

## ARE YOU RAISING MOSQUITOES IN YOUR BACKYARD?

Submitted by Orchard Nursery, Lafayette

It's never too late to take a look around your home and garden for standing water. West Nile Virus is still a concern where we live and we can all be good neighbors by making sure we're part of the solution. Most folks are amazed at what they find when they actually go outside and take a good look.

We tend to forget about things we tucked in on the side of the garage last winter, or gardening clogs or a wheelbarrow that we left behind the shed or a water bowl for Fido that fell behind the dog house. Here is a check list of places to look:

- Ponds, fountains, birdbaths
- Swimming Pools, spas
- Plastic Wading Pools
- Boats
- Animal Watering Bowls & Troughs
- All Kinds of Empty Containers
- Other Standing Water

### Mosquito Facts:

- All mosquitoes must have water to complete their life cycle.
- Only seven days are required to complete their life cycle (egg to adult) during warm weather.
- Mosquitoes do not develop in grass or shrubbery.
- Only female mosquitoes bite to obtain blood.
- Male mosquitoes feed only on plant juices.
- Female mosquitoes may live as long as three weeks during summer or many months over winter in order to lay eggs in spring.

According to the Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District, the owner of a piece of property on which a breeding source is located, is responsible for the abatement and prevention of its recurrence. The District can inform owners of mosquito breeding and assist them in working out a satisfactory correction. In extreme cases, where the owner does not accept responsibility to the public, the nuisance may be abated and a lien filed against the property as provided by the California State Health and Safety Code.

The good news is that mosquito fish, *Gambusia affinis*, are indispensable to mosquito control programs. They eat mosquito larvae as fast as they hatch. You can get mosquito fish for free from the Vector Control Office. Use them for stocking ponds, fountains, unused or out-of-order swimming pools, and animal water troughs. They require no feeding and all you have to do is protect them from garden sprays, chlorine or other chemicals used to clean the pond. The District stocks thousands of these fish in artificial lakes, reservoirs, waste water disposal lagoons, natural creeks, and drainage channels to eliminate the need for frequent spraying with an insecticide. So, be a good neighbor and take a stroll through your garden today!

Visit with representatives from Contra Costa Mosquito Vector Control: Saturday, July 21st, 11-1 pm. Orchard Nursery & Florist, 4010 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette; 925-284-4474  
Or you can contact them:  
Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control District  
155 Mason Circle; Concord, CA 94520; (925) 685-9301  
E-mail: [ccmvcd@ccmvcd.net](mailto:ccmvcd@ccmvcd.net)  
Information from the CCMVCV handout entitled "Are You Raising Mosquitoes in Your Backyard?"



Koi swim happily in the pond



### Lamorinda Puppy Raisers

Although both Sevilla and MacKinnon said they started volunteering with Guide Dogs for the Blind to work with the dogs, they now do it for the people as well. "It's all a big community," Sevilla said.

Phillips defines it as the power of partnership to improve quality of life. "We support a lifestyle of cooperation, collaboration and partnership."



Read online at: <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/html/read.html> (a pdf reader is required to view the pages.)

## On the Pond!

Orinda's first "Build a Pond Day," hosted by Garden Lights Landscape Development on May 12th, was a splashing success. There were 20 people in attendance; 4 Landscape Contractors, 4 Landscape Designers, 2 (do-it-yourself) homeowners, and 10 landscape laborers and foreman including 5 crew members from Garden Lights.

The seminar began at 9am with nothing more than a hole in the ground, a pile of dirt and lots and lots of rocks in various weights and sizes. Using the professional Aquascape pond equipment and installation system the day ended ahead of schedule at 4:20pm with water flowing down a triple falls stream and into a 13 by 9 foot pond.

Steve Lambert, owner of Garden Lights Landscape Development led the class in what he calls the fine art of water-scaping. "One of the reasons I wanted to hold this training day was to educate people on proper pond design and installation," said Lambert. "A good percentage of our pond business comes from frustrated homeowners who have a failing pond in need of repairs or rebuilding."

Participants received instruction on how to choose the best site for their water-feature and then how to design and layout their pond. Next the crew demonstrated how to properly size and layout the under layer and 45 millimeter pond liner. The liner had to be pushed into several fish tunnels that were dug into the sides of the pond and supported with 12-inch pipes. These tunnels, along with several rock shelves placed below the waterline, provide hiding places for fish that are being stalked by heron. They also serve as a place to cool off for both fish and turtles when the pond is in full sun. After the pond liner had been completely covered with rock and gravel the pond was filled while everyone enjoyed a lunch break in the Lambert's backyard garden.

Around 1:30 construction on the stream and waterfalls began. "I've been collecting special stones that have been kissed by water for about 5 years to one day add to my own water feature," said Lambert. "These rocks serve as the fall rocks and look very natural in the stream." Participants assisted with rock placement from pebble size stones to 700 pound boulders. They also helped place underwater lights in the pond and stream to illuminate the falls from behind. Two bronze Crain sculpture lights were wired and placed at the ponds edge.

When the waterfall was completed a 4000 gallon per-hour pump was installed which pulls the water across the pond then re-circulates it back up to the top of the waterfall.

After the switch was flipped to start the waterfall flowing down the stream and into the pond there were cheers and high fives all around.

The last step was to drain the pond back down to a level low enough to place water plants including; Waterlilies, water poppies, Marsh Marigolds and Louisiana Iris into pockets that were dug during the excavation phase. The water level was then

### ...continued from page 7

Thanks to organizations like Guide Dogs for the Blind and its volunteers, there are currently more than ten thousand people with vision loss enjoying the companionship and safety of a guide dog.

For more information on Guide Dogs for the Blind, how to volunteer, or to refer a family with blind children or adults interested in services available, visit [www.guidedogs.com](http://www.guidedogs.com).

returned to normal and four koi fish were given a new home.

"I've installed hundreds of ponds for clients and finally found a way to make the time to put one in my own yard by making it an educational opportunity for colleges and water garden enthusiasts," said Lambert. "Beside, I was tired of hearing ... when are we going to get a pond? from my wife and two kids."



Moving the special rocks needs a strong arm



Installing the 4000 gallon per-hour pump



The pond is done and the water is running down the triple falls stream

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