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A
s you are preparing your retail space for the upcoming pond season, your customers are busy planning the space for their ponds and its inhabitants. This is the perfect time of year to talk about what the pond will look like in terms of plants and fish. Adding both takes time and a well thought out plan. It is important to educate your customers on the benefits of aquatic plants, as well as the different varieties. Additionally, fish need to be chosen with careful consideration. One of the biggest mistakes a pondkeeper can make is adding too many plants and fish too fast. To help your customers become experts, explain how they can follow these guidelines to a successful pond season.

Aquatic Plants: Benefits, Types and Care

Benefits of Aquatic Plants

Aquatic plants are a beautiful addition to a pond. Their foliage and flowers add a new dimension to a pond. Without plants, a pond can seem dull and unattractive. However, adding plants is not just important for aesthetics; there are also important benefits plants add to the overall health of the pond. Aquatic plants provide important shade, which reduces algae growth, and natural filtration, which helps clean the water and keep oxygen at healthy levels. After the bacteria in the pond’s filtration system breaks down harmful pollutants, aquatic plants absorb the pollutants in the form of nitrates, which would otherwise remain in the water and provide food for unwanted algae. Aquatic plants also provide breeding grounds for fish and other inhabitants, and they create shelter from predators and severe weather.

Types of Aquatic Plants

Choosing a plant to accentuate a pond can be confusing to the new pondkeeper. Many realize the importance and benefits of adding plants, but selecting the right amount and the type of plant can get cumbersome. Additionally, when selecting aquatic plants, pondkeepers should also take into account its anticipated size once it is fully mature. Taller, fuller aquatic plants and grasses should be placed toward the back or far side of the pond, leaving the smaller plants and flowers unobstructed in front. This way plants will compliment one another without overcrowding.

Aquatic plants can generally be placed in four different categories: bog plants, marginals, floating plants and submerged plants.

Bog plants grow in wet ground along the perimeter of the pond, extending the waterscape and acting as a visual anchor to the surrounding garden. Bog plants thrive when grown in moist, damp soil that is rich in organic matter, however, some bog plants spread rapidly and can become invasive. To prevent unwieldy plants, suggest keeping these plants in containers to limit their root spread. Using plastic containers or fabric planters will also allow pondkeepers to easily remove and rearrange the plants. Some of the most common bog plants found in water gardens are: Sweet Flag, Taro, Horsetail, Hostas and Rush.

Marginals are also used along the pond perimeter for a natural, relaxed design. They grow best in shallow water and should be submerged to a depth of ten inches. Usually marginals are placed in fabric or plastic planters along a shallow shelf within the pond’s edge. Common examples of marginals are: Water Hawthorn, Umbrella Grass, Canna Hybrids, Irises, Lizard’s Tail, lotus and Cattails/Reed Mace.

Submerged plants, or “oxygenators,” are valuable to pond health because they act as natural filters and remove excess
nutrients from the pond, keeping the water clear. Many varieties produce small flowers above the pond surface, where miniscule oxygen bubbles attach to the plant. Recommend one bundle of submerged plants for every square foot of the pond’s surface area. Some popular varieties are: Anacharis, Elaggrass, Pondweed and Parrots Feather.

Floating plants act like ground cover on the water’s surface, providing fish the benefits of shade, protection and breeding areas. Ideally about 60 percent of the water’s surface should be covered, keeping water temperatures stable from morning to night. For optimal growth, remind customers to keep the moving water or the commotion of water features and fountains at a reasonable distance from their water lilies and Lotus. Other common floating plants are: Water Hyacinth, Water Lettuce and Water Fern, which have roots that are suspended in the water.

Caring for Aquatic Plants

Your pondkeepers should also see themselves as water gardeners. Caring for a pond is much more than feeding the fish. The plant life should be pruned and cared for regularly. Such care consists of removing dead blossoms and leaves and keeping the pond free of debris. It is a good idea to grow aquatic plants in containers that can be rearranged and removed when cleaning the pond.

Another important step in caring for aquatic plants is fertilizing. Suggest to your pondkeepers the use of a fertilizer tablet or small package designed for the gradual release of the fertilizer to the roots. By using this type of fertilizer, it won’t increase the nutrient level of the water which can increase the presence of algae.

Pests and disease can easily affect aquatic plants as they do other plants in your garden. It is very important that your pondkeepers do not spray or treat these with chemicals for fear of harming or killing the fish in the pond. Suggest hand removal of pests or spraying with water to remove from foliage. Additionally, recommend ridding the plants of infested foliage to make way for new growth.

Ornamental Fish: Choosing, Types and Care

Caring for and choosing beautiful fish can be a wonderful experience for a pondkeeper. When deciding on fish there are many important factors to consider such as size, type and care. Remind pondkeepers to not add too many fish to a pond, too quickly. This can create a crowded pond and an unhealthy ecosystem.

Choosing Fish

Pondkeepers should avoid purchasing fish that are listless, pale in color, gasping or have fins folded back. A healthy fish is active, bright and has outstretched fins. The pond water must be treated for chlorine and chloramines before adding fish. If it is a new pond, explain to your customers that the pond and filter should run for at least two weeks before adding fish. This allows beneficial bacteria to colonize.

Next, your customers should place the bag with the recently purchased fish into the pond water for at least 30 minutes so that the water in the bag gradually equals the temperature of the pond. Lastly, your pondkeepers should open the bag to allow pond water to mix with the water in the bag for a few minutes. Then they can gently pour the fish into their new home.

As a rule of thumb, to account for all kinds of fish, pondkeepers should keep their fish load under one-inch of fish length (excluding the tail fins) for every one square foot of water surface – about one goldfish per 3 to 4 feet of water surface area. Because Koi grow larger, they should place one Koi to every 10 square feet of surface area. If the stocking levels increase, the consumer should add larger or additional filters.

Header Ponds

Plants are a very important part of a healthy filtration system. However, many pondkeepers don’t want to overload their pond with plants, yet at the same time, they realize plants are an integral part of their pond health. “Header” ponds solve this dilemma.

A “header” pond is a smaller pond that feeds the waterfall that flows into the primary pond. Usually a “header” pond is constructed above the primary pond and is filled with many plants that have extensive roots. Water hyacinth is a good plant to place in the “header” pond, mainly because their many roots act as a natural filter. Additionally, one water hyacinth floating on the pond surface can become hundreds quickly, overtaking a pond during the summer. Therefore, your customers may want to confine water hyacinths to a “header” pond — and keep them from overtaking the larger, primary pond.

If your customer does not want to overload their pond with plants another option would be to consider a waterfall filter. It is easy to install and functions both as an attractive waterfall feature and an efficient mechanical and biological filter.
Types of Ornamental Fish

There are several varieties of ornamental fish. The two most popular options are Goldfish and Koi.

Goldfish: Goldfish are beautiful fish and known as good swimmers. Purchase fish that are at least two to three inches long; some can grow up to 10 – 12 inches long. There are several varieties of “goldfish” to choose from such as Comets, Shubunkins and Fantails.

Koi: Koi, or Cyprinus carpio, are ornate cousins of the carp family and can be easily identified by their whiskers. Their vivid coloration, striking patterns, longevity and impressive size make them popular pets. Standard Koi colors are black, white, yellow, orange, blue or red. Some popular varieties include Kohaku, Sanke, Showa, Utsuri, Ogon and a range of characteristics including metallic and butterfly koi."
Caring for Ornamental Fish

For most pondkeepers, the reason they decided to construct a pond is to have the beautiful fish adorn their landscape. When caring for pond fish, food and water quality are the most important considerations.

For overall pond health, feed Koi and pond fish high quality foods that will produce less waste. “Koi enthusiasts” should treat their fish to the very best in premium Koi food. Recommend your customers choose a food that is developed specifically for the health, condition and color for their exceptional Koi.

Poor water quality can have an adverse affect on pond fish, sometimes leading to death. A rise in pollutant levels (i.e. ammonia and nitrites) and sudden changes (or unsuitable values) of water pH and hardness can contribute to unhealthy fish. Be sure to advise customers to test their pond water regularly and watch their fish. Remind them to seek advice if they notice any visible changes in the fish.

The key to any pond project is a well thought out plan. As a retailer serving the pond enthusiast, equipping your customers with basic information about aquatic plants and ornamental fish will establish you as a trusted resource, while also allowing them to enjoy their hobby to the fullest.

Author –

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The International Waterlily and Water Gardening Society (IWGS) is proud to announce the 2011 winners of the 14th annual New Waterlily Competition. Waterlily hybrids were grown out and photographed at the Sarah P. Duke Gardens in Durham, NC under the supervision of horticulturist, Tamara Kilbane. Entries from around the world were judged from September 6th-9th, 2011 by an international panel of 12 aquatic plant experts. In addition, online and on-site voting was open to the public for People’s Choice Awards.

This year’s winners include:

- **Best New Waterlily**: Nymphaea ‘Siam Purple 1’ by Pairat Songpanich, Thailand
- **2nd Best New Waterlily**: Nymphaea ‘Tuonta’ by Nopchai Chansilpa, Thailand
- **1st Place Hardy Waterlily**: Nymphaea ‘Pink Dawn’ by Dustin Machinsky, USA
- **2nd Place Hardy Waterlily**: Nymphaea ‘Tanpong’ by Pairat Songpanich, Thailand
- **1st Place Tropical Day-Blooming Waterlily**: Nymphaea ‘Scarlet Flame’ by Florida Aquatic Nurseries, USA
- **2nd Place Tropical Day-Blooming Waterlily**: Nymphaea ‘Valentine’ by Florida Aquatic Nurseries, USA
- **1st Place Tropical Night-Blooming Waterlily**: Nymphaea ‘Rojjana Ubol’ by Pairat Songpanich, Thailand
- **2nd Place Tropical Night-Blooming Waterlily**: Nymphaea ‘Ploi Jear’ by Teanchai Teandatesakun, Thailand
- **1st Place Intersubgeneric Waterlily**: Nymphaea ‘Siam Purple 1’ by Pairat Songpanich, Thailand
Waterlily Competition Winners

- 2nd Place Intersubgeneric Waterlily: Nymphaea ‘Tuonta’ by Nopchai Chansilpa, Thailand
- Anecphya Hybrid Waterlily: Nymphaea ‘Blue Cloud’ by Ken Landon, USA

Results of the People’s Choice Awards include:

- 1st Place Hardy Waterlily: Nymphaea ‘Siam Nymph’ by Pairat Songpanich, Thailand
- 2nd Place Hardy Waterlily: Nymphaea ‘Pink Dawn’ by Dustin Machinsky, USA
- 1st Place Tropical Waterlily: Nymphaea ‘Scarlet Flame’ by Florida Aquatic Nurseries, USA
- 2nd Place Tropical Waterlily: Nymphaea ‘Chularat’ by Nopchai Chansilpa, Thailand
- 1st Place Tropical Night-Blooming Waterlily: Nymphaea ‘Rojjana Ubol’ by Pairat Songpanich, Thailand
- 2nd Place Tropical Night-Blooming Waterlily: Nymphaea ‘Ploi Jear’ by Teanchai Teandatesakun, Thailand
- 1st Place Intersubgeneric Waterlily: Nymphaea ‘Chanvit’ by Nopchai Chansilpa, Thailand
- 2nd Place Intersubgeneric Waterlily: Nymphaea ‘Tuonta’ by Nopchai Chansilpa, Thailand
- Anecphya Hybrid Waterlily: Nymphaea ‘Blue Cloud’ by Ken Landon, USA


To view all photos of the New Waterlily Competition winners or to learn more about the International Waterlily and Water Gardening Society, log onto www.iwgs.org or call 540-337-4507.

The International Waterlily & Water Gardening Society (IWGS) is a non-profit organization of multi-national membership dedicated to the furtherance of all aspects of water gardens and their associated plants. The IWGS supports and promotes education, research, and conservation in these areas and serves as the official registrar of Nymphaeaceae and Nelumbonaceae.

![Pink Dawn] First Place Hardy

![Day-bloomer]

![Blue Cloud] First Place Anecphya

![Rojjana Ubol] First Place Tropical Night-bloomer
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We all know a pretty pattern when we see it. And most of us can easily pick out the grand champion of a koi show. But very few people can explain skin in a way that the average hobbyist can understand it.

For most of my customers and friends, have heard me talk of *fukurin*, *shiroji*, *beni*, and luster. But all these things are nothing without the quality skin. Let’s look at koi as what they truly are: living paintings. Imagine I paint a picture with flat paint. It’s a nice picture but doesn’t do anything for you. Now let me paint the same picture and use gloss paint, and make the paint thicker to help accent colors, vivid colors that have depth and seem to jump off the canvas. That is the difference skin makes.

People who know me know that I am very shy at first. I am very quiet and let people talk. Once you know me though, I can’t stop talking. How this has helped me is that when I go to koi shows I hear a lot of talk about koi, but many never bring up the skin quality. Why? Were they never taught about it? Were they told it doesn’t matter? I have over the years spoken to many people about the importance of skin quality in high-class koi. Some koi judges and hobbyists are starting to listen. I see judging at koi shows getting better because of the influence of the American dealers bringing in better koi, and the breeders helping educate the customer.

So, how do I teach you skin quality in one short article?
3-D... that’s right, you heard it here first. It took me years to figure it out. I was in the movies with my kids watching a 3D cartoon 2 years ago when it hit me.... all the colors look like they are on separate levels. On a great Sanke the shiroji (white background) is at the first level, the beni (red) is at the next level, and the sumi (black) is at the top level. When you start looking for high-class skin, you can eliminate 99% of the koi you will be looking at. About 1% of koi possess this awesome trait. There is an American hobbyist who is doing some great background research on this. I am happy to call him my friend, Phillip Gray. Phillip last year went to Japan in search of skin quality and why it is so important. He did awesome interviews on how it develops, and the importance the breeders put on it.

**Broken beni and skin quality:**
Earlier this year an advanced hobbyist received a shipment of very high class tategoi tosai (great potential one season old koi). He called to announce that the koi’s beni was ”Breaking Down.” He read somewhere and saw Online that when there is white in between the scales of red, it means the red is breaking and fading away. After many calming phone calls and me taking the breeder to see the guy, we left it as a ”wait and see” thing. Well here we are six months later and the koi are not breaking down anymore. You see what happened was that the koi were outgrowing their beni! They were growing so fast that the beni could not catch up. Good skin helps correct this and condensed the beni on the koi and made it strong looking again.

The other thing skin quality will do is cover blemishes. I have seen many koi with a little niban hi (secondary red that comes up on a scale where you don’t want it) and the breeders don’t worry because the shiroji will actually thicken to cover it. This applies to the leading edge on beni (the sashi) as well. When a koi is young, the leading edge will be faded red, which is ok as the koi skin matures, and it will thicken and cover the pinkish leading edge.

Take a look at the pictures in this article as examples of quality skin.

**About the Author**

Matt Corino is the owner of Sugar Loaf Koi – NYKOI.com. He has been in business for over 18 years. Matt started in koi when he was only 14 years old, studying koi at one of England’s largest koi centers. At 18 he took his first trip to Japan, where he studied under Sakai Isawa, then Shintaro.

Sugar Loaf Koi is a family owned business located near New York City in Campbell Hall, NY.

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Something new this year is the People’s Choice Awards. These were selected based on our Online Voting. (Note: top award winner not included in People’s Choice awards)

People’s Choice
AquaFill, AquaMedia
Gravel Bog Filter, Aquatic Gardens
KH Alkalinity Bio-Active Booster, Ecological Laboratories, Inc.

People’s Choice
Aquafill, AquaMedia
Gravel Bog Filter, Aquatic Gardens
KH Alkalinity Bio-Active Booster, Ecological Laboratories, Inc.

Panel of industry professionals who where our judges:
Deb Spencer, Water’s Edge
John Olson, Graystone Industries, Inc.
Burt Nichols, Water Garden Gems, Inc.
Erik Tate, The Water Garden LLC
Mark Lawson, Koi Depot of San Diego

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1250 W. Arrow Hwy
Upland, CA 91786
888-920-1944
See ad on page 9.
Who Moved My Cheese? by Dr. Spencer Johnson, has been the World’s #1 Bestselling Book on change with over 21 million books in print. A simple story reveals profound truths about how change impacts people and organizations and provides a quick and easy way to succeed in changing times.

This is an enlightening story of four characters living in a “Maze” and looking for “Cheese” for nourishment and happiness. Two are mice named Sniff and Scurry and two are mice-sized people named Hem and Haw.

“Cheese” is a metaphor for what you want in life – whether it is a growing business, a good job, a relationship, possessions, health, or spiritual peace of mind. “The Maze” is where you look for what you want in business, an organization, family, or community.

In the story, the characters are faced with unexpected change. Eventually, one of them deals with change successfully, and writes what he has learned from his experience on the maze wall. When you come to see “The Handwriting on the Wall” you can discover for yourself how to deal with change and enjoy more success and less stress in your life.

So, what does this have to do with building water features, controlling algae, or water clarity? Everything… But, it’s not your usual water gardening article. The sole purpose of this article is to share some thoughts you might not have considered, or that one might find useful to better understand all the driving forces in today’s market, and be able to develop individual business plans that make finding the “Cheese” a little bit easier.

As with all industries, we are dealing with economic change and shifts in how we market to the change in buying preferences of Gen X & Y versus the Baby Boomers. Some blame just the economy for moving the “Cheese.” A few recognize both. However, I don’t hear a lot about the third one, which is where we are as it relates to the age of our industry and the laws of the marketing curve. Each one provides its own set of challenges, but to deal with all three at the same time is like the perfect storm. The good news is there is a very bright future ahead if we understand and act on how each of these challenges impacts our business.

The Economy – if anyone has a crystal ball on when the economy and consumer confidence will improve please let me know because my broker could use some help. The fact is 90+% of the population is still working and water feature projects are still selling. The Freedonia Group continues to report a projected 6.8% growth per year in hardscape features, with water features being a key element thru 2015, or even 2020. Other areas of strong growth are statuary & basins, Just-A-Falls, commercial features (even smaller ones), and lake and pond aeration.

Diversification is the key to growth. Water garden projects will increase as the economy improves, but because our industry now provides so many water feature options, water gardens will always be a smaller percentage of the total pie. Expansion of our industry is really good news. If you have continued with a single focus, it might be time to check out where the rest of the “Cheese” is.

Another way of looking at the economy is tough times create opportunities. In this case, it would be what I call the “Rebuilding of America.” Neglected foreclosure properties, and new homeowners will be looking to renew the neglected landscape and outdoor living areas. Even without the economics, Gen X & Y are buying homes as the Baby Boomers down size. Keep a record of the “For Sale” listings; it will prove to be a good area for target marketing. Team up with realtors, and banks. Realtors usually provide a thank you gift after a purchase. A statuary fountain and basin feature works well, or even a discount coupon for any water feature. And, does your community still have a welcome wagon?

Gen X & Y – The Rest of the Story – You’ve probably read some of the same articles as I have over the last couple of years comparing the Baby Boomers to Gen X & Y. These articles share what social issues shaped Gen X & Y, how it impacts the way they shop, their likes and dislikes, and how this differs from the Baby Boomers’ shopping and buying habits.

As for a social shaping of a generation, they weren’t too kind to the Baby Boomers when they entered the work force and age of consumer spending. If you recall, they were called the long haired, hippy freak, drop out generation that didn’t want to work. This wasn’t true of all Baby Boomers and some
of the things being said about Gen X & Y aren’t true for all either. Once the Baby Boomers took on the responsibilities of home and family, it all turned out pretty normal. So it will be and actually is with Gen X & the up and coming Gen Y.

If I am selling concessions at the ball park, I really don’t care what highway the customer took to get there. What I care about is what foods they like, how do I get their attention, and how they like to be served. The total number of buying consumers, age 25 to 55, will change very little over the next ten years, however, the “Cheese” will no longer be found in one location, (Ponds). Due to the growing diversified mix of the consumers, their desires, and the broader selection of water features, the “Cheese” will be found in a number of locations. If you’re not diversified now, and know how to market to each group, I would encourage you to consider expanding the different types of water features you offer on a regular basis.

Other than the short term issues on the economy, the pace of life and how we research products and services are key areas to not only know about, but to act on. The pace of life for some has increased their desire for low maintenance landscaping and water features. This means more opportunity for Just-A-Falls, statuary & basins, and hardscape spillways. All three generation groups don’t have the time to sit in a one hour seminar or read long books anymore. So, the web is the quickest and preferred method of gathering information on a project. However, on improvement projects they still prefer to connect locally. To close the sale you will have to earn their trust. Your own web site and the use of informative You Tube type clips, in addition to your other forms of advertising, are very important in connecting with your customer.

The Marketing Curve

Since pond construction really took off in the early 90s, there has been a rapid succession of change. So, if change always moves the “Cheese” why is finding the “Cheese” more challenging today? Part of the answer is the laws of the marketing curve.

During the early period of rapid growth in pond construction the demand was brisk. New products and improved methods were changes for a single product, “Ponds.” So, the “Cheese” was always in site and fairly easy to find. As the category continued to gain recognition, more providers competed for the same customer base. When the category diversified further into “Water Features”, with the introduction of pond-less water falls, statuary & basins, spillways, and lighting, new customer preferences enter the market. This makes marketing and advertising more important, and more challenging. Those that fail to diversify and fine tune their marketing found it harder to find the “Cheese.”

The marketing curve is at a point where everyone will have to work harder to understand their market and what tools to use to connect with a wider range of customers. Having a business plan that makes sense for you is a must. Understanding the new mix of customers and their preferences is critical. Diversification of product offerings is a necessity. Actively marketing with the use of a personal web site, digital marketing tools, and community connections is a must in order to connect with your customer. And, always promote your “Brand.” It is what sets you apart from the other guy and what customers come to trust.

Wishing Everyone the Best of Success in 2012 – Rick Smith ☺️

Rick Smith serves as Director of Sales with EasyPro Pond Products and has 30 years of organizational leadership and sales and marketing experience in the Lawn & Garden Nursery and Water Features Industries. Prior to coming to EasyPro, Rick served as Sales and Marketing Manager of the retail division for J. Mollema & Son (a large midwest lawn & garden distributor supplying independent garden centers nurseries, growers, and landscapers). He also spent 12 years with The Scotts Company working with independent business owners as well as regional and national chains.

For the past 17 years, water gardening has been one of Rick’s passions. While enjoying his own ponds and fish, Rick has had a focus on contributing to the enjoyment of other pond owners, as well as the success of business owners, by developing customized business plans, sales support material, and numerous power point training seminars.

Rick has appeared in various business trade publications both as an interviewee and as a contributing author. In addition, Rick has conducted seminars at trade shows, county extension services and Fredrick Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park as well as retail staff training and public seminars on lawn & garden, wild birds, and water gardening topics.

www.easypropondproducts.com
Upcoming Events

January 18
Sacramento Valley Expo
Sacramento Community Convention Center
www.sacvallexpo.com
8 am to 4 pm • 530-458-3189

February 1 – 2
32nd Annual Landscape Industry Show
Los Angeles, California
The theme of this year’s Show is titled: Back in the Game!
www.clca.us/lis.

February 9–10
Water Garden Expo 2012
Shawnee, Oklahoma
Learn • Network • Enjoy
www.pondliner.com
See ad on page 14.

February 25 – 26
25th Annual Koi Show, Koi Club of San Diego
Del Mar Fairgrounds
www.koiclubsandiego.org

February 26 – 28
NAPP Conference and Expo
Las Vegas, Nevada
National Association of Pond Professional.
www.nationalpondpro.com
See ad on page 5.

May 1 – 3
National Hardware Show
Las Vegas Convention Center
9 shows within a show including the Lawn, Garden & Outdoor Living Show
http://www.nationalhardwareshow.com

August 23–26
Pondemonium 2012
Chicago, Illinois
www.pondemonium.com
www.aquascapeinc.com

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POND Trade Magazine 23

January/February 2012
Kin-Gin-Rin (keen-geen-leen) is a reference to a koi’s scale type rather than the variety of koi, and literally means ‘golden silver reflective scales.’ Most generally, Kin Gin Rin is abbreviated to Gin Rin by koi breeders, sellers and koi hobbyists of today. Any koi variety can have Gin Rin scales, and what a brilliant enhancement the sparkly scales make. The addition of Gin Rin scales can transform an ordinarily plain koi into a stunning beauty. Gin Rin is highly reflective so that each scale glints when it catches the light. It’s no wonder that koi are called Living Jewels.

Gin Rin Technical Info:

- The correct terminology for Gin Rin koi is to precede the variety name with the words Gin Rin. Example: Gin Rin Showa, Gin Rin Asagi, and so forth.
- The Gin Rin scales appear golden when they cover red pigment, or hi. A Gin Rin scale appears silvery when covering white or black pigment.
- Ideal Gin Rin scales should start at the base of the head, or shoulder, and continue to the base of the tail and along both sides of the dorsal fin. Rows of scales should be very neatly aligned with no random or mismatched scales.
- A koi needs to have at least 2 complete rows, preferably 3 or more, to be classified as Gin Rin for entering into any koi show. Symmetry is very important when evaluating Gin Rin.

Scales vs. Skin

Koi which fall into the Hikari Muji and Hikari Moyo classes (Ogons, Kikusui, Kujaku, Hariwake etc.) are shiny too, but theirs is very different from Gin Rin. Remember that Gin Rin is shiny scales. The Hikari classes are metallic, meaning that their skin has a metallic sheen or luster. That luster will cover the entire body, including the scales. Hikari varieties will show metallic luster on the head and fins with the pectorals being the most prominent. So, the difference between Gin Rin and Hikari Koi is scales versus skin.

Special Note - If this topic were not confusing enough, Hikari varieties may also have Gin Rin scales!

What to Look For When Selecting a Gin Rin Koi

When searching for a good Gin Rin koi you need to look past all the bling, if that’s possible, and pick a fish that is as

Types of Gin Rin

Gin Rin scales are divided into four sub varieties, and can be flat or raised depending on its style.

1. Diamond Gin Rin: Looks like crackled glass or brushed aluminum lines radiating outward in the shape of a fan. Most common type.
2. Beta Gin: The whole surface of the scale shines like a mirror. Very uncommon type.
3. Pearl Gin Rin: Has a raised shiny deposit on the center of each scale, similar to a pearl. Most uncommon type.
4. Kado-Gin: Has a glittery scalloped outer edge instead of covering the entire scale surface. Highly unusual and least preferred.
close to perfect in every other dimension. First, check out the koi’s body conformation. See that it has correct proportions and all fins are intact. Next, watch how it swims, breathes, and reacts to other koi. Then pick out the fish with the most pleasing pattern or colors that you like. Finally you can concentrate on the Gin Rin scales. Remember that a Gin Rin Koi should have 2 or more complete rows of scales, the more the better. They should start at the shoulder and end at the tail. Look for scales that are neatly organized in straight and even rows. Avoid those with missing, random or jumbled scales. The layout or placement of scales will not change as your new pet grows. And lastly, choose the koi with the best sparkle as Kin Gin Rin koi are also judged on the quality of their scales.

**About the Author**

*Ellen Kloubec,* co-owner Kloubec Koi Farm in Amana, Iowa.

Ellen and her husband, Myron, began their aquaculture business in 1981, and their farm consists of 80-acres of mud-ponds. Together with their son, Nick, they raise and supply healthy & hardy koi to wholesale customers throughout the USA and Canada. Ellen loves all things koi. She enjoys Koi Shows & Watergarden Tradeshows where she has built lasting friendships. Many hobbyists and celebrities have relied on Ellen when looking for the perfect koi. Ellen hand-selected the Kloubec breeder fish while in Japan. The koi spawning season is her favorite time of year when the breeders are indoors in the hatchery. “Experimenting with different pairings is a passion. It’s so rewarding to harvest beautiful little koi and see your vision come to life.” Additionally, Ellen enjoys being with her family and their dogs, you'll even find pictures of them on the Kloubec website! www.kloubeckoi.com

Ellen can be reached at ellen@kloubeckoi.com or 319/846-2077
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Eco-Rise Water Feature Riser

Atlantic Water Gardens is pleased to present the Eco-Rise Water Feature Riser. A totally new concept in water feature construction, the extremely strong radial structure of the Eco-Rise handles the weight of heavier statuary, vases and columns while providing a broad, stable base over Eco-Blox reservoirs.

The versatility of the Eco-Rise used in conjunction with Eco-Blox, the Atlantic PV1700 Pump Vault and Triton 3-Way Diverter allows for multiple features in any configuration above odd basin shapes, while keeping plumbing and flow adjustment topside for easy access. MSRP: $109.20

Biocuda Fish Food

Atlantic Water Gardens is pleased to present Biocuda Fish Food. With three different sizes of both Summer Fish Food and Cold Water Fish Food, Biocuda gives you everything you need to keep your fish happy and healthy year round.

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Biocuda Fish food is available in ½ lb, 1 ¼” lb, and 5 lb. sizes. MSRP: $11.76 - $49.01

For further information please contact….
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IPPCA Five Star Contractor Award 2011

2011 IPPCA Five Star Contractor Award Goes to Texas Member Max Taylor, owner of Magnolia Ponds in The Woodlands, Texas, walked off with the top honor at the IPPCA’s 7th annual Awards Banquet held at INFO TANZA 2011. The Five Star Contractor Award has become the most prestigious Award that a Pond Contractor can achieve in the Pond and Waterscape Industry. The Award was sponsored this year by IPPCA Corporate Member Easy Pro Pond Products.

The elegant gold and acrylic trophy and the bragging rights that go with it is truly impressive in its own right, but the $1000 check that goes with the trophy takes the award’s value beyond the intrinsic to a true monetary reward of not inconsiderable value. The IPPCA’s 5 Star Contractor Award is given each year to the IPPCA Contractor member with the highest overall score from the Association’s Online Customer Satisfaction Rating form submitted by the winning contractor’s customers.

Customer Satisfaction Rating forms aren’t necessarily a new thing in business management. Independent consulting firms charge thousands of dollars setting up evaluation programs for companies. This very valuable company performance analysis tool has been offered as a member’s benefit from the inception of the Trade Association’s existence at no additional cost to the members. The IPPCA established this system in 2004 as an additional tool for members to utilize as well as a methodology for the Association to keep in touch with its members’ caliber of business practices. The award was created as an additional incentive to get members to utilize the program.

Congratulations to Max Taylor.

IPPCA Headquarters, Woodstock, GA www.IPPCA.com

To see full press release and additional new items go to http://www.pondtrademag.com/tradenews/
Aquatic Eco-Systems, Inc. Introduces Their E-Catalogs

The Aquatic Eco-Systems Master Catalog has been an industry standard for over 30 years. Now this wealth of information will be accessible anytime with the introduction of AES E-Catalogs, found on AquaticEco.com. Currently, electronic versions of the AES Master Catalog and the Lakes Catalog are available. There are also downloadable PDF versions of the AES Master Catalog, Lakes Catalog, International Catalog, Pond Catalog and the Education Catalog.

Aquatic Eco-Systems plans to release their very first AES Ponics catalog this year. The 92-page first edition of this catalog will feature over 7,500 hydroponic and aquaponic products to fit the needs of people at all skill levels – from novice to commercial growers. The AES Ponics catalog coincides with Aquatic Eco-Systems’ recent acquisition of Green Sky Growers, a state-of-the-art rooftop hydroponic and aquaponic facility in Winter Garden, FL. Once it is released in print, a downloadable version of the AES Ponics catalog will also be made available on AquaticEco.com.

Call 877-347-4788 and select option 1 to request your copy of the AES Ponics catalog. For AES E-Catalogs and downloadable versions of AES catalogs, visit www.AquaticEco.com/pages/15/Catalogs.

Hundreds of Students Visit Ozark Fisheries

Ozark Fisheries’ Indiana division, located in Martinsville, opened its doors to hundreds of students and their advisors the week of October 17th for the 2011 National FFA Convention. Held in Indianapolis, the National FFA Convention is one of the largest annual student conventions in the country, hosting approximately 55,000 students this year.

The students toured the farm to learn about the spawning, production and shipping of Ozark’s ornamental goldfish and koi crops. The hands-on tour opened the eyes of many students to the world of aquaculture.

Ozark Fisheries has been in business since 1926, raising feeder and fancy goldfish, such as pond comets, red fantails, shubunkins, and sarasa comets. Ozark is also known as an industry leader in koi and butterfly koi production. Other pond items such as trapdoor snails, crawdads, tadpoles and fish food are also available. Visit their website at www.ozarkfisheries.com for more information on their products or to set up a tour.

300-gph Hydroponics De-watering Pump

Danner Manufacturing’s new 300-gph Hydroponics De-watering Pump is primed for lower water level pickup and perfect for draining nutrient reservoirs in Hydroponics applications. The outlet has a garden hose thread so that it easily attaches to a garden hose to simplify draining a reservoir. The 300-gph De-watering Pump weighs approximately 2.75 lbs., has a ¾” ght, maximum watts is 18, .2 a amps max, shutoff is 6’ with a 300-gph max flow rate.

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Atlantic Water Gardens introduces the Oasis PV1700 Pump Vault

Atlantic Water Gardens is pleased to present the Oasis PV1700 Pump Vault. Designed to fit perfectly with Atlantic’s Eco-Blox, the PV1700 Pump Vault is the ideal pump vault for smaller pond-free applications and fountain basins using an Eco-Blox reservoir.

The Oasis Pump Vault can accommodate pump flows up to 3,900 GPH and features pump discharge step fittings for 1 ½” and 2” pipe on both sides of the vault, recessed pockets that accept the Triton 3-Way Diverter and a flat panel for 1 ½” pipe. These versatile outlets allow for easy use in both pond-free waterfalls and in conjunction with the all new Eco-Rise for fountain applications. MSRP: $221.20

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API® introduces Superior Nutrition line of fish food, Good for the Fish, Good for the Planet

Mars Fishcare, North America is excited to announce API® has launched an innovative and unique fish food line, Superior Nutrition by API® is Good for the Fish, Good for the Planet. With premium ingredients for healthy, colorful fish and enhanced water quality, API brings once again, innovation to the fish food category with a fish-meal free formula. Many fish foods contain fish-meal today. Fish-meal use in fish food contributes to the depletion of fish from the ocean. API only uses protein from sustainable sources, including polychaete worms, mussels and pea protein. Fish-meal free is good for the fish and good for the planet.

“This really is an exciting time for fish keepers, for the industry in general and the API brand...By delivering high quality nutrition to the fish our new range contributes to reducing fish waste, supporting optimal fish health and optimizing water quality. These essential benefits combined with their sustainable nature make our products good for the fish in the aquarium as well as for the fish in our oceans.” said Benjamin Lachaud, Global Brand Manager, Mars Fishcare North America.

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A pondless water feature that will help enhance healing for patients was built last week at Loma Linda University Medical Center East Campus, just outside the PossAbilities physical rehabilitation unit, thanks to the IPPCA (International Professional Pond Companies Association) www.IPPCA.com and the IPPCA Ponditat™ For Humanity program www.PonditatForHumanity.com sponsored and attended by pond professionals from all across the country.

The advanced level Pondless feature boasts four 5’ drilled rock columns plus a 3’ wide center spillway, all pooling and flowing over carefully selected giant mountain driftwood in a fashion unique to this feature, but in a way that appears that the feature was there before the mountains around Loma Linda were formed. The feature also boasts a two pump recirculating system, one external and one submerged, that combined move over 11,000 gallons per hour through the four rock columns and over the 3’ wide spillway placed in-between them that create a wonderful variety of healing musical sounds and tones of moving water.

The IPPCA hosted this annual event, their 6th, and it was heavily attended by many of the leading pond builders from across the U.S. These award winning pond builders designed and installed the water feature between the Zapara pavilion and the ambulatory services building on East Campus. The pondless feature, valued at well over $20,000, was built in just two days and was unveiled and dedicated in a ribbon cutting ceremony on the morning of November 4th.

“PossAbilities is grateful to have been chosen to receive a professionally installed water feature through the Ponditat’ for Humanity program of the IPPCA. This water feature will help to enhance the healing environment for our members as the soothing sound of running water helps to create a natural environment conducive to healing and well being,” said Pedro R. Payne, Manager of PossAbilities.

Eric Triplet, owner of The Pond Digger, supported the selection of PossAbilities and East Campus to receive the pondless feature because of the way the PossAbilities program incorporates water features to create a healing environment for patients.

“Building this water feature for PossAbilities with the IPPCA is huge for us here at The Pond Digger. We love the goals and mission statements from both these organizations and it helps us with our mission of Touching People’s Lives with Water. I was working with some of the best water feature contractors from across the nation for a great cause! Now, that’s a win, win for everyone involved,” Mr. Triplet said.

A special thank you to many of this year’s event sponsors: Firestone SP, Atlantic Water Gardens, Easy Pro Pond Products, Ewing Irrigation, Sequence Pumps, Fielding Pumps, The Pond Digger, Graystone Industries, White Water Filters, The Pond Professional and many, many more. The gracious and generous support of these and many more companies allows the IPPCA Ponditat™ For Humanity projects, with a humanitarian theme, to give back to the communities and hobbyists that make our industry great. Thank You all.

About Loma Linda University Medical Center East Campus (LLUMCEC) - http://lomalindahealth.org/east-campus
Great Off-Season Sale Item!!!

Arctic Blend prevents poor winter water conditions, losses and stresses that can cause spring onset of pathogenic outbreaks.

Just one easy treatment every other week and your pond and fish will be in perfect condition in the spring!

- Removes deadly Ionized Ammonia and Toxic Un-ionized Ammonia
- Removes toxic nitrates and nitrites
- Works in very cold water (35-50 degrees F)
- Reduces and digests bottom sludge build-up all winter
- Helps maintain a healthy immune system
- Arctic Blend will not deplete the oxygen level in your water
- Reduces spring clean up
- 100% NATURAL, NO CHEMICALS, safe for pets and wildlife

There’s More!

Some of the microbes that make up “Arctic Blend” are harvested from the frigid waters of the Antarctic and the Arctic. These unique microbes make their own natural anti-freeze and thus perform at their peak in water temperatures between 35 and 40 degrees F.

ARCTIC BLEND is the ONLY pond product on the market that can remove ammonia, nitrates, nitrites, phosphorus and digest sludge in winter conditions with water temperatures less than 39° F.

32 oz. (quart) treats up to 5,000 gallons for FIVE months
1 gallon treats up to 20,000 gallons for FIVE months

"Over the last few years I would always lose one or two Koi as I over-wintered them. The water was dirty looking and spring clean-up was a chore to say the least. After using Arctic Blend for the first time, I have lost no fish and they look very healthy. The water is crystal clear and I will use this product every winter from now on. I would highly recommend it to anyone who has a pond in cold climate and wants the best for their koi during that period”.

Dave H., Rochester, NY

“Rick, I opened my pond after a bad winter in NJ which has resulted in many people losing some prime Koi. All my Koi are alive and well and the pond is crystal clear. I have some 19 Koi in a 2500 gallon pond so clearly I have little margin for error. I am sure that ARCTIC BLEND is the major factor in keeping my fish alive and well. For the first time in three years I didn’t have problems with my Koi after the winter ‘stress’. Thanks again.”

Harvey Hammer, NJ

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