



# Splash

**Santa Clara Valley Koi and Water Garden Club, Volume 40, No. 7 - July 2023**

## July is Membership Month Membership Drive in Progress

July is Membership Month! Annual Membership term is July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. Club dues are \$40.00 per year per household (up to 2 adults/ 2 children). All are welcome. We offer monthly meetings, events, and education for Koi Keepers, Water Gardeners, and DIY aquaponic enthusiasts. Dues help the club provide regular meetings, events, and Koi community support such as Koi rescue, technical support, community outreach, and education.



Annual dues may be sent to: SCVKWGC, PO Box 54368, San Jose, CA 95154. Be sure to include name and contact information. We can take online payments using Zelle.

Email [info@sckoi.com](mailto:info@sckoi.com) for Zelle info. Thank you to our members and friends for all your support and friendship.

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## Upcoming Events

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| July | Membership Drive In Progress – Renew / Join today                      |
| Aug  | Pond Social #2 - TBA   |
| Sept | Pond Social #3 – Hayward Residence, more details to be announced soon. |



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**Visit us on the web: [www.sckoi.com](http://www.sckoi.com)**

### **Club Meetings and Activities:**

*The club typically meets on the third Tuesday of each month except December, and February. During the summer season the club hosts socials in lieu of meetings. At our events we get acquainted with members and guests, address pond issues, and enjoy discussions on Koi and water garden related topics, occasionally we have outings to places of interest for our members. Our website lists the latest updates for meetings, socials, and events. Guests are welcome to visit, but we ask that they pay dues if they attend regularly. We are a non-profit organization.*

## Presidents Corner

### Happy July

We are already halfway through the year. Hope everyone is out enjoying the warm weather and all the beauty this time of year brings especially with the ponds and water gardens. Just this week we have had water lily blooms pop up in several colors. The Koi are growing and eating more that last month as the water stays warm.



### Koi of the Year

Thank you for all those who submitted their entries by June 15<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations -- The winner gets bragging rights all year and a prize. Best of luck for 2024 Koi of the Year!

### Thank You!

We had a great time at our July Pond Social hosted by Don Chamberlain. The event was well attended, the food was great, and we had the opportunity to welcome new members and see some old friends. We host these events periodically hoping our membership comes out to share time with other club members and enjoy our hobbies of Koi keeping, water gardening, and DIY aquaponics.

*Happy Koi Keeping,*  
Eve Bretzke

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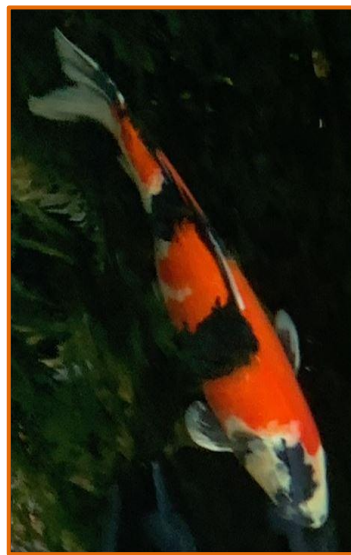
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## Koi of the Year Contest – Our Winners for 2023!

Each year it is our club's tradition to select a Koi of the Year from our membership. This year's entries were received an award and acknowledgement for representing the club's Koi of the Year.



*Winner*



*Runner up*

***Koi of the Year Winner: Linda Westfall***  
***Koi of the Year Runner up: Cece Stearns***

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## Pond Social Photos – July 15th, Don’s Pond in Willow Glen

July 15<sup>th</sup> we had our first Pond Social n Willow Glen at the Chamberlain Residence, This pond is beautiful has some really cool pond technologies installed. This was also our club’s membership drive kick off for this season. Thank you all who have joined / renewed.



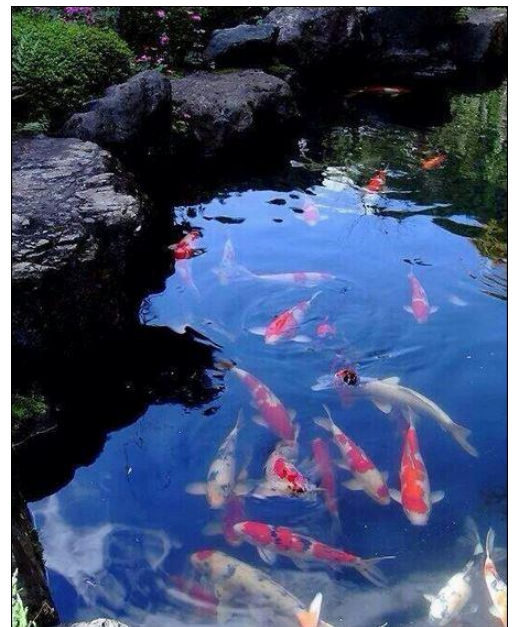


## Dealing with Summer Heat for the Koi Pond

*From Microblift summer newsletter*

These are a few important things that koi owners need to know about reducing stress and potential loss in summer heat. I have collected seven important points to consider which will help your fish go through the heat of summer. Using Microbe-Lift products can be extremely helpful in maintaining a clean pond.

1. **Feeding:** especially in small or shallow ponds, be sure to watch the temperature of the water. At 85°F, revert to the spring Wheat Germ food and feed sparingly. At 90°F, stop all feeding. These are not tropical fish. They are temperate zone fish and have difficulty absorbing nutrients at higher temperatures (like they do at temperatures below 50°F).
2. **Shade:** your fish are stressed by excess heat. A sail-cloth or other way of implementing shade for the fish is helpful. While plants need the sunlight, your fish will do fine in the shadows. Shade will also help control the growth of algae.



3. **Clean your filter.** If detritus is in the filter, it is in the pond and will contribute to the un-health of your system. Thoroughly wash the mats and other materials, and re-inoculate with nitrifying bacteria (PL Gel and Nite Out II).
4. **Clean the bottom** of the pond: remove all muck, uneaten food, fish poop, leaves, dying or dead plant leaves, etc. All that will contribute to bacterial activity and rob oxygen from your fish.
5. **Algae:** Clean out excess algae. Algae is an oxygenating plant, during the daytime, but during shaded days and nights they take in oxygen and give off carbon dioxide. A little bit is not a problem, but excess algae take the oxygen needed by your fish.
6. **Oxygen:** Add extra aeration during hot summer months. Make sure your waterfalls are running 24/7. Check your pumps. Be sure your pond is filled. Good circulation is important, too. Check your oxygen levels because oxygen is lowest in warm weather.
7. **Water changes:** Doing regular partial water changes (which is not simply adding water to the pond to top it off) is extremely important to remove pollutants and nutrients that will build up to harmful levels, especially in the middle of summer.



## What is KH and Why is it Important?

By [kitsukoi.co.uk/blogs/guides-and-tips](http://kitsukoi.co.uk/blogs/guides-and-tips)

KH, or Carbonate Hardness can be considered the most important water parameter that needs to be monitored and controlled by koi keepers. Without proper KH level, there is no bio filter, and left unchecked can lead to a pH crash. Without swift, corrective action, this can be fatal for your koi. Understanding KH and it's importance can prevent this ever happening.

### What is KH?

KH derives from the German Karbonathärte and it is a measure of the carbonate hardness of water. The unit dKH (degrees of carbonate hardness) is most frequently used by test kits aimed at koi keepers and aquarium keepers. Carbonate hardness is the presence of carbonate and bicarbonate anions in water. Carbonate hardness is also referred to as 'temporary hardness', and having a low dKH means you have 'soft' water, and a high dKH would mean you have 'hard' water.



*(continued – KH article)*

## **Why is KH important?**

KH, or carbonate hardness is important because it underpins the entire stability of the koi pond environment. The carbonates dissolve in to the pond water to act as a buffer to changes in pH. If the carbonate hardness is depleted, the pH of the pond will crash. This is such a serious issue that it could and has in other cases, lead to complete loss of life within a pond. The biggest contributor to acidity of the water in a koi pond is carbon dioxide.

*(KH article continued)*

Carbon dioxide is produced by fish respiration, photosynthesis, and decomposition of waste. It's fair to say that the higher the stocking rate, the more important it is that an adequate level of carbonate hardness is maintained.

Carbonate hardness is 'consumed' by the buffering process, so it is necessary to replenish carbonates in the pond environment. This can be achieved by regular water changes (10-20% per week) or by adding bicarbonate of soda, or other off-the-shelf KH buffers. By testing for carbonate hardness using a KH Test kit with your routine water testing, you can decide if water changes are replenishing sufficient carbonates, or if you need to add a buffer.

As well as being consumed by the production of carbon dioxide, the carbonate hardness is used by the filter bacteria. It takes approximately 7mg of carbonate hardness to process 1mg of ammonia to nitrite – again, heavy loading of the pond leads to a higher carbonate demand on the system, and will require more frequent testing and correction of the carbonate hardness.

We often have people coming to us for help after a pH crash, and often root cause is a change in tap water supply conditions. It's worth noting here that rain water is always very 'soft' and contains little to no carbonate hardness. Using rain water to top up a pond is not advised for this reason. Also, after a period of heavy rain, it is not unusual for KH levels to be lower. If you do often have a low KH, then testing and correction after heavy rain would be advisable.

For most koi keepers, that do not want to spend their life worrying about water chemistry, the ideal KH of a koi pond will be around 5-8dKH or 89-142mg/l as it provides the pH stability that koi need. The pH should not change more than 0.2 in 24 hours. If your KH is lower than 5dKH or 89mg/l, then you will want to add a buffer to your pond. If you KH is higher than this, there is normally no need to try and correct it.

## **How to measure KH**

There are two popular methods for testing carbonate hardness available to koi keepers. One is a liquid drop test kit, available from a number of manufacturers such as Colombo, Kusuri, and NT Labs. The second is the use of a photometer (such as the eXact iDip), which uses the measure of light transmitted through a sample and reagent. The KH should be tested every week along with your other water tests, and it would be wise to also test your incoming tap water if you rely on tap water for keeping your KH levels topped up.

(continued – KH article)

## Recap

- KH is the measure of carbonate and bicarbonate dissolved in water
- Carbonate is consumed by carbon dioxide and the breakdown of ammonia
- Carbonate hardness is depleted faster in ponds with high stocking, algae, and detritus build up
- A healthy KH level leads to a stable koi pond

***Hopefully you have a better understanding of carbonate hardness and it's importance to water chemistry in a koi pond. Many people experienced in keeping koi will say 'we don't keep koi, we keep water', or some variation of. By monitoring and replenishing KH when required, you will maintain a stable pH and provide plenty of carbonates for adequate bio filtration.***

Reference: Kitsukoi - <https://kitsukoi.co.uk/blogs/guides-and-tips/what-is-kh-and-why-is-it-important?>

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## 2023 Club Business

Next board meeting scheduled for August 1 at 7:30 PM via Zoom. Our meeting will focus on planning our next summer social. We have a host for September and are looking for a host for August. If we do not have a host for August we plan to visit a local place of interest.

We had our first pond social of the summer at Don Chamberlain's wonderful home and Koi pond in Willow Glen. Thank you Don for a very nice afternoon, we had a good turnout and collected renewals from our membership.

July is membership month so get those dues sent into our treasurer for processing. We thank all of you for your ongoing support of our club. We hope to meet our goals of 35 memberships by September 1<sup>st</sup>. If you know of someone who may be interested in our club, invite them to join or maybe give the gift of membership.



# Our Sponsors

Please support our sponsors who provide valuable products and services to our membership. While we love our sponsors SCVKWG does not endorse any business, service, or product.

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## Sponsorships Available:

Rates include an advertisement in the monthly club newsletter, website, and other publications for one year. Thank you to our sponsors. We have started a new advertising term that runs July 2023 to June 2024. To begin a new or renew an existing sponsorship contact the club at [info@sckoi.com](mailto:info@sckoi.com).

Business card size	\$35 per year
Quarter page size	\$95 per year
Half page size	\$125 per year