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August, 2014

By The Pond

Well it's time! The twenty year anniversary of the Atlanta Koi Show is here. Most everything is ready to go...unlike last year. We have five wet vendors, Carolina Koi, A's Goldfish (Tommy), New River Koi, Tarheel Koi, Happy Koi. There will be a good variety of large, small, imported and domestic koi in all price ranges. Don't forget you can show any fish you purchase by 9:00 am on Saturday. If you don't get a tank of your own, and we have about 6 left, you can always participate in the show with a new purchase. I encourage everyone to show one way or the other. It makes it all the more interesting to have a stake in the outcome. It doesn't take a ton of money, just a good eye for fish. Ask Hal and Susan Brown, they won Baby Grand Champ B with a cute little gin rin Chagoi they bought there at the show. Even if you don't show you still should consider going to the banquet. The food will be great (same as last year) and you get to talk fish for a couple of hours with fellow crazies. What more could you want?

There will other vendors there as well with everything you need to keep your wet pets healthy, fed and well cared for. Also don't forget the Goldfish Show. There will be a wide variety of very nice goldfish there also. Both to look at and to purchase, same deal as the koi, you can enter any new purchase up until 9:00 am Saturday.

We will have our pre-show meeting at Coastal at 2:00 Sunday the 7th.

On another note, elections are coming up and Hal Brown has been heading up the nomination committee. He has come up with a slate for the coming election (basically just finding someone willing to run). BUT if there is anyone that got overlooked, and who would like to run for President, Secretary, or Property Manager, please contact any board member or Hal and let them know. The election is open to anybody that would like to take a hand in running the club.

Well, hope to see you at the pre-show meeting and definitely at the Show!

Gary

Hi All,

It's less than a month (Sept 12-14) to the show and we could still use some volunteers.

Just a reminder - in order to get a free show t-shirt, you **MUST** sign up for something. There will be 2 colors available - royal blue and red and they will be ordered in sizes S-XXL. If you need a different size please email me with size and color. You do not need to tell me if you are OK with sizes S-XXL.

This is the link to Sign Up Genius: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040a48afae22a75-20141> If you have trouble accessing it, please let me know and I will get you signed up. Don't be shy - get involved. If you are new this is a great way to get to know your fellow club members and, once again, remember - many hands make light work!!

If you have any questions, or need me to sign you up, please let me know.

Thanks, Diane

August's Business Meeting

A little bit of "louden-boomer" rain didn't the spirits of the 47 members who attended our meeting on August 9th at Mike and Phyllis's house in Tucker. Their layout included a massive shallow pond, complete with humongous waterfall, stream, and lily pond, not to mention "Turtle Island". Mike attributed his crystal-clear water to the addition of air before the water returns to the filtration unit. One photo shows Mike pointing to the air manifold in the return chamber. A sumptuous feast was provided, re-splendent with all kinds of desserts.



Mike pointing air supply manifold



Turtle Island



Mike partially buried his filter piping for frost protection



KOI Food Survey

Before our August meeting started, a question was asked about what type of KOI food is best. Out of six people asked, there were six different answers. Prices varied tremendously, also. This looked like a good topic to discuss, and a survey was sent the membership to determine the details of what food is purchased. The response was overwhelming and enthusiastic, with 21 replies the first week. As a result of this survey, below is a table showing the various types of KOI food used by members. Following that table are several additional useful comments offered by members.

Mem-	Brand	Bag Size	Sink or	Cost	Vendor	Comments
A	Blackwater Creek	40#	Float	\$2<	Dr Foster and Smith	Free shipping over 49#, Switch to cool water low protein when cold.
B	Ecological Microbe-Lift	40#			Coastal Pond	Wheat germ in winter and Variety when
C	Kodama, OSI, Microbe-Lift	40#	Float	\$2 - \$4	James Yu, Coastal	Wheat germ in colder weather
D	41-9-32 large summer growth	10#	Float	\$4.50	www.koifoodshack.com	Large pellets
E	Blackwater Creek Max Growth	5#	Float	\$3 - \$3.60	www.petsolutions.com	
F	Saki Hikari	33#	Float	\$4+	Wet Pets	
G	Blackwater Growth	40#	Floats&Sink	\$2 - \$3	Splendor KOI	
H	Gai-Jin Special Blend	20#	Float	\$3	Pond Professional	
I	Blackwater Creek Max Growth	40#	Float	\$2 - \$3	Dr Foster and Smith	Free shipping over 49#, Switch to cool water low protein when cold.
J	Azoom	40#	Float	\$1 - \$2	Dr Foster and Smith	Large pellets, Fish meal listed first
K	Foster Smith	40#	Float	\$1 - \$2		Medium pellets
L	Aquamax (Purina)	50#	Sink	\$1 - \$2	Boss Bros. Country Store	
M	Kenzen	10#	Float	\$7.50	www.kenzkoi.com	
N	Blackwater Creek Max Growth	40#	Float	\$2	on-line	
O	Mazuri KOI	20#		\$2 - \$3	Feed and Seed-Brownlee and Chatta-hoochie	
P	Microbe-Lift Variety Mix	40#	Float	\$4 - \$5	Coastal Pond	
Q	Flat Rock KOI food	bulk	Floats&Sink	\$3	Flat Rock Koi	36% protein
R	Saki Hikari, Blackwater Gold	40#	Float	7-8, 3-4	on-line, best price	
S	KOI Food Shack	25#	Float	4-Mar	www.koifoodshack.com	
T	Saka-Hikari	4.4#	Float	\$40	Wet Pets and Webbs	
U	Mazuri Pond Nuggets	18#	Float	\$40	N Fulton Feed & Seed	

Additional helpful comments made by participants

We feed Ecological, Microbe-lift, foods - Wheat Germ in the winter and Variety in the warm months.

WHY? (You left that all important question off of your list). Because it is fresh and still has its nutrients. ANY IMPORTED food is old and has degraded.

We use 40lb bags that last somewhere around a month or so during season.

NOTE: Catfish food is cheap and OK for CATFISH that will BE KILLED AND EATEN IN 6 MONTHS. It is terrible for Koi. Any article on fish food needs to stress this FACT!

I purchase the large pellets (floating) for my koi, most of whom are two years old and around 12" long. A few smaller ones (7"-8") can eat it just fine. Younger fish would need the small pellets. What I'm feeding right now is the 10 lb. bag of summer growth formula, 41% protein that costs \$45 or \$4.50 per lb. <http://www.koifoodshack.com/10-lbs-41-9-32-large-summer-growth-formula-floating-koi-food/> I see from the cost break-downs below that I may be paying on the high side for my food so I'm particularly interested to hear others responses.

I use Saki Hikari growth and/or color enhancement. I buy a 33lb bag from Wet Pets in the spring when he offers 20% off. It does cost over \$4/lb. I started using it with my 700 gallon pond and was pleasantly surprised how it easily cut the fish waste in half. I guess because there is more protein and less filler. Anyway, I've been using it in my big pond for 5 years and am very happy with the growth I get and health of the fish.

Special blend for Small, Medium and Large Fish. Small mix is designed for those small koi and goldfish. 3.5 mm pellets. Medium mix is for medium fish with small fish in the same pond which contains 3.5 mm and 5.5 mm pellets. Large mix is for larger fish, with medium fish in the same pond. This one contains 5.5 mm and 7.5 mm pellets. All special mix contains protein and color enhancing along with the necessary trace minerals.

Check the ingredients to make sure the protein levels are high and are based on animal proteins, not plant (i.e. corn products). Good koi food based on high levels of animal protein is not inexpensive. Store unused food in cool dry locations in varmint proof containers.

I fed them Tetra Pond for several years when I only had four Koi. They love it and it was easy to get. It falls in the expensive category. I still buy different foods occasionally to give them variety and make sure they are getting the nutrients they need.

I typically purchase food in the Spring so that it's as fresh as possible. Most foods come with a best used by date which I always come under. As I said, I also store my food in a refrigerator in my basement to keep it even more fresh, and only bring out a couple of pounds at a time to feed. I still find that this amount of food may not be enough and purchase a smaller amount late in the season - I'll usually go with a fall/winter food higher in fiber. Just recently, however, I got a good discount email from Pet Solutions and I bought a 33 lb bag of Saki Hikari that several of us in the club split since none of us needed that much. I would love to see us be able to get discounts through the purchasing power of the club but it would have to be at the distributor level (like Pet Solutions or Drs. Foster and Smith) and not at the manufacturer level because I doubt if we would ever get everyone in the club to agree to the same food. I've heard discussions that high quality foods don't really matter, but I believe higher quality foods are good for the fish but also produce less waste. I also have some "koi treat" foods and put orange slices and cut baby spinach out on occasion - particularly in the spring.

Saka-Hikari is great food. Seems to produce less waste, allowing me to get away with weekly 10% water changes, April - Nov. Ammonia, Nitrites never reach levels > 0 parts per million. And above all, water remains clear, fish look great and are very active.

But are there less costly but equally effective summer foods available? Between Oct/Nov (water below 60 degrees) and May when water reaches 60 degrees I feed wheat germ until 50- 55 degrees I feed only wheat germ and then nothing until early Spring when water reaches 55%, then wheat germ again until water is consistently at 60 degrees when I resume Saki-Harari Color Enhancing

Schedule of Meetings

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS TO HOST OUR FUTURE MEETINGS!!!

Our September 7th meeting will be hosted by Bill and Lynn Dowden at Coastal Pond. This will be a meeting intended to prepare for our upcoming KOI Show. Officers will meet at 1pm and general meeting at 2pm.

We desperately need hosts for the October and November meetings, and into next year. Please contact Chase Tomkosky if you can help with a meeting at your pond. Just think of the honor and glory you will receive with pictures of your pond shared with the nation (or anyone who looks at our web page).

2014—2015 Officer Nominations

The Nominating Committee has suggested the following nominees for the 2014-2015 year of office:

- President Diane Giangrande
- Secretary David Pugh
- Equipment Managers Jerry Johnson and Larry Sheets

Nominations from the floor during our next meeting will be encouraged and accepted.

Do you have a topic to share?

Do you have a pet KOI pond topic? To keep our newsletter interesting, we welcome any presentations concerning fish, ponds, water quality, and most anything else associated with the (expensive) hobby of KOI culture. Please let the editor know of any topics you would like to present, or suggestions of what you would like to read about. If you would like to talk about a subject at a meeting, let us know.

FOR SALE

- CETUS Filter, gently used. Price is \$500.00. Contact David Pugh
- If you have any items you would like to sell, contact the editor.

Advice from Bill Dowden

Lots of rain can kill your fish. We have had LOTS of rain.

PLEASE go out now and check the KH = carbonate hardness. If you have the AP test kit which turns blue (hopefully) with one drop and yellow with the addition of enough more drops - you had better have at LEAST 5 or 6 drops worth of KH. If the first drop turns it yellow = you are in immediate danger of a killer pH crash.

WHEN IN DOUBT, add BAKING SODA IMMEDIATELY. A decent rule of thumb is at least one heaping cup per 1000 gallons. A 10,000 or so gallon pond = pour in the 13 lb bag from Sam's or Costco.

Please do not put this off. Just because they haven't died YET..... If it happens, it will happen very quickly.

There is no harm in putting in "too much." BUT your fish can die quickly if there is not enough.

Most of us have terrible water out of the tap - water that will kill fish because of the lack of KH.