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See the new Industry Directory at pondsources.com
In September Cindy and I went to Koi America 2011 - we enjoy going to these events because it allows us a chance to talk to folks in the businesses face-to-face. It is always a surprise just how much one can learn when you get out of the office. There are usually new products to see, and great opportunities to get caught up with associates. We have posted pictures on our facebook page, www.facebook.com/pondtrade.

Thank you to Mike, the energetic pond contractor and reader, for stopping us and saying “hi.” It was nice to meet you and your family.

As we talked with readers many asked how they can support POND Trade Magazine - here’s how. Support our super advertisers. Give them a call and talk to them about their products, and please, be sure to let them know that you saw their ad in POND Trade Magazine.

Thank you for your great support all. We hope you have a wonderful holiday and prosperous New Year!

Left, Myron Kloubec and Tom talking about the industry.
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Here we continue from Part 1 from the prior issue.
url to part 1 - http://www.pondtrademag.com/articles/ar-243/

Numbers of Fish
This can be quite a hot topic of debate amongst people who practice aquaponics. Stocking levels of fish within a system can be as high as many intensive recirculating aquaculture systems; however the higher the stocking density the higher the likelihood of things going wrong. In very heavy stocking densities you need to keep a constant eye on all water parameters to be sure that conditions are kept at the optimum.

If you lower the stocking levels of fish then you lower your levels of risk and stress. Growth rates of plants in lightly stocked systems can still be very impressive. This eight bed system was stocked with only 70 fish. That’s less than 9 fish per growbed. The fish tank is 5000L and there’s a 1000L sump on the system. The fish in the system at the time of taking this photo were trout and they were around 300 - 400g. The plant growth in the eight beds was fantastic. A wide mixture of plants were grown in the beds.

Plant species
We are often asked which plants grow well in an aquaponics system and it seems that most herbs and vegetables adapt well to aquaponics. Of course some plants won’t do as well when using different methods. Media filled beds seem to be the most successful for growing a large range of plants, and you can grow just about anything.

We often hear people say "But isn’t aquaponics only good for leafy green plants?” This is a fallacy that has been perpetuated for quite some time, but as you will see from the list at the bottom of this page, aquaponics will grow just about anything. This Habanero chili plant on the right grew a fantastic crop of super hot chilies, and a single tomato plant in a nearby grow bed produced well over 30 kg of tomatoes. Some other fruiting varieties that perform well are eggplant (aubergine), capsicum (bell pepper), bean, peas and many more.

Root crops?
What about root crops? No problem, although you are probably better off growing potatoes in the ground, they will still grow successfully in an aquaponic grow bed. Carrots are another great root crop in media beds. Carrots harvested from grow beds have no sand on them and although you might wonder how they grow in a bed filled with gravel they do a surprisingly good job.

Beetroots are another winner so we grow a lot of fresh beetroot and they grow to a fantastic size if you let them go long enough. The beetroot on the left was over 1kg.

What about deficiencies?
Just as with all gardening you may get some deficiencies in your plants, but generally this can be dealt with very simply. Seaweed extracts are a great way to supplement almost all minerals that might be lacking in an aquaponic system. Seaweed extracts come in many different forms, and consideration towards harmful additives needs to be paramount as anything you add in the system will be passed on to both fish, bacteria, plants and you. You can also use powdered mineral substances. There are a number of different ones on the market, but once again, you must take care in their application if you haven’t used them before. Remember, it’s not just the plants you’re caring for but also the fish and the bacteria population. The best way to stay on top of deficiencies is to use a good quality aquaculture feed for your fish. Most good quality feeds have a percentage of ocean caught bi-product, this means that
there’s a good range of minerals and trace elements within the fish feed. We have some systems that have not had any supplemental addition of minerals for well over 12 months and plant growth is exceptional.

**Can I plant seeds?**

Definitely. In media filled beds we generally use a combination of seedlings and seeds. When first planting a grow bed in a new system, we recommend sprinkling a mixture of seeds over the grow bed, as well as planting seedlings in the bed. Planting seedlings is simple. We recommend that you use normal seedlings but before you plant the seedlings, wash off the majority of the potting mix from the root ball in a small bucket of water. The potting mix should wash off fairly easily with just a gentle shake in the water.

While planting out the seedlings in the beds the media agitation causes the seeds that were sprinkled over the bed to fall down in between the media where it can absorb water and safely germinate. During planting trials I’ve found that this method has many benefits. As the seedlings grow and shelter the germinating seeds they tend to dominate the beds, and many of the germinating seeds can only grow very slowly. However, once the planted seedling matures and gets harvested, this opens up the canopy giving the small plants that germinated from seed a chance to take off. These plants now have a mature root system, and a great head start so they can grow very quickly. This mimics natural forest ecosystems where young trees and other undergrowth grow quite slowly, until a large tree dies and the canopy opens up allowing light to get to the lower plants, which then stimulates their growth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simpson’s Curled (Lettuce)</th>
<th>Celery</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oregon Sugar Pod (Peas)</td>
<td>Kohl Rabi (Purple vienna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloomsdale Savoy (Spinach)</td>
<td>Ciceria Variegata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Bunching (Onion)</td>
<td>Snow peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomato (Grosse Lisse)</td>
<td>Eggplant (Black beauty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomato (Beefsteak)</td>
<td>Capsicum (Californian wonder, Yolo wonder, Long sweet yellow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumber (Lebanese)</td>
<td>Bok Choy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silver Beet (Giant Fordhook)</td>
<td>Broccoli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce (Cos)</td>
<td>Cabbage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce (All seasons)</td>
<td>Cucumber (Burpless, Armenian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basil (Sweet green, purple, curly leaf and Thai)</td>
<td>Mizuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainbow Chard</td>
<td>Rocket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parsley (Flat leaf and curly leaf)</td>
<td>Coriander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numerous tomato varieties</td>
<td>Garlic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Watercress</td>
<td>Dwarf beans (Butter beans)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yugoslavian watercress (also known as Lebanese watercress or Bulgarian watercress)</td>
<td>Sage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chives (normal and garlic variety)</td>
<td>Lemongrass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chilies, many varieties</td>
<td>Yarrow</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comfrey</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rockmelon</td>
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What are growth rates like?

Growth rates of plants in aquaponic systems can be quite phenomenal. In fact a trial by Dr. Nick Savidov in Canada found that aquaponic growth rates can exceed hydroponic plant growth by up to four times with some vegetables and herbs. The advantage of aquaponics over soil grown vegetables is that during warm weather the plants get as much water as they need, due to the regular flooding of grow beds in an aquaponic system. Plants grown in the ground can use the water around their root system very quickly in hot weather, leading to wilting from a lack of water on a hot day. Plants in an aquaponic system get watered constantly, so they always have water, no matter how hot the weather is.

Here are some young plants in a grow bed. Joel Malcolm photographed these everyday to keep a record of the growth rates of the plants. The bed was planted with different varieties of basil, mizuna, cucumber and broccoli.

13 days after the first photograph, all of the plants are growing quite well.

25 days from the first picture. Joel has already harvested a couple of cucumbers and there are many more to come, with plenty of fresh herbs and salad greens also available.

Joel has grown chives that were over one metre (approx 3’ 4”) in length in the same system as you see above.

Of course the plants you grow in your system may be limited by the type of aquaponics system you have, or more to the point, the type of plant growing system. If you have an NFT system you will not be growing carrots or large tomato plants because the small NFT pipes will not allow such growth. If designing your own aquaponic system you must put some thought into your plant growing method, and what you want to grow. This is one of the reasons why we like deep media filled beds at Backyard Aquaponics. When you have deep media beds there are no limitations on growing different plants.

About the Author

Backyard Aquaponics was started by Joel Malcolm in Australia after he stumbled across the idea over ten years ago. Being such a simple concept, he wondered why more people weren’t doing it. Joel wrote the first book about Aquaponics and started the Backyard Aquaponics forum http://www.backyardaquaponics.com/forum/ where contributors from around the globe began sharing their knowledge and inspiring others. Realizing there was a demand, the world’s first retail display centre was opened in 2007 with over a dozen different systems on display. He began installing kit systems for clients, providing monthly workshops and providing consultations on system design and maintenance. Backyard Aquaponics also produces a quarterly magazine, which features systems from all over the world, methods of pest control, recipes, fish keeping and research trials, available in either electronic format or printed glossy editions. For further information go to the www.backyardaquaponics.com
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The Watergarden Koi – Sarasa Comets

by Tom Graham
POND Trade Magazine

No. Goldfish are not Koi, but they can fill the desires many pondkeepers have for beautiful fish in their pond.

Burt Nichols, Water Garden Gems in Marion, Texas, is a big fan of goldfish. At his expansive store on the outskirts of San Antonio, he sells everything for the pond, from koi pond and water garden filtration, aquatic plants, supplies, garden art, gifts, koi and yes, goldfish - lots of goldfish.

In talking with Burt, he explained that he has roughly 20 goldfish customers for every koi customer. They are often seniors, who dote over their fish, spending lavishly to keep them healthy, far beyond their replacement cost. “They all have names you see, so they are part of the family.”

If you look at the goldfish he carries, you will notice they are not the common orange goldfish you might expect. Instead he focuses on Sarasa Comets and Shubunkins. The end result is a collection that looks remarkably like a collection of koi, but are a lot less expensive to buy and easier to maintain for the pondkeeper.

High quality Sarasa Comets look a lot like Kohaku, the bold red and white koi. Sarasa have deep red patches on a bright white body, like a good quality koi. Some have koi-like markings or patterns, but most are not as refined, although that doesn’t seem to deter their fans.

Shubunkins are better known and more commonly available, and are roughly the Sanke of goldfish, with a white body and red and black markings. Like Sarasa, there are a few that have patterns that are Sanke-like.

Sarasa and Shubunkin both do well in garden ponds year round. An important point is that they do not get huge like koi can, so they are less likely to overwhelm a smaller pond, or one with limited filtration that could not support large koi. They do breed aggressively in most ponds, but as the population increases, so do the number of mouths eating the eggs and fry, so the population tends to level off at sustainable levels in most cases.

The joy of discovering new baby goldfish and watching them grow up in the pond is very addicting to many pondkeepers as well. And unlike koi, most of the babies turn into acceptable goldfish, with only a few staying brown or turning all white.
To the new pondkeeper, Sarasa Comets and Shubunkins are an ideal pond fish. They won’t overgrow the pond, they have the bright colors people have come to expect, and often believe can only be found in koi. They are not as delicate as koi, and are much more affordable to buy and replace. Oh, and did I mention they also play well with aquatic plants? That’s right. Water Lilies and other aquatic plants are the reason many want a pond in the first place, so why fight the battle of koi destroying the plants in the pond? If you populate a new pond with a healthy variety of Sarasa and Shubunkin, your new pond owner will have an easier go of it, particularly starting off.

Retailers should consider displaying a large inventory, demonstrating support for the goldfish, and providing the more discerning customer the opportunity to pick out the most attractive or koi like. The opportunity to discover a new fish is addicting, and can generate ongoing repeat business, if the customer can count on a new selection of fish to look through when they stop by the shop.

But the goldfish business doesn’t end with the end of summer. The fancy goldfish business is a winter time opportunity with genuine potential. Goldfish such as Bubble Eye, Lionhead, and Ryukin make great aquarium fish. They are easy to care for, and beautiful in a home aquarium. Most of these are imported from Asia, and are priced in a way that a good margin can be maintained. You might be surprised at how a room full of fancy goldfish could help off-season sales, for not only fish, but food, medications, decorations, and support for a gift shop or coffee stand.
The first International Waterlily and Lotus Exhibition and Symposium was held in Qingdao, China near the end of July, with over 150 attendees from 13 countries around the world and seven districts of China. The ocean port of Qingdao, the center of the 2008 Olympic sailing events, is a beautiful modern city between the mountains and the ocean, with flowers and trees landscaping many major highways.

Traveling to a far country is both exciting and intimidating, but with the lure of Chinese Waterlily World and the amazing progress in aquatics made in China and the rest of Asia in recent years, this event was not to be missed! Some of us arrived early and were privileged to have an advance glimpse of Waterlily World. As soon as we stepped through the gates, we were amazed and excited to find that 800 varieties of lotus and about 300 varieties of tropical and hardy waterlilies awaited our discovery in custom-built ponds throughout the 20 hectares of rolling hills.

Innumerable concrete free-form show ponds held waterlilies and aquatic plants in peak condition, and rows upon rows upon rows of large ceramic pots displayed amazing lotus with huge buds or blooms.

The impressive Opening Ceremony at Chinese Waterlily World was attended by hundreds of people, including the Chinese news cameras and press. The incredible displays of new varieties and old favourites in lotus and waterlilies, both tropical and hardy, kept us all entranced for hours as we walked up hills and into valleys lined with ponds interspersed with many varieties of luscious fruit trees.

On Sunday we were privileged to have 10 speakers from China and around the world, with inspiring topics about aquatics and water gardening. Lectures ranged from Dr. Subir

Bai Shao Yao Lian is an exquisite new lotus.

We spotted this exciting new hardy, as yet unnamed.
Gosh who enlightened us on the state of the wetlands of India, and the edible, commercially valuable, medicinal and traditional uses of the wide range of aquatic plants there; to Rick Bartel, who discussed the vital interaction of aquatic plants in water gardens; and then to Grant Mitchell who entertained us with his adventures seeking new and rare lotus in rural China.

In Qingdao we enjoyed many local attractions, including the Polar Ocean World, the Flower Market, Zhongshan Park and the Modification Works of the Licun River Wetland. Some of us stayed on to tour Beijing and major attractions like the Great Wall of China, the Forbidden City, the Summer Palace and Beijing Botanic Garden. Our guides learned to stop and wait whenever there were lotus or water features to admire and photograph!

The whole event was superbly organized with the collaboration of the City of Qingdao, Chinese Waterlily World, the 2014 Horticultural Exposition Committee and Larry Nau of Bergen Water Gardens, Rochester. The incredible displays of aquatic plants at Chinese Waterlily World, the superb hospitality of our hosts, and the beautiful city of Qingdao inspired some of us to plan a return visit in 3 years, when the 2014 International Horticultural Exposition will take place. It promises to be even more incredible!

Editors Note: We could not fit all the pictures here, there are MANY more on our website.
Rowena Burns • Burns Water Gardens • RR # 2
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905-372-2737

Attendees from U.S.A., Belgium, Germany, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Mexico, experiencing the taste of several kinds of tea during the Tea Ceremony.
David Curtright, USA, front left.

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Have you ever known someone that has a koi pond that does not have koi art in their home? Nope, me neither. Where do your customers buy koi art? If not from you then you may be missing out.

What kinds of koi art are available from artists today? You will find a vast array of possibilities such as paintings, tiles, sculptures, photos, vases, playing cards and even men’s ties.

For retailers, having koi art on the walls or sitting by the cash register could prove profitable. Your customers will see it and hopefully it will stimulate them into buying. If nothing else it gives your store that special look or feel – a destination that is inviting – that your customers will want to return to.

Remember, people who buy koi art want to see high quality representations of koi in their homes. No matter how great the art piece is, if it is of a poor quality koi, be hesitant to buy it to sell. People want to be inspired, and the longer people keep koi, the better their eye for quality gets.

Do you give your customer thank you gifts? For contractors a set of koi coffee mugs might make a great thank you gift. Your customer just spent a good deal of money with you – this could be a nice way to say thank you!

Some artists may even be willing to enter into a consignment agreement with you, which could be a win-win. Everyone going to your store sees the artist’s work and if a painting sells you both make a profit. You may want to contact some of your local artists and support your community by supplying them a new place to display their wares.

Remember to add artwork to your websites, too. With the holidays people may not be buying koi (the real thing), but they may buy koi art. And remember this, koi art is in season all year round.

Photos taken at the Japanese Friendship Garden, Balboa Park, San Diego, CA.

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Garden Flags

Ceramic Tiles

Patti Magee-Kaufman
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www.pattigrafix.com
Like most of us out there, I had been filling my pond-free reservoirs with gravel, usually 3/4” – 1” screened, sizing the reservoir so the water around the stones would suffice to run the stream and falls. As you already know, most of the reservoir space gets taken up by that gravel in there, so I learned how much volume to excavate the hard way – I undersized my first reservoir badly enough that I had to re-dig it.

Let me give you an example of an extreme. Imagine a beautiful backyard under tall oaks, sloping up away from the deck behind the house to create an almost perfect amphitheater carpeted with hay-scented ferns. Envision a 100-foot long stream winding its way down to a koi pond, which then overflowed into a reservoir where the pumps were located. The idea (not mine) was brilliant. No skimmer would be necessary since debris would simply overflow onto the top of a buried reservoir; the level of the water in the koi pond would always stay constant; the reservoir level would rise and fall instead of the pond.

The idea was great, but the math was off. The stream needed about a foot of water by an average of 3’ wide to completely fill the 100-foot run and start recirculating, a total of 1’ x 3’ x 100’ = 300 cubic feet of water. The reservoir held only about two thirds that much, but it still might have worked if the stream had been able to retain most of the water, easily achieved with liner and proper design. See the Detail.

Unfortunately, the materials actually used to retain the water in each stream pocket – stones glued together with foam and cement – were not waterproof, so they didn’t retain water for very long. The pump would empty the reservoir before water could recycle, then have to be switched off until the reservoir was about to overflow, then on again until empty, and so forth. Not fun. It took a day to get it started, and finally all was well – until it was shut off. 300 cubic feet of water from the stream tried to fit into 200 cubic feet of reservoir. The lost 100 cubic feet would need replacing and the tedious job of filling while cycling the pump on and off would start all over again. There are over seven and a half gallons of water in a cubic foot. I’ll bet you can imagine how much damage 750 gallons of water can cause every time the power went out, which happened there about once a month! Talk about a learning experience!

The formula presented itself: I wanted to have at least 4 times as much water in the reservoir than I needed to get the feature recirculating. That way, when the pump went on, the reservoir would only drain down a quarter of the way before an equilibrium was reached, with the water from the stream replenishing what was being pumped out. To keep things
straight, let’s call the amount of water needed to completely fill the stream top to bottom and start refilling the reservoir, the Dynamic Volume. The Reservoir Volume had to be at least four times the Dynamic Volume, so the water in the reservoir would never drop by more than one-quarter on startup:

(Note that the amount of water that the stream holds in the pockets and pools when the pump is off doesn’t change the formula. It’s only the water you need to add to get the feature recirculating that matters. The less water you need to get things started, the smaller the reservoir can be. It takes a 25% larger reservoir to supply a stream that needs 4” instead of 3” of additional water to get started. You save a lot of work, time and materials by decreasing the Dynamic Volume.)

Well, it seemed easy enough – but what about the gravel? I needed to know just how much larger the reservoir would have to be if I backfilled it with gravel, so I turned to a man who never takes anything for granted. I’m pretty sure Bill Hoffman, Pond Supplies of Ohio, has actually checked every measurement and formula that I’ve just taken for granted off a chart. Sure enough, he had checked volume of water in graveled reservoirs. Bill told me he had filled 5 gallon pails with clean gravel in a variety of sizes, and, regardless of the size, each displaced about two-thirds, leaving one-third water. That meant I would need to dig a hole three times larger than the volume of water I needed, to accommodate the gravel. Tripling the original formula of four times the Dynamic Volume to accommodate the gravel left me with the startling realization that the Graveled Reservoir Volume had to be at least TWELVE times the Dynamic Volume!
Volume of Graveled Reservoir

\[ \text{Volume of Graveled Reservoir} = \text{Dynamic Volume} \times 12 \]

Let’s see how that would work for my extreme example above. Even if I only needed to supply 100 cubic feet of water to the stream, that means 400 cubic feet of water, which would take a 1200 cubic foot reservoir if I was backfilling with gravel. Ouch! That’s a hole 4’ deep by 15’ by 20’, and I would need 40 yards of gravel to fill it! That’s not just a lot of gravel to buy, it’s a tractor-trailer load that has to be delivered, dumped and installed!

Obviously larger water features like this need a different strategy.

Enter the Water Matrix. These sturdy blocks take the place of the gravel in the reservoir, and they’re engineered to take the load. Typically internally reinforced with inner walls, these closed rectangles are no milk crates; water matrices were first developed for stormwater retention under parking lots. Some, like the Atlantic Eco-Blox for example (see Eco-Blox illustration), can handle over 7 tons (!) of distributed weight, so a properly constructed reservoir can be safely buried anywhere in the yard, under water features, patios or walks, without fear of collapse and are completely invisible. These matrices are 95% open space, so there’s no need to dig three times the reservoir, and forget all that additional gravel! We’re right back to the simple original formula of a Matrix Reservoir of only four times the Dynamic Volume:

Volume of Matrix Reservoir

\[ \text{Volume of Matrix Reservoir} = \text{Dynamic Volume} \times 4 \]

Let’s look at the reservoir for our extreme example now, using matrices instead of gravel backfill. Instead of that monster 1200 cubic foot reservoir, if we don’t need the space for the gravel, we’re back to around 400 cubic feet. Instead of a 4’ x 15’ x 20’ pit, we can now dig a hole one third the size at 4½’ x 8’ x 12’, filled with two layers of 24 matrices each, with a Pump Vault and Vault Extension to house a pump, the whole reservoir capped with a modest layer of 10” of gravel, totaling about 3 cubic yards. The cost of the 48 matrices might be slightly more than a tractor trailer of gravel (not where I’m from on Long Island!), but consider the savings: digging one-third the hole; moving one-thirteenth the gravel; transporting all the matrices in a shortbed pickup; assembly and installation in half a day, no strength or exertion required; and what about avoiding the cleanup costs of moving 50 tons of gravel! OK, but 100-foot long streams are certainly not everyday projects; what about smaller features? The savings translate down in scale just as well.

Let’s say for the sake of argument that you’ve contracted to build a 5’ high waterfall, running down about 9’ total of stream and falls before it gets back to the gravel where the vault is located. Let’s guesstimate that, in our hypothetical illustration, the 9’ long stream varies in width from 1’ to 4’ wide, but the average width of the stream and falls is about 2’ wide; we’ll guess that the average depth we have to fill including every pocket and pool is about 4” before the water flows back into the gravel. If we calculate the volume of water we’ll need in the stream and falls to get the feature running at 9’ long by 2’ wide by 4” (1/3 foot), we’ll need about 1/3 of 18, or 6 cubic feet of Dynamic Volume. To have enough room for the water and gravel besides, we’ll need 12 times the Dynamic Volume for our graveled reservoir, or 72 cubic feet of water, that’s a hole 3’ x 4’ x 6’, plus almost 3 yards of gravel. That’s a hard day’s work for two men by hand, not much less with a machine when you consider the cleanup.

Using Water Matrices, we can store the same volume of water with one-third the digging, about 2’ x 3’ x 4’ and 4 matrices, only half a yard of gravel and less than half the
time required. It’s no wonder Water Matrices are what serious contractors are using these days, for pond-free waterfalls, bubbling rocks and urns, rainwater harvesting cisterns, even greenhouse thermal storage mass! If you aren’t already using them, give them a try; you won’t go back to backfilling with gravel.

Remember, it’s always better to learn from the mistakes of others! Make sure you calculate the reservoir volume you will need to make that stream or pondless feature work the way you intend it to.

About the Author

Demi Fortuna is Director of Product Information for industry leader Atlantic Water Gardens, traveling and working with contractors and distributors alike in developing targeted Atlantic sales support materials. Fortuna has over 25 years of experience in all aspects of water garden design and construction, the last ten years in product research, development, sales and product training. When he isn’t presenting complex topics via seminars and lectures in an accessible, enjoyable manner, he can usually be found up to his elbows in pond slime working with his two sons, Edwin and Ely, in their water feature design/build business August Moon Designs. Demi can be contacted at demi@atlanticwatergardens.com or visit www.facebook.com/AugustMoonDesigns

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The Originator of Floc Log, Silt Stop, & Pond Log Products.

APS is the originator of Floc Log, Silt Stop, & Pond Log products which are innovative blends of polyacrylamide-based products used for mud thickening, erosion control, water clarification, soil stabilization, pond-like management, and nutrient removal. All APS products have undergone Acute and Chronic wet testing for aquatic organisms and were found non-toxic by an EPA certified laboratory. Floc Logs remove turbidity. Pond Log® remove nutrients and turbidity. Silt Stop powder can be applied to the soil, stabilizing it, eliminating erosion and thickening mud to make it more manageable for hauling by trucks.

www.siltstop.com
Upcoming Events

November 4 – 6
North Florida Koi Show
www.nfkc.info

November 5 – 8
INFO-Tanza 2011
San Diego, California
International Pond Professional Companies Association (IPPCA). Held in conjunction with the Irrigation Show.
www.infotanza.com

February 1 – 2, 2012
32nd Annual Landscape Industry Show
Los Angeles, California
Back in the Game at CLCA’s Landscape Industry Show! The California Landscape Contractors Association (CLCA) is proud to present its 32nd Annual Landscape Industry Show February 1-2, 2012 at the Los Angeles Convention Center. The theme of this year’s Show is titled: Back in the Game!
www.clca.us/lis.

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
The National Association of Pond Professionals (NAPP) is excited to announce that plans for the 2012 Conference and Expo are very close to completion.
www.nationalpondpro.com
See ad on page 10.

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Looking for a tax deduction? Or not sure if you can deduct something take a look at this article.

by Mark E. Battersby

W

ithout marketing or advertising, no one will know the existence of your pond design, construction, or maintenance business. Fortunately, a marketing strategy doesn’t have to mean multi-million-dollar TV commercials. After all, there are plenty of ways to market a pond business — and a variety of tax deductions to help make that marketing and advertising more affordable. Include entertainment in the pond operation’s marketing strategy and tax deductions will also underwrite the fun side of promoting your business.

Advertising, as well as marketing, can mean the continued life of a business affected by the economy, competition or other factors outside the control of the operation’s owner or manager. Because there are many aspects to both advertising and marketing, it is not surprising that the expenditures related to these activities fall within several sections of the tax regulations.

Advertising Expense

All-too-often, one of the first expenses reduced or cut by many troubled pond businesses is the most basic of expenditures — advertising costs. This is a doubly shortsighted strategy given the necessity of advertising in bad times and the fact that Uncle Sam, in the form of tax deductions, will often pick-up a portion of those advertising expenses.

Advertising expenses encompass everything from expenditures for business cards, catalogs, home demonstrations, design costs, prizes and contests, new product or service launch costs and other promotional activities.

Generally, advertising, marketing and other selling expenses are immediately tax deductible as “ordinary and necessary” business expenses — but not always.

All reasonable advertising expenses are tax deductible so long as they bear a reasonable relationship to the pond business. Under our tax rules, deductible expenses may be for the purpose of developing good will as well as gaining immediate sales. Even better, the cost of advertising is deductible when paid or incurred, even though the advertising program extends over several years or is expected to result in benefits extending over a period of years.

Lobbying Expenses: When it comes to promoting the interests of the pond construction or maintenance business, lobbying expenses directed towards influencing federal or state legislation are generally not deductible. However, this prohibition does not generally apply to in-house expenses that do not exceed $2,000 for a tax year. Lobbying expenses pertaining to local legislation are, of course, deductible.

The cost of public service or other impartial advertising, such as advertising designed to encourage the public to register to vote, are also deductible. But, no deduction may be claimed for the expense of advertising in political programs, or for admission to political fund-raising or inaugural functions and similar events. This includes admission to a dinner or program if any part of the proceeds of the event directly or indirectly inures to or for the use of a political party or a political candidate.

Web Site Development Costs

Although the IRS has not issued formal guidance on the treatment of Web site development costs, informal, internal IRS guidance suggests that one appropriate approach is to treat these costs like an item of software and depreciate them over three years. It is equally clear that taxpayers who pay large amounts to develop sophisticated sites have been allocating their costs to items such as software development (currently deductible like research and development costs) and currently deductible advertising expense — without challenge by the IRS.

Mailing Lists

Mailing lists are an important part of the advertising campaigns of many pond businesses. On one hand, the mailing list is an intangible asset, deductible only if a reasonable life can be determined for it. A tax deduction for the cost of compiling that list is a little trickier.

Consider the situation of a pond contractor that mails catalogs to people on its mailing list as well as to others on lists that it rents. Prospects for the permanent list are from advertising, and added to the company’s mailing list if they make purchases. The business keeps records of its costs in adding to the mailing lists and expenses those costs in the year the catalog to which the expenses relate is distributed.

The Internal Revenue Service has ruled that the company may deduct as an ordinary business expense its costs related to adding names to the mailing list. Keep in mind, however, that this situation involved a catalog that was published semi-annually, while in other cases the IRS ruled on the catalog had a useful life of several years.

Marketing as Advertising

Paid advertising isn’t the only way to spread the word about your pond operation or business. Public relations are marketing strategies that span everything from press releases and networking at a Chamber of Commerce meeting to sponsoring a contest to holding special events.

However, no deduction is allowed for dues paid to any club organized for business, pleasure, recreation, or other social purposes — even if membership is used to promote the pond business. Fortunately, this disallowance does not extend to trade and professional organizations, or public service organizations (e.g., Kiwanis and Rotary clubs).

Entertainment

A pond designer, contractor or maintenance professional is allowed a deduction for business entertainment, so long as there is a direct relationship between the expense and the development or expansion of the business. Remember, however, special limits are
imposed on the deduction of business-related
entertainment, meals and gift expenses.

First and foremost, no tax deduction is
allowed for the cost of entertaining guests at
nightclubs, sporting events, theaters, etc.,
unless that cost is either:

1. Directly related to the active conduct of
a trade or business, or
2. For entertainment directly before or after
a substantial and bona fide business
discussion associated with the conduct
of that trade or business.

The business discussion must be the prin-
cipal aspect of the combined entertainment
and business and must represent an active
effort by the pond professional to obtain
income or other specific business benefit.
However, if a meal expense directly precedes
or follows a substantial and bona fide business
discussion (including a business meeting at a
convention or trade show), then it is
deductible if it is established that the expense
was associated with the active conduct of a
trade or business. The pond business must, of
course, be able to substantiate the expense.

There are two additional restrictions
placed on the deduction of meal expenses: (1)
meal expenses generally are not deductible if
neither the pond professional nor the opera-
tion’s employee is present at the meal, and (2)
a deduction will not be allowed for food and
beverage to the extent that such expense is
lavish or extravagant under the circumstances.

**50% Limitation Rule:** The amount
allowable as a deduction for meal and enter-
tainment expenses is generally limited to 50%
of such expenses. The 50% rule is applied only
after determining the amount of the otherwise
allowable deductions. For instance, the
portion of a meal that is lavish or extravagant
must first be subtracted from the meal cost
before the 50% reduction is applied.

Giving is Often
Advertising

Yet another form of advertising is the
giving of gifts by a pond business. Deductions
for business gifts, whether made directly or
indirectly, are limited to $25 per recipient per
year. Items clearly of an advertising nature that
cost $4 or less and signs, display racks or other
promotional materials given for use on busi-
ness premises are not gifts.

A pond business that provides customers
or prospective customers with an item that
might be considered either a gift or entertain-
ment will generally benefit from the entertain-
ment write-off, ignoring the $25 limit. Of
course, if the operation gives a customer pack-
aged food or beverages that are to be used
later, they are considered gifts.

A gift to the wife of a business customer
is not treated separately from a gift to the
customer himself. Remember, the $25 limita-
tion applies to gifts made “directly or indi-
rectly” to an individual. A gift made to the
wife of a business customer of the taxpayer is
generally considered as made indirectly to the
customer. However, if the customer’s wife has
an independent business connection with the
taxpayer, a gift to her would not be regarded
as an indirect gift to her husband unless it was
intended for his eventual use or benefit.

To spur sales, many businesses frequently
give away small samples. Under the tax rules,
the cost of the samples can be deducted imme-
diately – if the samples are purchased sepa-
rately from the products being sold, their cost
is an ordinary and necessary business expense.
However, if the item was included in inven-
tory, it cannot be deducted twice. It will
already be part of the cost of goods sold.

The tax rules clearly label the majority of
advertising and marketing costs as immedi-
ately tax deductible albeit with some
restrictions or limits. Obviously, to get the
maximum benefits from advertising and
marketing expenditures or to reap the cost-
cutting deductions, often requires the help of
qualified professionals.

Whether help includes advertising or
marketing professionals or is limited to a qual-
ified tax professional, the decision of whether
to advertise or market the pond design,
construction or maintenance operation’s serv-
ices or products should be a “no brainer,”
good times or bad.

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**About the Author**

Mark Battersby 25 years of professional experience in the fields of taxes and finances enable Mr.
Battersby to write on unique and topical subjects. Although no reputable professional should ever
render specific advice at arm’s length, he does craft unbiased, interesting, informative, and accurate
articles. Mr. Battersby currently writes for publications in a variety of fields. His topical columns are
syndicated in many publications each week. He also writes columns for trade magazines and has authored
four books.
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API® launches the Evolution in Filtration with new API® nexx™ FILTER!

Mars Fishcare, North America is excited to announce the launch of their new filter the API® nexx™ FILTER and EXTENSION. The nexx FILTER is one of the most intuitive external filters to be released in the market. This new patented innovation is the ultimate in convenience, no mess, quick media changes in four minutes or less and filtration options that offer customers the flexibility in filtration that they need and want. The modular capability of the filter makes it unique while optimizing shelf space. The nexx FILTER has a complete range of media providing superior filtration and flexibility. The nexx FILTER is an Evolution in Filtration.

"With consumers’ needs in mind, this new filter design will contribute greatly to increasing the overall fish keeping experience. Nexx™’s truly innovative design brings ease of use, flexibility and filtration efficacy which will bring peace of mind to our consumers enabling them to spend less time with their filter and more time with their fish," said Benjamin Lachaud, Global Brand Manager, Mars Fishcare North America.

Information regarding all Mars Fishcare brands can be found at www.marsfishcare.com.

Eric Triplett Joins IPPCA Board of Advisors

The IPPCA (International Professional Pond Companies Association) is elated to announce the appointment of Eric Triplett to its board of advisors. Eric is the founder and CEO of THE POND DIGGER INC, of Yucaipa CA. Offering custom water feature installations as well as operating a retail location and distribution network, Eric is the perfect addition to the IPPCA Board of Advisors.

IPPCA President John Olson said, “I have worked with Eric for many years and find his creativity, organization, and keen business sense to be unsurpassed. Eric Triplett’s knowledge of private labeling, marketing, and industry trends will play a key role in the IPPCA’s efforts to assist pond related companies who may be struggling in this continued down economy.”

To read more about Eric Triplett or the Pond Digger crew please visit www.theponddigger.com

To learn more about the IPPCA please visit www.ippca.com or call 770-529-9790.

Franklin Electric Streamlines Brand Offering

Franklin Electric, manufacturer of Cal Pump and Little Giant brand products, is pleased to introduce its plan to streamline brands. Beginning in late 2011, Cal Pump brand products will be available under the Little Giant brand name.

This change, putting the company’s quality outdoor living products under one brand, comes to help simplify product selection and sizing for customers. New packaging, as well as new item numbers will usher in the change later this year. Little Giant Outdoor Living and Gardening will also unveil a coordinating new product catalog and website, alleviating the need for customers to search multiple catalogs and websites to find needed products.

Franklin Electric is very excited to continue to offer quality outdoor living and gardening products, simplified under the quality brand of Little Giant.

Recognized as a technical leader in its specialties, Franklin Electric serves customers around the world in residential, commercial, agricultural, industrial, municipal, and fueling applications.

For more information please visit www.lgoutdoor.com.

Blue Thumb and PondBuilder Break Ground on new Building Expansion

Blue Thumb Distributing, Inc., a national distributor of pond equipment and supplies announces the construction expansion of their warehouse in Saginaw, Michigan. Once completed, the 22,000 square foot expansion will give the company a total of 52,000 square feet of warehouse and office space.

Blue Thumb manufactures the PondBuilder brand of pond equipment and sites increased demand for its products as the main reason for the expansion. “The expansion will allow us to house additional inventory to handle the increased business and allow us the space necessary to continue research and development for new product lines rolling out in 2012.”

For additional information please contact Aaron Scarlata, Business Development Manager at aaron@mipond.com.
IWGS Announces New International Waterlily Week

The International Waterlily and Water Gardening Society (IWGS) is proud to announce the first annual International Waterlily Week, held September 4th – 10th at the culmination of the Society’s New Waterlily Competition, offered annually since its inception in 1997.

Each year, waterlily hybrids from around the world are grown out for the New Waterlily Competition and judged by a panel of international aquatic experts. In addition, people’s choice awards are determined through online voting by water gardening hobbyists from across the globe. Grown out at Sarah P. Duke Gardens in Durham, NC under the supervision of horticulturist, Tamara Kilbane.

To raise awareness of these new hybridized waterlilies, the IWGS has declared the first annual International Waterlily Week to be September 4th – 10th, when 2011 waterlily competition results will be announced to the public.

For more information log on to www.iwgs.org or call 540-337-4507.

Sentinel Deluxe Aeration Systems

EasyPro offers a complete line of lake and pond management supplies including the Sentinel Deluxe Aeration systems. Now powered by the Stratus ERP series compressors with two year warranty, the Sentinel kits offer an energy efficient way to aerate ponds up to six acres. Sentinel systems come complete with locking cabinet, compressor installed, tubing, valved manifolds and diffusers.

The Sentinel Deluxe Aeration systems offer an energy efficient and effective way to aerate lakes and ponds through diffused bottom aeration.

For more information or a free catalog call us at 800-448-3873 or visit us on the web www.EasyProPondProducts.com!

Aquatic Eco-Systems, Inc. Acquires Green Sky Growers

Aquatic Eco-Systems Inc. (AES) of Apopka, FL, announced that it has acquired Green Sky Growers, based in Winter Garden, FL.

As a result of the acquisition, AES, operating under the name Green Sky Growers, will continue the hydroponic and aquaponic operations started by Bert Roper, on the basis of promoting sustainable living and best practices.

To see complete Press Release see www.pondtrademag.com.

For more information about Green Sky Growers, facility tour information, a list of current products offered and company updates, visit www.GreenSkyGrowers.com.

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.

For more information, visit AquaticEco.com or call 407-886-3939.

Pond Zinger™ New Pond Clarification Product

After years of research and many erosion and sediment control, stormwater, and pond clarification applications, Applied Polymer Systems is pleased to introduce the Zinger Series for ponds and soils. Pond Zinger™ is a pond clarification product designed and formulated for backyard ponds.

Pond Zinger™ safely removes algae from ponds between 500 and 12,000 gallons in size, creating a healthy ecosystem with clean, clear, beautiful water, where aquatic life can thrive. Attached to a fountain, bubbler, aerator, or the steps of a waterfall, the Pond Zinger™ slowly dissolves, releasing its components into the pond where excess nutrients, such as Phosphorous, bind together and settle out. The result is improved pond water quality in terms of clarity, reduced phosphates and algae, odor control, decreased suspended solids, and metal discoloration removal.

Once the water is clean, any remaining Pond Zinger™ can be removed from the pond, dried, and then stored away from sunlight until it is needed again. The pond should remain clean for the season, unless more phosphorous enters it.

Pond Zinger™ is available from Applied Polymer Systems and through retailers nationwide. Applied Polymer Systems stands behind their products.

For more information, please visit www.zingerseries.com or contact us at 1-866-200-9868 or info@siltstop.com. To learn about our other products, please visit www.siltstop.com.

Aquatic Eco-Systems, Inc. Announces New International Waterlily Week

IWGS Announces New International Waterlily Week
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Aquascape’s Pondemonium® 2011 Focused on Building the Future Together

by Jennifer Zuri
Aquascape

Hundreds of distributors, contractors, and retailers from around the world came together for education, networking, and fun at Aquascape Inc.’s water gardening event, Pondemonium® 2011, held August 18th-21st in St. Charles, IL. This year’s theme was “Building the Future Together” and offered workshops and hands-on training sessions designed to instruct attendees about effective, economical ways to grow their business.

The event kicked off with an advanced Build-a-Pond training session held at Chicago’s Shedd Aquarium, the third water feature installed at this location by Aquascape and its network of Certified Aquascape Contractors. Capping the build was a waterfall ribbon-cutting ceremony with dinner on the outside terrace at the Shedd Aquarium.

Friday’s classroom sessions started with keynote presentations from Greg Wittstock, CEO and Founder of Aquascape, Inc. and John Stanley, retail industry expert. Greg’s presentation, “Building the Future Together” focused on plugging your business into the philosophies and ideologies with water features that appeal to today’s new consumer, while John’s presentation, “Water: Make it Your Future to Have a Future” highlighted what’s being done to make water features vogue and how to leverage the past to build your business today and for the future.

New to Pondemonium® this year were “Cup of Coffee” roundtable discussions, led by a variety of water feature contractors and retailers on topics ranging from “Making Home Shows Profitable” to “Creative Construction Projects” to “Selling Your Passion” and more. Attendees could choose from over 60 discussions in which to participate before heading into classroom workshops on Friday and Saturday.

Networking events were offered throughout the event and included a trip to Ball Horticultural Company for dinner and private tour of the expansive gardens. In addition, a coffee bar and beer garden at Aqualand, corporate headquarters of Aquascape, afforded opportunities for socializing and idea-swapping. An awards ceremony and annual Blow-Out Bash rounded out the agenda for 2011.

During the awards ceremony, Aquascape recognized customers who displayed one or more of the company’s core values of Character, Team, Win-4, and Fun. In addition, 3 recipients were chosen for special awards never before offered.

- Tony Sargeant of Aquatic Creations in Grantville, GA was awarded 2011 Businessman of the Year by Greg Wittstock.
- Chip and Sue DuBois of Chips Landscaping in Greenfield Center, NY were awarded 2011 Conservation/Sustainability Award by Ed Beaulieu, chief sustainability officer for Aquascape, Inc.
- BJ Linger of BJL Aquascapes in Oceanport, NJ was awarded Artist of the Year/Workmanship Award by Brian Helfrich, construction manager for Aquascape, Inc.

For more information on Pondemonium®, log on to www.pondemonium.com. For information on any of Aquascape’s other training events, log on to www.aquascapeinc.com or call 866-877-6637 (US) or 866-766-3426 (CAN)
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 nitrites and nitrates
- 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, nitrites, nitrates, 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 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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