

# Ponderings...

Newsletter of the Central Iowa Water Garden Association [www.ciwga.org](http://www.ciwga.org) vol. 3 no. 11 November 2003



Corner Stone

President  
Jamie Beyer  
[president@ciwga.org](mailto:president@ciwga.org)

Vice President  
Gary Craven

Secretary  
Jim Jordan

Treasurer  
Denice & Larry Reisetter

Membership  
Carolyn & Greg Knop  
[membership@ciwga.org](mailto:membership@ciwga.org)

Newsletter & Website  
Lisa Harmison  
[news@ciwga.org](mailto:news@ciwga.org)

Publicity  
Gretchen Triplett

Board of Directors  
Jamie Beyer, Gary Craven,  
Lisa Harmison, Harvey  
Hilpipre, Jim Jordan, Greg  
Knop, Lori Peake, Denice &  
Larry Reisetter, Doug Rieck,  
Ed Schroeder, Mike Stewart

Top of Iowa Chapter  
President  
Ed Schroeder  
[topofia@ciwga.org](mailto:topofia@ciwga.org)

Secretary  
Mary Schultz

Polk Chapter  
President  
Doug Rieck  
[polk@ciwga.org](mailto:polk@ciwga.org)

Secretary  
Carol Culmer

## Lilypad

Our next meeting will be Monday, November 10, at 7:00 pm at the Alliant facility in Ames. A map is included in this newsletter. The program is a *round-table discussion of pond design*. Hospitality: Judy Henry, Dan and Mary Lou Haddock.

## Ribbiting Report

Our ponding season is basically over and I hope everyone has their ponds ready for winter -- or close to it. We've had some great turnouts at all three chapter's meetings covering the topic of overwintering. I also did the same program to the Northern Iowa Water Garden Society in Cedar Falls.

As a footnote to the program I would suggest the addition of an air-check valve on the output of your air pump (place it on the air line right by the pump). This will prevent water from entering your air line if the power goes out. If the water would enter (without the air check valve), it would freeze and then when the power returns, it is froze and the air line is plugged. This was a great suggestion from a member of the Polk County Chapter. Of course, if the air line did plug with ice it is easy to replace it with another but this step can be avoided with the air check.

The Water Garden Tour Committee is already very busy with planning on the July tour. We are presently lining up gardens for the tour and are interested in anyone who is interested in placing their garden on the tour. The gardens need to be in the Ames, Huxley, Cambridge, Alleman areas for the Ames leg of the tour. For the Des Moines leg, the gardens need to be in the south half of Des Moines, Indianola, and Norwalk areas. We have already lined up many gardens but want your suggestions. Please contact John Selin, Greg Knop, or me with your suggestions. Feel free to suggest your own garden if you want. This tour, by the way, is the largest garden tour in the state.

*continued on next page...*



### Table of Contents

Chapter Channels .....	2
Minnow's Minutes .....	3
Fountains of Support .....	4
Red stemmed Thalia .....	5
Map .....	5

## Ribbiting Report

...continued

I hope that everyone remembers Deb Jetter from Ankeny who was on the 2002 Pond Tour. She sends her greetings and thanks to everyone that helped to get her garden ready to go for the tour. She says that this last summer, her lotus bloomed profusely and she spent many hours by the pond. She is very proud of her garden and it really gives her a lot of comfort in thinking about it. Deb is not able to get to her garden as much now as she would like but she has those memories. I thought that any kind of cards and letters would be most welcome by Deb. Her address is 6924 Berwick Drive, Ankeny, IA 50021. I was not able to see Deb's garden this year. One of the things that I do remember most of Deb's garden was not only her pond but also her bubbling personality that really makes you feel welcome. I also remember that her pond also overlooked another pond that was really a very nice farm pond.

Okay, for the meeting program on Monday, November 10. Let's have a round table discussion of "The Perfect Pond Design". Of course, there is not one overall design that will fit all landscapes but there are elements that are common that need to be included in every design. This is a chance to give your opinions on what would be a good idea to include in most designs. Things you may have had success with or things that you think may be a good idea. I am really looking forward to all the ideas that we can all learn from. Round table means everyone will have a chance to give their views that want. I will insure that the discussion proceeds without "dead times". The meeting starts at 7:00 PM at the Alliant facility. Hope to see everybody there.

The Big Toad, Jamie



## Chapter Channels

### Polk County

The Polk County chapter met at the ISU Extension office of November 28. Rob Pritchard from Liquid Landscapes presented an excellent program on pond construction. Rob is a designer and installer who works throughout central Iowa. His presentation was accompanied by slides that helped illustrate his presentation. Sixteen attendee's received a lot of good information.

Much thanks to Rob and all the new faces present.

Due to the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays the Polk County Chapters next meeting will be January 27. Watch for the meeting topic in the next newsletter.

### Top of Iowa

The Top of Iowa Water Garden Association will next meet in January. If you have any questions, please contact Ed Schroeder at 641-923-3512.

## 2004 Tour News

The Committee for the 2004 Pond Tour is actively planning next year's tour. The dates have been set for July 17-18. 24 gardens are currently being planned to be shown (12 in the Des Moines-wide area, and 12 in the Ames-wide area). We are co-sponsoring the event with the Master Gardeners from Des Moines and Ames. One area where a tremendous amount of support will be needed is volunteering to assist each garden site host(s). If you are interested in spending any part of either, or both, of the Tour Dates at a garden site, please contact any of the following people:

Greg & Carolyn Knop	515-382-5685
Kate & Rod Mulder	515-292-7693
Carol Scheid	641-377-2648
Gary Craven	515-432-9123

# *Minnow's Minutes*

*October 13, 2003*

The business meeting, held at the Alliant facility was called to order by Jamie at 8:45 p.m. The meeting followed a very thorough and professional presentation by Jackie Allsup, present secretary and past president of the Eastern Iowa Pond Society. Her presentation was entitled Filtration - Thinking Outside the Box. The presentation came with an 8-page handout about the subject and included two pages of myths and facts on green water. This writer feels those unable to attend missed out on a wealth of good information.

A hospitality sign-up sheet was circulated. Carolyn Knop also asked that a sign-up sheet for volunteers at the water garden tour the 3rd weekend of July 2004 be circulated. Nonmembers who are always welcome at CIWGA meetings included Doug McCay of Ames and Ted and Maybelle Rogers of New Virginia. The minutes of the last meeting were approved. It was announced that CIWGA treasury balance is \$8,331.17. This followed a single check of \$62.52 to Copyworks. Membership was stated to be very close to 300 members.

Editor's report: Lisa stated the association's web site has a new link called "Educational Eddy". It includes all kinds of articles to help educate us, such as Gretchen's pictures of Jamie's presentation on plant dividing and links to newsletter articles. Lisa also requested pictures of plants from membership so they might be put on the web site and in the newsletter. She was particularly impressed by Red stemmed Thalia. Jamie mentioned how fortunate we are to have John, the owner of Copyworks, as a friend and ally.

Carolyn announced the water garden tour, on July 17 - 18, would probably not be far off Highway 30. She solicited ideas and requested people call Greg or Gary if individuals are interested in showing a garden. Appreciation of Gretchen's publicity committee was expressed and a subcommittee on ticket design and distribution was contemplated as well as a flags and signs sub-committee. Also a pond tour treasurer may be established to budget and track expenses. Carolyn plans a monthly update to let membership know they are working hard on the tour. Jamie stated the tour is now 8 years old and that during that time 90-100 ponds have been viewed.

Program Book Committee: This committee consists of Gretchen, the Robinson's, Jamie, and Jim Jordan. They hope to meet soon and have a directory program book out by January 1, 2004. Jamie wished for organization of programs while still having some flexibility.

Community Relations: This committee sets up fountains of support. More are needed from the Ames and Des Moines area.

Jamie announced a plan initiated by Gary and Janet regarding the possibility of a handicapped tour of gardens. He is excited about this, but is hoping not to overwhelm us. It was suggested to start by forming a list of institutions and deciding how many to have. He stated the Gateway Center garden is a good example of a handicapped accessible garden - more to come on this project.

Election of directors and officers: The following were elected to a 2-year term: Treasurer - Larry and Denise Reisetter; Director - Lisa Harmison; Director - Jamie Beyer; Vice-President - Gary Craven; Director - Greg Knop - membership chair; Director - Russ Buechler.

Future programs announced by Jamie Beyer: Don Byrne - Amazon traveler/lily hybridizer, date not yet nailed down, probably sometime February to April ; January - Jim Pease, wildlife biologist, speaking about wildlife problems around water gardens; November - pond construction discussion.

Lizzy was returned from a month at Jill and Jim Rose's pond in Jefferson. I think she gained weight there! She will reside this next month at Jerry and Bert Aldrich's at Alden, Iowa. Bert shared with the club a very amusing story about how their tractor sprung a leak after Jerry moved 2 big rocks on their pond - something about replacing tires on the tractor as a consequence. Their daughter Carol stated the tires were in need of replacement anyway. I bet Jerry has big biceps!!!!

Many members won raffle items donated by Jackie Allsup, Ark Pet Center, and The Voshell's. Thanks to Ada Mae Lewis and Cindy Ruigh for the cider, breads, and cookies.

*Respectfully submitted, Jim Jordan*

## Fountains of Support

**Ames Landscape and Nursery**, 4320 Hwy 69 South, Ames, 515-232-2840 -- 10% discount.

**Ark Pet Center**, 118 Hayward Avenue, Ames, 515-292-4646 -- Monthly specials in addition to 10% discount on everything else.

**Aqualand**, 3600 6th Avenue (6th and Euclid), Des Moines, 515-283-0300 -- 10% discount.

**New!** **Copyworks Plus**, John Crawford, 105 Welch Avenue, Ames, 515-292-3630 -- 10% off all copy services.

**Dillon Plant Company**, Craig Jacobson, 2554 Dillon Road, Marshalltown, 641-479-2632 -- Dwarf conifers, hostas, daylilies, ornamental grasses. Open by appointment.

**Earl May Garden Center**, 1601 S. Kellogg, Ames, 515-232-2929 -- Everything 10% discount except for the dog and cat food plus monthly in-store specials for an additional discount.

**Earl May Nursery and Garden Center**, Scott Bradham, 168 South 25th Street, Ft. Dodge, 515-576-4231 -- 10% discount .

**Escapes Water Creations**, Carol and Randy Best, 107 E. Meadow Lane, Marshalltown, 641-753-7750 -- M-F 9-6, Sat. 9-3, 10% discount on retail items, excluding custom installation and already discounted items.

**Happy Acres Nursery**, Mary Fisk, 2012 Hwy 9, Osage, 641-732-5173 -- We carry a complete line of trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals, pond plants, pond supplies, fountains and statuary. We do landscaping designs and installation as well as maintenance.

**Holub's Garden & Greenhouses, Inc.**, 22085 580th Ave., Ames, 515-232-4769 -- 10% discount not valid with other discounts.

**Iowa Outdoor Products**, 3200 86th Street, Des Moines -- Everything 10% discount.

**K & K Gardens**, 108 E. Wilbur St., Hawkeye, 52147, 563-427-5373, [www.kkgardens.com](http://www.kkgardens.com) -- *Open May through July*, all members receive a 10% discount.

**The Light Perspective**, Ryan Walrod, 3404 Coy Street, #6, Ames, 515-450-1868 -- 10% discount. The Light Perspective offers professional consultation, design, and installation for landscape and garden lighting.

**Lowes Garden Center**, 120 Airport Road, Ames, 515-233-0404 -- All pond and landscaping products 10% discount.

**Quick's Hardware Hank**, 502 East 1st Street at the Corner of Hwy 69 and 1st Str, Huxley, 515-597-2338 -- 10% discount all garden things except items on sale/specials to members with card.

**Skycrest Gardens**, 243 Dave Circle, Ames, 515-233-1382, *Seasonal hours* -- Almost everything 10% discount.

**Struther's Trees and Outdoor Store**, Jodi Ballard, 2908 NE 94th Ave., Ankeny (1 mile east of I-35 exit 92), 515-964-5145 -- 10% discount.

**Willowglen Nursery**, Lindsay Lee & E. Lee Zieke Lee, 3512 Lost Mile Road, Decorah, 52101 - - Card-carrying members have 10% discount on water plants.

## Turtle's Tanks

Thank you to the following individuals and organizations that have helped our group:

Skycrest Garden

The Ark Pet Center

Copyworks of Ames

Alliant Energy



## A Stone's Throw

### For Newsletter Articles:

You can contact me by e-mail at [news@ciwga.org](mailto:news@ciwga.org) or by postal mail at CIWGA, c/o Lisa Harmison, 2042 South 500th Avenue, Ames, IA 50014. Material (written stories and photographs) sent by regular mail will be returned.

**Deadline for November issue is October 20.**

# Red-stemmed Thalia

*Thalia geniculata var. ruminoides*

Red-stemmed Thalia is native to the West Indies. This tropical plant can be found in cypress swamps where alligators live, hence its common name of alligator flag. It may also be called fire flag.

Typically it grows to five or six feet in height but it can reach eight feet. The large, simple leaves grow on long stalks from its thick rhizome. The broad, lanced-shaped leaves can be up to eight inches wide and more than two feet long. The stems are a dark red, hence its name. The plant produces two bracts that extend above the foliage with many small, lavender flowers hanging from them.

Because it is a big plant, red stemmed Thalia needs a big container. Plant it in a five to 20 gallon container filled with a rich loam. Red stemmed Thalia prefers one to six inches of water covering

its crown. Put the container in your pond in the sun or partial shade sheltered from harsh winds. Red stemmed Thalia also does well planted in a bog area. These tropical plants will not do survive our cold winters. If you have the space, they can be overwintered as a tropical houseplant.

Red stemmed Thalia can be divided in the spring or summer. Wash the soil from its roots. Divide the rhizome into sections with leaves and pot as above.

*A photograph of Red stemmed Thalia is on page six of this newsletter. If you have a plant you'd like to learn more about or a photograph of one you are proud of, please let me know (I don't have many photos in my collection). I am looking for subjects to write about and share with our membership and am in need of suggestions for topics. I am also looking for writers. Articles can be as long as you like, one page is a good target for publication. I can be reached at [news@ciwga.org](mailto:news@ciwga.org) or c/o Lisa Harmison, 2042 South 500th Avenue, Ames, 50014. Thanks!*

Map to the Alliant Facility where the next CIWGA meeting will be held:



Red stemmed Thalia planted in the Craven's water gardens. Thanks to Gary for sharing.



Lisa Harmison  
Central Iowa Water Garden Association  
2042 South 500th Avenue  
Ames, IA 50014