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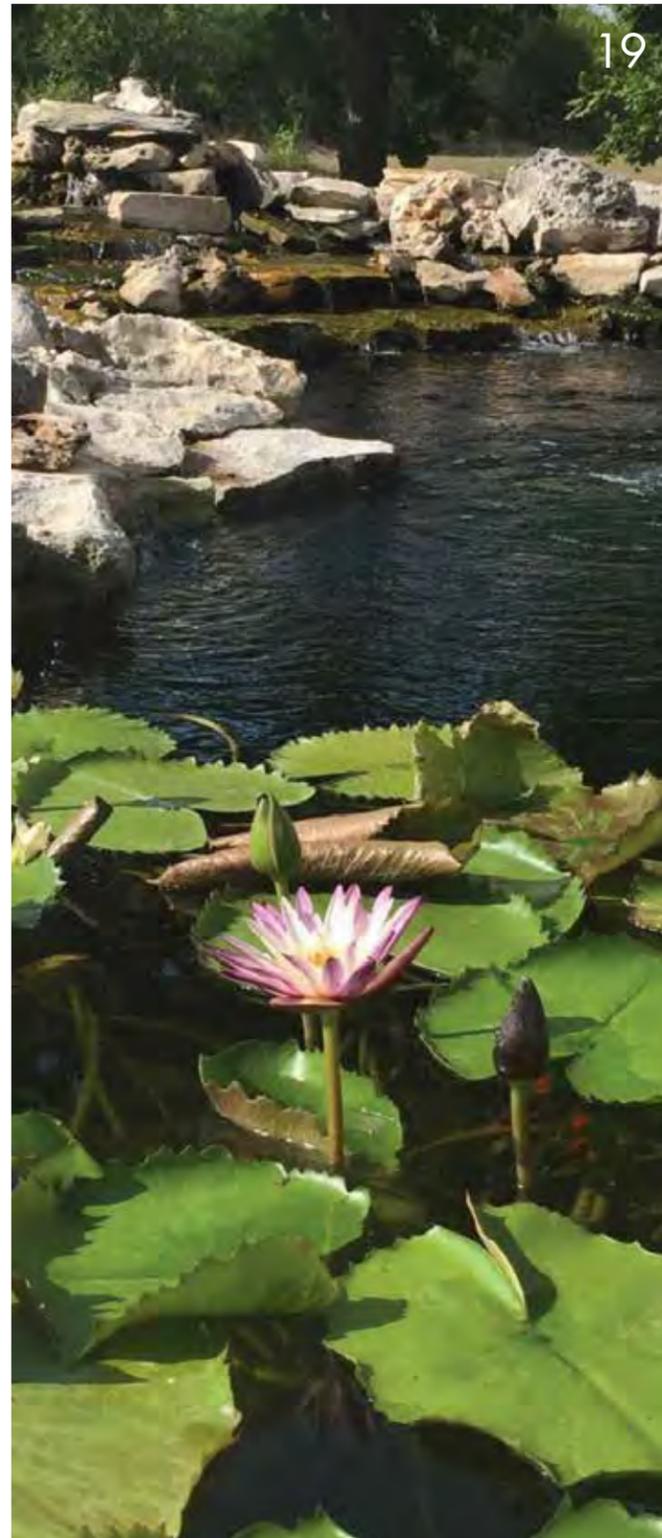
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It's always helpful to have a few jacks of all trades on your team. Just ask **Dylan Arlotta & Tom Dieck**. When they found themselves shorthanded on an ecosystem pond build, they enlisted the help of the masonry crew to assist with construction.

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Many of us have an affinity for the sights and sounds of moving water, but not everybody has a huge backyard to install a large-scale pond. By constructing a water wall or spillway, as **John Olson** explains, you can reap the benefits of the pond life without the real estate requirement.

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Arrrr! The Pond Pirate **Erick Santana** has our cover story with a look at a variety of methods for building concrete ponds. From waterproofing to rebar, he covers everything you need to know to construct a pond that will last a lifetime.



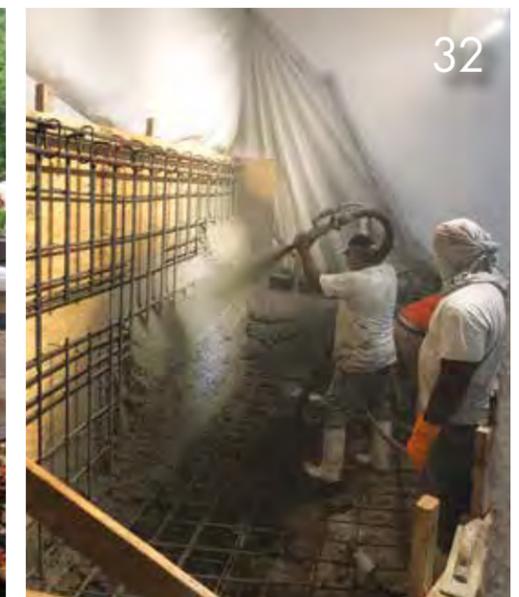
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Weekends and days off are sacred territory. Nobody likes to be bothered with minor pond maintenance issues when we aren't on the clock. **Rex McCaskill** offers a way to help preserve your work-home balance: install backup pump systems in every pond you build.

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Best Practices will return in the next issue!



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Upcoming Events

2020

December 2 - 4
Atlantic-OASE Professional Conference
 Cleveland, Ohio
www.atlantic-oase.com

October 20 - 22

GIE+Expo / Hardscape North America
 Kentucky Exposition Center
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2021

January 12 - 14
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POND Trade Magazine is published bi-monthly, starting in January, for \$41.70 per year by LG Publishing, Inc., POND Trade Magazine, PO BOX 2721, Orland Park, IL 60462. Qualified applicants may subscribe at no cost at www.pondtrademag.com. Postage is paid at Orland Park, IL and additional offices. For new subscriptions, additional copies and address changes, please call 708/873-1921 or email llgelles@pondtrademag.com.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to POND Trade Magazine, PO BOX 2721, Orland Park, IL 60462
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Publisher's Perspective

We've Got You Covered!

I recently finished up the 2021 media kit that goes out to all our wonderful, supportive advertisers. I always include a taste of some of the upcoming articles planned for the next year while we try to line up all the best authors with the right topics. As I looked back at what we have covered over



the past 10 years, I got to thinking to myself, "Holy moly! We've written about a LOT of topics!" So it really goes without saying that yes, we've definitely got you covered when it comes to the pond and water feature business.

Now, here's where you come in. What are we missing? Is there a topic you'd like to see us talk more about? Or perhaps something that we need to revisit? If so, I'd love to hear from you. Shoot me an email at [\[pondtrademag.com\]\(mailto:llgelles@pondtrademag.com\). Whether it's a new construction technique, an innovative sales strategy, or a really cool build, we would love to share it with your pond world peers.](mailto:llgelles@</p>
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For example, our cover story ("Concrete Pond Construction Techniques") is about formal concrete ponds, which we have covered from time to time, especially in Kent Wallace's Best Practices articles (which will return in the January/February 2021 issue, by the way). However, not until now have we presented the point of view of a Pond Pirate. Walk the plank over to pg. 32 and see everything that went into building Erick Santana's gorgeous koi pond.

We also like to present new viewpoints about ways to conduct business. While some contractors might balk at installing more than one pump in a small pond, Rex McCaskill explains on pg. 42 why two pumps can be better than one ("One-Two Punch") and just might save your weekend. No room for a pond? How about a water wall? John Olson has more on pg. 15 ("The Writing on the Wall") about integrating smaller water features.

Oh, and one more thing — I have a new sidekick. I GOT A NEW PUPPY! His name is Bodie, and he is a border terrier. He sure is keeping me busy! It's so nice to hear the pitter-patter of puppy feet around the house again.

Happy PONDering!

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Where does the water stop and the land begin, nobody knows! Blending landscapes with waterscapes is always the focus for this multi-faceted install team. At only two years old this feature has already taken on a natural lush appearance.

| Pond Construction |

Pooling Together

Unlikely crew teams up for ecosystem pond & patio build

by **Tom Dieck**, TRD Designs & **Dylan Arlotta**, Aquascapes East

The water garden industry (and landscaping in general) can be a feast-or-famine scenario. Due to uncooperative weather throughout the winters in the Northeast, we are often forced to cram a whole calendar year's worth of installations into a span of just eight months or so. No matter how prepared we try to be, the reality is that we are often forced to juggle a few projects at one time.

I operate as part of a greater team that includes two distinct, full-service firms. TRD Designs covers landscape design and installation, while Aquascapes East specializes in installing and maintaining custom-built water features. Despite clearly drawn lines of responsibility, the two companies often have to share workloads to help keep projects running smoothly. This means that our team must fully understand a wide range of capabilities — everything from the proper installation of sod and specimen trees to the creation of a custom ecosystem pond or fountainscape, sometimes for the same project and client.

Sometimes masonry work is involved, so enter yet another crew with a different set of special skills. From pools to patios



Koi and goldfish thrive in the ecosystem pond. Wetland filtration keeps the water crystal clear.

and from fire pits to full outdoor kitchens, our top-notch masonry crew is literally the cement that holds some of our designs together. The collective team of TRD Designs and Aquascapes East has developed a strength of pulling together large projects in multiple phases while working together hand in hand. When working on large, integrated projects, each team member needs to be able to interpret the site plan and anticipate the needs of the other craftsmen on the jobsite in order to make sure that each phase carries smoothly into the one that follows. This type of collaborative approach makes each member a jack of all trades, while they still serve as masters of their own installation specialty.

Reshaping Suburbia

When the Aquascapes East team was called to the Becker home in Katonah, New York, the task was pretty straightforward. This family was looking for a natural pond for keeping fish. Simple, right? But wait, it turned out that they also wanted a

new patio large enough for small gatherings, along with a full landscaping overhaul. So, we summoned the landscape architects and formulated a plan.

The Becker residence sits on a corner in a suburban neighborhood with road frontage on two sides. The backyard has a lateral shape with a ton of room from side to side, but not very

The key to this project was to create a tranquil private space that made the family feel nestled into the neighborhood instead of exposed to every passerby.

much depth from the house to the rear property line. As is the case in most of suburbia, the back property line is shared with the house from the next road over, so their view through the large windows in their family room and kitchen was often dictated by what their neighbors were up to that day. This lateral yard, although

spacious, sloped from left to right and slightly away from the rear of the house.

The key to this project was to create a tranquil private space that made the family feel nestled into the neighborhood instead of exposed to every passerby. So, the focus became creating a backyard space that centered on the family room and invited

the Beckers outside into their own private retreat. The new view from inside the house would concentrate on an ecosystem pond with wetland filtration and a sizable bluestone patio that would come right up to the water feature. Due to the limited access from the driveway, the water feature would have to be constructed first, with

the adjoining patio installed afterward as the crews worked their way back toward the driveway.

As luck would have it, this was one of those times when multiple projects were going on at the same time, and the regular Aquascapes East crew was already busy working on the completion of a different water feature. The masonry crew was ready to roll, but they needed the water feature crew to finish before their patio project could move forward.

Time Waits for No Man

(And in this case, no crew.) The decision was made to use this as an opportunity to expand the skills of the masonry crew and heavily involve them in the construction of the water feature. This was a no-brainer, because the design called for the patio edge to overhang the new ecosystem pond. This small feat may sound simple, but it required precise techniques and plenty of forethought. Leaving the water feature crew to complete their other project, I joined the masonry team for what would become a hands-on, weeklong class in ecosystem pond construction.

We started by bringing in large boulders for a natural set of retaining terraces that would be set downhill from the proposed patio location. These terraces would help to level out the site and provide comfortable passage from one outdoor space to the next. A natural stone stairway was tucked into the terraces to allow practical access to the storage shed on the lower lawn. Once the ideal spot for the pond was painted out, the 24-by-32-foot patio area could be pre-excavated so that all the soil could be used to create additional elevation behind the pond. At this point, the masons were still comfy and cozy inside their wheelhouse — stone walls and patio prep. So, no big deal!

That's when I told them we wanted the bluestone patio to overhang the pond at least 12 inches in some spots to provide the fish with some safe retreats and allow the family a few places to sit and dangle their feet in the water.

They thought I was joking. I assured them I was not. They claimed that 4-foot-wide stones or larger would be needed to provide enough weight so that they would not move if someone stood on the edge. Furthermore, they would have to be cemented down.

The project site before construction (top) consisted of a boring backyard just waiting to be transformed into a welcoming space. With the pond in mid-construction (middle), it was time to start on the waterfall. The plumbing and lining for the wetland filter (bottom) will be completely disguised by the time construction is complete. The completely natural look of wetland filters is their greatest selling point.



We agreed that safety was the most important thing, so we started to figure out the exact heights the patio would need to be in relation to the pond to provide just the right pitch away from the water. We also had to make sure that any dirt and debris that might gather on the patio wouldn't get carried into the fish-filled pond with every rainstorm.

Jumping in, Head First

After about a day of patio and site prep, the head mason, Carlos, approached me to have a very serious discussion. Putting on his serious face, he told me to make sure that each rock placed under the bluestone edge was a perfect fit. Once they were in place, they had to be rock solid to avoid any movement that would cause damage to his patio.

I assured him that I had already figured out a way to guarantee that he would get exactly what he was asking for. This is when I broke the news to him and the rest of the masonry crew that starting the next day, they would be building their very first water feature. By providing these guys with a little bit of guidance and positive think-

ing, not only would they have the perfect edge prepared to accept the cantilevered bluestone patio, but they would also find out that they already had all the skills it takes to build amazing water features.

We started our adventure with the installation of an upflow wetland filter. This simple concept for filtration can be used in almost any ecosystem pond, providing a simple, long-lasting, all-natural way of keeping the water clean. Although the wetland will only appear as a small body of water that is less than a foot deep, most of its magic is hidden below. This false-bottom system provides lots of surface area for beneficial bacteria to colonize.

After the wetland had been constructed, we set to work on excavating the pond itself: a basic 12-by-16-foot pond with shelves at varying heights and a maximum depth of 3 feet. The front of all the shelved areas was covered in smoothed river gravel and contained by natural rock boulders. I explained to the crew that just because rocks are underwater does not mean that they do not have to appear completely natural. We took our time, and I explained the reasoning behind the choices we were making. Before

long, I could feel that they were starting to get it.

We incorporated a few extra bells and whistles, including a full LED underwater lighting package and a built-in fish cave. As they were using their mason-trained minds to disguise the entrance to the fish cave, they started to joke with each other about the fish swimming in and out of their home, which was hidden in the shelving. My Spanish comprehension is far from flawless, but after much discussion, I gathered that they had decided to alter their design slightly. They were convinced that the fish were going to get so fat and happy in their new home that before long, there would not be enough room for two fish to pass by each other at the entrance.

This was their first pond build, and they were already thinking like fish! This was hilarious! Needless to say, they were off and running at a breakneck pace. Each subsequent rock that went into the pond had its placement scrutinized and criticized with intensity. The discovery of each perfect placement was celebrated with giddy laughter and cheering. After the pond was rocked in, we began work on the



Underwater LED lighting (left) means this family doesn't have to stop enjoying the beauty of the pond when the sun goes down. The floating patio edge (right) makes every approach to the pond an intimate interaction with the ecosystem.

waterfalls.

Building a waterfall for the first time can be a daunting task. Anyone can pile up rocks and hold them together with a can or two of waterfall foam. Building natural waterfalls that don't leak is a different game altogether. I witnessed the team working hard to abandon all the formality of constructed masonry in lieu of following the laws of nature and gravity to create truly natural waterfalls.

With the wetland and waterfalls complete, the moment of truth had arrived. It was time to build the patio and hang those monster-sized stones over the water's edge. For the sake of storytelling, I wish the process were more dramatic, but it truly went off without a hitch, almost as if this was something they did on a daily basis. Once the regular bluestone patio was finished, we traced a sweeping, curved line along the stone's edge overhanging the pond. The stones were cut along this line, and the patio was complete. We love how this organic line is in complete contrast with the straight lines of the regular bluestone, blending the formal and informal.

Picture Perfect

As I pressed the power button on the remote for the waterfall pump, not only did the water start to rise in the wetland and crest over the first rocky drop, but every mason also seemed equally controlled. They dropped their tools and whipped out their phones, snapping photos and narrating

their own selfie videos. I'm not sure who was prouder at that point — they or I.

At this point, we were reminded that our greatest strengths lie within our successes as a team. As the landscaping truck pulled up, the crew emptied out, and in minutes, the TRD Designs crew seemed to have filled every nook and cranny with some type of greenery.

Arboretals surround the patio and create the much-anticipated privacy this family was looking for. Perennials like hydrangeas and fountain grasses serve as natural anchors and textural contrast for all the hard and cold stonework. As plants go into the pond, waterfall, wetland and surrounding landscape, I can't help but reflect that even after installing hundreds of features, I am always pleasantly surprised at how a couple of plants really do make all the difference. Riparian plantings along the water's edge work to blend the spaces in and out of the water into one cohesive, natural space. Not being able to tell where the water stops and the land begins is what makes it all feel natural.

I can't help but think about how our team seems to work just the same way. As I watch a newly hired member of the landscape crew planting a patch of annuals, I realize that the value of my success depends on the efforts of even the greenest member of our team. Just like the nature we try to mimic, no single organism holds more importance than our collective success as an ecosystem. ☘



Incorporating living spaces into the landscape makes it easy to kick back and enjoy the show on nature's entertainment center.

About the Authors

Dylan Arlotta of Aquascapes East has been installing water features

for 25 years in the Hudson Valley of New York. He loves to embrace the randomness of nature and does his best to incorporate the subtle nuances he has observed while out hiking the Catskills and surrounding areas. Realizing every achievement opens the door to a new challenge and reflecting on what each separate water feature teaches him is what keeps him coming back for more.



Tom Dieck,

owner of TRD Designs and Aquascapes East, has won two Water Artisan of the Year awards (Best Pondless 2018, Ponds Revisited 2019). He has more than 34 years of experience in the green industry. His team includes Master Certified Aquascape Contractors and are two-time winners of Unilock's Awards of Excellence. He has also been the lead designer on two episodes of ABC Extreme Makeover: Home Edition.





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| Water Walls |



"Waterwalls of Alaska" were constructed using Anjon MS-3000 pumps. (Photo: Shelton Landon)

by John Olson,
Graystone Industries

The Writing on the Wall

Water walls offer pond perks without the real estate

Over the last decade, the pond industry has seen many changes in direction. Fewer ponds are being put in the ground, with many homeowners opting instead for pond-free waterfalls or fountains. In more recent years, there has been a growing trend toward formal wall fountains, or water walls. Pond supply manufacturers have had to race to expand their offerings to keep up with the exponentially growing demand.

Why Water Walls?

It is my belief that formal wall fountains have never been far from consumers' minds. The main issue in the past has been the lack of available equip-

ment, with most professional installations utilizing custom-made spillways or expensive spouts designed for the pool industry. Now that product lines have expanded to include stainless steel, acrylic and brass options for spillways (and not to mention wall spouts of every size and shape), the design possibilities are endless. Homeowners and water feature installers alike are now able to design and build professional-grade wall fountains in a variety of styles and shapes.

It is important to note that water walls and wall fountains can be installed in a space a fraction of the size required for ponds, making them perfect for customers with small backyards, condo owners and those who just wish to hear the sound of water without the presence of or mainte-

nance associated with a full-sized pond.

Equipment Options

Some water feature builders create wonderful, custom wall fountains using large sheets of glass or metal in limitless combinations. These artistic designs are built with locally sourced raw materials and powered by an appropriately sized submersible pump. However, there is a growing number of products in the water feature industry specifically made to make building water walls easier for consumers and installers alike.

of installation, less water flow required and resistance to discoloration. However, they can easily be damaged during shipping and installation, and the narrow gap that allows the fine sheet of water can get clogged with debris. A filter is required on the pump feeding the spillway.

Another option is metal spillways, or scuppers — two words often used interchangeably. The products themselves may be found in 304 stainless steel (for non-chlorinated use), 316 stainless steel (for pools and chlorine-treated fountains) and copper or copper finish. Sizes range from

expensive acrylic spillways, and the variety of styles and finishes provides more options for appearance and installation. Things to look out for include frequent discoloration, or patina (which some customers love), corrosion when using non-316 stainless steel in chlorinated situations, and the tendency for longer spillways to bend during shipping or installation.

If you're looking for yet another option, there has been an explosion of new metal wall spouts from a variety of manufacturers over the past two to three years. These spouts have long been used in



A 71 1/2-inch stainless steel Vianti Falls spillway with TH250 stainless steel pump and ProSeries pump vault (Photo: Outdoor Innovations, Aledo, Illinois)

Acrylic spillways are offered by nearly every pond supply manufacturer. These can come with and without solid-color and color-changing light strips. These spillways allow for the creation of water walls and custom wall fountains with a solid sheet of water falling down. They range from only 6 inches wide to more than 4 foot in length, with a typical waterfall lip of 2 inches. Acrylic spillways are made to a height that easily allows for installation in block walls. Advantages of acrylic spillways include lower price, ease

of installation, less water flow required and resistance to discoloration. However, they can easily be damaged during shipping and installation, and the narrow gap that allows the fine sheet of water can get clogged with debris. A filter is required on the pump feeding the spillway. Another option is metal spillways, or scuppers — two words often used interchangeably. The products themselves may be found in 304 stainless steel (for non-chlorinated use), 316 stainless steel (for pools and chlorine-treated fountains) and copper or copper finish. Sizes range from

the pool industry, but lately we are seeing more and more pond projects utilizing these stately and versatile spouts. They are offered in 304 stainless steel, electropolished stainless steel (for extra chlorine resistance), solid brass, bronze finish and copper finish. Styles include square, round and oval, each with a multitude of mounting plates to add additional style when installed. Flows range from 5 to 20 gallons per minute, per spout. The expansive variety of metal spouts available on the market ensures a style for every taste.

Some water feature builders create wonderful, custom wall fountains using large sheets of glass or metal in limitless combinations. These artistic designs are built with locally sourced raw materials and powered by an appropriately sized submersible pump.

They are also sturdy, easy to install and scalable, allowing you to use as few or as many as needed for the project. Still, keep an eye out for possible long-term discoloration or corrosion when using certain finishes in chlorinated situations.

Outdoor Accent Wall

Illuminate a water wall using any of the endlessly versatile LED lighting products that lend themselves to many different water feature applications. Lighting strips can be found in many sizes, ranging from only 6 inches to well over 5 feet. These strips can be a solid color, such as white, or blue or red, or offer programmable options for color-changing lights. Recent advances have added both WiFi and app control at your fingertips. You can utilize lighting in many ways, including spout lights, corrosion-resistant lighting for chlori-

nated use and accent lighting for in and around the water feature.

Using the different types of products discussed in this article allows for countless styles of water wall features. While it is hard to replace the amazing creations that artists may custom build, water walls bring affordability, versatility and beauty to the many homeowners and businesses who install them.

As the wants and needs of consumers continue to change, the water feature industry must work to keep up. Smaller, more formal and creative features are taking their place alongside larger, natural-looking ponds and water gardens. While having fewer ponds going in the ground is a cause of concern for many pond builders, their fears can be cast aside by embracing this trend toward formal wall fountains and water walls. ☞

A custom-built copper rain curtain (top) is powered with an EasyPro TLS2750 pump. (Photo: Artfully Rogue, Phoenix, Arizona) Landmark Construction in Roswell, Georgia constructed a water wall (second) with three EasyPro SSS35 spillways lit with color-changing Cabrio CLED4SS lights. Great Lakes Landscape Design in Oak Park, Michigan crafted two 71 1/2-inch stainless steel Vianti Falls Spillways (third) with a TH750 stainless steel pump. A 36-inch acrylic spillway (bottom) is made by American Pond (model no. APAS36-CW) and has white LED lights. (Photo: H. Lundh, Vancouver, Washington)



About the Author



John Olson is a retired "crime reporter," avid alligator wrestler and CEO of Graystone Industries, a distributor for more than a dozen brands of quality pond supplies with warehouse and retail locations in Georgia and North Carolina. When he's not working, John often spends his time hiking in the Appalachians, kayaking or

writing. For more information: www.graystonecreations.com.

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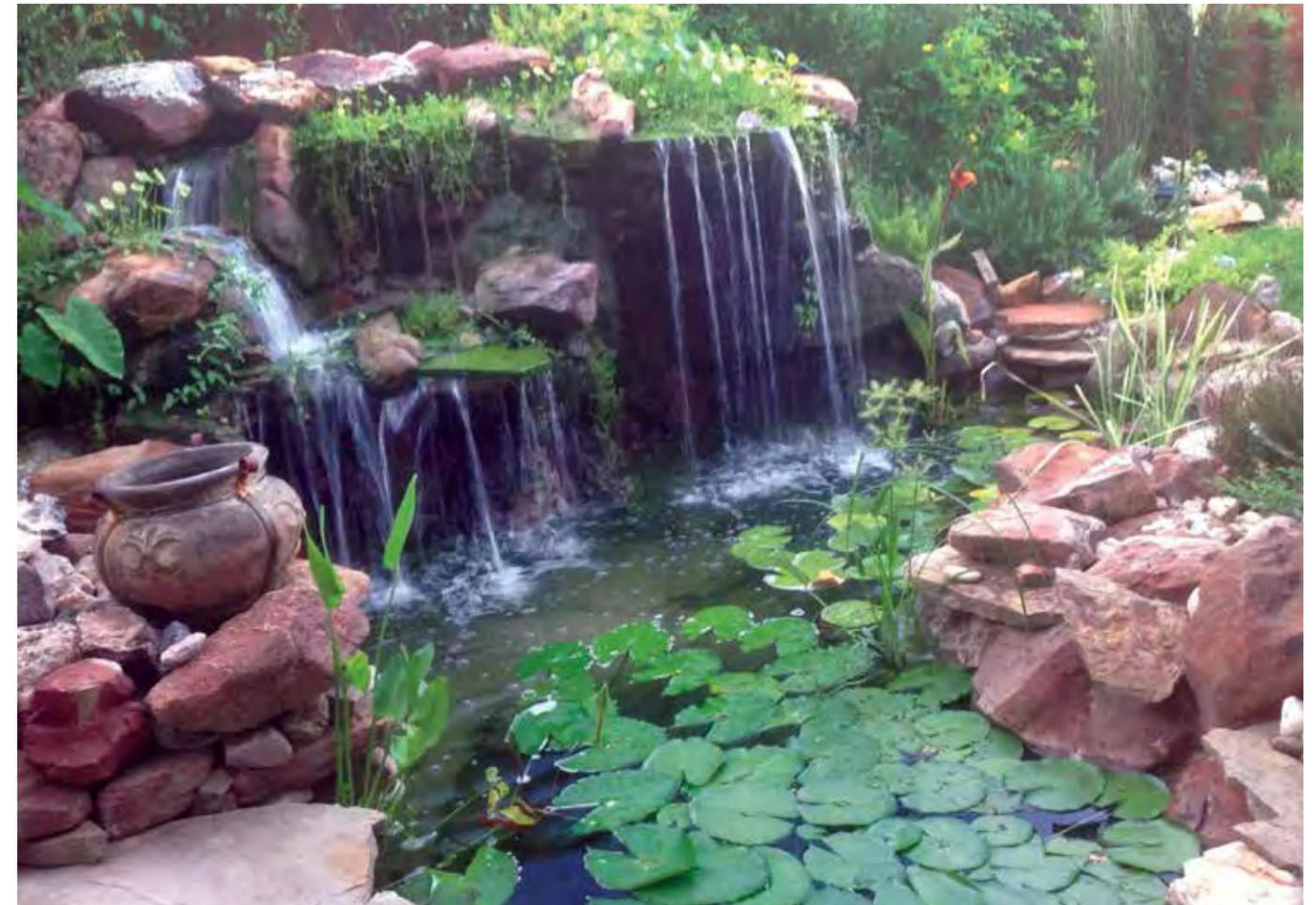
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| Pond Size |



This 6-foot-tall waterfall is perfect for this space, set against the back fence with vines and shrubbery surrounding the falls. The wider-than-normal rock work not only adds more water flow, but also introduces a unique visual that accommodates the height of the waterfall.

How Big Should I Build?

Engage with the customer in your pursuit of perfection

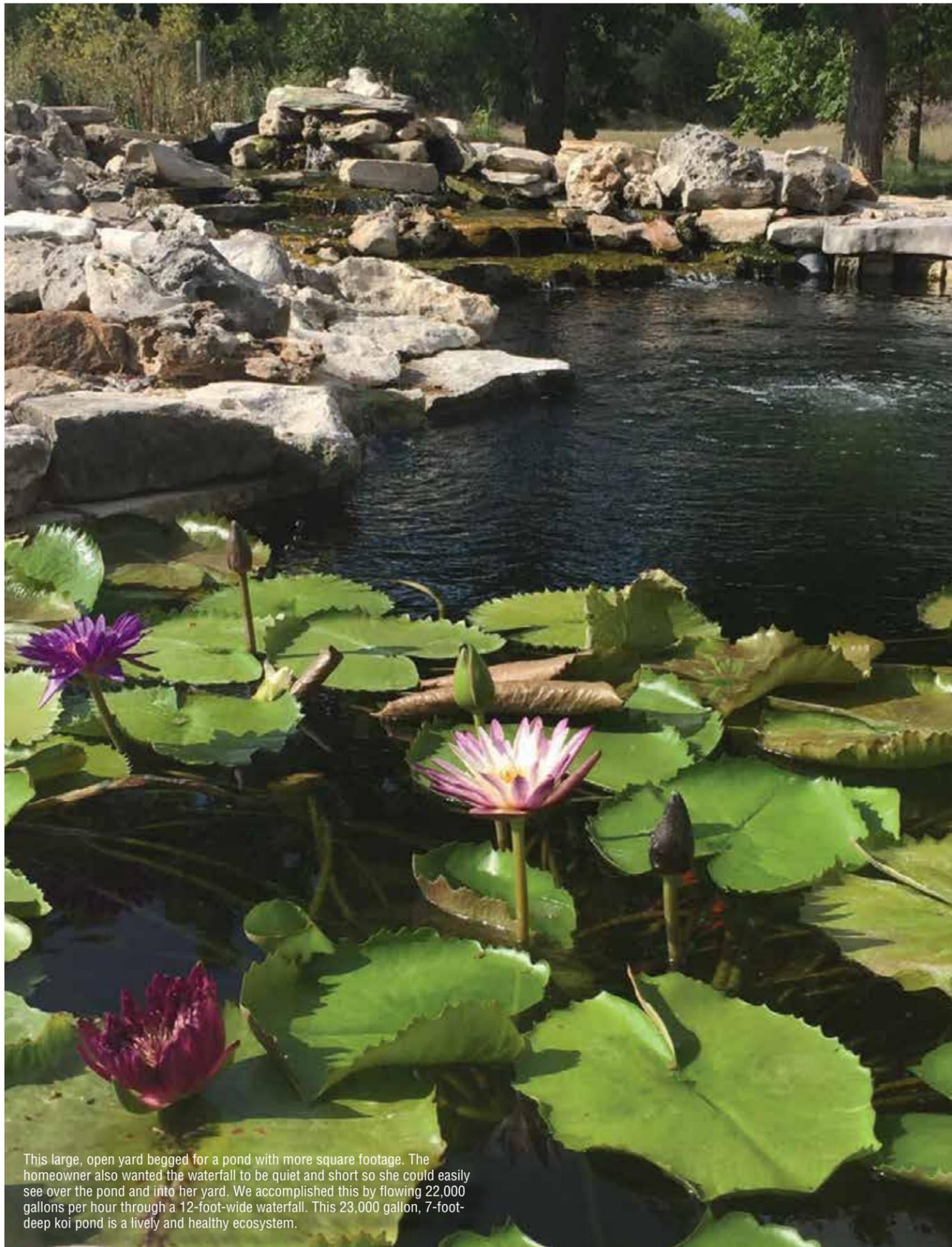
by **Shane Stefak**,
 Water Garden Gems

When it comes to ponds, few questions are more common and complicated to answer than “How big should you build?” The potential answers to this daunting question can be endless, depending on what, who, why, where and how. How you approach it can separate the novice or DIY-er from the experienced professional.

As professionals, we are tasked to build the perfect

feature. However, “perfect,” in this case, is always defined by the client, so it’s important to be a great listener. It is said that great listeners answer questions with another question to get better clarity of the person, the situation and the anticipated answer.

So, while I cannot come right out and tell you how big you should build, if you were to participate in a game of 20 Questions with me, I could tell you what you need to know. We are called on as experts to know how big a particular pond or feature should be, but we must humbly understand first and foremost that the customer



This large, open yard begged for a pond with more square footage. The homeowner also wanted the waterfall to be quiet and short so she could easily see over the pond and into her yard. We accomplished this by flowing 22,000 gallons per hour through a 12-foot-wide waterfall. This 23,000 gallon, 7-foot-deep koi pond is a lively and healthy ecosystem.

is the keeper of the answer. Our job is to help them find it.

Ask & Listen

When a homeowner asks me how big their water feature should be, I always have some basic questions ready to ask. Why do they want the pond? Are they putting koi or goldfish in the pond? What about plants? How often do they plan on enjoying the pond? What drew them to wanting a pond in the first place? What other, if any, landscaping changes or builds are they planning in the near future? Who will end up enjoying the pond? How likely is it that they will want a bigger, better pond in the future after they reap the initial benefits of the pond lifestyle? With the answers to questions like these, we are ready to get somewhere!

For it is impossible for a professional to build a client's "perfection" if they do not know the client and fully understand what they are envisioning.

We were blessed to do a pond rebuild

for a wonderful couple this summer. They met with multiple contractors and ultimately chose us to do the job, in large part because I stood in their backyard with them for more than 90 minutes talking, asking questions, throwing ideas at them and, most importantly, listening. My

needs. This is why they are hiring you.

Be the Expert

After you accept that the client is in control of the answers to all these questions, you can then merge your education, experience and knowhow with the

For it is impossible for a professional to build a client's 'perfection' if they do not know the client and fully understand what they are envisioning.

competitors had pitched a project that was double the size they were interested in and three times the budget they had discussed over the phone. They insisted on selling them all new equipment, even though the client's existing skimmer and waterfall box were perfectly fine to use again in the rebuild. Basically, the contractors did not listen to what the clients wanted, and they were unable to offer an acceptable product. You build to fulfill your client's

client's desires to create boundaries and basic rules for the project. For example, we cannot build a 500-gallon koi pond — that's just too small. If the maximum size of the project is 500 gallons, help the customer adjust their expectations. Perhaps shubunkin or sarassa comet goldfish would be a better option.

If the customer wants koi, how many? The answer to this question sets the floor for minimal size requirements for the pond. What if the customer wants a

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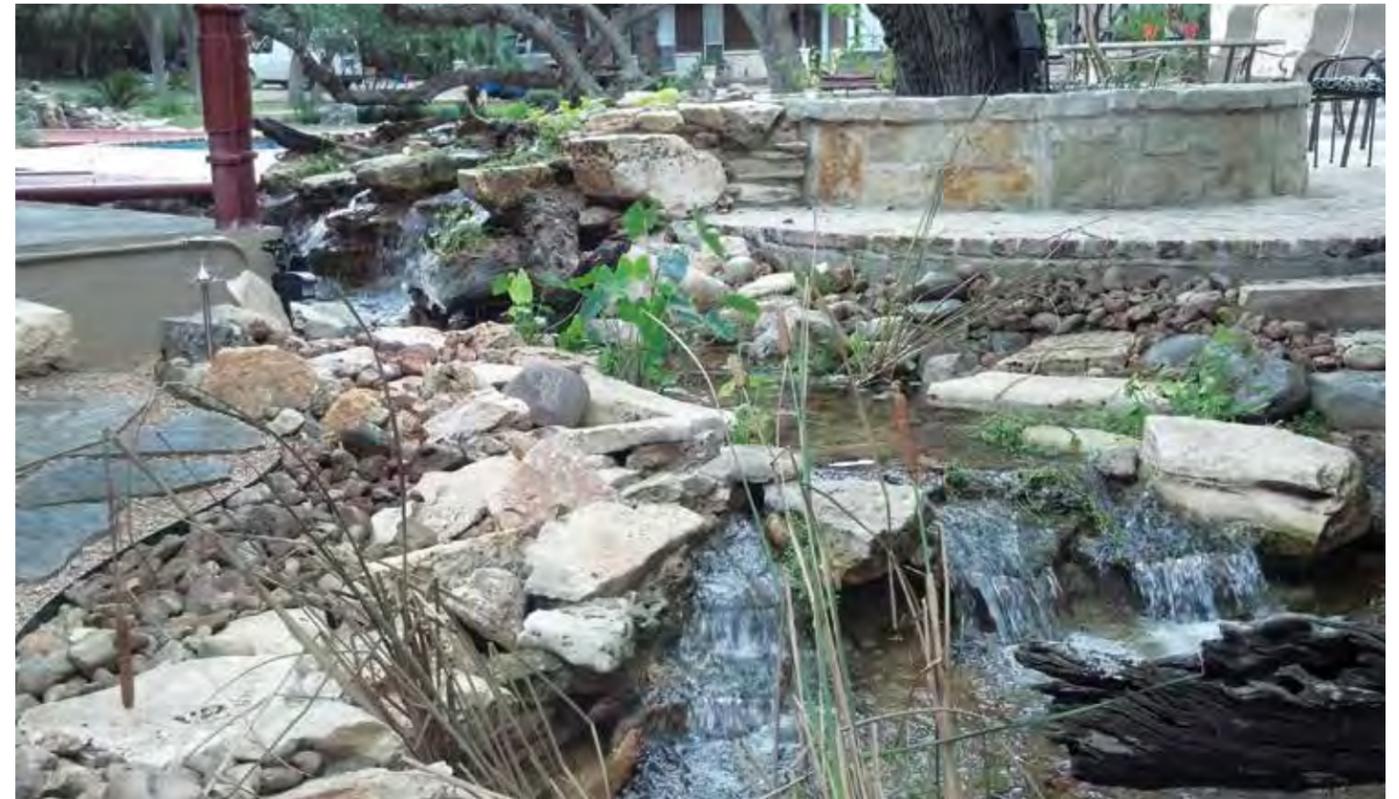
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We replaced a 2-foot-wide, brushed steel fountain a landscaper had installed with this four-urn set, spanning 6 feet wide and 6 feet tall in front of this large home, creating a big showstopper and statement. Larger homes require larger features when you are doing front-yard landscaping.



This 60-foot stream water feature flows through the entire backyard between the large patios, swimming pool, sitting area and old heritage oaks, bringing the yard together perfectly with three waterfalls that dump into a nice goldfish pond at the end.

waterfall to drown out highway noise? With our experience and understanding of water sounds, we know that we have to flow a certain amount of water and drop it through the air from a certain minimum height to create the desired volume of sound for the customer.

There's also the allotted space to consider, or the blank canvas. You want to help the client envision the project in the space. How will it merge with the landscaping and fit perfectly into place? We do not want to build too small and lose the opportunity to achieve the wow effect that water features tend to bring, but we do not want to build too large and overshadow everything else around it. Horizontal and vertical balance in the landscaping is critical. The water feature must fall into scale within the total landscape, both in space covered and height created.

Ultimately, it is our responsibility to explain how and why we are merging the customer's dream with our expertise in defining size requirements based on the setting and purpose of use. This is what sets us experienced professionals apart from

the rest. We know a koi pond needs to be large. We know a waterfall needs to have some white water, which often requires a larger pump than one might expect. We know that added depth to a pond can make everything easier in the long run with cooler water. We know that shallow beach slopes, while they look neat, are feeding grounds for predator birds and raccoons and should not be part of a koi pond.

Know Your Customer

Remember that the definition of perfection in this situation is twofold. It is defined by the homeowner in visual and blending effects and defined by the contractor from a purpose and use angle. It has to be big enough for the client to use properly for their personal desires, whether it be a water feature in the landscaping or a koi pond feeding their upcoming hobby. It must be sized perfectly into its space within the environment so that it visually fits.

So, how big should you build? Build the size that looks right to the customer within the space constraints and landscaping. The customer is a huge part of this part of the

equation. Always build the size so that the utilitarian purpose of the feature is achieved. Base the size the customer needs on the 20 questions you ask at the consultation.

The perfect size of a feature is not dimensional; it is defined by what, who, where, why and how. It takes a professional to be able to answer these questions. ☞

About the Author

Shane Stefek is the president of

Water Garden Gems, a koi and pond specialty retailer outside San Antonio, Texas.

Water Garden Gems has been a leader in the koi and water

garden industry for more than 25 years.

Water Garden Gems annually hosts the longest-running koi show in Texas and is

a premier supplier of imported Japanese koi and show-quality goldfish.





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Mix of young and hungry koi.

| Language of **Koi** |

Quarantine for Koi

When social distancing & fish don't mix

by **Evan McNulty**,
Mt. Parnell Fisheries Inc.

It might as well be a four-letter word, but considering the times we're in, I'd go out on a limb and say that most everyone has become familiar with what it means for us humans to quarantine. In the end, the idea is to keep people safe from potential harm.

This is exactly the idea when it comes to quarantining fish. To a hobbyist, they are like family. Quarantining freshwater fish is intended not only to prevent

potential problems with integrating new fish into a population, but also to spare the lives of those that came before them. Since your new finned friends may have an issue grasping the concept of social distancing, they must quarantine!

While it's always important to buy healthy fish from a reputable dealer, sometimes we end up adopting fish from friends and family, or as a result of an "it was cheap" moment at a yard sale. Maybe your children won another goldfish at the fair. No big deal. But when you finally purchase that mature

showa butterfly koi you had always wanted, it's best to plan ahead!

Two important factors in determining how long to quarantine are the quality of care the new fish received before it came to you, and the personal value of your existing fish. The recommended range of a quarantine is somewhere between two and four weeks. Most pest problems should rear their ugly faces by then. In commercial situations, when adding brood stock, this may take upward of a year or more to ensure a safe and healthy integration.





Welcome Home!

Well, almost. A quarantine is just temporary quarters, but whether in a tank, a tub or extra pond, everything should be independent and isolated from all other fish to discourage transferring harmful pathogens. All pumps, filters and other equipment should only be used for the quarantined fish. Cross-contamination happens when liquids or organic materials are transferred from one environment to another and can result from something as simple as using a net that wasn't properly disinfected. Sanitation is essential, so wash your hands.

Maybe you're blessed and saved that first practice pond you built in the far corner of your property. Or, perhaps you have a 20-gallon "hospital" tank to support your primary 100-gallon aquarium. Either way, water quality is and always will be the most important factor in the survival of any fish. The idea

is to get the quarantine water to mimic the parameters of your established population. It is still crucial to monitor and maintain the alkalinity, pH, hardness, oxygen and ammonia. Continue to clean a tank and do small (but daily) water changes. Every fish species has a range of conditions it can tolerate, but poor water quality will always add extra stress that eventually leaves fishy friends more susceptible to pest pressures. Give your fish three or four days to acclimate themselves. This is a good time to do a visual inspection of their body, motions and behaviors.

Testing ... One, Two ...

It's a scary world out there sometimes, and even though there are no

cures for some things that ail us, at least we can test for them. Pathogens like bacterial infections, fungi, disease and parasites will often trigger a visual sign or symptom of the infection. A key indicator of a parasite might be elevated breathing, white-colored feces or erratic behavior, like flashing its white belly upward in an attempt to shed the infestation.

If you have a microscope, you could peek a little more closely at the fish's health. Aside from sacrificing a fish for the greater good, a gill and scale sample is just as easy as (and certainly less deadly than) a sacrifice. This can usually be done without significantly harming any fish and should allow you to see if there are any parasites present



like scale and gill flukes, chilodonella and trichodina. The microscopic world is very intriguing to me, but it's often hard to imagine some of the things you can see when you look through the glass. Conversely, some anchor worms and fish lice produce sores that are visible to the naked eye.

Cotton wool disease, also known as columnaris, is a bacterial disease caused by flexibacter bacteria. Columnaris appears as cottony, white fuzz found around the head and body, sometimes resembling what's referred to as a "saddleback." The fish become lethargic and quit eating. While flexibacter is likely present in all ponds, it can be transmitted easily under the right conditions. The same goes for

A low-maintenance quarantine pond (opposite page) is shown in a country setting. An anchor worm (above) was found between the dorsal and tail fin on a black moor.

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Small quarantine (top, left) pond. Large (above) quarantine tank. Columnaris or 'saddleback' disease (top, right) on tails and back of black moors. An elaborate tank (middle, right) at a hospital. Commercial grade I (bottom, right) quarantine tank.



Hopefully by the fourth week, any noticeable problems will have been addressed, and these lonely, isolated fish can swim in the waters they call their new home.

white spot disease, otherwise known as "Ich." White spot disease involves small, pinpoint-sized white cysts that eventually multiply and form larger, white patches on the scales, gills and fins. The cysts eventually produce a parasite that will eventually swim off to find another host.

I've never been a big believer in preventative treatments in lieu of testing, but they are out there for those of you who just don't want to take any chances. It's not always that easy to notice these issues if your quarantined fish are in a pond, but if and when you do recognize the signs of a pest, you do have options for treatments. Depending on the pathogen, I've always relied on salt baths, copper, potassium permanganate or formaldehyde-based medications. Regardless of your choice, you should always remember to read the directions and follow them closely to avoid any potentially harsh reactions. If all else fails, don't be afraid to consult a fish biologist or veterinarian who is

fluent in aquaculture.

Preventive Pond Care

Hopefully by the fourth week, any noticeable problems will have been addressed, and these lonely, isolated fish can swim in the waters they call their new home. As an added precaution, some enthusiasts like to introduce a couple of their oldest existing fish with the newly quarantined fish before they are introduced to the rest of the main population. This can be a last-ditch effort to predict any transmittable pathogen, but after an extra week or two of commingling, it should be sufficient.

In a perfect world, none of this would be necessary. But that is just not the way it is. Preventable illnesses arise in humans and fish alike, and they have to be tackled with focus and persistence, sometimes just in order to survive. Fear not, though. We have the tools and the knowledge not only to heal, but to avoid infections altogether. When your new fish finally swim away to meet their

adopted friends and family, you can rest easy knowing that everything in your power was done to keep them safe and happy. ☺

About the Author

Evan McNulty is originally from Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, where he grew up spending time outdoors hunting and fishing. He has an associate's degree in horticulture from the Pennsylvania College of Technology. He and his wife have three children and enjoy sitting around campfires, making mountain pies with friends and family and kayaking the Conococheague Creek on cool, crisp mornings.



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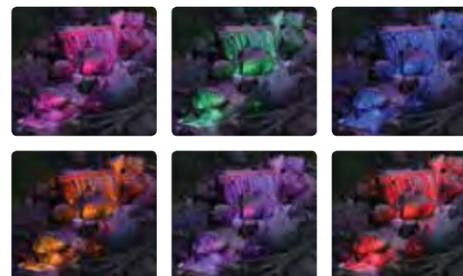
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A Solid FOUNDATION

Concrete pond construction techniques

by Erick Santana,
Bella's Aquatic Gardens

As a Pond Pirate, I enjoy creating ponds that look larger than life, even when they are small. Considering the subtropical climate we have in South Florida, I can't help but put a tropical stamp of approval on each of my designs. When I sit down to map out my thoughts, I love to sketch a rough blueprint and create conceptual drawings so I can envision the beauty I am going to get my hands on.

It all starts with a vision. Once there is a clear picture, the fun begins. Building a concrete pond is in no way an easy task, as there are many components that go into making a well built one. Even more so, many pond builders think of concrete ponds as a box with no movement. I have managed to prove time and time again that concrete ponds can be made in any shape, form and depth you so desire. Concrete ponds are often square or rectangular in shape as formal ponds, but as a Pond Pirate, giving a concrete pond a little flavor is definitely on my to-do list.

My Own Pond Evolution

When I first started building ponds, I naturally used my yard as a test dummy. I built a tiny, semi-shallow pond just so I could have waterlilies and small marginals to grow on my would-be waterfall. Time has since passed, and my style has evolved to the point where my new pond, which sits in the same location as my old pond, puts the beginner pond to shame.

The original pond had a liner with concrete overlay. It had a good run of about 16 years (with the occasional facelift), but ultimately as my construction style changed, so did my vision of an ideal pond for my backyard. The second time around, my heart was set on a concrete pond with a twist of tropical Zen and functionality. The space was quite small, and the live oak in our yard was in the way, but I was determined

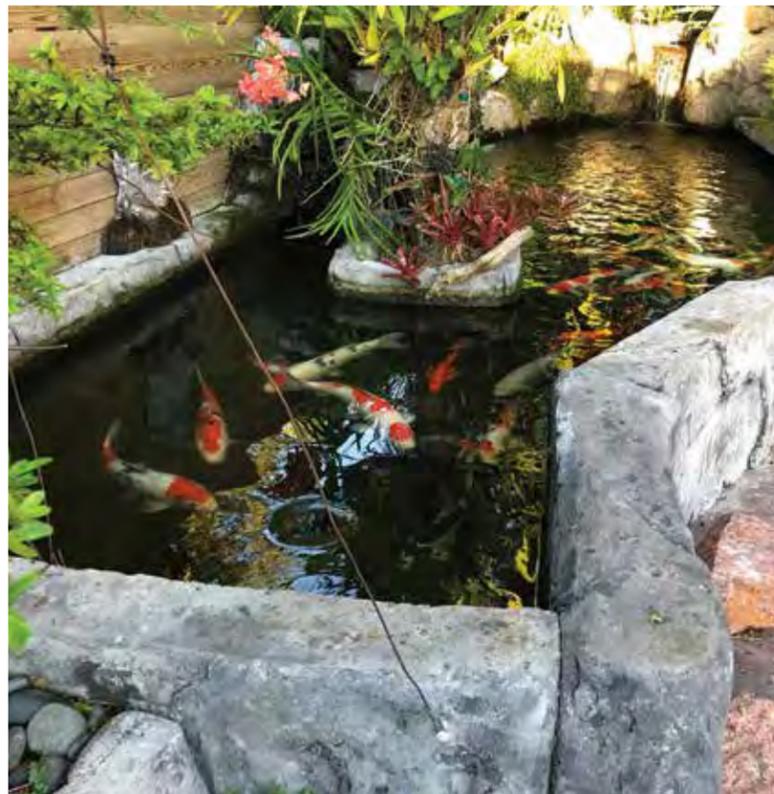
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to make an exceptional work of art. With the right equipment, I broke ground and ripped out the old pond. I made sure to dig deeper to create the adequate space and depth I needed for my koi to thrive.

In South Florida, there are strict building regulations when it comes to concrete structures, and even more so when water is concerned. Knowing this, my construction background went full throttle. Any body



Concrete installation (above, left) is shown at Delvista Towers - Aventura (Miami, Florida). We built another concrete pond (above, right) in Coral Gables, Florida.



These before (left) and after (right) photos of our pond show the rock-sculpting process.



A glass viewing window showcases some of our Japanese koi.

of water having a depth of 24 inches or greater falls into the category of swimming pool construction. Building these bodies of water requires meeting all the necessary rules and regulations to ensure you have a sound product. Some of these regulations, for example, include fencing around the body of water, self-closing latches on the fences around the property and even anti-entrapment drains. Keeping all these rules in mind, I relied on my skill set to make sure this pond would not only comply with our strict guidelines, but also last a lifetime.

Proactive Plumbing

When building a concrete pond, rough plumbing is your very first step (after digging your hole, of course). Plumbing of a pond is as important as the circulatory system in your body. You

always need to make sure you measure twice and cut once. Calculate all your fittings, pipe lengths and placement as



In most pond builds, my typical spacing for rebar is 8 inches.

a failsafe for your returns and intakes to fall exactly where you need them staged. The best glue I have found to use in this

industry is a heavy-duty gray and medium gray PVC glue. When applying this glue after using PVC cleaner and primer, it facilitates more work time, taking longer to cure so you have more wiggle room to line up everything correctly.

With everything glued in place and all your pipes staged, you are ready to put your work under pressure. Pressure-testing your plumbing is crucial to do before you begin framing your steel. Sealing your return and intake lines with caps and installing a pressure test kit, including a pressure gauge and hose bib, you will be able to fill your lines with water and compressed air to guarantee there are no leaks in your system. After 24 hours of maintained pressure, you may proceed with the work.

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accidental breaks on your lines will be noticed right away and will be much easier to repair. Attempting to fix a leaky pipe under a concrete structure is extremely difficult, especially when you have no idea where it is.

Framing your pond correctly is another important component to building a concrete pond. This is what holds it all together and gives strength to the concrete. No. 3 rebar is the industry standard in South Florida. How you place it makes all the difference. Rebar should always be at a maximum spacing of 10 inches off center. I prefer to position them every 6 – 8 inches. This may seem excessive, but I honestly feel that the integrity of the pond heavily relies on the strength of its structure.

Where you embed the rebar is also an important note to remember. I have learned that embedding the rebar on the upper half of your concrete work from the ground is what provides the necessary strength to hold the tons of pressure caused by the volume of water you are putting in it, as well as the overall weight of the whole pond. It reduces the chances of the concrete cracking and losing water.

Make it Pour!

Once all your rebar cage is set and installed, you are ready for your pour. When pouring concrete, we used 3,500-psi concrete and a shotcrete pump. Using the shotcrete method (a hydraulic concrete pump and large air compressor), we created a compacted concrete installation. This method projects the concrete at high velocities onto the surface due to the force of the compressed air being ejected from the nozzle. We poured 6 – 8 inches on the walls and 8 – 10 inches on the floor.

After about two days of shooting concrete, we began the process of waterproofing. After many years of trial and error, I have found the most effective waterproofing systems to be Basecrete and Flexcrete, when applied correctly. Prepping your surface is key to a seamless application. Thoroughly cleaning the surface from all loose particles, dirt,



oils and any other contaminants makes a world of difference. Your product is only as good as what you apply it to. Pressure-washing and acid-washing your surface before application is the best way to go to make sure the surface is as clean as possible to apply your first coat. Applying three coats of the waterproofing membrane with a 24-hour dry time between each layer will guarantee a

watertight structure.

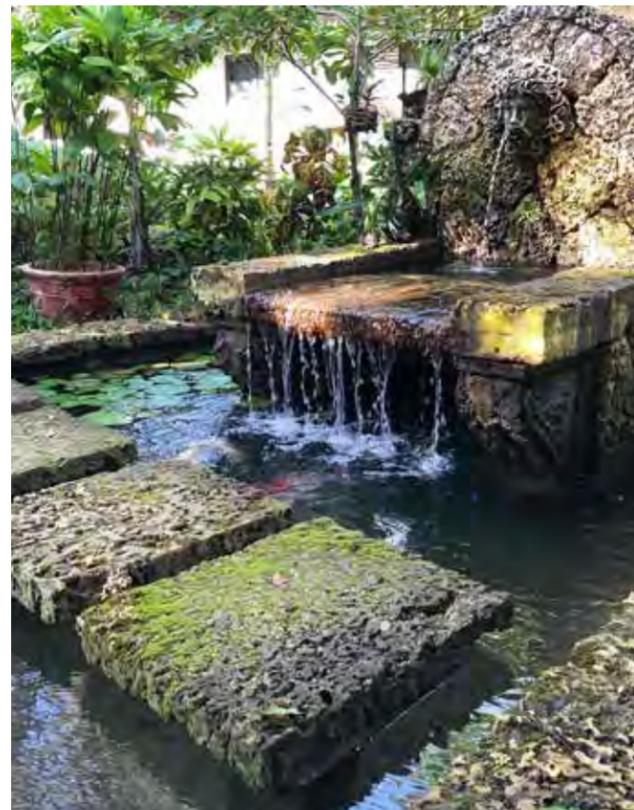
After the very last coat of your waterproofing has been applied, you have to wait about a week for it to fully cure. This is the best opportunity to fine tune all of your details, from the pumps and filtration connections to the rocks you will be staging on your pond. I decided to make the look my own, creating all my hardscape out of EPS foam and vertical

concrete carving mix. This allowed us to really carve into the space and develop the area as desired.

A main perk to using faux rock in your installation is simply the art of manipulation. You can create any shape that suits your style and even defy gravity. The opportunity to create the perfect rock for my waterfall was there, and I had to go for it.



Building the perfect home for our koi (top) was a multi-phase process. The waterproofing membrane (bottom left) is freshly installed, as my onlookers supervise. We used heavy machinery (bottom right) to resize the space and transform the waterscape.



A negative edge koi pond (top left) with mangrove island is shown in Miami. We also built a formal concrete pond (top right) in Pinecrest. A concrete pond at Grove Paradise (bottom left) was decked out with some awe-inspiring floating steps (bottom right).



Don't be surprised when you make a mess while using this method. You have to literally get in the mud and toss it up and around to fill every void. Make sure to cover your entire workspace with protective tarp as a failsafe from damaging the waterproofing you have just recently applied.

A Touch Above the Rest

Your mess has been cleared, with waterproofing fully cured. Now, you finalize your pond with finish, right? Not if you have a few extra tricks up your sleeve.

My vision for this pond included something special that would draw people in and leave them awestricken. A viewing glass window that was 2 feet high and 4 feet long would become the icing on the cake, elevating it from ordinary to over the top. Dealing with glass is a very delicate procedure, especially when it is 1-inch-thick Starfire Glass. We suspended the glass with 1/4-inch stainless steel bolts that were embedded

in the face of the pond. Using the bolts provided the extra support and required strength to seal it to the concrete walls. We used a rubberized polyurethane to

We suspended the glass with 1/4-inch stainless steel bolts that were embedded in the face of the pond. Using the bolts provided the extra support and required strength to seal it to the concrete walls. We used a rubberized polyurethane to seam it together.

seam it together.

We plastered the pond with Onyx Diamond Brite pool finish to give the illusion of depth and make the pond more comfortable for the fish. This finish is an exposed aggregate finish that we polished until the cream of the plaster surfaced. This was the exact texture we needed for the inside of our pond so that there would be no rough edges where the fish could scratch themselves.

With the shell now fully completed and ready for water, I went a little crazy

with what would power this magnificent pond. The Pirate within me went all in with the Mack Daddy of all filtration systems. I'm a general fan of over

filtering the ponds I build. My clients love to feed their fish, and so do I. The only way to avoid problems with this is to make sure you have a great filtration system to compensate for the fish load. I used a 6-cubic-foot CG-TEK Alpha One filter, which is rated for 20,000 gallons; my pond is only 4,000 gallons. I also installed an additional biomechanical prefilter along with a 4-cubic-foot moving bed filter, which served as the water source for our main waterfall.

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A formal koi pond sets an elegant tone at Delvista Towers - Aventura in Miami, Florida.

Make it Green

Ready for water, ready for fish ... but the look still doesn't seem complete. You need to add some color to your paradise. Complement your pond with a variety of foliage. I let my love for plants go wild as I shopped for aroids, philodendrons, bamboo grass, bromeliads and ferns. Every crevasse, every corner, every nook and cranny were laced in greenery. This provided even more movement as the plants began to flourish in their new home.

Before adding fish, it is always a good idea to allow your pond to cycle, which can take anywhere from four to six weeks. At any point in this cycle, your ammonia, nitrites and nitrates can skyrocket and create an ugly situation if fish are already in there. I learned the art of patience during this time, because I wanted to see my pond up and running. I would highly recommend introducing a few test fish to see how they fare prior to adding all your babies, just to confirm your pond is ready to house your pets.

My love for koi over the years has grown so much. I wanted my pond to have variety and color, and as there are many different classifications, it is very difficult to fall in love with just one type. There are Sanke, Showa, Hi-Utsuri and Kujako, just to name a few. I also wanted shades of blue, so I chose electric blue ahli cichlids to give the pond an extra touch of color I would not be able to obtain with just koi.

For me, this pond has not only been a personal goal for myself and my building skills, but it was also my chance to create paradise in my own backyard. I come home in the late afternoon after a hard day's work and just sit in front of my pond. My babies have learned to line up in front of the viewing glass to greet me when they hear the sound of the back-door closing, just waiting for a fistful of food to fall in the water. This has become my safe space — my therapy, if you will.

All piratey things aside, I hope this will inspire anyone to take a chance and

try something new. Open a new chapter and create something other than your run-of-the-mill liner pond. It never hurts to think outside the box! 

About the Author

Erick Santana is the owner and president of Bella's Aquatic Gardens since early 2005. He comes from an extensive art background, from graffiti art to graphic design. The son of a general contractor, he was born into the construction trade. He learned how to read blueprints at the age of 10. While he has been surrounded by construction, he has always been a passionate artist. When he learned how to fuse these two gifts together, he found his true calling — water features and design.



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This large pond is a beautiful example of a two-pump, two-skimmer system.

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How installing two-pump systems can save your weekend

by **Rex McCaskill**,
Pond Professors Inc.

After being a business owner in the pond industry for more than 10 years, you respect the hard work and relationships you have formed with longtime customers. You also learn that your personal time and weekends are also very important. Weekends allow you to recharge your mind and body so you can continue to give your best to the business.

I own Pond Professors Inc., in Greensboro, North Carolina. I built my business with a strong focus on maintenance, which allows me to have full-time employees working year-round rather than relying on seasonal help during peak times. In central North Carolina, we usually build or renovate new features 10 months a year. The number of service accounts and new features we build each year leads to frequent communication with our customers. It can be overwhelming and rewarding at the same time. The goal is to continue engagement with customers while also reducing the number of unnecessary phone calls about pond issues that can frustrate both pond owners and business owners.



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I've found that as you plan for new pond builds and maintenance contracts, installing a two-pump system — although it may seem extreme to some pond owners — can save time, money and heartache.

Two Pumps in a Fishpond?

The idea here is to strategically balance your work and family time. Picture it: the work week ends, and Saturday finally arrives. You have worked hard all week to satisfy your customers in extreme conditions, so your body and mind naturally need time to recover and prepare to do it all over again the following week. Saturday afternoon rolls around. It's 95 degrees. You just threw some steaks on the grill and opened your first adult beverage. Then, the phone rings.

"My pump quit working, and my fish are going to die!" your customer exclaims.

Now, your afternoon has completely changed, and your responsibility to that customer and your livelihood (i.e., what allows you to have a house and grill steaks on a Saturday afternoon) takes over. Bottom line, if you are going to build ponds or provide maintenance on ponds, you need to plan on how to address an issue like this without taking away from your precious family time.

When building a standard pond, typically the waterfall pump by itself gives the pond enough oxygen to sustain aquatic life. However, if that sole pump fails, we have a big problem. At Pond Professors Inc., we install an air system in even the most basic ponds, and we strongly recommend adding this feature to our maintenance accounts that lack a secondary oxygen source. An air pump adds oxygen to preserve life as well as benefit the overall health of the pond by supplying it to the floor and rotating the water from the bottom upward.

Two Is Better Than One

If you can, it is wise to run the air pump on a separate circuit from the waterfall pump, just in case the ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlet is

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tripped from one of the units going bad or getting moisture in it from a heavy rain. This way, your other oxygen source will continue to run with no loss of aquatic life! Always remember that air diffusers need to be lifted to the top shelf in the winter to keep a hole open in the ice. This ensures that super cooling does not happen to the pond water, which will harm the fish that are hibernating.

Also, if the customer states that there is a leak, 95 percent of the time it will be in the waterfall areas due to debris blockage, a low edge of liner or a plumbing issue. Armed with a secondary pump source, you can tell the customer to just turn off the waterfall pump, and the air system will maintain the pond oxygen level so that the issue can be addressed on Monday. Now you have successfully saved your Saturday afternoon with your family while putting the pond owner at ease.

Other O2 Options

Another system that works well is to install two pumps in one skimmer. By incorporating this

method, you can reduce the pump sizes and run one through an ultraviolet light or a bog filter and have the flow come into the pond in another location. If one pump goes bad, the other will continue to run if they are on separate electrical circuits. On larger ponds, you can use two skimmers, with each pulling from different locations of the pond surface to ensure that there are no dead spots in the skimming action. Once again, it is crucial to separate electrical circuits in case a pump goes bad and trips the GFCI. This avoids both pumps stalling and risking loss of pond life. The pump will likely fail at some point, so using different electrical circuits ensures that a two-pump system can successfully complete the job of keeping ponds running and saving your Saturday afternoon plans.

You can also simply drop in a second pump that sits on the bottom of a pond. This is seemingly easy to do, but a word of caution: there are drawbacks to this method. First and foremost, maintaining the submerged pump is a challenge. I choose not to

An air system (top left) is installed in the deepest part of an existing pond. A larger pond (bottom left) requires multiple waterfall pumps and an air system combination. A waterfall (below) incorporates a two-pump system with bog filtration.



use this method, because servicing the pump requires physically getting into the water. Further, if a leak occurs in the plumbing line outside the pond, all the water could drain out, resulting in the loss of aquatic life. This method also requires an additional step in the winter, because the bottom pump needs to be turned off to ensure

You can reduce the pump sizes and run one through an ultraviolet light or a bog filter and have the flow come into the pond in another location. If one pump goes bad, the other will continue to run if they are on separate electrical circuits.

a warmer water temperature at the lowest level in the pond for the fish to overwinter. Thus, during the winter months, the pond defaults back to a one-pump system, essentially defeating the purpose of a two-pump system.

Recommendations

While there are many two-pump combination choices, my favorite is the pump and air system. The maintenance of the air pump, air stone or diffuser is minimal and very dependable, serving as a fish-saving oxygen source for the health of the whole pond. We have actually built ponds large enough for a full pond lake air system by Atlantic-OASE. The energy consumption is very low for air pumps, and the rate of pond turnover is generally more than other pond pumps can provide.

A few other industry recommendations include the Atlantic TT Series magnetic drive pumps, because they are energy saving and always good in low-head pressure situations. They also will not deplete your customer's wallet when purchasing and running it. The dual pump in the skimmer is a reward for the customer when you downsize



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Ideally, installing a two-pump system in a new pond will save you and the customer time, money and heartache.

the pumps and go with two 3,000-gph pumps instead of one 6,000-gph pump. This gives the pond owner a backup plan in case one pump fails in the system. The company also has a unique satellite skimmer that will allow a 3,000-gph pump.

I am a believer in most skimmers on the market, even though I know you can lose a fish to it on occasion. However, the risk is worth the reward when it comes to

reducing unnecessary maintenance issues. Having a two-pump system does require a bit more work on the front end, but it can be an invaluable tool in pond performance, customer satisfaction and relationship building, while also preserving your personal time. Weekend calls and service trips come with a heavy price, so plan ahead and install a two-pump system on every pond. ☞

About the Author

Rex McCaskill owns Pond Professors Inc. in Greensboro, North Carolina, and manages a team of five full-time employees. He has grown the business over the last 10 years and has learned much through this journey. He believes in a strong commitment to customer service through responsiveness and trusting relationships. When it comes to water features, quality is more important than quantity. He loves his job and the ability to create beautiful spaces for people to gather and enjoy. He is a firm believer in "Living the Pond Life."



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Video conferencing with live chat sessions proved almost as effective as in-person networking at this year's Pondemonium.

Pondemonium Goes **VIRTUAL**

Aquascape's annual event held online in 2020

by **Jennifer Zuri**,
Aquascape, Inc.

Pondemonium is one of the water gardening industry's preeminent annual business, training and networking events. Hosted by Aquascape, Inc., it hosts hundreds of water feature contractors, retailers, and distributors from around the globe

every year for a multi-day event that features hands-on training sessions and a waterfall-building contest.

After 20 years of hosting live, in-person Pondemonium events, Greg Wittstock, CEO and founder of Aquascape Inc., grappled with a difficult decision in the middle of the Coronavirus pandemic. Cancel Pondemonium 2020 or figure out a way to hold the event online?



Alan Decker of Decker's Pondscaapes in New York shared the challenges and successes of his journey from general landscaper to recipient of the 2016 Aquascape Artist of the Year.



Greg Wittstock, owner and CEO of Aquascape, Inc., kicked off Pondemonium Online 2020 with his popular keynote address.



Jason Duffney of Earth Works in Florida discusses his many years of experience running a pond-construction business and successful water-gardening store.



New product showcases were 'streamed' during the event.

Talking Ponds in the Cloud

Recreating the event as a virtual experience caused attendance to double over previous years, attracting an international audience of experienced pond builders, as well as those interested in starting a water feature business. The two-day online broadcast was held Aug. 26 – 27, 2020, and featured more than 90 sessions led by Aquascape team members, award-winning pond builders, industry experts and popular digital influencers like Coyote Peterson of Animal Planet's "Brave New World" and well-known YouTubers Brian Barczyk, Kevin Harkin of "Kamp Kenan," Stanley "Dirt Monkey" Genadek, Jay Brewer of "Prehistoric Pets" and many others.

Cup of Coffee roundtable discussions kicked off each day via live Zoom meetings. Attendees could ask questions and provide input on a variety of topics, from water feature construction techniques to business development and marketing operations. Day one included a special keynote speech from Wittstock, who gave a recap of the year and discussed how to rise to the business challenges of functioning in a virus-ridden world. Ed Beaulieu, vice president of field research and contractor development, presented an overview of the world's environment and how Aquascape water features replicate Mother Nature's ecosystem. A chat box was available in all keynote addresses and class sessions so that people could greet each other, ask questions and receive answers in real time.

Seven virtual classrooms were provided throughout the

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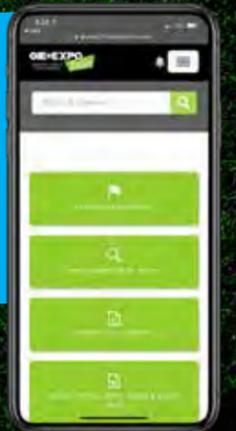
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Nick Needham, Digital Influencer of the Year



Tim Wood and Tim Anderson, Aquascape Artist of the Year



Dean Pipito, Conservationist of the Year



Tom Smith, Distributor of the Year

two days. Attendees could participate in any session of their choice and were free to come and go among the rooms as they pleased. Electronic handouts and other materials were provided in the eLearning platform, along with a separate, private Pondemonium 2020 Facebook group for registered attendees.

“Fortunately, hosting a virtual event created unique opportunities for this year’s Pondemonium,” Wittstock said. “People had the option of purchasing an extended registration ticket, providing them with a 90-day window to watch sessions they might have missed.”

In addition, virtual visits



Jason Duffney, Businessman of the Year



Mark Wilson, Certified Aquascape Contractor of the Year

to successful pond retail locations in a variety of places were featured, as well as virtual trips to see ponds, waterfalls and fountains installed around the world by previous recipients of the Aquascape Artist of the Year award.

Just like at previous Pondemonium events, Aquascape announced winners of its highly coveted annual awards:

- Nick Needham of Pond King Water Gardens in Eagan, MN for Digital Influencer of the Year
- Dean Pipito of Aquatica in Wales, WI for Conservationist of the Year
- Jason Duffney of Earth Works in Jacksonville, FL for Businessman of the Year
- Mark Wilson of Any Pond Limited in Daventry,

UK for Certified Aquascape Contractor of the Year

- Tim Wood of Aquatic Edge in Pittsburgh, PA for Aquascape Artist of the Year
- Thomas Smith of Garden State Koi in Warwick, NY for Distributor of the Year

“The pandemic certainly proved to be a unique challenge for hosting Pondemonium,” Wittstock added. “I’m proud of my team for delivering a value-packed event for our customers.”

The virtual event proved to a successful reinvention of the Pondemonium concept, with increased attendance, more sessions and content than in years past. It received rave reviews from participants, customers and employees alike. ☞

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Otterbine Barebo Releases New Color-Changing Lights

Otterbine Barebo Inc., a leading manufacturer of aerators and fountains in the pond and lake management industry, has released a new color-changing light set. The latest addition to the company's Fountain-Glo™ line is the Mini-RGBW two-light set that offers rich, high-intensity colors in a compact, low-voltage, energy-efficient package that is perfect for backyard ponds and smaller units like Otterbine's 1/2 Horsepower Fractional Series.

These new lights come with two 4-watt emitters and a remote that allows users to control the speed, intensity and color of the lights while creating powerful displays with preprogrammed sequences. These sequences provide more than 2,000 color options for users to choose from and can feature multiple colors or default to a single color. With the purchase of a Wifi controller upgrade, the lights can also be controlled from a smartphone.

Otterbine's Mini-RGBW Lights are virtually maintenance free and backed by a three-year warranty. These lights are the perfect way to enhance a water feature's natural beauty. For more information on this product or how to order, please contact rbarebo@otterbine.com or visit www.otterbine.com.



Becker Windmills Now Include Hinge Kits

EasyPro, the manufacturer of Becker Windmills, is making wind aeration easier than ever! Hinge kits are now included in all 16-foot and 20-foot Becker Windmill systems. Attached to the tower base, the hinges make it possible to easily lower the tower for maintenance or impending storms. Each is made of high-grade, galvanized steel with stainless steel hardware. For more information on EasyPro Pond Products, call 800-448-3873 or visit easypro.com.

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"Cloudy pond water is a prevalent issue a lot of customers face during hot summer months," said Dave Kelly, vice president of product development for Aquascape Inc. "Our QuickFix Pond Gummy rapidly resolves this problem while helping to control organic waste to prevent future outbreaks of cloudiness. The gummy is also excellent for events that stress a pond's ecosystem like seasonal pond cleanouts, heavy rainfall, and fish spawning."

The Aquascape Quick-Fix Pond Gummy offers a fast-acting solution to pond problems, including cloudy water. It is easy to use and apply

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Matala Releases New BioSteps Pond Kits

Introducing new BioSteps pond kits that are ideal for water garden ponds up to 2,000 gallons and koi ponds up to 1,000 gallons!

The new offerings are available in four models: BioSteps Plus Kit, BioSteps Plus W Kit, BioSteps Pro Kit and BioSteps Premium Kit.

The BioSteps Premium Kit is the basic model with the 16-watt EZClear UV clarifier and the waterfall spillway. It comes complete with the new BioSteps filter, MF-1100EZ submersible pump and 25 feet of 3/4-inch, quality "kink-free" hose and connectors to make installation quick and easy!

The BioSteps Plus Kit includes a BioSteps filter with six Matala filter pads for "Progressive Filtration," two green Matala pads, two blue Matala pads and two gray Matala pads. It has amazing filter capacity and improved management of solids settling within the filter chamber. With a flow rate of 800 to 900 gallons per hour, it has an open-flow gravity return to the pond.

A new "Swivel Inlet Fitting" has barb sizes that include 3/4 inch, 1 inch, 1 1/4 inches and 1 1/2 inches. The outlet fitting is for a 1 1/2 or 2-inch pipe connection or connection to the optional waterfall spillway. Its tank is made from automotive-grade plastic capable of cold and hot environments.

These kits have it all. But you always have the option to add on the optional 16-watt EZClear UV Clarifier or the waterfall spillway to your basic BioSteps Plus Kit at a later time if you decide to upgrade after installation.

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FINAL THOUGHT...



Nature's Montage

Photo courtesy of Kelly Billing



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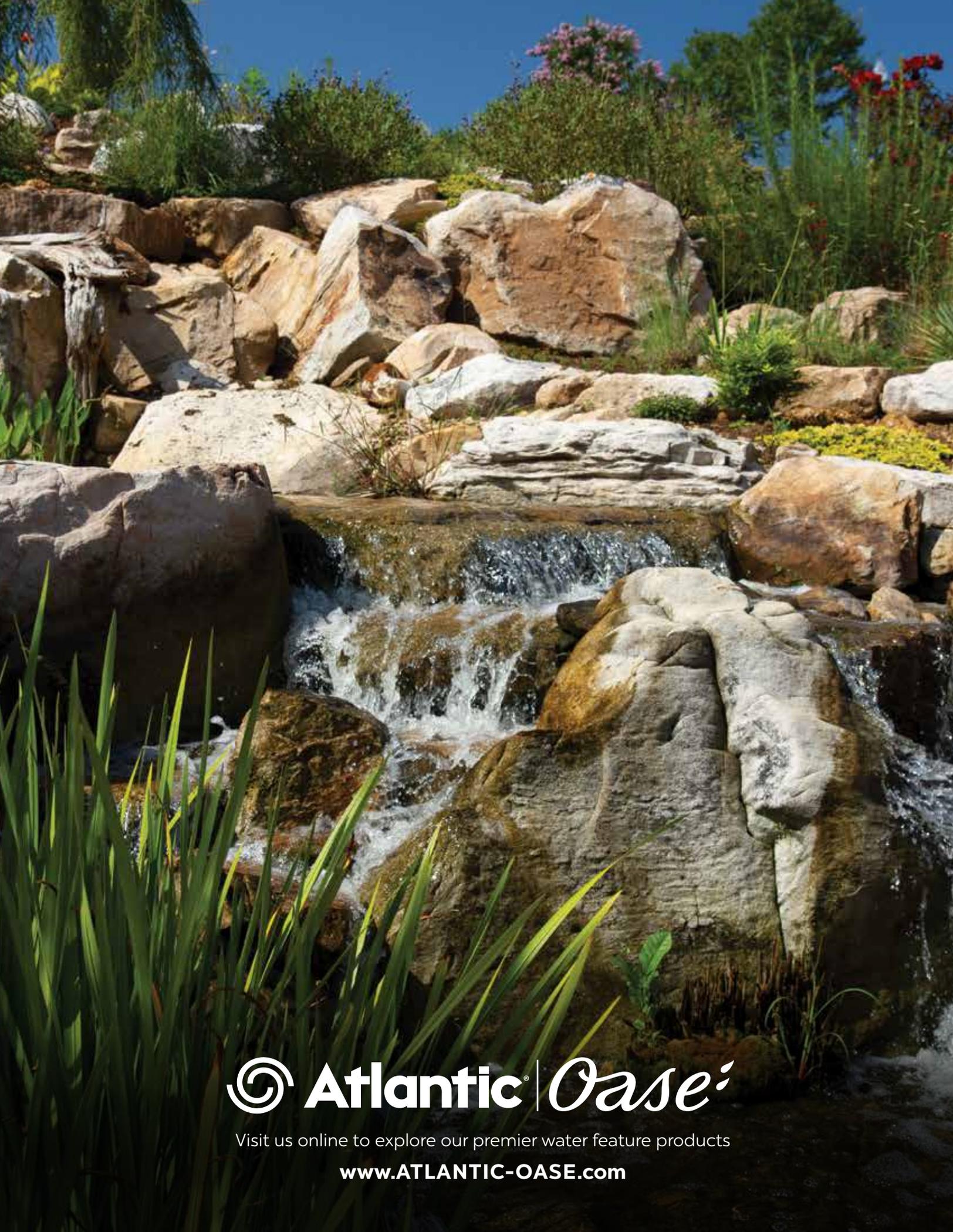
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