

# ATLANTA CLUB



## Koi



**Dedicated to Sharing the Joy of Keeping Koi**

September 2012

Volume 24 Issue 6

Clay Melancon President

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### By the Pond

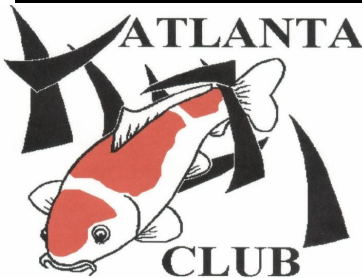
Hello again to all of our members,

Our August meeting was a very special one. Joe and Peggy Hatfield were superb hosts and if you didn't know, Joe is one of three certified Koi Health Advisers, (KHA) in our club and they are trained to identify any health issues you may have with your fish. Joe was kind enough to present a class on how to use a microscope to identify microbes that can make your fish sick. Thanks to both of you for sharing your beautiful home and pond for our meeting.

The main topic of course, is the upcoming show in September. Vicki Knill is chairing the show this year and she will keep everyone updated on times and dates. We still need volunteers to work the venue and to help out with the banquet details. I encourage our new members to sign up and work the show. You will be able to see how fish are shown and judged, learn what characteristics make a champion and, the basics of showing fish yourself. We still have some trophy sponsorships open for Koi and Goldfish categories. I am in charge of this, so if you would like more information, or want to sponsor a certain variety of fish send me an email and I can let you know what is left.

There will be an informal briefing if needed for volunteers Friday and Saturday morning before we start. These are mainly for new members and members that have not volunteered before and may have questions about their assigned tasks. I look forward to seeing all of you at the show and Banquet this year.

Clay Melancon



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This is just one picture of a very beautiful stained glass art that is donated for the banquet auction coming up in September at the Koi Show at Japan Fest. This piece measures 23" X 23" as is but, depending on the successful bidder's wishes, could be built out with additional borders to custom fit one's window. Or, it could be used as a piece of garden art. This piece was donated by Gary Lee.



**We are very fortunate to have three certified KHA's in our club. These folks are willing and able to help you with questions/problems with your fish or pond.**

**Contact Joe Hatfield, Gary or JoAnn Elmore**

**@**

**[http://www.atlantakoiclub.org/KHA%20Information/kha\\_information.htm](http://www.atlantakoiclub.org/KHA%20Information/kha_information.htm)**





## KOI meeting on Saturday, August 11th at the home of Joe and Peggy

Their pond holds 10,021 gallons, and is 4-1/2 feet deep, and Joe built it himself. It is equipped with two bead filters, skimmer, bottom drain, and carbon pads in the waterfall return. The pond contains 22 fish in ages of 3 to 6 years old, plus two in quarantine. Their remarkably clean water is enhanced by weekly flushes of the bead filters. The fish like to snack on watermelon, after which the filters are back flushed the next day.

Joe feeds them twice per day, and has had success with the effects of color with various foods.

He presented a demonstration about fish scraping and examination, and provided several microscopes for members to see various organisms. Fortunately, though, the fish appeared to be clean. His informative handouts provided sketches of many of the common fish pests. Discussion also centered on introduction of new fish into a pond. His normal quarantine period is 21 days, and he recommends that a pond's "canary" fish be put into the quarantine tank to accompany the questionable fish, to assure that the new fish doesn't introduce any unusual pests that the pond fish might not be used to.

Needless to say, the 28+ attendees had a wonderful evening in this beautiful garden/pond.



# Why Do Parasites Infect Koi?

The study of parasites has developed into a huge science in its own right. Thankfully, we koi-keepers only need to appreciate some very basic principles in order to protect our koi. There are four main factors that greatly influence the level of those bugs most commonly found affecting our water jewels.

- \* The health status of the Koi themselves.
- \* The water quality in which the Koi are living.
- \* The stocking density of the pond.
- \* How new introductions are dealt with.

Remember these, there is a test later.

## What are parasites?

A parasite is any organism (bug) that directly lives off of another and there are millions of species. Most of the common skin parasites in koi are mobile (moving) when viewed microscopically where fungi are often overlooked as parasites due to their static life. The success of fungi such as *Saprolegnia* or *Sap* is a species commonly found infecting koi depends on the availability of open skin lesions to invade such as wounds and ulcers. *Sap* is a killer if not treated quickly. While some parasites such as skin flukes take up their parasitic lifestyle at birth because this takes place directly on to the fish, other parasites have phases to their life cycle in the water rather than on the fish. Most time these phases are water temperature dependent.

## Inside and out

Ecto-parasites live off the host fish externally where Endo-parasites affect the fish internally. With their unique characteristics and complex reproductive cycles, endo-parasites are too diverse for generalizations. Some are capable of killing the host usually by nutrient deprivation directly from the blood thus draining body resources to a level that is harmful to health and then ultimately fatal to the host. However this is not the case with all parasites and some organisms reach a balance with the host in which both survive unharmed.

## Free loaders

Most parasites get the better deal with safe lodgings and a free lunch for life but some actually offer a few small benefits to the host fish such as keeping other more harmful organisms at bay or even utilizing them as a food source. In the wild, parasites are not such a threat to the well-being of fish and self-cleansing mechanisms can be adopted by the fish that cannot work in the confines of our koi ponds.

## Macro and Micro

Macro-parasites are those that can be seen with the human eye or without a microscope. An example is *Argulus*, or fish louse. This is spread either by the purchase of infected fish or plants and in some cases by water birds. Ducks for example often live in waters infected by lice and while they should not be regarded as a natural host to fish lice, they can be the transporter of an infection. If a duck visits a clean pond soon after leaving one infected with *Argulus* it is possible that some lice will also make the trip. In normal circumstances the fish louse dies on the feet or feathers of a water bird due to the defense mechanisms of that animal and the fact that fish lice do not live off of ducks. However with little or no interval between ponds, the lice can be spread and such an event is largely outside the koi-keepers control.

## Overall Health Status

Koi that are sick are unable to create an adequate immune response to defend themselves from secondary health problems and parasites then find fish easy targets. Koi that are recovering from disease can be afflicted for example by skin flukes or trichodina which may prove very difficult to control. This is not because treatment is ineffective but because the fish are unable to aid their own recovery from within and chemicals alone are not always enough. Trichodina and skin flukes are not true fish parasites. They thrive in hidden pond debris and stricter hygiene is often more effective than chemicals. That's why I always harp on cleaning your pond and filters. Did I forget to say, CLEAN YOUR POND?

## **Water Quality and environmental conditions**

Koi that are frequently exposed to poor water quality allow parasites to easily gain the upper hand and do so very quickly. Koi can be infected by low levels or small numbers of parasites for years and produce coping strategies via their own immune system. The bugs however will soon breed out of control if for example ammonia or nitrite levels rise unchecked or the pond is polluted by acid rain. That's one reason why water changes are so important. If the pond becomes polluted by what ever, then secondary infection by bacteria and fungus will further weaken the fish.

## **Stocking Density**

The sheer proximity of fish in overstocked ponds increases the possibility of parasites to spread so it would seem the more water each fish has to live in the less likely it becomes that a serious parasite problems will ever develop. Most koi normally carry a few skin parasites without this being a major health problem. Body contact allows exchange of mucus and parasites so ultimately all fish in overstocked ponds will have parasites. The more parasites you have the more they multiply. The organic load in over-crowded environments peaks with poor, lacking filtration and performance of regularly scheduled maintenance. This in turn will create periods in which it may never be suspected that the water is creating unsafe conditions until it is too late. Parasites are opportunists born to recognize weakness in host fish; they smell blood in the water, and then attack for their own survival.

## **Getting along together**

Symbiosis is observed in all branches of biology and the term is applied when a parasite depends on a host for survival without causing harm. Some internal parasites pose no risk during certain life cycles stages only becoming a threat to the fish during a specific developmental phase. Some parasitic organisms require additional hosts to carry out

stages of their life cycle without which the cycle cannot be completed. Water snails for example are a common intermediate host for fish parasites. However it is not a case of any snail will do as the process requires specific teamwork in order to perpetuate each species. It is amazing just how selective parasites are when deciding on an intermediate host. The aim ensures the reproductive process produces robust future generations. Just to complicate matters fish themselves can serve as intermediate hosts for a variety of organisms and are not always parasites directly.

## **What are flukes**

Flukes are common parasites in all animals and just how many fluke species there are is unknown but they are a large and diverse family. Flukes are classified as trematodes and some species reproduce via an intermediate host. Koi keepers are familiar with the skin fluke scientifically termed Gyrodactylus and gill flukes or Dactylogyrus. There are numerous species of flukes found internally in fish and one such organism is Sanguinicola.

## **First Class Travelers**

Parasites get a free ride on the skin, in the gills or even inside the body of koi and this ensures greater distribution. This second-hand frequent flyer life style has spread countless fish parasites to new environments allowing them to seek out new fish as hosts. This travel is responsible for the spread of many organisms and diseases and obviously not just among koi. This can be stopped with proper quarantine protocol.

## **New Koi and plants**

Quarantining all new koi greatly reduces the risk of parasites and serious disease being introduced to a healthy pond. In quarantine, koi can simply be observed for three to four weeks to ensure they are and remain healthy and tested for bugs. A microscope should be used to take scrapes and mucus smears can be taken to check for and identify parasites. This should be accomplished especially if they are suspected due to skin redness or obvious irritation. Heat can be influential in parasitic life cycles and if applied during quarantine will reduce risks if infection still further. Parasite control may require chemical treatment and this is often detrimental to pond and filter biology. In addition chemicals cannot specifically target any single parasite and can cause side effects in koi so ensure all chemical use is really necessary. In quarantine, koi can be treated easier, cheaper and without damage to the overall pond, filtration system, or other fish inhabitants. Read about proper quarantine procedures on the club KHA site. All new plants should be treated for parasites. A long, slow bath in high concentrations of potassium permanganate followed by a good rinse before you place them in your pond will eliminate all known parasites.

**Atlanta Koi Club**  
**Financial Statements**  
**Year to Date**  
**As of August 31, 2012**

**INCOME STATEMENT**

**REVENUE**

Koi Auction	\$14,939
Koi Show	3,915
Membership & Sponsorship Dues Income	2,753
Misc.	73
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b><u>\$21,680</u></b>

**EXPENSES**

AKCA Dues	\$100
Koi Auction	12,132
Membership Expenses	215
Insurance Premium Paid	812
Rent Expense	1,645
Show Expenses	2,716
Misc. Expenses	1,511
Newsletter Expenses	187
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$19,318</u></b>

**Net Income (Loss)** **\$2,361**

**BALANCE SHEET**

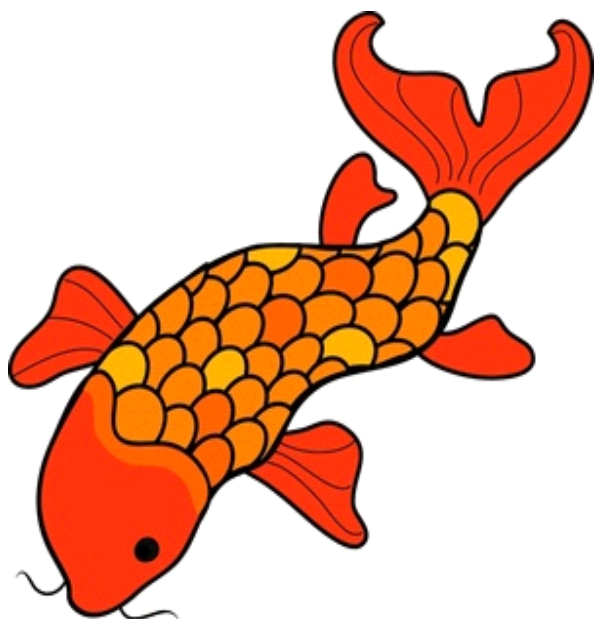
**Assets** (not including property in inventory)

Cash in Bank	\$21,775
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b><u>\$21,775</u></b>

**Liabilities**

**Total Liabilities** **\$0.00**

**Net Worth** **\$21,775**



The September meeting is Sunday the 9th and is traditionally when we run through the final koi show staging and packing of show equipment. This will not be a regular club meeting but it is an important meeting for the koi show volunteers. If you have signed up to work at the show please attend because this is when you will receive your duty assignment and be given your show t-shirt and passes.

We will meet at Coastal Ponds;  
**2110 Tucker Industrial Road Tucker, GA 30084**  
Arrive at 2pm for planning, pizza and drinks.  
Carl Knill

**The 2012 Atlanta Koi & Goldfish Show** is only days away. I would like to encourage members to enter their fish into the show. You just might be surprised at how well your fish do. If you prefer not to bring your koi then come Friday afternoon to shop for fish from the vendors that will be present. There will be both Asian imported koi & goldfish as well as domestic koi bred and raised in the southeast. Our fish vendors this year are:

Kodama Koi Farm from Hawaii with imported koi  
 A's Aquarium from Texas with imported koi & goldfish  
 Splendor Koi from Georgia with domestic koi  
 Tarheel Koi Farm from North Carolina with domestic koi  
 Razorback Koi from Arkansas with domestic koi  
 Carolina Koi Farm from South Carolina with domestic koi

The judges this year are:

Head Koi Judge; Charles Phelps from Louisville KY. Senior Certified & AKJA Chairperson  
 Candidate Koi Judge; John Sprinkle from Clear Water FL  
 Candidate Koi Judge; Troy Head from Louisville KY  
 Goldfish Judge; Vicki Knill from Marietta GA. Certified AGA judge  
 We will once again be returning to JapanFest at the Gwinnett Convention Center.  
 6500 Sugarloaf Parkway, Duluth GA 30097

### **Kohaku Grow out**



If you bought koi last year for the Hammock Koi Farms Kohaku Grow out this is the show that we invite you to bring your koi and exhibit them. The koi will be judged in the regular show but they will also be judged in special grow out categories. The pattern of the fish is not a factor in the grow out judging. Awards will be presented to the koi that was grown out to achieve the best of the following categories:

Best Shiroji. This for the most brilliant white  
 Best Beni. This is for the deepest, thickest red  
 Best Body, Female. A large powerful body is one of the most important aspects of koi  
 Best Body, Male. While females always have the largest body we recognize a male with a powerful body too. (the fish, not the owner)

**A show is only as good as the people who present it.  
 Let's all present the best show.**



# Support our Super Sponsors!



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WELCOME

NEW MEMBERS

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION ATLANTA KOI CLUB

"Dedicated to Sharing the Joy of Keeping Koi"

www.AtlantaKoiClub.org

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Check No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Check Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership: Household: \$50 for 1 Yr. \_\_\_\_\_; \$90 for 2 Yrs. \_\_\_\_\_
( Check One ) Individual: \$30 for 1 Yr. \_\_\_\_\_; \$54 for 2 Yrs. \_\_\_\_\_
Sponsor: \$150 for 1 Yr. \_\_\_\_\_

Other: KOI USA Magazine Subscription: \$20 for 1 Yr. \_\_\_\_\_
\*Name Badges: \$5 each. \_\_\_\_\_



Names: \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_
First Last First Last

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Best Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Email: \_\_\_\_\_

AKC is a volunteer organization. We need as much help and support as you can provide, no matter how insignificant. In which of the following areas can you help?

Host Meeting \_\_, Pond Tour \_\_, Auction \_\_, Koi Show \_\_, Hold Office \_\_, Flower Show \_\_

To save money, we provide our newsletter in color via email several days earlier than mailed copies.

Would you like to receive your newsletter via email? Yes or No.

We try to publish a membership roster annually. It is given only to club members and AKCA, the Associated Koi Clubs of America. May we publish your address, phone number and email? Yes or No.

Make checks payable to Atlanta Koi Club and submit with application to: Peggy Fricke

\* Please consider buying Name Badges. For only \$5, you will get to know and be known by everyone and also receive a free raffle ticket every time you wear your badge to a Club Meeting.



DEDICATED TO SHARING THE JOY OF KEEPING KOI.