

*San Francisco Bay Area  
Koi Club  
June 2009 Volume 15 Issue 7*

*"News From Around The Pond"*

**"Pond"er This!**

We feed our fish once or twice a day depending on the season. Koi can go for 10 or more days without food without harm. They will eat almost anything but we feed them pellets that are specially made for Koi. These pellets come in different sizes and varieties. Koi can also be fed dried or fresh shrimp, lettuce cooked rice or cooked oats.

A Quote from Asahi Fancy Koi, Inc.: <http://users.vcnet.com/rrenshaw/asahi1.html>

If undeliverable please return to:

Bill Edwards  
686 Canterbury Place  
Milpitas, Ca 95035

**[HTTP://WWW.SFBAKC.ORG](http://www.sfbakc.org)**

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The SFBKAC is a non-profit EDUCATIONAL club for koi enthusiasts. Anyone who requires help or advice should feel free to request it from our membership.

We encourage anyone interested in koi or currently involved with koi to become a member.

Guests are always welcome to come and check us out at our monthly general meetings.

Meeting Schedule

Please join us at the next get-together on 25 July, 2009 at the Home of:

**Mike and Lorie Robertson**  
**3731 Walnut Ave**  
**Concord Ca 94519**  
**(925-685-4690)**

(See directions on page 7)

**Board meeting** starts at 11:00A.M. (all members are welcome to attend)

**Social hour** starts at 12:00 Noon - Please bring munchies & finger food!

**General meeting** starts at 1:00 P.M. (Guests welcome!)

Topic of speaker: TBD

Note:

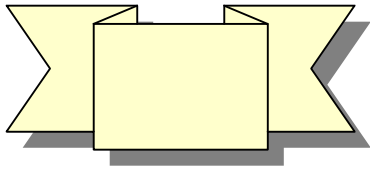
Meetings are always the 4th Saturday of every month - unless otherwise changed by prior notification (rare).

The KHA is cadre of highly trained Koi club members who have graduated from the KHA Academy. They are trained in all aspects of Koi keeping, including pond building, water quality, koi health and disease prevention. If you need help you can download a questionnaire from our website. Your answers will help them evaluate the situation.

**Some Northern CA KHAs:**

- Bobbie Cervantes, Pacifica  
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## Club Officers 2009

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**Webmaster:** Open

**Newsletter:** Bill Edwards

billedwards@comcast.net



## President's Corner

I apologize for the late newsletter. In the future, we will get you the online newsletter closer to the middle of the month and the hard copy sooner..

Interesting pond for the June meeting. Steve had coral shells to stabilize the alkalinity. I need to experiment with coral or oyster shells so I have more of a hands on experience. Already have a couple of ideas.

He also had what's called a hydroxyl generator. I spoke about them a few years ago. They can work miracles if the TDS is high enough but it's a lot higher than we consider good water. That's another one I would like to play with one of these days (There's that phrase again.)

His koi are show quality and big. We all were lined up along the side enjoying them.

Sheila did microscope tricks. I would like to see her do a complete KHA lab sometime. There is a lot pond owners should know in order to recognize and treat disease in their ponds. We get called out on too many simple tasks that the owners can do themselves. If we could work with the pond owner over the phone we would be much farther ahead.

I'm thinking we should work up a sheet for owners to follow before calling so most of what we need is at their fingertips and we may be able to resolve the issue then.

Sheila is working on a suitable site for the August meeting where we have a pot luck picnic somewhere. Maybe she will have something to discuss this next meeting.

Don't forget the Camellia koi show on [Sept. 12-13 at Placer County Fairgrounds](#) near Sacramento. Their shows are the best around N. California and you will see some of the very best quality koi at this show. I guarantee you will find koi that you wish were in your pond. I would like to hear from a few SFBKAC members willing to pitch in and help them. There's a variety of jobs from setting up tanks to breaking down at the end of the show. Probably the most important event is the break down. It's at the end of their showing fish and they need to get them home so breaking down is where we can really make a difference that will be appreciated. If there's some other part of the event you are interested in, let me know and I will try to get you on that task. If you go on Saturday, consider going to the Banquet, that's where we can socialize with them.

See you at the next meeting.  
Rich

# Treasurer's Report

July 2009

submitted by Greg Bequette

Beginning balance, May 10, 2009			<b>\$3,951.08</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Koi Fair and Auction revenue less expenses	\$2,194.00	<b>-\$1,617.3</b>	\$576.70
Dues			\$680.00
Koi USA collections less payments	\$180.00	<b>-\$180.00</b>	\$0.00
Tank rental income			\$340.00
Raffle ticket sales			\$27.00
Donation			\$2.50
	<b>Total Income</b>		<b>\$1,626.20</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Koi USA membership for SFBKAC			<b>-\$100.00</b>
Postage, office supplies, web page hosting cost			<b>-\$450.27</b>
	<b>Total Ex-</b>		
	<b>penses</b>		<b>-\$550.27</b>
Ending balance, July 14, 2009			<b>\$5,027.01</b>

Financially, the Club had a busy month in June. At the Koi Fair and Auction, fish, equipment and other things koi were auctioned off or sold, generating \$576.70 for the club. 18 club members renewed their dues, and 2 new members joined. Welcome Norm Walsh from Santa Rosa and the couple Joseph Scherer and Claire Maier from Oakland.

## More "Bill's Babbling"

> Here are a few links to some more interesting websites!

- <http://users.vcnet.com/trenshaw/asahi1.html> (this is the site with the cover page quote)
- <http://www.exoticwaterscapes.com/koi-facts.php> (this is the site from last months article on how long a koi can live)
- <http://www.pondviewkoi.com/koifacts.htm> (very informative!)
- [http://www.newenglandaquatics.com/The\\_Ecosystem/Koi.htm](http://www.newenglandaquatics.com/The_Ecosystem/Koi.htm) (a Landscapers webpage with a LOT of useful stuff)
- Doc Johnson's webpage: <http://www.koivet.com/koivet/>

Actually, most of the sites mentioned above were the first few "hits" of a Google search for "Koi Facts". There were actually over 1,000 hits on that subject alone. I am always amazed with the enormous amount of (actual!) useful information to be found on the web.

> For those of you interested in writing programs for the PC (sorry, Mac users!) I discovered a small program available from some Microsoft Software Engineers called "Small Basic". For those of us old enough to remember DOS (there are STILL a lot of us out there!) this Small Basic is as easy to use as Quick Basic, or QBasic. Check out: <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/devlabs/cc950524.aspx>. This is a Microsoft site and therefore safe to download from. Become a kid again and write some clever programs!

> One thing I have been interested in for a long time is a method to "automate" some of the things about our ponds. For instance, a 24/7 monitoring of the ph, chemistry (ammonia, nitrate?) of the water. If the pump(s) quit, alert us. If the water level is too low sound an alarm. My filter went dry a few years back due to algae clogging the mechanical filter. I lost 3 beautiful fish because of that. If I had an alarm I could have prevented the loss.

Let me know your ideas! Maybe we can come up with some valuable (fish-saving) devices. Hey, I'm an Engineer..., uh, geek.

# Selecting a young Showa

by Dr. Arthur Lembke

Selecting a young showa is one of the toughest young koi to choose. Showas go through many changes as they grow. Many times the black is very deep and only comes out as the fish grows. For this reason, if you see gray areas, it might not be poor quality white but deep black that will appear later.

Start selecting a young showa, as with other young koi, by looking at the head. The head should have all 3 colors (red, black and white), preferably in equal amounts. Best would be to have a good kohaku head with either a lightening stripe or a v-shape in black on the top of the head. Many showas don't develop this until later, so just try to pick one that has good red and white with some black coming out.

Next look for a good kohaku pattern on the body. It should be balanced and be placed all through the body. Then check to see if black is either present or coming up all over the body. Don't worry if the black is of poor quality at an early age. Black develops later in most good quality showas. It is also okay to have an orange-red at this point because the red gets better as the fish grows.

The next very important thing to look for is the pectoral fins. Ideally, almost all of the pectoral fins, except for the outermost tips, should be black. As the pectoral fins grow out, the black seems to stay the same and the white area on the outside seems to spread out. If the pectoral fins are all black at this time, it is often alright, as this too can grow out to have good showa fins. Fins that are not acceptable are fins with any red, all white fins, or fins with very little black at the base. All other fins should preferably be white, but some black is acceptable. Red is not acceptable in the fins.

Look for a good, strong body, large pectorals, and a disease free fish. One must know how to pick a good kohaku and a good shiro utsuri to choose a good showa. If you take all the black away on a showa you should have a good kohaku and if you take all the red away you should have a good shiro utsuri.

Another thing to look for in this particular fish is the percentage of the 3 colors to the total fish. The classic showas used to be about 40% black, 40% red, and 20% white. The modern showas, that many judges like, have equal amounts of all 3 colors.

As you can see, the showas are one of the most difficult koi to select at a young age because they change so much as they grow. It is this complexity that makes this one of my favorites of the varieties of koi.

## Showa Koi and Water Lily

Michael Emmett Creese



Please visit this link for 41 more beautiful paintings and prints of Koi by Michael Creese

<http://mysite.verizon.net/mike.creese/>

Then browse his links.

• Good advice!

## Be Prepared

by Ray Jordan, via Texas Koi & Fancy Goldfish Society Newsletter

The last few months have been harrowing for some of our members. One of the stimulating aspects of our hobby is the changing requirements of our ponds and fish. Fortunately, Martha & I have had a fairly relaxing and satisfying winter so far, pond wise. However, as I think back over the past several years, there have been challenges for us and our fish! Now is the time to get prepared for possible problems. Some of the things you might want to think about and be prepared for are as follows:

1. What if your only air pump stops working Depending on several factors such as fish density, you could begin losing fish in only a matter of hours. It is expensive to have spares for everything but an extra air pump is relatively cheap and really a necessity. If you are already using two pumps for your pond then you would still have a back up when one stops working.

2. What if you had to do a major water change: Do you keep enough dechlorinator on hand to change your entire pond's water if needed? Or, what if you forgot and left the water running during a regular water change and over-filled your pond with regular chlorinated tap water? Yes, it is a very good idea to use a water timer, etc. But, sooner or later you will lose track of time or forget and leave the house with the water running, or fall asleep. Believe me, I know. So always be prepared to make a major water change and have spare dechlorinator on hand.

3. What will you do when a fish gets sick: Do you keep a hospital tank ready to go so you can treat most problems successfully? You can buy a 150 gal. Rubbermaid tub, a small pump, filter, and heater for under \$200. This is really cheap insurance and can save you it's initial cost many times over.

4. Do you have written specific directions for anyone taking care of your pond while away from home: For example could they reset a tripped breaker for your ponds air or water pumps? Would they know what to do if a major problem occurred? Ask someone who knows your pond to act as a backup for your house sitter. Be sure they know how to clean your leaf traps, etc. Also, never ever make any significant changes to your pond just prior to leaving town.

5. Read and learn about diseases before they happen to your Fish. Attend the lectures. The new club library is also a great way to start. There are several excellent books and the fish disease video by Dr. Hansen is fantastic.

6. Do not hesitate to call someone: A primary objective of our club is to assist each other. Call someone and ask for help or advice.



## Enjoy!

- "Russia is claiming that it owns the North Pole. President Bush is furious and said, 'That's ridiculous - everyone knows the North Pole is owned by Santa.'" --Conan O'Brien
- "Expecting the world to treat you fairly because you are good is like expecting the bull not to charge because you are a vegetarian." --Dennis Wholey
- My Dad and I were talking the other night about love and marriage. He told me that he knew as early as their wedding what marriage to my Mom would be like. It seems the minister asked my Mom, "Do you take this man to be your husband." And she said, "I do." Then the minister asked my Dad, "Do you take this woman to be your wife," and my Mom said, "He does." (*read carefully!*)
- "President Bush moved to open up a third of all remote national forest lands to road building and logging. This is supposed to help more Americans visit. You know where you can see the giant redwoods at sequoia national park? At Home Depot." --Jay Leno

## Bumper Stickers -

- Nerds! 2x2 Ever!
- Men. Can't live with 'em, can't shoot 'em
- Sometimes I wake up Grouchy. Other times I let him sleep!
- If you think I'm a wimp, my wife will kick your butt!
- There are 3 kinds of people: Those who can count and those who can't.
- 4 out of 3 people have trouble with fractions.
- Out of my mind: Back in 5 minutes.
- My life is based on a true story.
- Hard work never killed anyone but WHY take the chance?
- Filthy Stinking Rich (2 out of 3 ain't bad)
- I'm gonna live even if it kills me!
- I got in a traffic jam on my road to riches.
- I didn't retire! I surrendered!
- Don't honk. Driver trying to sleep!
- I'm in no shape to exercise!
- Where the HECK is Easy Street?

Directions to: Mike and Lorie Robertson  
3731 Walnut Ave  
Concord Ca 94519  
(925-685-4690)

From the **San Francisco area** start out on I80-E.

Take the CA-24 E (Hayward-Stockton) exit onto I-580E and go ~1.7 mi.

Take the Berkeley/Walnut Creek exit onto CA-24E towards Walnut Creek and go ~ 13.2 mi.

Take the Sacramento/Concord LEFT exit for I-680N and go ~4.9 mi.

Take exit #50/Concord/Pittsburg and go ~0.7 mi.

Take the Concord/Clayton Road exit and go ~0.2 mi.

Bear Right on Clayton Road and go ~0.9 mi.

Turn Right on Farm Bureau Road and follow the common directions.

From the **South Bay**, start out on I680-N.

Take Exit #50/Concord/Pittsburg onto CA-242 N.

Take the Concord/Clayton Road exit and go ~0.2 mi.

Bear Right on Clayton Road and go ~0.9 mi.

Turn Right on Farm Bureau Road and follow the common directions.

From the **Brentwood area**, start on CA-4 W

Take the Willow Pass Road exit onto Willow Pass Road towards Bay Point and go ~0.5 mi

Make a U-turn at Evora Road onto Willow Pass Road and go ~2.6 mi.

Turn Left on Farm Bureau Road and follow the common directions.

**Common Directions:**

Turn Left onto Walnut Ave. and go ~0.2 mi.

Arrive at 3731 Walnut Ave., Concord, on the left.

**The Mission Statement of the SFBKAC -**

“ The San Francisco Bay Area Koi Club wants people to do it right the first time, helping to create a dream instead of a nightmare ”

To encourage, promote, and educate others in the art of keeping Koi and building ponds through quality guidance and care for show, breeding, aesthetics, sales, or just for pleasure.

To build a “ Koi keeping ” network among the members.

Projects:

Sponsor Koi shows and pond tours.

Study and research all areas of Nishikigoi, including

pond and water garden design, construction, development, and support.

Encourage and promote the development and presentation of show Koi.

*A subject that is distasteful but inevitable when keeping fish as our friends or pets. Read with the proper frame of mind. You will do what is right. Thank you, Doc Johnson. From 4/11/2008, koivet.com Bill*

## Euthanasia in fish - by Doc Johnson

**Abstract:** It is unsettled whether Koi and other fish can feel pain, or if they do, whether they subjectify the sensations quantitatively, or as "painful" - Therefore it would be preferable to assume they do, since that's very easy to accommodate.

As of April 2008 I believe small to medium fish that are easily handled should be anesthetized with a stout (double or triple) dose of anesthesia such as Oil of Cloves. Too much would cause changes in water quality that might even be severely irritating. When the fish is completely asleep the entire fish-water assembly is transferred to the freezer.

Large to very large fish would be anesthetized in a larger vat. When completely anesthetized, they may be elevated from the water and the skull above and between the eyes fractured and or opened with a fish baton available at bait shops. I've used a hammer on one very large fish. Alternatively the fish could be decapitated, but again, ONLY in a fully anesthetized condition.

### **Euthanasia in fish**

...Should be considered when a fish is intractably ill or deformed by disease beyond hope of salvation. It is believed that a fish feels no deep pain because they have no spinothalamic tract. Still if they are hopeless, euthanasia is a humane choice.

Ideally, hypothermia is the recommended way to dispatch a fish.

Place the fish in a modest amount of water so that it may recline upright and comfortably. It should not spend its last moments frantic for water. Place the bowl (or bag) in the freezer and close the door, providing darkness. As the poikilotherm (cold blooded animal) loses heat, the enzymes that sustain consciousness are inactivated and they lose sensation and finally all systems eventually arrest, painlessly and completely.

Alternatives would involve severing the head behind the gill covers.

For larger fish, a sharp blow (with hammer or other weighty object) to the head between the eyes is effective. Then the head is severed.

"My favorite method is the freezer method, with plenty enough water for the fish not to feel alarmed." ~ Doc Johnson

Many people add the step of sedating the fish in Oil of Cloves or Finquel and then, when the fish is totally unawares, they decapitate or freeze. When you see the fishes' reaction to the taste of these sedatives, you'll wonder if you soothed the fish at all. However, over-sedation before any euthanasia [or even as a form of euthanasia] procedure is endorsed by the AVMA.

There was a long discussion on the message board which contributed to my thought process on this. I'd like to copy my responses here for your consideration.

1) "Animejet" describes terminal Dropsy, so she's not a beast.. She said; ALL the scales were standing up, all over. That's "dropsy". So, folks, we're not talking about a survivable situation. If she said her fish simply had some sores and she was giving up, I'd be on the side of "Jeanbergeron".

2) JanetMermaid relayed that her fisheries biologist said: "freezer causes the animal a fair amount of pain" which could NOT be true of teleost fish. They have no LATERAL SPINOTHALAMIC TRACT. There was a misunderstanding. A more recent article (2/2/2004) demonstrated the fishes' inability to subjectify pain because it lacks the neocortex used by homonids to do so.

3) A good point was made: Freezing really large fish WOULD indeed be cruel from a logistical standpoint because of the physical realities of putting a twelve pound fish in the freezer. Good point. I didn't think of that. My advice on freezer euthanasia refers to the average six to eight inch household goldfish.

4) Cutting this same twelve pound fishes' head off (decapitation) would be equally cruel. Have you ever seen a timid neophyte chop the head off a mere \*two\* pound fish in a wet lab? Can you say "repetitive sawing action" - There's a good bit of bone in the area and the fish will suffer considerable anxiety.

5) Large fish = Use a fish Baton. Smack them on top of the head between the eyes as hard as you can and try and cave something in. I am sorry it's gross; but I am speaking from experience with women and men who close their eyes, turn their heads, and whack the fish timidly on the head expecting it to die, and they only piss it off.

6) Someone correctly noted that the fish does "flash" when parasitized, and it can and will avoid contact with stimuli which makes

it uncomfortable - there's a lot that the INFERIOR spinothalamic pathways can conduct - but not pain.

7) Another person mentioned, correctly that their fish are not unconscious at thirty something degrees during winter. The premise becomes that the fish in the freezer is also conscious at thirty something degrees while it dies. This would be true if the fish came from an icy pond and you tried to freeze it to death. If the fish were from your living room, it would be shut down with the first twenty degrees drop in water temperature. The reason for this is "iso-enzymes" - It has to do with how poikilotherms, (cold blooded critters) survive in hot, then frigid environments.

In warm weather, cold blooded fish use warm-water enzymes. As it gets cold, they produce and use more and more "iso-enzymes" which function in ice water. This is gradual and natural.

A rapid rise in temperature destabilizes the cold-water iso enzymes structure and the fish dies. The opposite is true of the warm weather poikilotherm enzyme system.

Briefly:

<http://www.life.uiuc.edu/bio104/L11Notes.html>

[Interaction-5-9.pdf](#)

Fish should be spared fear, and discomfort. And I am not AT ALL arguing that fish don't feel discomfort, or interpret anxious situations, because they do. In that assertion, "anti-anglers", and people who don't want their pet fish to suffer an agonizing death are correct.

I think the emphasis should be on speed. Interpret the condition of the fish, it's anxiety about being handled, and it's overall size when choosing an overdose, freezing, a fish baton, or decapitation. Whatever you do, do it without anxiety, discomfort, and do it agilely and swiftly.

I think differentiating (on behalf of the fish) between freezing or oil of cloves is semantic. Have you seen how the fish "dash and sputter" in Oil of Cloves? I don't think they like it, but it's for their own sake.

Again, whatever you do, do it for the fish - not for convenience. Make it as short, sharp and swift as you can think of.

Best regards  
Doc Johnson  
koivet.com