

Minutes from 1/23/15 Monterey Bay Koi & Pond Club Meeting & Pond Social

Attendees:

Rick Blazo	Erik Blomquist
Barbara Dietz	Chris DiMaio
Diane Franzioa	Don Green
Bob Guidor & wife	Ralph & Julie Kimball
Bob Nelson	Stephen & Carol Payne
Andy Pudan	Michael Ready
Andrew Reyes*	Adra Ross
Dan Rutledge	Diane Sleeter

*Welcome to Andrew Reyes; our newest pond club member. Andrew has created an amazingly beautiful pond in his backyard in Felton, complete with waterways, bridges and wonderful pond art---all next to the San Lorenzo River.

And welcome back to everyone else. It was so good to see you all after our long Holiday sabbatical. This meeting was devoted to general discussion and questions. See notes taken below.

Following are key dates to remember:

*Next Monterey Bay Koi & Pond Club Meeting: Friday, February 27 --7:00 p.m.

Main subject: Water Plants; Randy will have our club T-shirts for folks

*ZNA NorCal Koi Show – Four Points by Sheraton Hotel (399 Silicon Valley Road in San Jose): Saturday, February 28 –1:00 p.m.

Selection of fish for our club's Friendship Award. See the following website for information: <http://www.znanorcal.org/news.php>

Action Items for Follow-up:

*Annual Dues are due: \$30/family... please give \$ or check made out to MBK&PC to Treasurer, Andy Pudan

*Pond Social Locations: Volunteers to host Pond Socials this Summer in May, July & August. Stephen & Carol Payne will host the social in June; Barbara Franzioa in September. Date for social to be determined by host, either Saturday or Sunday. However, Saturday is preferred so that folks who go to church can attend.

Key Information Discussed:

*Good place to buy koi food on line:

Koi Food Shack <http://www.koifoodshack.com/>

*Recommended bacteria for ponds:

Time release, needed to use only every 6 months: PURE POND

Available from Genki Nishikigoi in San Jose <http://www.genkikoi.com/>

*Good place for pump repair:

John's Electric, 457 May St in Santa Cruz (behind Marianne's Ice Cream; great guys.

General Discussion – Pond Updates:

Feeding: Winter is not the time to feed your fish even though we are experiencing warmer-than-normal weather. If you want to feed them, do so with vegetable protein food, e.g., yams, sweet potatoes, wheat germ, etc. and only feed them a little. When your pond water is <50 degrees you stop feeding. Measure your water temperature at the bottom of the pond, not the top. It is typically warmer at the bottom due to insulation from the ground.

Aeration: You can also reduce the amount of aeration in the winter as cold water has a higher oxygen level. Dan shuts down the air in his pond and only keeps the aerator in his filter running.

Pond Updates and Issues:

Michael Ready reported that he has tree roots in his pond causing leaks and water loss but it is too cold right now to go in and fix it.

Diane Franzoia brought a skimmer and liner material left over from her recent pond build to give away. She also brought a vial of her pond water to test. After completing her pond, she put in 4 small koi.... all of which died in a week and she was concerned that her water was not good. Rick used his test kit to test the water for ammonia, pH, nitrites and copper during the break. He didn't find any problems in these areas and suggested that Diane check with her local water company to see if there are chloramines in her water (she had already tested for chlorine and found none).

Eric said that his auto filler, which is installed inside of his skimmer, would come on when the skimmer basket was filled up so he needs to make sure than he keeps his skimmer basket clear. It was suggested that it is best to install the auto filler in a location outside of the skimmer. Michael Ready also mentioned a mercury switch auto filler instead of the "toilet bowl" type to avoid the problem of the full skimmer basket.

It is not necessary to have an auto filler in your pond but most pond owners have one.

Barbara Dietz expressed a concern with the water dropping in her pond. Dan & Erik and several of the other club members said that it is typical to experience a ¼-½ inch drop in water level due to evaporation. This can even be higher in small ponds. Bob Nelson reported that he was having 1-1.5" water loss in 5 days. In general, it was felt that this is to be expected.

Carol Payne told us that she was having a problem with her yellow flag iris's which had grown so thick in her pond that they were causing water to flow out of the pond.

Dan mentioned that the main subject for our next koi club meeting is water plants.

Don Green said that he has cat tails in his pond and that they have grown to tall they fall over and is seeking a plant holder that is wider at the bottom that can hold the cat tails up. Dan suggested that he check out Santa Cruz Hydroponics (815 Almar St in Santa Cruz). Rick suggested milk crates filled with river rock; perhaps two or more strapped together.

Erik said that the Showa he has had for 4-5 years is starting to lose it's red color and will be a black & white fish. He was advised that this is typical of Showa's. However a female will keep it's red color longer than the males because they take longer to develop.

It was mentioned that you can slow a koi's growth by keeping in a smaller pond; however this will also result in it's size being stunted for life.

It was also mentioned that you can avoid spawning by not feeding your female koi until later in the year (they will re-absorb any unlaidd eggs for nourishment and not produce new ones) or by not providing any breeding media, such as plants or artificial media.

Club Dues: This years dues are due ☺ \$30/family for the year, a great bargain. Please give cash or checks made out to MBK&PC to Andy Pudan, our Treasurer.

Pond Socials: As voted by the club, we will plan to have combined Pond Socials/Club Meetings during the months of May-September and asked for new volunteers to host them. Carol & Stephen Payne volunteered their home/pond for June and Barbara Franzoia did so for September. This leaves May, July and August.

Pumps: Michael Ready said his Sequence Pump got submerged and wasn't working so he took it to John's Electric in Santa Cruz and they fixed it at a great price. It was mentioned that these pumps should last about 7 years. It was also mentioned that everyone should have a spare pump in case his or her main pond pump stops working. If the pond is without a working pump for more than 3-4 hours the beneficial bacterial in your filter will die. Rick mentioned that, if you lose electricity and don't have or don't want to use a generator, you can put an aerator in your bio-filter to keep the bacteria alive. There is a Bait Aerator that runs on a D-Battery and will run for 18 hours.

Transporting Koi: It was also mentioned that, if you do not have an oxygen tank that you can spray hydrogen peroxide in the bag you use to transport koi.

ZNA Norcal Koi Show: This year the show, which is recognized as one of the best shows in the US and a great opportunity to see champion-level koi, will be held on Saturday, February 28 and March 1. The club will plan to meet there at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday to select the koi to which we want to present a Friendship Award.

Club T-Shirts: Randy Sparks, who was unable to attend this meeting, will have our club T-shirts for folks at the February meeting.

Pure Pond: Rick introduced a new beneficial bacteria that had been recommended to him by Kevin Pham, Genki Nishikigoi. It is in a pellet form and is time-released and works exceptionally well. Instead of the monthly application of bacteria that Rick does for all of the pond he maintains, this bacteria need only be added every 6 months. When used on his own pond, Rick said he could see a dramatic improvement in his water and plants right away.

Koi USA: Rick brought up the idea of our club joining Koi USA so that we would be recognized as a club and have our activities published in the magazine. Dan said he was looking into this and we would do so.

Japanese Cultural Fair: This year the JCF will be held on June 6th and we will have a booth. To be discussed further at a future meeting.

END OF NOTES