



# PONDERINGS

Official Newsletter of The Tucson Watergardeners (TTW)

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[www.tucsonwatergardeners.org](http://www.tucsonwatergardeners.org)



## A Bit About Feng Shui

*...Come rest with the Green*

*Dragon and White Tiger!*

Meandering, rather than straight paths? Killing energies? Goldfish to encourage wealth? Sounds fascinating, but how are these concepts all connected?

As a powerful life force, water can be introduced into our garden and landscape environments via a pond, fountain, water feature or waterfall. Learning to be sensitive to Feng Shui<sup>1</sup> (pronounced "fung shway") principles and applying them to our water gardens will intuitively create an improved sense of vibrant, auspicious and friendly energy. For example, water should flow toward the house, thereby inviting good energy Chi (pronounced "chee") into your home. The direction of flow from a water feature should never be away from your home.

Our March program will help us learn more about Feng Shui. The terms literally means the way of wind and water, and dates back thousands of years to the ancient Chinese art of positioning objects for harmony and balance in the environment.

<sup>1</sup> *Editor's Note:* The Pima County Public Library on-line resources and search service <http://www.tppl.org> is an excellent source for identifying books on Feng Shui, including Feng Shui for water gardens. However, in order to do a search, you must have a library card.

### PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**Board Meeting:** No March board meeting.

**General Meeting:** Thursday, March 22nd  
**7:30pm** @ Jr League of Tucson  
2099 E River Road

**Program:** "Feng Shui For Water Gardens"  
By **Eric Cuestas-Thompson** &  
**Michael Bamba** (Members)

**Refreshments:** Renee Shane-Boyd & Susan Kelley

**Door Prizes:** Share your "extra" plants & "stuff"



## Greetings From The President!

It was great to see such interest and participation for our first '07 meeting! Thank you, Pam Glenn, for giving us such an informative program. Let's keep up the momentum for each of our upcoming programs and special water gardening events. At this time, we have a 2007 roster with about 125 paying members, and will welcome newcomers and new members throughout this year!

We still have a couple of critical Committee Chair vacancies, namely, our Program Chair and our Native Species Chair. While some of our programs are set, a Program Chair is needed to insure contacts for our speakers, develop future programs and follow up on leads. The Native Species Chair recommends strategies for introducing native species to our ponds. Do I hear two volunteers for these important Chairs?

*Elizabeth Good*

**ATTENTION PONDERERS**  
**Fertilizer Spikes Galore! SALE!**  
At March Meeting - \$6.00 Per Pack  
Correct change is appreciated.

By the way, **TTW** received some great publicity in the Tucson Lifestyle Home & Garden March/April 2007 issue when the Rod Minami (member) Asian-inspired garden was featured in an article "Teahouse for Two."

*2007 Future Programs*

- April:** "Divide & Conquer Water Plants"  
By **Gail Barnhill** (Member)  
*...Watch the ruthless dismemberment of aquatic plant rhizomes before your very eyes!*
- May:** "Pool / Spa To Pond Conversions"  
By **Carl Ragel** (Member)  
*...Circulation strategies, plant shelf styles, aeration, biofiltration, and much more!*

*More Thoughts on Spring Clean Up*

If rocks were just "dumped" inside your pond's vessel or have shifted through the years, spring is the time to re-evaluate your situation. The key to keeping the anaerobic bacteria, as well as "pond pudding" minimized, is the flow of water around and through the rocks. Additional circulation can be added to keep the water moving. Another alternative is to remove the rock, check the liner for leaks and then coat with a protective layer of concrete, with exposed aggregate for slip resistance and color in the finish. Looks like dirt, but it's far easier to clean, walk, work and support plants on. Also, for pond clean outs, don't totally discount a pressure washer in the hands of a *careful* technician. It can make the job go far more quickly.

-Carl Ragel, Member Contributor



**Yerba Mansa** (*Anemopsis californica*)  
*(Photo courtesy of Rod Minami's (member) garden.)*

I'm a perennial herb, also known by other names such as Bearsweed, Mountain Balm, and Swamp Root. As part of the Saururaceae (Lizard's Tail Family), I thrive in bog areas, and also do quite well, potted, as a shallow marginal in ponds. I thrive in saline and alkaline soils that many plants find inhospitable. Visitors to your pond will probably make a statement something like, "I've never seen one of *THOSE* before!"

The Yerba mansa has spinach-like leaves. Its flowers resemble coneflowers and bloom from March through September. In the fall, the plant turns brick red. The people of the Southwest and Mexico have long known Yerba mansa for its herbal medicinal properties, including anti-inflammatory, antibacterial and antifungal effects.

Herbs in the water garden do well in terra cotta pots. Evaporation of water from the pot's sides actually cools the plant roots, so it can "breathe." Soak the pot before planting and positioning in the water garden.

Herbs in our desert water gardens? Yes, indeed!



## PROFILING MEMBERS PROJECTS

“Using high end inspirations, I like to come up with creative solutions, but do things economically,” explained **Elizabeth Good**, TTW President, regarding the design of her garden water features. Nestled between her home and its adjoining casita is a sun-drenched courtyard, with a formal, rectangular pond and its eye-catching wall fountain.

The fountainhead borrows across cultures, in this European influenced garden. When Elizabeth’s imagination blended with masks from Nogales, Mexico, and a houseguest who is an artist in mosaic work, the results are stunning. Both the pond and the wall fountain



share the same biofilter and a 1,000 gallon pumping infrastructure. In addition to the hand cast mask, swimming pool tiles, glass beads, and pieces of mirrors have been artfully blended together against a concrete block wall.

Good served as general contractor for the home that was completed in 2004, as well as

designing the courtyard and surrounding landscaping. Her home and gardens continue to be featured on several Tucson garden tours.

Her message? Understand your taste and budget and take your time planning. “Get lots of inspiration everywhere –from books, magazines, and other people’s gardens,” is Elizabeth’s best advice to those planning water gardens!



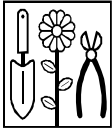
**Be Inspired!**

*Now  
is  
the  
time  
to  
plan*

*and build* that new water feature!

Define what you want to get from your project. Plan it. Seek a balance of sunlight and shade. If digging, avoid drains, cables, pipes, and trees. Some other pitfalls to avoid: making the pond too small, too shallow or too deep; buying a pump that’s too low in capacity; neglecting to use enough plants to help balance the pond; and, having either too many fish or not enough filtration.

Container water gardening can also be your inspiration. This type of water garden can be as simple as a pot sunk into the ground, or, more elaborate with larger waterproof pots or urns –even an old-fashioned bathtub could be converted to an interesting water garden. A pump, grid, water plants and pebbles –then just add water and enjoy!



## Watergardening Classifieds

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## New TTW Grant Awarded

**Goldfish To Good Homes.** We're active, healthy goldfish that would love to relocate to your water garden or pond. Please contact Ed or Sue at [boersswest@msn.com](mailto:boersswest@msn.com), or call 574-1679. Our bags are packed, now we just need new homes...the sooner, the better!

**Water Plant, Fish & Supplies Sales Position Available.** Carl Ragel's Natural Pools & Gardens is seeking an energetic, self-starting part-time to possible full-time person who knows the basics about watergardening, biological filtration and how ponds go together. Send a resume via fax to 323-6522 or drop by 2143 N. Country Club. Check us out at: [www.naturalpoolsandgardens.com](http://www.naturalpoolsandgardens.com)

**Looking for Helpful Hints.** Do you have those one or two helpful things or short cuts that you do to make your life easier as a water gardener? *Would you like to share with your fellow ponders?* Would love to hear from you! Call or email our Editor.

Check Out Our TTW Web Site:

[www.tucsonwatergardeners.org](http://www.tucsonwatergardeners.org)

**Attention Watergardeners! Your deadline is the 4<sup>th</sup> of each month!** If you need something or have something you want to sell or trade related to watergardening, this is the place to advertise. Best of all, it's free!

Don't go in arrears! 2007 dues are due!

See you at the meeting!

The Desert View High School was approved for \$1,280 as part of the ongoing TTW Grant Program at the TTW Board's November 2006 meeting. Desert View established its gardening club in August 2006, and is eager to add a water garden to its ongoing botanical garden project. In addition to assistance from TTW, Desert View is also in dialogue with the Drachman Institute, College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, The University of Arizona, to create plans for further development of the overall garden.

Other Tucson area schools receiving TTW grants include: Collier Elementary - \$936; Schumaker Elementary - \$870; and, Laguna Elementary - \$2,500.



## TTW Contacts

Here are other **TTW Committee Chairs**:

**Meeting Room Manager:** Board members  
**Refreshment Chair:** Rod Minami & JoAn Stolley  
**Information Chair:** Karen Christianson  
**Program Chair:** *VACANT*  
**Publicity Chair:** Susan Kelley  
**Public Garden Tour Chair:** Gail Barnhill  
**Co-Chair:** Gayna Scott  
**Watergarden Sale:** Mary Morse & Oscar Skinner  
**Storage Facility & Property:** Bill Hudson  
**Grants Committee:** Gayna Scott  
**Field Trips:** Casey Case  
**Bylaws:** Gail Barnhill  
**Native Species:** *VACANT*