



# Splash

*Santa Clara Valley Koi and Water Garden Club – Vol. 40, No. 9, September 2024*

## Changing Seasons – Koi, Waterplants, and Autumn Leaves

We have our General meeting Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup> via Zoom. We plan to discuss fall activities and feature a video about why Japanese Koi are so expensive. Join us for a lively discussion. We will also welcome new members.

This summers season of club pond socials has been a summer season of fun and spending time with fellow club members! The club was hosted by amazing members and pond owners who opened up their homes members and guests to visit. Thank you for your hospitality!

This month the club's pond social was held at the home of Lee Hayward. We enjoyed visiting Lee's tropical paradise which was truly amazing. The garden showcases Lee's love of Plumeria plants and all things tropical.



We felt like the club had been magically transported to the islands for a delightful evening with good food and friends. We are so glad that many of our members were able to enjoy these pond socials with fellow club members. Thank you for all those who renewed their membership at the social.

## Upcoming Events

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| Sep 17 | General Meeting, 7:30 PM via Zoom                       |
| Oct 15 | General Meeting, 7:30 PM via Zoom                       |
| Dec 8  | Annual Holiday Social / Fundraiser ( <i>tentative</i> ) |

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

Started in 1984, we are a non-profit organization that provides a community for koi keepers and water gardeners that fosters greater understanding and appreciation for these fine hobbies. Through our publications, pond tours, and meetings, we educate, support and share knowledge in a friendly, sociable environment. We assist with fish rescue, care, and development of aquatic animals and plants and are a resource to our community for these areas of interest. We have monthly meetings with interesting speakers and topics. Visit our website for the latest information about events and activities at [www.sckoi.com](http://www.sckoi.com).

## Presidents Corner

Hello everyone,

It's mid-September and summer seems to be hot as ever yet fading into fall. We have had many reports of algae and other heat related issues showing up in the local ponds over the past few weeks. Algae and associated issues have been particularly difficult to keep under control this season so don't feel like you may be the only pond keeper out there with green water. Muck it, the pond that is – a little netting now saves on maintenance later.



Thank you Lee and Linda for hosting our August pond social, we all enjoyed sharing pond stories, pond plants, and an abundant dinner of shared dishes and Lee's amazing BBQ shrimp. It really makes it all worth the work involved when the club has successful events.

Speaking of memberships, we are wrapping up the club's annual membership drive. Dues help the club provide regular meetings, events, and Koi community support. Thank you to those who have renewed or new members. Welcome.

As a reminder, there is no general meeting in November. Our next general meeting is September 17 at 7:30 PM via Zoom. We will have a general meeting October 15<sup>th</sup> via Zoom. Some requests from members to host more socials and meet ups have been made. Your board continues to keep club business moving forward. If you or someone in the club would like to volunteer to host a social, please let me know.

As always, if you have any questions about Koi, ponds, or water gardening we are available to help. Email [info@sckoi.com](mailto:info@sckoi.com) or attend one of our meetings

*Happy Koi Keeping,*  
Eve Bretzke

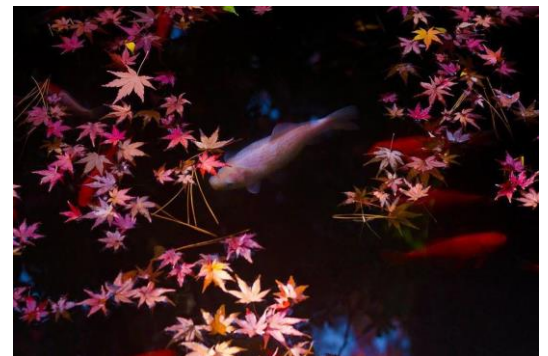
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## Did you know?

As the fall season approaches, fallen leaves can quickly make their way to the bottom of the pond. Make sure to use a good pond cover net to prevent this from happening.

The fall is a great time to add aeration to your pond. It serves as additional aeration for the beneficial bacteria for enhanced gas exchange. Switch over to a wheat germ based Koi food to help build up fat reserves on your fish.



## Plants and Koi – Making Friends

Plants and Koi can live happy together and help each other thrive in the ponds. The pond keeper needs to want to keep in mind both the needs of the Koi and of the plants. Plants use nitrogen, ammonium, and nitrate. This is the nitrogen cycle that we speak of from time to time as pond keepers. Ammonium converts to nitrite and then to nitrate is referred to as the nitrification or simply the nitrogen cycle.

Koi add lots of ammonia to the pond with their activity. Ammonia comes from their urine and feces. In addition to that, ammonia is also excreted from their gills as they breath (underwater). Plants use ammonia, the first stage of the nitrogen cycle, to grow. Ammonia is fertilizer. Ammonia is toxic to fish. Balance between Koi and plants is goal.

The final stage of nitrogen cycle is nitrates. Nitrates form when the biological filtration begins to break down fish waste. While nitrates are not harmful in low numbers, after time the nitrates can build to toxic levels. It is good to keep nitrates under 60 ppm. Plants and algae use nitrates to grow. Plants can effectively use and remove nitrates in the pond. Plants are used to “balance” the nitrate levels.

Downside to pond plants: Koi disturb plants / messy soil used in potting; parasites – treat plants in a bath of potassium permanganate in large container to prevent issues prior to putting in pond.

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### Plant of the Month – White Lotus [*Nelumbo nucifera*]



As a primarily Buddhist country, Japan holds the lotus to be sacred. The lotus is considered one of the Eight Auspicious Symbols, and is a representation of the Buddha. Lotus symbolize the progress of the ultimate mind. It grows from muddy depths through the waters of experience and "blooms in the sunshine of enlightenment."

The petals are in an intriguing arrangement such that one comes after another without an end. In Chinese and Vietnamese, its name means 'flower of endless petals'. Dwarf lotus can be grown as a pot plant. The large bloom, lasting 3 to 6 days, is strikingly beautiful and exotically fragrant.

The seedpod is yellow on a newly-opened lotus, it then turns green and remains for 6 weeks. These dry seedpods are very decorative in flower arrangements. The seeds can survive after hundreds of years. Lotus grow from tubers that are planted in the soil underwater. They can grow to a spread of over 10 feet, depending on the variety. Lotus can be white, pink, red or blue. Outdoor, it's hardy to zone 4 (as long as the tuber is kept from freezing).

Source: [Wikipedia.com/lotus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lotus)

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## Do-It-Yourself Backyard Aquaponics Systems

*Backyard aquaponics as a hobby is emerging as more people wish to experiment with it...*

Aquaponics is a hybrid food growing technology that combines aquaculture (growing fish) and hydroponics (growing veggies in non-soil media and nutrient-laden water).

This is an example of a simple, top tank growing what looks like strawberries with koi fish in the bottom tank. This set up is compact and looks energy efficient with a decent amount of room for both fish and plants. Notice the clay like media that the plants are growing in.



Got an aquaponics system you want to show off? Email [info@sckoi.com](mailto:info@sckoi.com).

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## IWGS Members Benefits for Club Members



The IWGS international fellowship of water gardeners includes new water gardeners keen to learn, experienced water gardeners eager to share, commercial growers, hybridizers, botanical garden and university professionals, hobbyists with wide ranging experience, aquatic plant specialists, fish specialists, manufacturers of water garden products, installers and retailers, and others who appreciate the delights of water in the landscape.

The IWGS database currently comprises over 3,000 plant names, and more than 1,000 photographs, continues to grow, with new varieties being added constantly. IWGS documents and shares knowledge of waterlilies, lotuses and other aquatic plants.

Visit [www.iwgs.org](http://www.iwgs.org) for more information and images of waterlilies and water gardening.

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## 2024 Club Business

*Happy 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! Can you believe we have been meeting for over 40 years and talking about Koi ponds and water gardens? Crazy... "Koi Kitchi" ... we just love our hobby.*

Our apologies for being less attentive this season, your board has put in many volunteer hours... we encourage the membership to help with club activities ... if you have time and are able, we could use more participation. In the meantime, we will continue to hold our meetings and events as scheduled. We appreciate our members and are glad that our club is growing and thriving as is.

Research shows people join koi clubs hoping to get more enjoyment from their hobby. With regard to club meetings, members generally like two things best: Learning about things that can improve their enjoyment of Koi and related topics and socializing with others who enjoy the hobby.



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### Sponsorships Available:

Rates include advertisement in the monthly club newsletter The SPLASH, on club website, plus other publications that the club may produce for one year. Current advertising term runs July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. To begin or renew an existing sponsorship contact our newsletter editor at [info@sckoi.com](mailto:info@sckoi.com).

**Business card size**                \$45 per year  
**Quarter page size**            \$95 per year