now, another variety that we do not even pay attention to now will turn out to be amazingly beautiful and popular.

Photo 5: Ideal *Ai* condition

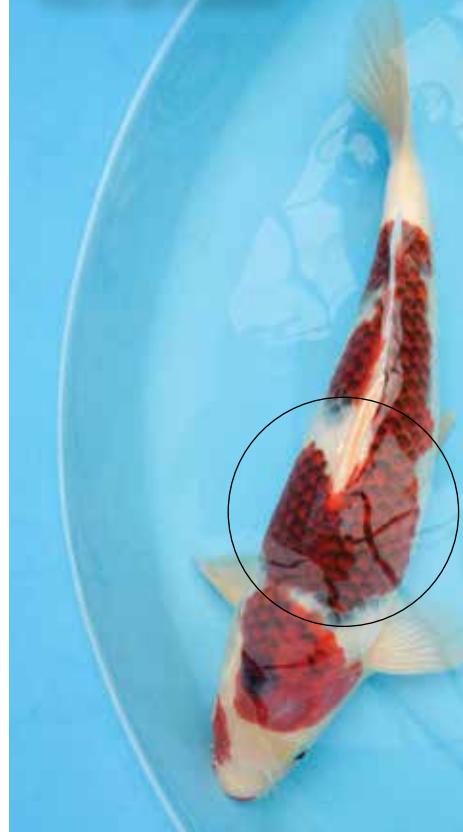


Photo 2: The old version of Goshiki



Marketing

Marketing Koromo and Goshiki may not be that easy, as there are so many different versions. I think it requires some study of each variety and bloodline as well. At least please buy these varieties from trusted breeders, like the ones I mention below. Then, you can introduce them to your clients with confidence.

I recommend Sakazume Koi Farm and Takano Koi Farm for Ai goromo and Budo goromo, and Hiroi Koi Farm, Kawakami Koi Farm, Kan'no Koi Farm and Aokiya Koi Farm for Goshiki. ☺

About the Author

Taro Kodama is president of Kodama Koi Farm, the largest importer and distributor of quality Japanese koi in the U.S. With locations in Japan, Hawaii, New York and New Jersey, Kodama Koi Farm carries over 35,000 Japanese koi from the top breeders in Japan. Taro Kodama, along with his father, Mamoru Kodama, not only provide winning show koi, but they also conduct many koi seminars.



Tancho Koromo like this one (above, left) are very hard to find. I have not seen Tancho Koromo in the last five years at least. Goshiki like these (above, right) were originally developed by crossing Sanke and Goshiki.

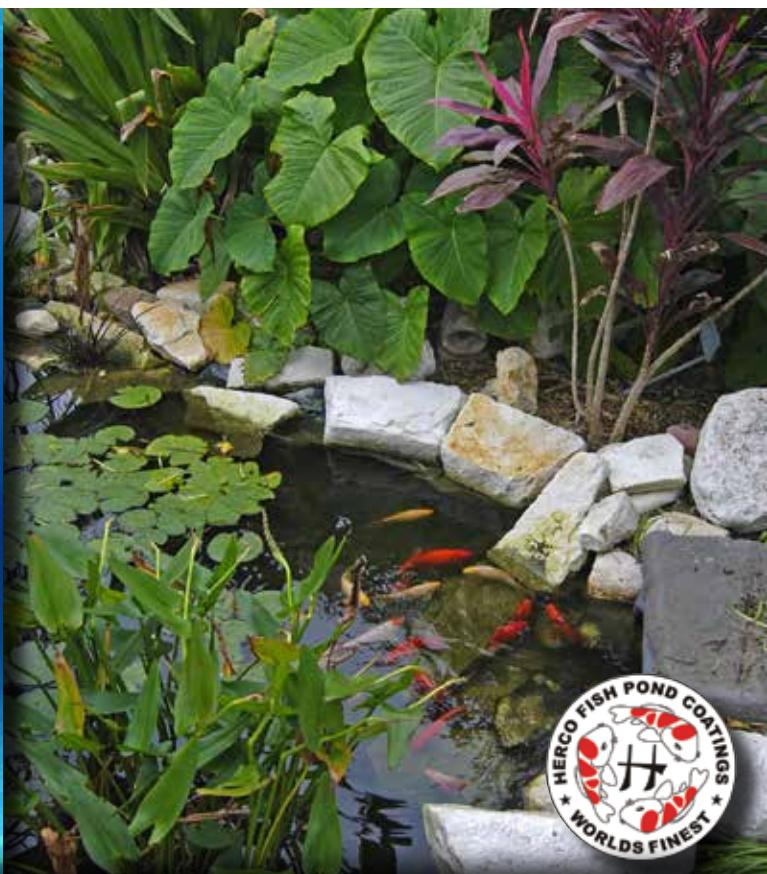
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Stepping Up



It's moments like this that make every speed bump and learning curve along our journey worth it. Here, my son fine-tunes a waterfall spillway on a dedicated koi pond.

Renaissance Understudy

Step up your pond construction knowledge



by Eric Triplett,
The Pond Digger

McDonald's has been selling virtually the same menu since I was a kid: burgers, fries, shakes and chicken nuggets. But suddenly, in the last several years, their menu has new "healthy" items to choose from, including salads, fruit and chicken wraps. Mickey Dee's even has "designer" coffees now.

When a major player like McDonald's changes their menu after 50 years of the same stuff, you have to wonder why, right?

The answer is pretty simple. People are researching, learning and changing their minds about what they want to put in their bodies. With all the information on the Internet at our fingertips, consumers are



Not to be outdone, Carl's Jr. has lettuce wrap hamburgers, Del Taco now offers Turkey Tacos as a healthy alternative and Starbucks offers fresh fruit and salads on their coffee menu to capture market share. Did you



Dual Helix Waterfall filters (upper left) with an air assisted cleaning cycle provides excellent filtration and easy maintenance. Keeping your crew motivated, learning and earning (upper right) is paramount to a Renaissance Pond Division. Remote Life Support Systems (lower right) offer technology and efficiency. High End Goshiki Koi (inset).

know the junk food quick-stop convenience store 7-Eleven now offers a line of health food, designed by world-famous Beachbody trainer Tony Horton?

The Internet Has Consumers Stepping Up

What should this tell us as pond designers and contractors? Our consumers are stepping up and learning. Our clients are studying, absorbing content and information. Consumers want better, healthier and longer-lasting choices. This applies to every aspect of their lives. And it spills down to their pets — and more importantly, to their ponds.

Watching YouTube and Hulu, you should notice the ads for products to help keep your pets healthier so they can live longer lives. Consumers are emotionally driven to provide the best possible diets and environments for their pets — and that includes their koi.

Step Up Your Koi Habitat with Life Support

This has become a common topic of

conversation with potential new pond owners. They want to know the “healthiest” choice for the koi that they plan to acquire, or they want to upgrade their existing koi habitat to something healthier and easier to maintain. Their Internet research has taught them that these beautiful creatures can live more than a hundred years if kept in a healthy, well-maintained environment.

As a pond contractor, you want to give your clients all the right information to keep their koi healthy enough to live a very long time. Keeping water quality as pristine as possible is the first of many steps to make this happen. Options for a healthy habitat with easy maintenance can create add-on sales for your project, helping to boost your bottom line.

UV, Filters, Skimmers and Air

UV units at the right wattage control not only algae, but also undesirable bacteria to help prevent bacterial infections. Tangential pond returns help keep areas from stagnating and allowing debris to build up. This helps keep better water quality.

If there is gravel on the bottom of the



Keeping It Fresh

An extremely simple yet often-overlooked technique for keeping water healthier in your pond is a water change routine. Implement a system for your clients to easily do water changes with the installation of an advanced waterfall filter with an air-assisted cleaning cycle. Or, plumbing a tee and ball valve in line after the pump can make a water change so easy a child can do it. This terrific maintenance routine is most often seen in the aquarium world, but really should be adopted by the pond community as well. The nutrient-rich water removed from the pond can be used to irrigate nearby landscaping, and the clean water you would typically water the landscape with can be added to the pond. Win-win.

Moving bed filters harness the power of “supercharged” beneficial bacteria that convert dirty water to clean water. The beneficial bacteria on moving bed media are highly effective at consuming the waste produced by koi, and are very effective at handling fluxes in ammonia levels due to

additions of new fish or an overfeeding problem caused by a fish sitter.

Step Up Your Knowledge of All Pond Construction Philosophies

In other industries, such as medical, automotive and education, it is a requirement to continue learning in order to keep up with advances in technology. You’re not still using a flip phone, are you?

If we follow that example in the pond world, we will be doing a great service to our industry. Any Business 101 class will tell you that if you are not growing, you are stagnating ... and in the business world, that equals “out of business.”

By empowering yourself with the knowledge of how each of these systems and technologies work, you can improve water quality — and most importantly, keep a pond clean and clear for many years to come. You will help not only yourself, but also clients, future customers — and most importantly — koi. ☀

About the Author

Eric Triplett owns and operates The Pond Digger Inc. Waterscape Design and Construction Company, based in Yucaipa, California.

With a focus on Information, Education and Inspiration, it's easy to see why he has nearly 9 million views

on YouTube. The Pond Digger specializes in ecologically friendly, low-maintenance waterscapes for fish and aquatic plants ... but more importantly, for people.

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Photos by Dan Lenner

Whimsy

in the Water Garden

How to infuse your installations with personality

by **Gerard Touhey**,
International Water Features

It all began over 20 years ago with a goldfish that had outgrown our aquarium. It had grown so large that swimming and turning in the tank was difficult — if not impossible. A larger tank was not in the picture at the time as we continued to build our interior decorating and painting business in a small house in Easton, Pennsylvania. So, the poor fella had to go.

With apologies and a sorrowful parting, I released him into the nearby river one afternoon, thinking it to be the most humane way to say “goodbye.” Upon his introduction to the wild new world, he just stayed there in the shallows, looking up at me and seemed to be saying, “Don’t leave me!” I finally had to walk away, miserable and crying like I was at a dear friend’s funeral.

Returning home, I was struck with a solution when I looked into the garden! I could dig a hole in the backyard, line it, fill it with water and move my goldfish outside! Literally running back to the river

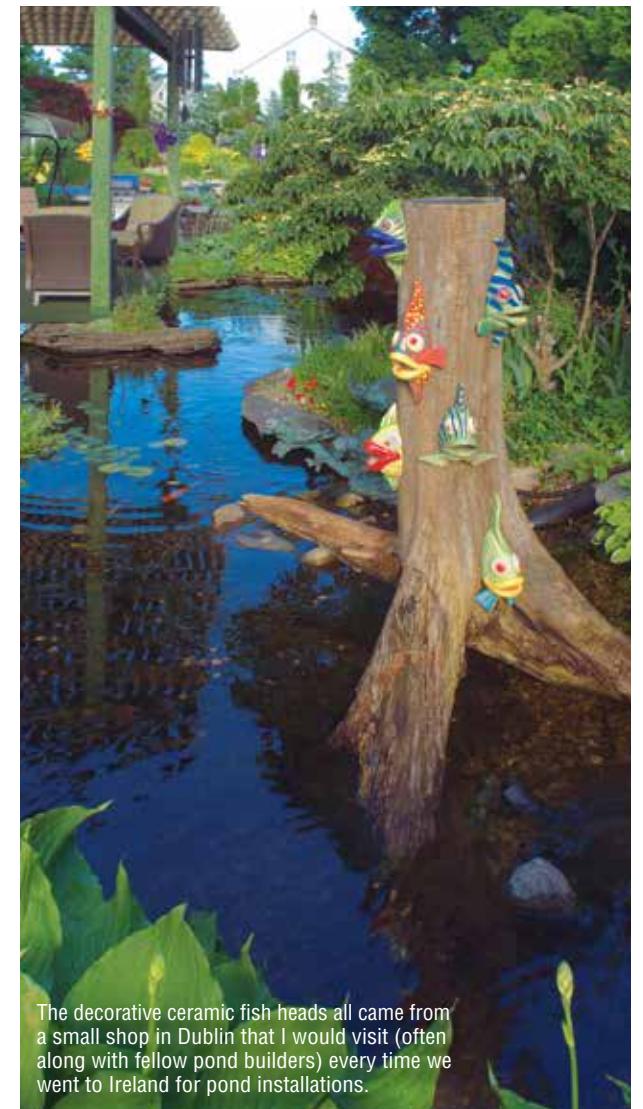
shallows where I had released my old friend, I could only hope he was still there and I could bring him back home.

He was gone. In the wake of my experience I was resolved to never have to leave another fish friend on his own in the wild.

Growing like a Goldfish

We built our first pond in our Easton backyard garden in 1995. Since then, Water Features by Gerard has installed and worked on over 200 water features, including ponds in Disney World, Mexico, France, Ireland, Chicago and other Illinois cities as well as Boston and the surrounding Lehigh Valley area.

As an appreciator and collector of unique pieces of art, I began to experiment with placement of some of the pieces of statuary in and around the water garden several years ago. The colorful ceramic fish heads came from a small shop in Dublin, Ireland. I would bring back one or two of these “one-of-a-kind” pieces on every trip home to build ponds or visit family. Many were resold to customers visiting my water garden displays at my



The decorative ceramic fish heads all came from a small shop in Dublin that I would visit (often along with fellow pond builders) every time we went to Ireland for pond installations.

home. (I don't really "know" art ... but I do know what I like!)

As a rule, most pond contractors visit the customer's premises as part of a "design consultation" to discuss location, size and type of water feature desired.

We don't. If a customer would like a design consultation, we set up an initial appointment (at no charge) for them to

wetland filter and statuary throughout.

Altogether, the visitor can see five distinct water features when visiting our gardens.

Our Philosophy

We begin with the idea that a water feature should look as natural as possible. It should appear as if the pond or stream or falls were there before the house or garden was

in most features is a 1:2:1 size. (One fourth of the rocks should be in the smallest size range, one half in the mid-sized range, and one fourth the largest size range — all by weight and not volume.) If the feature requires four tons of stone, the quantities would be: 1 ton small, 2 tons medium and 1 ton largest. This provides for the most natural appearance in most cases.

Then the Real Fun Begins!

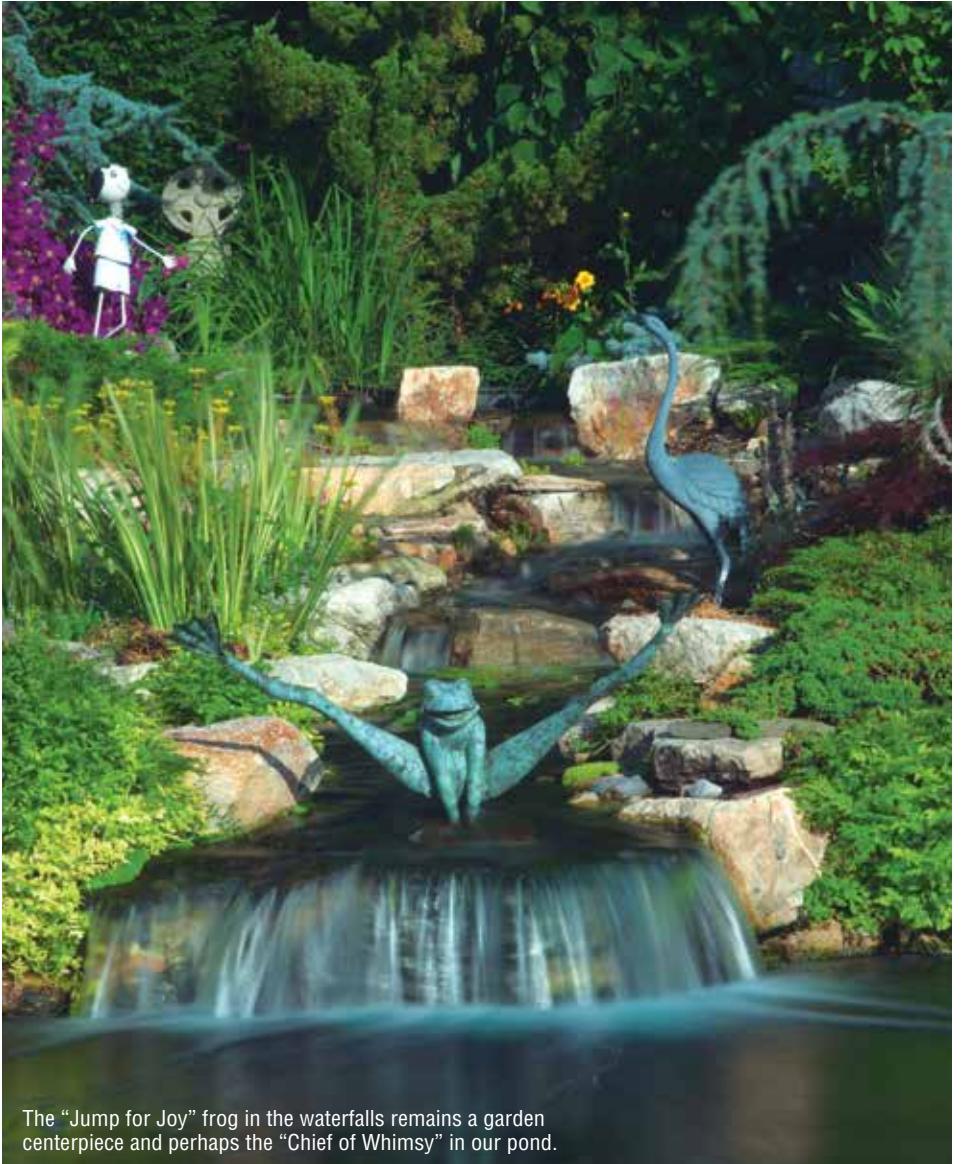
Driftwood, logs, stumps and branches along with moss can be added to provide some "naturalizing" and "softening" effects prior to planting aquatics and terrestrials in and around the feature. For many, this completes a perfect, naturalistic installation of waterfalls, streams, cascades and ponds. Many customers enjoy this type of installation for decades without any further additions. But for those desiring a more personalized installation, there is even more fun ahead!

Now for a Wee Bit O' Whimsy!

Perhaps it has to do with my love of unique works of art ... including our water features. Perhaps a career as an interior decorator/designer/painter inspires the appreciation of the whimsical. Or it could be that my Irish heritage leads me to look for delightful surprises in the garden as well as within the walls of our home. Or, most likely, "I like the things I like" and want them to be a regular part of what I enjoy daily! Thus, the things with which I decorate our home display features are things I simply like to look at as often as possible!

The photos here are all of our Water Features by Gerard home display water gardens, on a narrow lot in the heart of a residential area in Easton. When I am on my deck feeding the fish, or in the glider by the brightly painted chimera in the shape of a large koi next to the "swim pond," or looking out my kitchen/dining room window, these artistic additions in and around the water features bring me joy!

They also serve as a reminder and are mementos of the good times I have had working with other pond builders in Ireland or the U.S. over the past 20-plus years! I see the bronze statuary of the



The "Jump for Joy" frog in the waterfalls remains a garden centerpiece and perhaps the "Chief of Whimsy" in our pond.

come to our garden so they can see firsthand the wonder and beauty of what is possible in a small space. We feature our "piano falls" as well as another fountain and a pondless waterfall at the entry to our home property. As we go to the side yard we see the deck-side pond; cross the glass bridge over the pond to the deck; and work our way back to the "large swimming pond," with falls and

built. "Volcano Waterfalls," or steep berms at the headwater of a feature, absolutely kill a natural appearance. Although steep berms at a waterfall can be "softened" by stone or soft-scape that meet the eye at a higher elevation than the start of the falls, the stream course must still be dug into and not be elevated above the surrounding landscape.

The ratio of stone sizes that works best



We had a local fabricator build this piano to our specifications out of stainless steel and aluminum before powder-coating, so it will last for years!

children, turtles or ducks and recall the trip to Aquascape's Pond College, where I worked with other pond builders, attended classes and purchased all the statues on display!

The "Jump for Joy" frog in the waterfalls remains a garden centerpiece and perhaps the "Chief of Whimsy" in our pond. The "Dancing Frog Couple" keep us company near the deck!

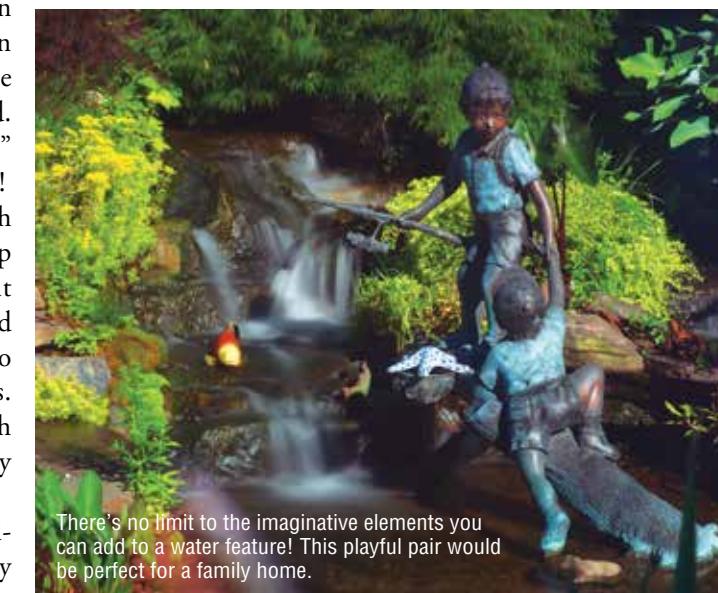
The decorative ceramic fish heads all came from a small shop in Dublin that I would visit (often along with fellow pond builders) every time we went to Ireland for pond installations. I would bring a few home with each trip as carry-ons so they would not be broken.

The Waterfall Piano installation was inspired by a display built by Brian Helfrich and crew at the Chicago Flower & Garden Show. We had a local fabricator build it our specifications out of stainless steel and aluminum before powder-coating, so it will last for years! (A wooden feature like the one used at the show would deteriorate in a few seasons.)

Among my most favored pieces around

the garden are the Celtic Crosses. They represent another strong connection to my Irish homeland and provide a focus for reflection.

Birdhouses and bird feeders, whether



There's no limit to the imaginative elements you can add to a water feature! This playful pair would be perfect for a family home.

colorful or rustic, make a great addition to the spaces around your water feature and provide enhanced habitat in urban areas. Just be sure the bird feeders are far enough from the margins of your pond to avoid unwanted feed or other bird related "products" from getting in your water!

The Old Canoe lends an "outdoorsy"

and slightly nautical touch to the scene and makes me think I could be camping on the lake. The fire gently crackling in the nearby koi-shaped chimera enhances the sense of being in the out-of-doors — especially with the sounds of the waterfalls masking the noise of the neighborhood!

Lighting not only extends enjoyment of our pond and waterfalls into the evening hours, but it is a must for softly accenting additions of statuary and favorite pieces in and around the pond. Just like installing different pieces and experimenting with their placement, lighting is another easily adjusted enrichment of the garden space. It is always a good idea to leave a bit of extra wire tucked away and zip-tied or taped up when installing a fixture to allow for adjustment of lights.

Thematic Considerations

A fellow pond builder has a customer who retired from the Navy. He decorates his pond with small replicas of submarines and other naval vessels. A musician

A Long, Smashing Journey

The year was 2008. I was taking a class during one of my many trips to Chicago when I thought to myself, "Why not bring Aquascape to Ireland?" Next thing you know, I had a few guys and an 11-by-16-foot pond kit on a plane to build my first Aquascape pond in Ireland! Before I knew it, I was shipping containers over to Ireland and flying back and forth every other week, working here and there and even in France.

I've been in the pond business for 16 years, and boy, what a wonderful, smashing adventure it's been! To think that I get to play in the dirt and move rocks around and get paid for it is crazy, but that's what I do. It's pure joy, fun and excitement, and I am at my happiest when I am building my ponds.

My adopted mother gave me \$400 and a round-trip plane ticket to come to America in 1988 so that I could get a chance at living the American dream. Wow — what a gift. I can now say I am living it, and it's smashing!

Ponds Around the World

I have installed a boatload of ponds in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Florida, Mexico, France and Ireland. Several years ago, I was

invited via Aquascape to build a pond at Disney World in Florida for the annual flower show at Epcot Center. What an amazing week! Being



there, doing that work, it was crazy to think that I had come from Ireland with no job — really, with no future and no clue what I was going to be or do. And then, not long after, I was building a pond in Disney World.

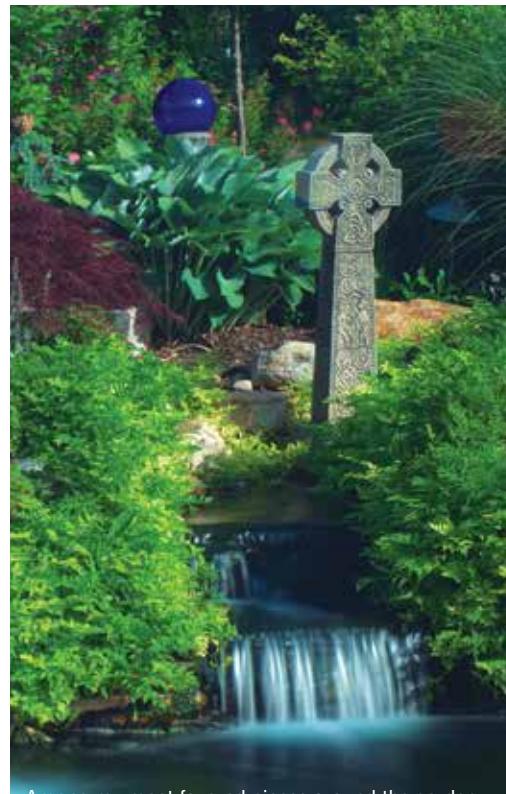
When the pond season comes to a close each year, I miss it so much ... but the off-season is a great time to travel to see family and friends, both here in the States and in Europe. I love to tour around Ireland and see all its beauty: going for walks, looking for rivers and waterfalls and just taking in Mother Nature. I also enjoy going out to nice restaurants and eating lovely food — and, of course, a good pint of Guinness as well.

might want to incorporate a "piano fountain" in their feature. The familiar St. Francis statue is

often a common addition around ponds — and very fitting for people of faith. Chihuly Glass, glass sculpture or colored glass globes are another embellishment we have seen many of our clients add to the margins of their features. Pottery and ceramic sculpture of all types are also fitting additions for adding a whimsical touch to the garden — especially when they are of special meaning to the customer.

Keep Your Pond Inhabitants Safe!

Keep in mind when adding pieces in and around the water feature that they need to be of a



Among my most favored pieces around the garden are the Celtic Crosses. They represent another strong connection to my Irish homeland and provide a focus for reflection.

material that would not be subject to deterioration in moist environments. And when placed in the water, they should pose no danger to the fish in the pond through any weathering process.

One example: We received a frantic call from a customer whose fish were dying. It turned out that a string of paper lanterns had been blown into the pond. The toxins in the dyes that dissolved into the water were responsible for the loss of several very large koi!

Whimsical themes in and about the water garden may not be for everyone, but they bring delight to me — and many of my customers as well. Certainly, my tastes in water garden decoration are not common to all builders or customers, so experiment with adding a piece here or there. If you don't like it, you can always move or remove it easily, experimenting until the scene you craft is pleasing to you and your customer! ☘

About the Author

Gerard Touhey is the owner of two pond companies: Waterfeatures

by Gerard in Wilson, Pennsylvania, and International Waterfeatures Ltd. in Ireland. Gerard came to the United States in 1998 with \$400 in his pocket and started his first pond business soon after.

After attending several classes on how to build natural-looking ponds using the Aquascape system, he became a Certified Aquascape Contractor in 2004 and has been on a long, exciting journey ever since. To date, he and his team have built a couple hundred ponds.



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Memory Lane



Mr. and Mrs. Slocum stand in front of the entrance sign that welcomes visitors.

You Don't Have to Mow Water!

How Slocum Water Gardens birthed a Pond Monster

by Lloyd Lightsey,
The Pond Monster

I'm often asked how I got into building water features. Well, it all boils down to some grass.

When I was 13, my brother joined the Army and left me in charge of mowing the lawn every Saturday. Of course, in Central Florida the grass never

stops growing. What's more, in the summer you can't cut it

until the dew dries at 10 a.m. — which is also when the humidity reaches 90 percent and the temperature climbs to a heat index that would kill Tarzan. This, in turn, turns your body into your own flowing water feature — an effect that

doesn't stop until you make your last pass with the lawnmower two hours, one gallon of gas and 30 gallons of sweat later.

It didn't take long before I developed a real hatred for our grass. I also learned that my father was the most amazing lawnmower repair man; no matter how I tried to break the thing down, he was able to have it running in no time



Randy Slocum poses as the fishermen's model on the Victorias.



This formal water garden (above) mesmerized not only me, but also all who walked from the back of the store to enter the greenhouse and reach the gardens.

at all! (Of course, I now see that my father was teaching me the value of tackling a job rather than avoiding it. I was working harder to keep the mower from running than I would've worked just using the thing and getting the job done!)

You Can't Mow Water!

One Saturday, while pushing the mower and brainstorming about how to escape this torturous ceremony (which my family seemed to love watching from our air-conditioned house), I made a striking realization: you don't have to mow water! All the lakes around our town had grass growing along the edges, but not out in the center. And even that shoreline grass was allowed to grow naturally! A plan began to form.

I humbly asked my father if I could dig a pond. To my surprise, his answer was "Yes." What's more, he promised that we could go see someone that very day who would help us with the project!

Of course, we could only go after I cut the grass ... and I couldn't get that lawn mowed fast enough! I was thrilled, thinking it would be my last time doing it. (Yes, I was young and dumb.)

When I finally finished and showered, we drove to Slocum Water Gardens, where I would meet three people who have greatly influenced my life: Perry Slocum; his son, Peter Slocum, who still owns Slocum Water Gardens; and my friend Randy Slocum, who has branched off into Slocum Ponds and Water Gardens.

That fateful Saturday, Peter Slocum

and my father discussed how the pond should be built of concrete and how the Slocums could supply all the aquatic plants we would need. However, it would be up to us to build the pond! While they gave my father the how-tos of pond construction, I was paying little attention to all that was going on. I was mesmerized



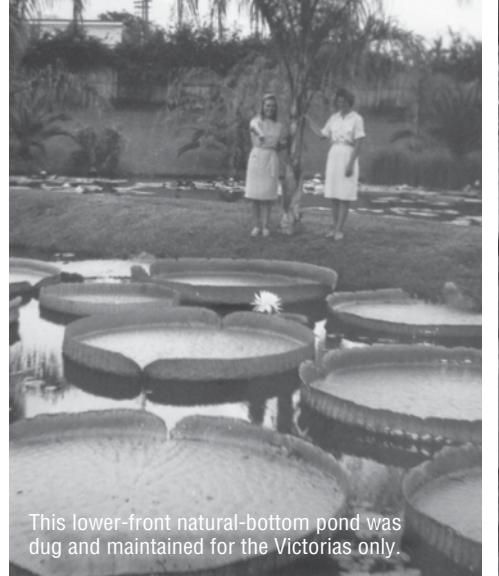
How times have changed!
It once was a very big deal
to be the Water Lily Queen.

that at that very moment he was strategizing with the Slocums to create a job that would not pay me! It would, however lead to extensive knowledge of aquatic plant life ... it would build in me the character required to build and care for a water garden ... and it would lead to a lifelong passion for ponds.

Of course, none of that could happen before I learned to appreciate the wondrous joy of having a pond! So, every Saturday afternoon for the next few months, I was delivered to the Gardens by my father (after mowing the evil grass, which was now laughing at and taunting me). After working on a few special projects at the Gardens throughout the summer, I was finally allowed to build our first water garden at home.

The Hows and Whys of Water Gardening

By this time, my father (who had retired from 15 years with the U.S. Navy's nuclear submarine division to become the stationary engineer at our local hospital) had a set idea in his mind about how a pond should be built. But I had begun a transformation into someone who cared more about the way water flowed, moved, shaped and transformed than simply how it supported life. I didn't buy into the theory that "water is just the means to the



This lower-front natural-bottom pond was dug and maintained for the Victorias only.



The view as you step out of the store overlooks the water gardens, with the natural-bottom ponds along with the concrete lily pools.

end of growing aquatic plants" — a theory I heard frequently from the Slocums.

Now, don't get me wrong. I really was trying my best as a volunteer employee at the Gardens. But I was starting to realize that grass was a plant, and I was learning how to take care of water plants. What's more, all these water plants needed to be taken care of outside, in the heat. And they

really smelled worse than the grass I was so desperately trying to kill at home!

Pulling Weeds ... And Then Some

At the beginning I had no knowledge of the difference between a weed and a plant to keep (terminology I still use to this day). The Slocums, however, can just

about give you the molecular breakdown of any given plant in a language that I still don't understand. Why we need the Latin name of each plant, I'll never know.

One Saturday morning, I was told to remove all the weeds from one of the back ponds that was not viewed by the public, nor from the showroom or the greenhouse. This pond was for cultivating cattails, arrowhead,



taro, papyrus and a variety of other plants.

The Slocums estimated that the job should take about four hours to complete. So you can imagine how proud I was when I walked into the showroom after just three hours, covered from head to toe in a very smelly substance, and announced that there was not one weed left in that pond! And that was true; I had removed every weed.

Unfortunately, as I soon learned, I had also removed all the plants.

I heard words that day that I had never heard before, and I don't think all of them were Latin plant names! I didn't realize just how fast those old timers could move until I saw them rushing to put all the plants back in!

After that regrettable incident, the

Perry Slocum used his skills as a photographer to capture the simplicity of the blooms, using the shadows and reflections in his black-and-white shots.

Slocums sat me down and explained the real purpose of pond weeding and how it was different from harvesting. And the good news of the day: they promoted me to the prestigious position of head pond de-mucker and chief pond sanitation

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This waterfall (above) was built for the series of five ponds that would flow to the bottom pond, where one of the first Slocum bucket filters was developed. Peter Slocum (middle) replenishes the holding tanks in the store. Mr. Slocum would often recruit local friends and their children (right) to pose on the wondrous Victoria's that were grown at the gardens. After handling the thorns on them, I agree with this little one's attitude!

officer! While the job was every bit as smelly as it sounds, it also involved lots of water, which was far cooler than that nasty grass at home.

Building Momentum

After my first summer I was beginning

to learn just how proud I could be after cleaning and repairing those back ponds. The back side of the Gardens was becoming my playground, and any area that was prepared to hold water could be used to cultivate and harvest aquatic plants that were shipped all over the world. That's

when I realized that some of the plants I was helping with might end up in places that I would visit when I got older.

Soon enough, those days on the back ponds prepared me to work on the front ponds. When that time arrived, I thought I had been called up to the big leagues. I was

working the weekends and learning more about the construction of the ponds than the plants that were in them. I also learned how, through the presence of the plants, the water could become the living entity that we all strive for and attain the clarity that everyone expects today.

The patience required to build a soil-based pond is something that many do not have. We would dig out the ground, place new 32-mil liner in the hole and then throw a quarter of the dirt back in. We'd also add some cow manure, peat and a blend of fertilizer from the local mines here in Florida, which made the water look like a mud pit.

However, once we added oxygenating plants and freshwater clams that were obtained from local lakes or harvested out of the other ponds, things started to turn around. I'd put in a few dozen goldfish (to decrease the mosquito population) and then wait around 30 days and watch as the



Perry Slocum had one major rule: Never use or move his waders. It was time to run and hide if you did! But it was always wonderful to see him so happy when wading among his lilies.

water would become amazingly clear. It would stay that way until we harvested the plants, fish or clams. Then, the de-mucking job would begin all over again.

Waterfalls and Repurposed Materials

My passion for waterfalls began in the back ponds at the Gardens, where I was allowed to play — I mean, work — with many different materials. Florida field-

stone is very brittle and hard, like glass. Also like glass, it will cut the dickens out of you. It has holes in it, which can create an awesome water effect by themselves. But if cemented in properly, it can be used to create a really cool Polynesian look. Add in some low-voltage lighting at night, and it looks like a volcano.

We also used broken slabs of concrete to make stair-step waterfalls, and even an old claw-foot bathtub was used once! Anything we could get on the cheap was fair game.

One Sunday, I went to a flea market and found 10 or 12 cast iron frying pans that were rusty and cracked. I asked my dad if I could buy them and weld them together to make a custom water feature. Miraculously, he agreed. We went home and welded the pans' handles onto a 3-inch pipe, cascading around the pipe in a circle. Each pan poured water into the next. It was a beautiful idea, and it became one of

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Still hanging with the Slocums, with Randy to my right and Peter to my left. Even though the main gardens are gone, the Slocums still grow and sell their legendary namesake lilies, thanks to the growth of Winter Haven and the widening of the highway out to LEGOLAND (then known as Cypress Gardens).

the first water effects ever added to our pond at home.

Speaking of home: by the time I eventually purchased a house of my own, that childhood home of mine had a 12,000-gallon pond in the front yard and several water features and effects in the backyard

... with absolutely no grass to cut!

Becoming the Monster

Perry, Peter and my Dad taught me some valuable lessons in those first years of working at the Gardens: work hard, love your passions and dream until the smile can't be taken off your face.

I took them all to heart, and that's how I became known as the Pond Monster. Those men taught me to attack a project like it should have been done yesterday. And now, I can find no better satisfaction than seeing the image in your mind or design come to life ... using your own flesh and bone to turn an idea into reality and make it match what your mind's eye sees.

Today, I'm thankful to know that I was taught by the best. I'll always have their presence there, watching me as I take each step in this life. I know how blessed I am to have worked with some of the best teachers in this industry, and to have the Slocums and others consider me The Pond Monster. After 41 years of ponds, I can tell you that if you work hard, love your passions and dream until the smile can't be taken off your face, you'll be blessed as well.

So always rock on and let the water flow! ☺

About the Author



Lloyd Lightsey, The Pond Monster, has been building, engineering and just plain loving the water feature industry for nearly 41 years. He loves playing with life-sized Tonka trucks and throwing dirt and rocks all day with his crew. Lloyd has an awesome wife, Karrie, his "partner in life and business" who will soon be announcing her own line of pond accessories. Lloyd and Karrie have been "digging the pond life (pun intended)."

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Choosing the right skimmer for your pond

by Kent Wallace,

Living Water Solutions

Determining the best skimmer for a particular project and how best to use it can be a challenge. Choices for skimmers come from both the water garden industry and the pool industry.

The use of a pond skimmer started with water gardening as a way of moving the submersible pump

SERIES: Best Pond Practices

This is an installment of an ongoing, multi-part series. Be sure to watch for further installments in future issues!

out of the pond and into a protected space, away from the fish and plant debris. This created a form of prefiltration with leaf nets and Japanese matting to separate out the larger debris ahead of the pump.

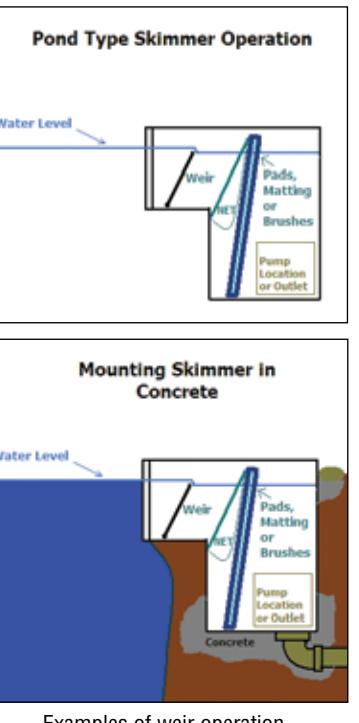
Skimmer Basics

The primary job of a skimmer is to pull the large, floating debris off the surface of a pond before it has a chance to saturate and settle to

the pond bottom. Ponds also generate a film on the surface created by oils from plant debris, fish, food, dissolved organics, et cetera. Even a pond that is completely protected from the elements can produce this film, creating a dingy look to the water's surface. A properly functioning skimmer pulls this film off, keeping the surface clear.

A skimmer works with the use of a weir: a floating door that pivots at the bottom with a top edge that is suspended just below the surface of the water. The incoming water is forced over the top edge, creating a high level of tension at the water's surface. The closer the weir edge is to the surface, the better it will create this surface tension. There are many types of weirs, but they're all designed around the same goal: removing surface debris.

Many water garden skimmers create poor surface tension and have poor skimming ability due to a weir with little buoyancy or side channels that open up to the skimmer's interior as the weir opens with water flow. In "skimmer only" ponds that don't incorporate other water outflow types like bottom grids, bottom drains or mid-



Examples of weir operation

water drains, this isn't a big issue because all of the water exiting the pond goes through the skimmer intake in a high volume. In systems where other outflow sources are in place, however, a better weir is necessary to allow the skimmer to actually do the job of skimming and not just act as an upper water outlet.

Grabbing the Gunk

Skimmers always contain some type of trapping system to catch the debris as it passes through. Water garden skimmers have a net or a basket to catch the large debris and then have a system of pads, matting or brushes to trap the finer particles and do some initial bio-conversion. Water garden skimmers also have a large area to contain a submersible pump and, in general, are not designed for more efficient external pump systems. Pool-type skimmers house just a basket because there is no bioconversion or fines filtration that needs to be done in the skimmer and because swimming pools don't use submersible pumps. Each has advantages and disadvantages and

all can be modified to some degree to meet the needs of a koi pond.

Koi ponds don't require skimmer water for the entire turnover rate as water garden skimmer systems do. Although submersible pumps can be used, direct suction to an external pump is generally preferred because of external pumps' increased efficiency. With water garden skimmers, direct suction can be accomplished using the internal filtration of the skimmer as the prefiltration system, protecting the pump from debris. Add a bulkhead for a 2-inch or larger line directly from the back or bottom of the skimmer to the pump and you're ready to go. The unused space where the submersible pump would have gone can be utilized by adding more media for increased prefiltration. If prefiltration is handled downline, a plate can be designed to fit the shape of the skimmer housing and inserted in place to hold additional pool-type baskets for a higher flow rate. These can be used in conjunction with the original basket or net or as stand-alone baskets. Modifying water garden skimmers in this fashion allows

for much larger debris-trapping ability and longer maintenance intervals between cleaning.

Pool skimmers can be plumbed directly to the front of an external pump, but a prefilter between the skimmer and pump is

Helix Pond Skimmer
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advised to pull out the heavy solids before the pump. Gravity flow to a prefiltration tank is the better method because the prefiltration tank can be larger and more effective. This can be accomplished with the addition of 3-inch or 4-inch bulkheads for larger lines between the skimmer and pre-filter. Pool

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This pool skimmer was modified for gravity flow with 3-inch outlets.



This Savio skimmer was modified for an extra basket.

Skimmers are designed for direct suction-to-pump operation and usually have 1.5-inch or 2-inch outlets. These small outlets are highly restrictive and not suitable for gravity-flow systems, which require 3-inch or 4-inch piping. Gravity-flow application can be achieved by cutting off the lower portion of the skimmer body and adding an adaptor for either 3-inch or 4-inch.

Why a Pool Skimmer?

One advantage of a pool skimmer is the smaller footprint and lid. Pool-type skimmers are a good option when space at the

pond's edge is limited, such as in the side of a raised pond or in a corner. Pool skimmers are much easier to work with aesthetically, and the vinyl liner versions have a mechanical clamping faceplate for use with pond liner or spray-applied coatings such as polyurea. Wide-mouth versions are also available, but aren't necessary because it is the actual throat size that is important and not the tapered inlet shape to the face.

Never leave the basket out of a skimmer. This can be dangerous for fish, and the floating debris must still be removed by hand from the pre-filter tank.

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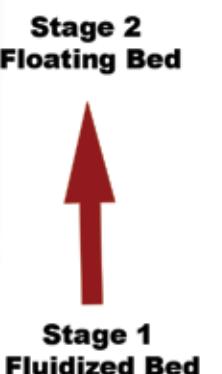


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Skimmer Options

Three pool skimmers on the market have a large basket and are very suitable for pond application. The one with the largest basket and the largest throat size (9.5 inches) of any pool-type skimmer is made by Waterco. This skimmer also comes with a beige lid assembly, which makes a pleasing blend with landscape or top cap easier. The Waterway Renegade series also has a large basket version, and the Pentair Bermuda skimmer has a large basket and also comes in black. The larger basket and gravity flow to prefiltration make these good choices for more formal applications.

Another skimmer option is the "Aqua Niche" skimmer. This is a free-mounting skimmer that is supported by a pipe directly in the pond and incorporates a floating, circular weir. A floating, circular weir is the most "fish-safe" design currently on the market. The circular weir's shape actually has a weir lip approximately 15 inches in circumference and floats extremely close to the surface. This creates a very high level of surface tension because of the thin water line

it pulls from the surface. The circular weir is also fish-safe because it floats up and down vertically and doesn't pivot like a conventional weir that can trap a fish. This is safe for even small koi or goldfish when the water flow is kept at a reasonable rate. The Aqua Niche uses a large, B-37 basket and comes with a 1.5-inch side outlet or a 2-inch, 3-inch or 4-inch bottom outlet.

The newest skimmer on the market is the Helix skimmer, which uses the circular weir technology in an external housing. The circular weir can be adapted to other pool-type skimmers, and eliminating the conventional weir door by the use of a retrofit kit makes them more fish-safe.

Many conventional weir skimmers have been modified to accept horizontal bars just below the water level as "fish guards." Fish-guard bars should be mounted horizontally and not vertically to allow debris to flow under and over the bars without getting caught.

Most of the skimmers I have replaced over the years have been crushed in by the surrounding soil over time. A concrete

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collar around the surface perimeter can prevent this and is a good practice to put in place when possible. Many pond skimmers get distorted by soil movement created by landscape growth and human traffic.

Fasteners for skimmer faces, as in all pond-related devices, should be stainless steel

Choosing the right skimmer starts with proper placement and flow. Then considerations are made for fish safety, debris volume, ease of maintenance and aesthetics.

or plastic. Some popular commercial pond skimmers come with fasteners that are not stainless steel and begin to rust in a matter of days after installation. Be cautious with these fasteners and replace them when you come across them. Stainless steel nuts and bolts are readily available and will prevent fastener failure and the necessary replacement later on.

The practice of installing a bottom drain line into a skimmer has become popular recently. This is largely an unsuccessful marketing ploy — and a waste of

time unless done properly.

Proper Bottom Drain Requirements

A bottom drain line into a skimmer is a gravity-flow concept. A 2-inch line will gravity-flow approximately 900 gph with a 1-inch difference between the pond surface level and the water level in the container to which it flows. A 3-inch line will flow approximately 1,800 gph with a 1-inch difference. It is virtually impossible to create a 1-inch difference in a skimmer, although a smaller level of difference can be achieved if done properly. The internal water level drop requires a restriction at the skimmer face and a relatively high flow rate from the pump. The skimmer weir opening must be kept small to restrict the flow and the weir must be very buoyant.

One of the best weirs for this is the old-school bellows weir, thanks to its stiffness. The drain line should be at least 3-inch in any but the smallest of pond systems. While a 1-inch drop is difficult to achieve, a half-inch to quarter-inch drop is achievable. A half-inch drop will allow a flow rate of approximately 900 gph through a 3-inch line. The drain line inlet should be in front of the pads or matting in the skimmer to protect the pump from pond bottom debris, and the line should have a cleanout

plumbed into it for regular maintenance. The skimmer door can also be closed for a few seconds each week, forcing all the water possible through the drain line in an effort to flush the line and keep it flowing.

Choosing the right skimmer starts with proper placement and flow. Then considerations are made for fish safety, debris volume, ease of maintenance and aesthetics. Knowing your options makes the skimmer installation fit your pond's particular needs. **es**

About the Author

Kent Wallace was born and raised in Las Vegas.

Kent spent most of his adult life in the automobile industry at independent shops and dealerships, along with working at his own shop as a race car fabricator at age 24. Then, in 2001 a neighbor asked Kent if he could build her a koi pond like the one Kent's father had.

From that point on pond building became his new passion. This first pond he built was submitted to Better Homes & Gardens Magazine and won Best Courtyard Nationwide in their special interest publication.



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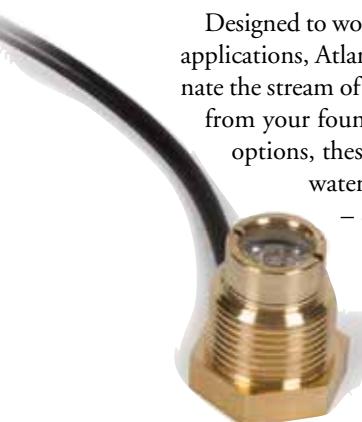
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Aquascape Sets Date for PONDEMONIUM 2015

Aquascape Inc. has set the date for Pondemonium 2015, the water garden industry's premier business training and networking event. From August 5 to 8, distributors, contractors, and retailers can attend Aquascape's training event designed to help grow their water feature businesses.

"Our goal with Pondemonium is to offer leading-edge construction and training events," says Greg Wittstock, founder and CEO of Aquascape Inc. "Ample time for networking is provided in addition to classroom sessions and hands-on training events."

Pondemonium 2015 offers something for everyone, whether you're just getting started with water features or have numerous years of experience under your belt. To learn more about Pondemonium, log onto www.pondemonium.com. For more information about the Q Center, visit www.qcenter.com.

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IPPCA Needs You!

There have been big changes at the International Professional Pond Companies Association, and I thought you should be the first to know. First, I regret to announce that Dave and Gloria Jones have voluntarily removed themselves from the Executive Committee, the governing body of the organization, and the Board at Large. I would like to publicly thank Dave and Gloria Jones for their years of dedication and service, to IPPCA and to the industry at large. Their establishment of an impartial Certification Program for contractors, the successful campaign to blunt the incursion of EPA Water Sense regulations and the integration of NAPP membership have all served the industry well. Under the Jones' guidance IPPCA has taken giant strides forward; now the Board of Directors will shoulder the administrative and executive duties of IPPCA without them. At my request, Gloria has agreed to assist with secretarial duties during the transition. Dave has stepped away "with a clear conscience, leaving IPPCA in good hands."



We are very pleased to announce the appointment of Rip Sokol to the Board, joining Mark Lawson, Gil Belcher, Mark Gibson, Pieter Van Westervelt and me. An icon of the Industry, Rip needs no introduction; we are delighted to add his talents and experience to the Board. Together, we are aggressively expanding our educational and certification programs, and IPPCA builds on sturdy foundations. To our Certified Professional Pond Contractor program we are adding a new Certified Professional Pond Retailer initiative, headed up by President Elect Mark Lawson, to provide and promote best management and construction practices for our

retail members. I am personally developing Best Practices PowerPoints in English and Spanish to help our members grow their businesses as they promote interest in the water feature industry and IPPCA.

The website (www.ipca.org) will be updated to accommodate the new content as soon as funds allow, as befits our status as a state- and federally recognized 501(c)(6) non-commercial organization. Finally, though the phone number will remain unchanged, a new mailing address is being secured.

The most important thing that's still missing from the all-new IPPCA is ... you! We need you, to join and revitalize the only trade Organization by, and for, our water feature industry. Drop me a line at 631/827-7353 or send me an email at demi.fortuna@gmail.com to be included in the next Open Meeting, when we'll discuss where we're going together. Make no mistake – IPPCA is YOUR organization, and it's not going anywhere without you. I'm looking forward to hearing from you! For the full press release, go to www.pondademag.com/ipca-needs.

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