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IKEAGE
Vicki Vaughan, Flat Rock Koi

An Ikeage is a ritual performed several times a year by Japanese koi breeders. It literally means, "mud pond harvest." Ikeage is a lot of work, but it is also a time of celebration. See how one US koi farm continues this tradition. There is always a great deal of excitement when the nets are pulled and everyone sees how the koi have grown and developed.

Product of the Year 2010 Challenge

Our Product of the Year Challenge for 2010 starts now. Manufactures send in your entries and readers can make suggestions. This is a great way to showcase the exciting new products released in 2010.

Pond Leaks
Part Two – Advanced Investigation
Jamie Beyer, Midwest Waterscapes

Leaks can be in so many places. Pond expert Jamie Beyer takes you through a series of steps on where leaks can be and how to find them in this second of a two-part series. Areas like waterfalls, outlet tubing, skimmers, streams, invasive plants and more are all discussed. Patience is key as some leaks are easy to find, some can take days.

Rain Water – Benefit or Hazard for Ponds
Ann Telford, AllClear Water Purifiers

This may not be what you think, not all rain water is safe for fish. Water expert Ann Telford talks about the benefits and possible hazards of rain water. Its no surprise that you need to be testing added water and the source of that water; be it from the clouds or from the hose in the backyard. Rain water can have a major impact on a pond, just be sure it is not a harmful one.

Ponditat
Gloria Jones, IPPCA

The 5th Annual Ponditat for Humanity overhaul event was held recently by the International Professional Pond Contractors Association (IPPCA). The "Top Guns" converged Nebraska to add a bog and reduce the electricity used (making it more "green"). They also used their photography skills learned at a prior seminar to document and promote this pond.

How to Keep Koi Alive in Your Customers’ Pond
Mamoru Kodama, Kodama Koi Farm

Mr. Kodama discusses the importance of keeping your customers koi alive by educating your customers and providing regular
maintenance service. He covers reasons why the koi can die after only a week or two and what to do to prevent problems. Each pond and pond owner is unique – by visiting or maintaining their pond you will be able to help them when they need it most. This also builds customer loyalty, stimulating future sales.

28 **Rocking the Boat – are Rocks the Problem?**

*Rick Bartel, Savio Water Feature Institute*

Are rocks or inadequate filtration the real culprit? Twenty-year veteran water feature contractor Rick Bartel, tries to answer the "rock on the bottom" controversy once and for all. Includes several actual ponds, their dimensions and pond specifics. This provocative article introduces his theory about "rocks" and good pond design.

**POND Sources — Pressurized Filters**

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*Tamsie Pierce, Author and Koi Hobbyist*

What’s the deal with pressurized filter? Learn about how they work and when and why to use them. Includes tips to consider when deciding on what filter to use. Read about six of the leading pressurized filters on the market today.

38 **POND Sources Directory: Pressurized Filters Manufacturers and Distributors**

Need to find a pressurized filter? Here is a list of leading manufacturers and distributors to get you started.

39 **Eight Tips for Improving Monday Mornings**

*Gretchen Rubin, The Happiness Project*

Need help getting your week started? Here are great tips to help you get a great start to your day.

**Web Exclusive Article** - Why I Don’t Like Turtles in My Ponds

*David Curtright, www.pondplants.com*

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– Water Lilies and Deer

Paula, something is eating my water lilies. One day they were so full I was wondering how to thin them out and the next morning something ate most of the pads and flowers around the edge. They looked like what turtles do. Like something cut them with a scissor. I don’t have turtles, but I do have frogs. I have also seen deer trying to get near the pond. Do they eat lilies? I have large goldfish in the pond and they just had a baby. Would that have any affect on the plants?

I’m grasping at straws as each morning when I get up there are more plants gone. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Diane,

Diane, Yes deer can eat water lilies. Many years ago I went to an annual meeting for the International Waterlily Society, which had some programs at a very large botanical garden in Washington, DC. The Garden was very upset because deer had gotten into the garden and decimated all their roses and water lilies.

Goldfish and frogs don’t negatively affect your plants, except for occasional rooting around in the pots. I would say the deer are your culprit.

Good Luck,

Paula Biles (see pondtrademag.com website for author bio and articles by Paula)
You might have noticed that we have not jumped into the "Rock on the Bottom" debate in POND Trade Magazine. In this issue we dive in with a story by Rick Bartel titled Rockin' the Boat, that zeros in on what he sees as the culprit behind rock bottom pond problems. Is he on to something here? Read Rick's article for yourself and let us know what you think.

This month we look at large format pressurized filters. As one of the most popular for koi ponds, they offer high volume power in a small footprint. They can even be buried remotely from the pond. Don't miss our POND Sources section in this issue.

All across the country, businesses are holding events, and attending others to promote their wares, with sights on 2010 and 2011 sales. Distributors are holding seminar/trade shows; manufacturers are attending those and other shows around the country, such as the Pet Expo held recently in Pomona, California. Joel Burkard of Pan Intercorp, whose business is primarily importing koi for wholesale distribution, has been hosting casual coffee and koi get togethers at his facility in Kenmore, Washington on the weekends. Remember, if you are hosting an event for the trade, let us know, so we can add it to our calendar of upcoming events and help you build your attendance.

This month’s cover photo came to us from Barbara Johnson, The Fish Lady, of Van Nuys, California. She scrambled to help us find photos for an article and then we pulled the article. But this photo remains. Thank you Barbara for your support.

Now that summer 2010 is behind us, I hope the outlook for 2011 is hopeful for your business as it is for many that I have spoken with. If there is anything we can touch on, on these pages that would be of help to you and your business, please drop me a note at tomg@pondtrademag.com and let me know. We are here to support you.

Happy Selling,
Tom Graham
An Ikeage is a ritual performed several times a year by Japanese koi breeders. It literally means, “mud pond harvest.” It is a joyous ceremonial event that is meant to showcase the year’s production and growout of koi. Here on the farm we strive to reproduce this fun as well as making it an educational event in the spring and in the fall. We invite many to actually participate in the seining of the ponds and use this time to reconnect with old friends and make new ones.

An Ikeage has many purposes. In the spring we collect the previous year’s spawn and cull and grade the fish. We seine the broodstock ponds and assess the overall condition of the fish and determine what to breed. We also seine the growout ponds so that customers can see how their fish have grown and developed. When a customer buys a fish from Flat Rock Koi they have the option of putting it in one of our mud ponds for
optimal growth and condition. They eagerly await the Ikeage to see how well the fish have done in the mud pond.

The fall Ikeage is a good time to see how the spring spawns went and cull. The five Great Pyrenees watchdogs are especially keen on this activity as the cull fish turn into dog food. Many of the ponds are completely emptied after the Ikeage for cleaning and restocking.

As with all koi functions good food and cold beverages are in order. We generally cook a pig and participants bring a dish. The ponds are blessed with a fine bottle of sake and the celebration follows. This is a good time for the participants to peruse the collection tanks and enjoy the fruits of their labor.

Customers are allowed to buy fish after the pond pull but are advised to wait a week or two to pick up the fish. Fish coming out of a mud pond generally have parasites and need a certain rest period before transport. Harvesting fish is very stressful (to the fish and sometimes the people) and they need to be biopsied and evaluated for disease issues before they are released to the customer.

An Ikeage is hard work—the nets are heavy, the sides of the pond are steep and the mud can collect in the nets making them even heavier. Moving the brood stock “Mamasans” is back breaking as some of the fish are 34+” and weigh over 20lbs. They are moved in fish bags with water in them and they must be lifted over the protective fencing. No one seems to complain and people vie for the opportunity to “get in the mud” and get’er done.

Our fall harvest will be sometime in October. It will probably be after our buying trip to Japan and their Ikeage. We will post a date on our website when we finalize the plans. Keep posted to www.flatrockkoi.com.

Flat Rock Koi, LLC is located in Watkinsville, GA. The farm produces domestic koi and brings in several shipments every year of high quality Japanese fish. We raise water plants as well as Japanese maples. In addition, there is a bonsai nursery with everything from finished bonsai, pre bonsai, pots and custom soil blends.

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POND Trade™ Magazine invites you to submit your new products to the POND Trade Magazine – **Product of the Year 2010 Challenge**. POND Trade Magazine will recognize the most outstanding products of 2010 in our March/April 2011 issue. A panel of industry professionals will do the judging. This award is judged exclusively by the trade, with no fee to enter.

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* Eligible products must be new for 2010. Entrants must certify that their entries were introduced (or will be) for sale to the public after Nov. 1, 2009 and prior to Oct. 31, 2010.
Investigating pond leaks is a simple step-by-step procedure if approached systematically. Most leaks are found in the initial investigations. In Part I of this article we discussed the easy to find leaks that take very little time to investigate, and we covered a large number of potential leak locations. Time is money, as they say, and we want to be as efficient as possible in finding leaks for our clients. Now, we are going to cover more advanced investigations of leaks in flexible lined ponds. Most of these less obvious sources of leaks take more time to find than the easy ones, the majority of which you will have already eliminated by now.

**Waterfall Leaks**

Some of the more difficult to find leaks in ponds occur in the waterfall/stream of the pond. An easy way to determine whether this is the case is to shut down the waterfall/stream for 24 hours. If after doing this, the water level of the pond stays constant, you know it has to be in the waterfall/stream or the outlet tubing of the water pump that supplies water to the top of the stream. This is an efficient place to start to narrow down the most likely location of the leak.

Always provide extra circulation within the pond during the waterfall/stream shutdown period, especially if the pond has fish. The pond ecosystem is extremely dependent upon this circulation to keep things well oxygenated. So add extra circulation with aeration and/or water pumps within the pond.

On one occasion I shut off the waterfall/stream in an attempt to find a leak in a simple oval small 900-gal. pond. With the flow stopped the pond level continued to drop. So… “Ah Ha” – we “knew” the leak was in the pond itself. The pond was emptied of all water and stone. On my hands and knees I went over the entire liner looking for a leak – without success. I was frustrated but I did notice that there was some groundwater welling up under the liner. It felt like a waterbed under foot. I was initially grateful for this groundwater because, if there was a hole in the liner that low in the pond it should be leaking back into the pond through it. It did not do this so I was still stumped.

Another “Ah Ha” moment came and I finally figured it out. It was actually the stream that was leaking. How can this be even though it was off? When the stream was running it was providing a constant source of water seeping under the pond liner and running beneath the pond itself. The ground was saturated and the water table was high. The water did not have anywhere to go but to create a bubble under the liner even though the pond was filled with water. In our situation, the water under the liner was still able to soak away very slowly. During the test of shutting off the stream for 24 hours, the groundwater would soak away and the bubble that was created by the groundwater decreased in size. This dropped the level in the pond and gave the impression that the leak was in the pond. I believe that this is really not all that unusual, so beware.

If, after shutting off the waterfall the pond level does not go down, you can now be certain that it is in the waterfall or outlet tubing. An easy check to determine whether the outlet tubing has a leak is to inspect the water level in the filter falls’ box after a 24 hour shut down. As long as the check valve is holding water and keeps it from back-flowing in the outlet tubing into the skimmer box/pond, this is a good test. You know there is not much of a leak if the water level stays at the top of the filter falls’ box overflow. Because of the higher water pressure when the pump is running, an outlet tubing leak is much faster when the pump is running. So, give this static test more time to determine if the leak is in the outlet tubing.

**Isolating Leaks in the Outlet Tubing or Filter Falls’ Box**

Outlet tubing can be compromised in several ways. Good quality tubing is a must, especially if it is to be buried. Once hidden this creates much more work in looking for leaks so we recommend starting off with good stuff. Rodents and burrowing critters are notorious in chewing through outlet tubing. These critters include moles, voles, and mice. For those of us that live where the ground freezes down several feet we have the added variable that the tubing may freeze with water in it, thereby cracking the tubing. Tubing buried in these colder zones must be allowed to drain or be blown out before freezing weather. Of course, if the main water pump is run all winter then this is not a problem.

A test to help find leaks in the stream or outlet tubing is to temporarily replace the tubing with a “test” piece (Figure One). Bring along a piece of tubing of the same size and length that is presently used on the outlet of the waterfall pump.
Disconnect the old tubing at the pump and connect the temporary tubing. Then lay this new tubing on top of the ground up to the top of the waterfall or into the filter falls’ box, depending on what you have for the start of the waterfall. Start the pump and run it for 24 hours. If the pond level does not drop then the leak is in the outlet tubing or filter falls’ box itself.

The bulkhead fitting at the bottom of the filter falls’ box is a prime candidate for a leak. I like to use a 24 to 36” long soil test probe (Figure Two) for an inspection of areas like this. As long as the stream has been leaking for awhile and it has not been raining much lately this is a very effective tool. Poke the probe down beneath the bulkhead and pull out a soil sample from that depth. If the dirt is muddy somewhere along the length of the soil profile you know you have likely found it.

Locating leaks around the filter falls’ box lip will require the removal of some of the rocks and dirt next to the lip. Attempt to feel with your hand behind the liner under the lip. This can be difficult in some situations but the soil probe may work here, also. If the soil is wet, then the liner attachment to the lip will need to be resealed.
If there were no leaks in those places then the leak must be in the buried outlet tubing. To pinpoint the leak there, follow the outlet tubing with the soil probe looking along its entire length. Of course, we have to be careful to not poke the probe through the tubing. In areas where the ground freezes the leak most likely is at the lowest point of the tubing. This is where the tubing would have had the most ice. Sometimes we get lucky and find a wet spot on top of the ground – most times we are not this lucky.

**Isolating a Leak in the Stream**

We have ruled out most of the problems with outlet tubing and filter falls’ boxes. If the leak is still occurring with the test tubing lying on top of the ground and the pump running, move the outlet of the new tubing halfway down the stream. Run another 24 hour test. If the pond level continues to drop then move the new tubing to where it is dumping water only a couple of feet up the stream. You get the idea – systematically move the tubing down the stream, waiting 24 hours and assessing the change in pond level each time, repeating until the pond level remains unchanged. This is a good test to localize the leak that is occurring in the stream.

Stream leaks can be caused by several factors. I have already mentioned in Part I, the stream overflowing the sides of a stream, and we have ruled this one out by cruising the edge. Burrowing critters are another very likely cause of a stream leak as well as a leak in the pond itself. Look for evidence of animal tunnels or chewed liner along the edge of the stream and pond. Moles, mice, muskrats and Meadow Voles can cause huge damage to liners by chewing through them. Generally speaking they do not chew a lot in one area because they get wet, but it does not take much chewing to cause big problems. You also do not normally see significant damage much below a foot beneath the soil surface. So, burrowing critters under streams happen
quite often. If a client sees much burrowing critter evidence, they need to go on the offensive and take care of the animals before they do any damage.

Finally stream leaks can also be caused by liners that have insufficiently overlapped areas without lap seaming tape. Knowing how the stream was built can save some effort. If available, refer to the original construction notes describing the liner seams.

There is almost always an overlap of liner at the juncture of the stream and the pond where two separate pieces of liner are used. Some installers do not use seam and cover tape in this overlap. Just by the process of capillary action water can flow uphill in-between this joint if not overlapped properly. It is amazing how much water can be lost due to this action. Ninety degree vertical drops need a minimum of a 6” lap above the water level of the pond without seaming the joint. I must repeat, this lap must be above the water level of the pond itself. The less vertical the lap, the more lap overlay there should be. Of course, properly joined laps with seam and cover tape are always the best choice. This insures that capillary action will not occur.

If a liner lap leak is suspected, then employ the soil probe mentioned earlier. Attempt to get a soil sample under this lap. However, if the test outlet tubing was performed on the stream, simple elimination will tell you the leak has to be in a certain section of stream. This just may be the best place to tear the stream apart to find it.

**Finding Leaks in the Pond Itself**

When everything points to a leak in the pond then the investigation turns to waiting for the pond level to stop dropping. The stream and waterfall may be left running during this period because you have already determined the leak is not there. Of course, auto fill valves are shut off during this period. This test period can take from a few days to a couple of weeks depending on how fast and where the leak is. When the level does quit dropping then the hole in the liner can be investigated at that level. Rocks and plants will need to be removed to get to the liner so that it can be felt and observed for a hole or tear.

Leaks in the pond itself are more unusual provided a good underlayment has been installed. The underlayment can help prevent punctures by sharp objects but they still can happen, of course. Deer hooves can tear a hole. The same burrowing critters mentioned earlier (moles, voles and mice) can also chew holes in the liner. Sharp rocks can poke holes, especially when walked on. Abrasion of the liner is a very common occurrence, especially when there are very rough objects against the liner. Concrete is like sandpaper working on the liner. The protective layer of an underlayment is critical in areas like this. It is recommended to also place an extra piece of scrap liner on top of the pond liner to take the brunt of any rubbing of a heavy abrasive object like a big rock or block.

**Other Causes of Leaks**

Capillary action or wicking action can occur around a pond’s edge. This can occur with the underlayment and may cause water to show up in a different spot from where it is actually leaking, which can confuse the issue. Roots or mud may be overhanging a pond or stream’s edge and suck up a lot of water. It does not take much to provide a route for the water to be wicked away.

Skimmer box openings are very common leak points. The soil can settle in this area and the liner can pull away from the skimmer faceplate (Figure Three). If this is leaking the water level will drop to the bottom of the skimmer box opening and stay. Move the rock from around the front of the skimmer so that you can feel with your hand under...
the opening. If it is wet the faceplate will need to be taken off and resealed.

Certain plant rhizomes or growing tips can easily puncture a liner from within the pond as well as from outside. Plants like Gold Rush Reed \((Phragmites australis)\), or Bamboo have very sharp growing tips, so either avoid planting this type of plant around the pond or make provisions to keep those sharp rhizomes from touching the liner. Placing them in pots is one way but even this technique is dangerous unless you are watching for this. The rhizomes are so vigorous that they can climb over or break the pot (Figure Four).

Locating punctures under rock is almost impossible unless the rock is removed. The soil probe can work but not much more than a couple feet below grade. Once the rock is removed the puncture or tear can be detected by feel. You may be able to see it but the feel method has worked for me on several occasions. It is unusual to find a leak in the bottom of a pond so this is the last place I look. Of course, this requires a total pond cleanout.

Operating the stream/waterfalls through the winter is done with some ponds to help keep high oxygen levels in the pond. Leaks can develop in the winter as well and if a client is not monitoring things closely then disasters can happen. Ice dams in the stream can occur, thereby backing up water and overflowing the sides of the stream. If high flows are maintained ice dams are less common but can still happen. Power outages can create a problem if the power is out for a long period of time when it is very cold. The stream can freeze, as well as the exposed parts of the outlet tubing.

Then when the power is restored major overflows of the stream can occur, as well as other problems.

Those who remove their waterfall pump will need to go through a spring start-up process when everything is returned to normal. This is always an
interesting time for those who live where it really freezes hard. Returning the main water pump to service needs to be done cautiously. When the pump is started, always remain around the water feature for several hours to determine if a leak has developed over the winter in the hardware that is located outside the main body of water. I have known clients whose ponds emptied over a few hours after start-up while they left to do some errands.

This brings up a very important principle. Locating the water pump’s intake towards the bottom of the pond can potentially empty your pond if the outlet tubing develops a leak. When the pump is located in a skimmer box, then the problem shifts to a different one. The pond water level will only go down to the bottom of the opening of the skimmer box. The problem then turns to burning up your water pump without any water to pump. Spring water pump start-ups are a dangerous time so beware and be ready.

Almost all possible causes of leaks and how to look for them have been discussed in this two-part article. Considering the expense of water, clients will want that leak fixed – even the small ones. Most are easily found and fixed, whereas only a few really are a challenge. The step-by-step investigation presented here should give you the tools necessary to find or prevent any leak.

Author the Author

Jamie Beyer – The very popular subject of adding water features to a garden is one that Jamie Beyer brings a lot of knowledge and enthusiasm to. Jamie is a Lifetime Master Gardener from the Ames/Boone area and is founder and President of the Central Iowa Water Garden Association. Water gardening has been a passion of Jamie’s for over 45 years and, currently, he has three 10,000 gallon ponds and one 27,000 pond which contains many kinds of water plants and fish.

He combines this experience with his Master's Degree in Fish and Wildlife Biology to become uniquely qualified to be one of the Midwest’s foremost experts on the subject. His broad background of fisheries, dynamics of water, wildlife ecology, and horticulture gives him impressive credentials.

Jamie frequently speaks and writes on all aspects of water features and water gardening to gardeners in the Midwest. In addition, he also has a consulting/installation business, called Midwest Waterscapes, which he works as a water garden, fountain and pond consultant/installer.

Jamie has considerable experience installing ponds, diagnosing water garden problems, teaching classes and helping do-it-yourselfers, do it right. Since the late 80’s, he has been involved with the design and installation of over 700 water gardens and features.

Jamie and co-author Veronica Fowler, wrote the Ortho Book “All About Garden Pools and Fountains.” Over a half million copies of the book has been sold since its publication.

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What does rain water mean for fish keepers? Is it a benefit or a hazard? That depends upon how you look at it.

Rain water can be a benefit by:

- Providing a free water supply, particularly beneficial if tap water is metered and charged accordingly by the water supply company.
- Being free of chlorine and chloramine.
- Being soft.

Figure 1.

The contents of Figure 1 could send fish keepers out on a fast buying spree to get large rain water barrels so they can start collecting rain water for their fish as fast as possible. But before doing so, think carefully about the hazards. ‘Free’ is a word we all like but on the basis that ‘there is no such thing as a free lunch’ – could there be a price to pay or, more importantly, a price for your fish to pay? Let’s explore rain water to find out.

It is incorrect to suppose that rain water is just pure water (H2O). As water is evaporated from the earth and drawn up to form rain clouds, other dissolved substances may also be taken up with the water. Research has shown that falling rain can dissolve, carry and be impaired by, gaseous pollutants in the atmosphere, which were created by industrial and human activities. (“Industrial Contamination,” Seip and Toll 1985; “Degradation by Human Activities.” Ayoade 1988 & Pickering and Owen 1994.)

The Nigerian Government set a 2008 deadline to end all gas flaring by oil companies after research showed, among other things, that lead levels were above the maximum allowable in potable water by the WHO (World Health Organization) and higher values of lead were found in the rain water than the ground water.

The quality of rain water can vary from area to area, for instance, it is felt that heavily industrialized areas are more likely to receive polluted rain than lightly industrialized areas. We need to throw into that discussion arena the effects of major motorways (traffic fumes), airports (airplane fuel emissions), petrol-chemical plants and farming.

It has been proposed that particles can also be carried in rain clouds; this is supported by:

(A) Dependent on the wind direction, some heavy rainfalls around Brentwood (England, UK) deposit sand. Anecdotally ‘the sand’ had been carried from the Saharan Desert in North Africa across Europe to Eastern England.

(B) The Chernobyl nuclear reactor accident in Russia was seen by the UK government as being directly responsible for polluting some of the UK’s Welsh Hills – for some years governmental restrictions were placed on allowing lambs produced in these areas to enter the food chain.

Research undertaken at the University of North Carolina (USA) also showed that the components of rain water at a coastal site in North Carolina varied according to the time of day or night samples were collected (G. Brooks Avery, Jr; Joan D. Willey; Robert J. Kieber, 2000).

If you live in an area, which has very little industrial activity and the prevailing wind does not come from industrialized areas then the rain water may be perfectly acceptable for fish use. The U.S. EPA recommends that in some situations, rain water collected for drinking may need further treatment to disinfect the water or to filter out other impurities from the rain water supply. This water would probably not need disinfecting for fish but having experienced tremendous...
damage done to koi by heavily polluted rain fall, it is a fallacy to think that rain water is always fish safe. The main contaminants can be roughly grouped into organic, inorganic, radioactive and acid/base.

Substances in collecting and storage materials can also contaminate rain. For instance, roofing materials: Experiments in Paris showed the leaching of zinc, cadmium and lead in wet weather (Chebbo et al., 2001). Additional research has shown that zinc dissolved from roofing materials is mainly in the form which is damaging to both fish and aquatic plants (Heijerick et al., 2002). For human safety, The NSF Rain Water Catching System Testing Programme reviews products used to catch and store rain water; further information should be sought from manufacturers re fish safety.

There are two inter-related factors to consider before deciding to use rain water for fish:

pH values affect fish health considerably. The typical pH of rain water is about 5 – 6. However industrially produced sulphuric oxides and carbon monoxide in the atmosphere can reduce the rain’s pH to 4 or below. Whereas such a low pH could be beneficial to fish such as breeding discus; it could be extremely harmful to fish needing alkaline waters such as koi which require a pH of 7+

Alkalinity is missing from rain water. It is required in various fish waters to buffer and stabilize pH, some fish require far harder water.

**Conclusion**

For some fish species and in some areas, dependent upon how the rain water is collected and stored, rain water can be very useful to fish keepers. However for other fish species and/or in contaminated rain areas it may be advisable not only to avoid using rain water but also to erect covers over outside ponds to prevent the rain water from entering the fish water.

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**About the Author**

Ann Telford originally worked in education, which included being in charge of an education unit and as a college lecturer. Her hobby of koi keeping, koi health problems and research experience led her into in-depth water investigation and its effects on fish. This culminated in her launching AllClear Water Purifiers in the UK in 1993. Ann has written many articles, which have been published in a variety of fish keeping magazines.

Website: www.allclearwaterpurifiers.com
Email: info@allclearwaterpurifiers.com
Telephone: 0044 (0)1359 253 679 (UK office hours only).

Paula,
Hope you can help me. My hardy and tropical water lilies are being eaten alive by a small, thin worm @ 3/16” long. They are only seen if I turn over a leaf where they are busy at work. Any idea how I can treat this without killing my koi?
Any help would be appreciated
John — Yardley, PA.

Dear John,
Since I’ve never seen this problem in Florida, I checked with a friend in the wholesale business who has much wider experience. She said it is probably some kind of fly larvae that’s doing the damage. (They’ve seen the problem in some Maryland ponds this summer.) In ponds with mosquito fish these pests usually aren’t a problem, so it’s likely that your koi prefer the food you give them rather than these tiny little larvae.

Treatment is important since heavy infestations can defoliate lilies and severely weaken the plants. You may want to start by cutting off the most damaged leaves and destroying them, leaving at least 4–6 leaves per plant. Then use Mosquito Dunks and Mosquito Bits, which contain Bacillus thuringiensis subspecies israelensis (BTI). This naturally occurring bacteria will not harm your koi, or anything else except the insects (or their larvae) that ingest it.

You can often get these products at good garden or koi stores, since they’re usually used to prevent mosquitoes.

Good Luck,
Paula Biles
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A picture is worth a 1,000 words or the picture doesn’t do it justice: two of the most common statements when looking at a photo. The International Professional Pond Contractors Association (IPPCA) 2010 TOP GUNS took what they learned in the “Photography to Enhance Your Marketability” class at INFO TANZA™ 2009 and applied it when taking these photos of the fifth annual IPPCA Ponditat™ For Humanity pond “overhaul,” done this year in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Night photos can be hard to get perfect, but the teamwork of these guys shows in the night photos they took. Between getting the timing down, to getting just the right shot at the right angle. The equipment used were common items often
found in a contractors “tool box.” Digital Cameras, transit tripod and an 18 volt Milwaukee flashlight. Freddie Combas was on the camera that was sitting on the tripod. Mike White was on another camera that was used for the “extra flash.”

Freddie used the flashlight to highlight the areas he wanted to show up in the night photo while counting down so that Mike and Freddie pushed the shutters down at the right moment. Several photos were taken at different angles to get all the lights to show up just right. Many were taken moving the flashlight beam back and forth across the feature so that the lapsed time shot got different shadows and illumination that a normal shot would never have picked up. The extra knowledge and effort really paid off with some great shots.

To see more photos of this annual event see: www.PonditatForHumanity.com

To show your support of the Pond and Waterscape industry, join the IPPCA today at: www.IPPCA.com, the Pond and Waterscape Industry’s Trade Association. 
Points you have to remember so your koi will not die at your customers’ ponds:

When you are operating your own koi business, “having your customers keep their koi alive” is very important. There are two main things that you have to do:

1. Educate your customers.
2. Provide a regular maintenance service.

When koi die in a customers’ pond, it is usually

1. Within one to two weeks after the customer bought it.
2. Koi dies quite awhile after the customer bought it. This is assuming the koi are healthy and don’t have any parasites to begin with.

Koi dies within one to two weeks after…

Educating your customers can prevent this situation. Customers need to realize there is a problem. Therefore, your job is to educate them. It usually requires only two or three lectures for them to understand the right methods.

Now, where do you educate them? That should be at the customers’ home/pond, because the problem is most likely the condition of the customers’ pond. You must see it yourself to determine the problem and make suggestions on how to correct it. If you skip the pond visit you will not be able to give them good advice. When an accident occurs, you must be able to rush over to their pond. That should be your business policy.

Most important, the owner of the koi business must become the “Koi Specialist.” This is an important point and it should not be neglected. You can send your young staff member who likes fish to the customers’ ponds; however, you must be the one who is the specialist. Otherwise, what if he or she suddenly quits? You must study and understand about koi yourself and become a koi specialist too.

The ideal is for a koi business owner to become a koi specialist. Then they hire the staff and educate them, so they can make the house (pond) calls.

Then, how do you learn to be the specialist?

You should build your own koi pond in your own yard and raise koi yourself. That way, you can learn about koi and the challenges of having a pond first hand.

There are many ways to learn about koi. First you might start with the Internet, magazines and books; a trip to Japan is always a good idea too. Then you should get more hands-on information from seminars held throughout the country all year long. (Note: the author teaches at the Kodama Koi Academy.) In the koi world, there is a Japanese word called,
“Koi Dangi.” It translates “Koi meeting.” The owners of koi businesses should take advantage of “koi meetings” where dealers gather to learn and help each other.

Visiting the customers who have had problems is another way for you to learn. Understand the unique situation of customers so you can educate them as well. This may also be a way for you to gain the trust of your customers. Show them you have a personal interest in their being successful Koi Keepers. You don’t have to visit them too often. Visiting them three times should do the job.

(Tip – be sure to document your visits, so when a customer calls you, you know the specifics of their pond.)

**Koi dies quite awhile after …**

Providing a regular pond maintenance service could prevent this. When koi die many months after the customer bought them, it is often caused by a lack of maintenance.

Koi are living creatures. They do get sick even though you give them proper care. When they get sick, we must provide proper treatment. Otherwise, the koi could die.

Bad water quality, giving improper feeding, and so forth usually is the cause of koi health problems. Therefore, it is necessary to give them the right maintenance. The customers themselves can maintain the pond and koi; however, they should follow the advice of the specialist about water maintenance and disease prevention. Having your customers understand that, giving them regular maintenance, and giving them advice on how to maintain their pond and koi will prevent koi from dying.

The maintenance service of the pond is not free of charge. Providing regularly scheduled maintenance will increase your revenue and help stabilize the business.

**Koi Can Increase in Value**

Do you know how large koi could grow? The largest koi in Japan right now is 40” long. We will probably see 60” koi in the future. Most customers buy koi when they are small, but they can grow big with the proper care. When the koi becomes large, the value will also rise.

Your customers’ koi can be very valuable, not just monetarily, but emotionally too. It is possible the koi that your customer is raising might go up from $100 to $10,000 in value. True story – one of my customers had a koi whose value went up from $15,000 to $100,000.

We should realize that we are selling koi that have value that might increase if raised properly. The value can be affected by the condition of the pond, the filter system, and the way it is maintained. Therefore, you should advise your customers not to spare any expense when it comes to the pond and filter system.

When your customer first buys koi, an accident often happens due to their lack of knowledge. Therefore, you should
visit them and teach them about koi and their pond. Also let them know about the necessity of regular maintenance.

In Japan, many high-priced koi are distributed. That is because about 600 special dealers are teaching their customers and giving advice about how to raise beautiful large koi.

Improved Japanese lineage koi will bring up their value by being raised with proper care. The customer who is confident of keeping their koi healthy and knows the value of koi will buy high-priced koi.

In Conclusion
Koi are living animals that need a proper environment and care. For your customers to be successful koi keepers:

1. Visit the customers’ pond and teach him/her how to raise koi. This will prevent koi from dying within the first two weeks after the customer bought the koi.

2. Providing regular maintenance will prevent koi from dying long after the customer bought the koi.

Note: Mr. Kodama has written a series of three articles of “How to Be Successful Selling Japanese Koi.” The most important point to being successful is “not to have the koi die.”
Hope you enjoy them. The articles are:

Nov/Dec 2009 Issue, “How to be Successful Selling Japanese Koi”
May/Jun 2010 Issue, “How Retailers Reduce Koi Mortality–to Save Profit Margin”
Sep/Oct 2010 Issue, “How to Keep Koi Alive in Your Customers’ Pond”

About the Author

Mamoru Kodama is an expert in the Koi industry, an author, and the owner of Miyoshiike Co., Ltd. He has been invited to speak as a guest lecturer several times by international Koi clubs within the United States, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, etc. He was a guest speaker at the AKCA seminar 2002, Concord, Calif. and AKCA Seminar 2009, San Diego, Calif.

His approach to the beauty of Koi inspires and enlightens many Koi hobbyists and dealers around the world.

His profound knowledge and expertise is now compiled in two MUST-read books! They are available under the titles, Kokugyo and Kokugyo II. Mr. Kodama has assembled a wealth of information and experience in these two books that will educate beginning Koi hobbyists as well as the seasoned professional.

Note – The author is offering a class where he teaches the technique of managing the koi he has for sale – Kodama Koi Academy. Why don’t you join us to study about dealing and managing koi.

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For quite some time, I have failed to understand where the controversy arose between the two major factions within the water feature industry festering over whether to put rock or gravel in the bottom of ponds. At times I am even amazed at how adamantly people will attempt futile arguments over this easily resolved issue. So I wanted to make an attempt to show you how rocks are not the culprit and allow the industry to move forward on more pressing issues rather than squabble and debate over issues that already have solutions.

The Issue

No matter how attractive or “unnoticeable” manufacturers’ attempt to make their products, few seem to want to look into the bottom of a pond and see a rubber liner! It just doesn’t look natural, and natural appearances, after all, are the single most important issue that allows professional water feature contractors to ultimately generate higher levels of profit for their work. Yes, we need water features to operate in a practical and functional manner, therefore components and equipment are important, but these are not seen or thought of on a day-to-day basis.

Only when filters need cleaning or pumps fail to operate, do most end-users even think about these items. As long as these necessary components are working properly, they are simply forgotten. However, the cosmetic appearance of a water feature is seen and viewed daily. Think about it, once the water feature has been properly installed, all of these necessary, yet unsightly components should be fully hidden from view. The excavation, underlayment, liner, pumps, plumbing, filters, etc. have all been adequately hidden and camouflaged.

Adequate Filtration alone will determine "if" a pond bottom stays clean and clear, not whether you use bare liner or cover the liner with rocks and gravel! (Photo by Savio Water Feature Institute)
A close-up view of a pond bottom covered in rocks and gravel as well as being populated with aquatic plants and fish, does not show signs of any debris build-up after more than 1,200 days of continuous operation! (Photo by Autumn Mist Aquatics)

Medium Pond, dimensions: 18’ x 15’ x 3’
Biological Life – 35 assorted aquatic plants & 20 small koi
Gallon Capacity – 6,100 gallons
Pump Flow Rate in Gallons per Hour – 18,000 gph
Filtration – 1 skimmer filter, 1 biological filter, and 1 pressurized filter
Gallons of water per square foot of filter surface – 268.7

Recent contractor surveys from two separate organizations, and the phenomenal success of industry popular educational programs from responsible manufacturers, have clearly shown that end-users will pay substantially more for a truly natural appearing water feature. Not just attractive water features but truly natural appearing ones. It therefore makes perfect sense for contractors to learn to make their designed features appear more naturalistically within the landscape!

The Suggestion

Cover up this unnatural liner so that it cannot be seen! One of the easiest and most cost effective methods of hiding liner has been with the use of rock and gravel products. This technique provided the sought after natural effects in the end result.

The Complaint

The rocks and gravel used to hide the liner created spaces between each individual piece of material where dirt and unwanted debris can accumulate while providing difficulty for later removal.

There is no replacement for proper and complete filtration in any water feature application!

The Controversy

Whether the rocks and gravel are actually causing the problem…but wait a minute. The rocks and gravel are not creating the dirt and debris that sits at the root of this controversy but merely providing a location for the debris to accumulate!

The Solution

Solve the real problem, “Inadequate filtration and circulation!” This is the real issue no matter what anyone says. “IF” dirt and debris is entering a contained environment and settling to the bottom of a pond, (with or without rocks and gravel), that is simply an issue of inadequate filtration.

As a successful veteran water feature contractor, I have personally installed thousands of water features with rock and gravel bottoms in virtually every geographical region around the globe and they remain crystal clear without the need for
The Closing Argument

If excessive debris is settling to the bottom of any pond, it clearly tells us that the existing filtration system is inadequate or incomplete. If there is debris accumulating in the bottom of your water features, this is simply a filtration issue and nothing more. It is not an issue of whether you used rocks or gravel during the installation process in an attempt to hide man-made components such as a liner.

Remember...water is wet, fire is hot and rocks do not create debris in water features. No matter how often we discuss this, you can never change these facts! PLEASE filter your ponds!

The Overview

Too many times humans tackle problems from the issues created by a situation and not by solving the actual problem. Rocks in a water feature have never been the problem but rather the difficulty in cleaning out excessive debris in a water feature with a rock-covered bottom. We all know that rocks are not getting up in the middle of the night and manufacturing debris in our ponds while we sleep. So why then are we blaming the existence of rocks in the bottom of a pond for the problem while not actually solving the real issue?

frequent and unnecessary clean-outs. The reason for this undisputed success is proper filtration systems where good water circulation and flow rates exist in these gravel bottom ponds...AND they look so natural appearing without seeing all that liner!

Gallon Capacity and Flow Rate – The number of gallons of total water capacity per each square foot of filter surface area should be kept low, thereby providing plenty of filter area for each gallon of water in the system. The number of gallons of total water circulated by the pumping system should be kept high, providing plenty of circulation without overloading the effectiveness of the filtration system.
Rick Bartel; a twenty year experienced veteran water feature contractor; is the current administrator and primary instructor for the Savio Water Feature Institute whose industry wide popularity of advanced educational seminars has literally redefined the water feature installation industry. More than 7,200 industry professionals and contractors have attended Rick’s seminars and workshops worldwide, which have earned six prestigious awards for excellence in education. Rick just published a new book “The R.I.S.E. Method.” See his website www.rickbartel.com.

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Webster’s New World Dictionary defines pressure as “pressing or being pressed, compression, squeezing.” In the hobby of outdoor ponds a pressure filter is an enclosed, external filtration system with pond water pumped into a closed container to circulate before it exits. The container is not open to the outside air, therefore putting the water under a degree of internal pressure – more like a can of juice than a pitcher. Proximity to the pond itself is limited only by plumbing.

Cleaning this type of filter is done by back flushing the filter – injecting water in what had been the exit to flush waste out of a drain placed near or below the inlet. Pressure filters are not designed to deal with large particles and require the pump to be placed on the inlet side of the filter. Each manufacturer has slightly different specifications. The pressure within the tank may be very high or lower, the filter media very fine or of much looser composition, bead, tube or of a pellet shape.

Pressure filters will work on all pond systems, although they may be more filter then you need in a water garden. In a water garden you also have to deal with the dirt that the plants are rooted in, and the dead and decaying plant leaves and flowers. The pump would require a large prefilter ahead of it to catch the vegetable waste. A pond with fish and plants, even just an ornamental fish pond will also benefit from a prefilter – a mechanical filter of any type to screen out the solids. The rest that is not screened out will be ground up by the action of the pump and shorten the effectiveness of the pressure filter.

Originally a pressure filter was of the sand filter type used in the swimming pool industry. It was used to “polish” the water by forcing the flow through and among the grains of sand. One disadvantage to sand filters is that large particulate matter can clog the filter and after some time the sand could compact, leaving “channels” for the water to flow, decreasing its efficiency.

In the 1990’s the bead type filter came on the market. It is a low-pressure type filter where the water swirls within the filter media of small plastic pellets that host the bacteriological portion of a filter. In a swimming pool, there is no bacteria – the chlorine takes care of that. In a fish pond or even a water feature the bacteria keeps the water clear by consuming dissolved fish waste or plant waste that would encourage excessive growth of algae. The positives of the bubble bead were that it was self contained, small footprint, and easy to clean. It could look like an external water heater, take up about the same amount of space, and cleaning was simply closing a few valves to the pond, opening the drain, running the waste water until it ran clean, and refilling the filter with pond water. The float-ing beads that hosted the
bacteria would come rattling down through an hourglass constriction in the center of the tank knocking any accumulated dirt loose to be dumped out, and when the tank was refilled, up they went to float again.

Current technology has taken the system and improved it even further, retaining the small footprint and the ease of cleaning. The filter media has changed with each manufacturer, with the goal to provide the maximum amount of surface area so the filter can be rated for larger ponds with the same small footprint. Changes have been made in back flush design, bio material shape and construction and efficiency.

**Things to take into consideration**, with a pressure type of filter.

The pump needs an excellent prefilter before it. A leaf trap will work, but remember that leaves and food pellets going through the pump are harder to filter out, leave more of a residue in the media, than catching them first before they are pulverized.

Remember that the pump itself must be engineered to provide and sustain a higher pressure than one designed for an open-air filter. There will be a back pressure. Pay attention to the manufacturer’s specifications and recommendations on both the pump and the filter. The wrong pump will burn out sooner, leaving you with an unhappy customer.

Consider this filter as a water polisher first and then a biological filter. IF used as a biological filter the water flow needs to be monitored to linger long enough within the media to allow the bacteria to do a thorough job. The bacteria is aerobic and needs oxygen, the pressure filter does not have exposure to oxygen in the same fashion as an open-air filter does. It is also not a mechanical filter and if used as such it will clog more rapidly resulting in wear on the pump, more frequent cleaning and reduced efficiency. A properly maintained prefilter will allow a pressure filter to become capable of higher pond water turnover because the media is constantly circulating in the water flow. If the media becomes packed from improper cleaning or lack of a prefilter, the water going through the filter may channel, creating dead areas (anaerobic) and efficiency will decline.

For the majority of pond systems the addition of a pressure filter from the initial design or as an upgrade/retrofit is not difficult. The addition of a bypass from the pump to divert water to both open air and pressure filters is merely a function of additional plumbing.

A pressure filter is a good option for ponds, especially with the filters’ smaller footprint, neater appearance and ease of cleaning. The closed system is easy to adapt to ponds of all sizes. An increase in the units’ size is minimal compared to open systems. And with the advances in newer technology of filter media, water current efficiency and pump technology such filters should be considered, especially when crystal clear, “polished” water is desired.

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**About the Author**

Tamsie Pierce is a veteran koi keeper. Her first pond came into existence about 20 years ago. She couldn’t get a backhoe in to dig the pond, so it was all dug by hand after work mostly late at night by the light of halogens. This gave her a lot of time (because it was slow going) to do research on pond design and construction. She joined a koi club before the pond was even finished and learned from its members too. For almost 15 years, she has been the Newsletter Editor and author of numerous articles for the Koi Club of San Diego. Other newsletters nationwide often reprint her articles and she continues to be a regular contributor to koi hobbyist magazines.

tamsie@cox.net
Aquadyne

Aquadyne is the only bead filter to hold a patent (1999) on a columnar flow control design that uses no flow restricting elbows to control water transfer in a closed up-flow bead media system. This column design allows for very little internal head loss compared to other designs as the slotted column is 4 times as efficient as the porting and plumbing supplying the filter, and there is no peripheral plumbing running around inside the filter to obstruct filtration or backwashing as with many competitive models. This reduces head loss to less than 2psi on all models at 3000 to 4000 gph. Aquadyne was also one of the first pressurized bead systems to use a forced air bead cleansing system. “Dynamax Forced Air,” boosts total biological nitrification and filtration capacity approximately 30% and provides a thorough washing of bead media through a significant increase in turbulence of media prior to backwashing. The forced air washing completely breaks up the entire media bed and frees all fine materials. It also reduces the water necessary to backwash by as much as 60 to 80%. You can backwash a Model .60 with as little as 30 gallons of water.

Emperor Aquatics

PSP Filters by Emperor Aquatics, Inc. deliver effective mechanical (solid-waste) and biological (bacteria) filtering in one package. This filtration combination is only possible through the PSP (Pressurized Sinking Pellet) filter’s unique media: FilterCLAY. The FilterCLAY media’s porosity is ideal for beneficial bacteria; it allows for colonization deep within the media core where it is protected from anaerobic (oxygen lacking) situations inside the filter. Meanwhile the average size, specific weight, and shape of the FilterCLAY pellets trap waste for effective mechanical filtration. These characteristics also help eliminate media-packing and channeling inside the filter, which will cause drastically reduced efficiency. The most important difference between the PSP filter and other pressurized filters is the lack of an internal screen, commonly used to keep filter media inside during backwashing. (Screens can clog, reduce efficiency or even damage the filter.) This is possible because the FilterCLAY media is heavy enough to stay inside the filter during backwash, but light enough to fluidize properly during cleaning.

GC Tek

From day one our goal at GC Tek was to produce a high quality, easy to use filter that was truly user friendly and built to last. Our focus was also to have the most “energy friendly” filters on the market delivering top flows using lower amperage koi pond type pumps. We accomplished this, especially with the AlphaONE line of filters as they are a step up from traditional bead type filters. The AlphaONE units excel by not stopping the solids in the way a bead filter does which is all in one place across the face of the media pac. Rather by spreading the debris through out the pac, and still stopping it, the AlphaONE can give a greater turnover of the pond using the same size pump thus giving clearer water at reduced energy consumption.

To further our goal in this regards we have pioneered the way with our line of LH (Lower Head) filters and valves. The line up that we have even includes 3” models that utilize the LH multiport valve setup. With these units you can use some of the new 3” koi pond pumps that are on the market and never have to go lower than 3” resulting in unbelievable flows.

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Aquadyne

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SeaGate Filters, Inc., is a four year old company, and manufacturers professional grade filtration systems for commercial aqua-culture, ornamental fish ponds and water gardens.

The patented Xtreme BioFilter, is available in four configurations, top mount (six sizes), side mount (four sizes), commercial side mount (two sizes), and Refit kits. The Xtreme BioFilter, features our patented, double ridged tubular Xtreme Bio Media, which provides more surface area per cubic foot of media, vs traditional beads. (870 sq.ft vs. 300-400 sq.ft) They prevent clumping and channeling, offer minimum bacterial loss during backwash.

The Wave Performance Bead Filter is a high performance, energy efficient unit that’s simple to operate and maintain. The side mounted multi-valve allows the use of a Dragon lower head pump, which saves electricity. Internally, there are dual screens to resist clogging, and a radial diffuser to spread incoming water evenly across the media. Every system includes a powerful 2HP air blower to agitate the media during cleaning. The bottom sludge drain allows heavy sludge and settled waste to discharge from the bottom of the filter without disturbing the media.

The filter bypass allows complete isolation of the filter media from your pond without disturbing normal water flow. This can be invaluable when medicating the pond, as it prevents killing the beneficial bacteria in the filter.

Bio Wave Floating Media resists clogging and channeling, giving the water a sparkling polished appearance. The Performance Bead Filter has an exceptionally small footprint and is available in three sizes for ponds from 2,500 to 10,000 gallons.
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Mashimizu (Pure Water System)

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by Gretchen Rubin
The Happiness Project

One happiness-project exercise I undertook was to consider the different times of day, and days of the week, to see if any particular day parts were happiness challenges. In my case, I realized that school mornings were no fun, and I took several steps to make school-day mornings more calm and cheery.

Another common problem time? Monday morning – or rather, the Monday-morning mood, which can strike at any time of the week. Even when you love your job, and especially if you don’t love your job, it can be hard to go back to work on Monday morning. After a few days out of the routine, it can feel jarring and overwhelming to jump back into the workday world. If you take care of kids full time, Mondays can feel easier – or not, depending on what your days are like.

I’ve talked to several people about how they deal with Mondays. Their different answers illustrate a common point: the importance of self-awareness. If you’re aware of the fact that certain times of day, or days of the week, pose a particular happiness challenge, and why, you can take steps to improve them. When do you feel like buckling down? When do you feel like goofing off? Pay attention to your idiosyncratic rhythms.

1. Avoid getting the bends, I. One friend used to hate the frantic rush of Monday mornings, so now she doesn’t try to do any “real work” until after lunch on Monday. She eases into the work week by checking email, reading professional email newsletters, and doing more substantial tasks IF she feels like it, but doesn’t consider herself “at work” until 1:30 p.m. The result? She gets about as much done as she did before – she just feels less pressure.

2. Avoid getting the bends, II. Another friend has a job where he’s deluged with crises from the first minute he walks in the door. By Tuesday, he’s used to the atmosphere again, but on Monday, he feels overwhelmed by it. So for Monday mornings, he found an obscure room at his workplace where he can have a cup of coffee, undisturbed, and adjust to work life again.

3. Look forward to something. One of my former roommates has always suffered from the Sunday Blues. Now she deals with it by making sure she has something to look forward to on Monday: she schedules lunch with a friend, excuses herself from some daily task that she doesn’t enjoy, or figures out some other way to improve the day. Once Monday morning actually comes, she’s always fine – she just suffers from dread on Sunday. Having something pleasant to anticipate lessens the feeling.

4. Set your own priorities. Another friend gets to work at 8:00 a.m. but doesn’t “react” to anything until 10:00 a.m. –on Monday or any other day. For the first two hours of work, he works only on tasks that he’s set himself. By not answering email, returning phone calls, or working on someone else’s request until 10:00, he takes care of his own priorities first. I would never be able to postpone checking my email for the first two hours at my desk, but I understand why it works for him.

5. Make the most of the morning. Speaking of mornings, studies show that the brain is often better able to tackle cognitive tasks before noon, so Monday morning, when you’re also fresh from the weekend, may be a great time to tackle a challenging task. This is an issue for me right now. I definitely do my best thinking early in the day, but it’s also the most convenient time for me to go to the gym (my gym is in the same building where my younger daughter goes to nursery school, so after I drop her off in the morning, I’m right there). I hate to miss using this valuable brain time, but if I don’t exercise in that slot, I’m much more apt to miss it altogether. I still haven’t figured out how to balance these considerations.

6. Shuffle the schedule. Maybe something is making Mondays unnecessarily tough. Could you suggest moving the weekly meeting from Monday morning to Wednesday morning, so you don’t feel like you’re starting your week by sitting in a long meeting? Could a report be due on Tuesday, instead of Monday, to give you a little cushion?
7. Find some fun. If you really don’t feel like coming to work on Monday morning, can you think of some workplace ritual – that just involves you, or even better, involves some co-workers – to make re-entry more fun? A little bit of fun can make a big difference to making an unpleasant situation more bearable. I once ate at a diner where the wait staff kept a chalkboard where they wrote the names of movies they’d seen, with their brief reviews. “Excellent.” “Worthless.” “Boring but my boyfriend loved it.” This sounds like a small thing, but it looked like they got a big kick out of it.

8. Roll with it. The change I’ve made in my approach to my Monday morning is – don’t expect to have a regular schedule. I love routine and predictability, but the way my life is right now, every day is different. For a while, that made me feel frustrated and inefficient. Now I’m trying to embrace and enjoy it.

Because I’ve always had an officey-sort of job, these tips are best suited for people who work in an office. If you have a non-office job, what tips would you offer for coping with Monday morning – or the Monday-morning mood?

About the Author

I’m Gretchen Rubin.
I started out as a lawyer. At Yale Law School, I was editor-in-chief of the Yale Law Journal and won a writing prize. I went on to clerk for Justice Sandra Day O’Connor on the U.S. Supreme Court.

I had a great experience in law, but I realized that what I really wanted to do was to write. Since making the switch, I’ve published four books. I’m currently working on The Happiness Project. It will hit the shelves in January 2010 (Harper).

Raised in Kansas City, I now live in New York City with my husband and two young daughters.

My only hobbies are reading and writing—and helping other people clean out their closets. I’m left-handed, terrible at sports, tone-deaf, a constant hair-twister, and afraid to drive. I talk to my parents and my sister all the time, and I live around the corner from my in-laws.

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**Karin Berke, Aquarium Technical Support**

Ecological Laboratories, Inc. is proud to announce the hiring of Miss Karin Berke as Aquarium Technical Support. In addition to Consumer Service responsibilities with Ecological Laboratories, Inc, Karin speaks fluent German. This is very helpful since the opening of ECOLOGICAL EUROPE. A full German website has been developed, www.ecologicaleurope.com to help with European distribution of Microbe-Lift aquarium products and Karin acts as interpreter and technical/sales support to this new market.

With over 20 years in the Pet Trade, Karin brings a wealth of practical experience to our ‘Ask the Experts’ customer support team. Karin began her career in retail sales and management working for some of the largest independent Pet Retailers in the Philadelphia area. She has extensive maintenance experience, having serviced fresh and saltwater aquariums in offices. She was also a Lab/Quality Control Technician for Aquarium Pharmaceuticals, Inc. and has significant technical, sales support and customer relations’ experience.

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**Aquascape, Inc., Launches “Get Your Feet Wet” Campaign to Promote Entry-level Water Features**

Aquascape, Inc. is proud to announce its new “Get Your Feet Wet” campaign designed to make it simple and profitable for landscape contractors to add water feature installations to their existing line of service and products. “Get Your Feet Wet” offers 3 basic kit models which provide quick, easy, high-profit jobs that can be installed in a day or less.

Aquascape created the new water feature campaign to address consumer demand for entry-level, low-cost water features.

“We’re confident that contractors new to water gardening will find the basic kits simple to sell and easy to install with this campaign,” states Sue Soderberg, National Sales Director for Aquascape.

Aquascape provides free, local training seminars at distributor locations across the nation for contractors interested in installing any or all of the kit options:

- Mongolian Basalt Fountain kit
- 4’ x 6’ MicroPondless® Waterfall kit
- 8’ x 11’ MicroPond® System kit

Consumer awareness for these 3 basic water features will be created through Aquascape’s national marketing campaign via its website at www.aquascapeinc.com. In addition, a consumer video highlighting the 3 basic water features is available at www.getyourfeetwetnow.com.

Contractors interested in learning more about Aquascape’s “Get Your Feet Wet” campaign can call - Aquascape, Inc. 866-877-6637 • www.aquascapeinc.com

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**Inventor of Bird Bath Raft Sells Product to Songbird Essentials**

Finding a way to make anything that holds water “safe for wild birds” was what led Gordy Dye of Sheffield, Iowa to invent “The Bird Bath Raft.” Gordy’s invention was a plastic disk that floats - exposing just the right amount of water for songbirds to safely use. Why bother?? Because giving songbirds access to safe water is one of the best ways to attract more varieties of birds to the typical consumer’s yard. His patented Bird Bath Raft is used by birds in all seasons and in all sorts of water containers including garden pots, stock tanks, whiskey barrels, and even Koi ponds.

Bird Bath Raft was told to Songbird Essentials of Mexico, Missouri. Songbird Essentials has been America’s fastest growing line of wild bird products the last three years.

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Mosquito Sentry™, the all-natural mosquito-repellent product line, is now available for sale via www.homedepot.com for $299.00.

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This book is based upon Rick’s ten year development of the industry popular RISE Method of natural rock and boulder placement that has achieved more than 1,800 international awards and recognitions for quality design and installation work revolving around Rick’s amazing water creations worldwide.

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Ecological Laboratories, Inc. is proud to announce the opening of its new Training Center in Cape Coral, FL. Customers from the United States as well as overseas have already come to the Cape Coral facility. This Training Center is being used to increase understanding of MICROBE-LIFT biotechnology, applications of new products and to process feedback from our customers, all of which will continue to improve sales and productivity. The Ecological Laboratories, Inc. has had the opportunity to educate customers from Holland, Turkey, Israel, United Kingdom, Brazil, Columbia, Mexico, and Singapore and has hosted the annual meeting of the NAPP Board of Directors in their new Training Center.

Ecological Laboratories, Inc. is an environmental biotechnological company that produces products for use in the water gardening, ecosystem remediation, agricultural, municipal wastewater, on-site wastewater and industrial wastewater markets. They produce the MICROBE-LIFT line of products, which includes MICROBE-LIFT/PL the #1 selling water clarifier in the water gardening industry. The company has been in operation since 1976 and is headquartered in Malverne, NY and has a 60,000 square foot warehouse, lab and manufacturing facility in Cape Coral, FL.

Ecological Laboratories, Inc. is excited to announce the launching of our new and improved website. The new website includes all the content and features of the current website, but has been developed using a content managed system (CMS) which allows Ecological Laboratories, Inc. to make changes at a moment’s notice, to be on the cutting edge.

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2010 Ponditat For Humanity Goes Green

Ponditat 2010, June 24-26th! This was the 5th annual Ponditat For Humanity event for the International Professional Pond Contractors Association (IPPCA). The “Top Guns” converged at the New Covenant Church in Lincoln, Nebraska.

This year we had a couple of special “firsts” for the event; all of the IPPCA members that attended were IPPCA Certified Professional Pond Contractors (CPCPs), and we incorporated a mentoring aspect for aspiring young pond builders.

Going Green: The newly renovated system uses 1/3 less electricity on the fountain jets and will be chemical free, naturally filtered and kept clear by an up-flow bog filter system, completing the “Green Transformation” of this year’s Ponditat’ pond.

This year we were also treated to a spectacular light show courtesy of Easy Pro Pond Products that supplied the LED light rings and pond lights that were used on the fountains and falls. Thank yous also go to, Dave Ouwinga, Rick Smith and crew at Easy Pro PondProducts, ShinMaywa pumps- Court, Art and crew at Fielding Pump; John Olson of Graystone Creations; and Firestone SP for their gracious contributions as well.

To read the full press release please see our website http://www.pondtrademag.com/tradenews/tn-1575/ Also see the article on page 22.

For more information see www.PonditatForHumanity.com 2010 Lincoln, NE.
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