



Newsletter Spring 2011 (May)

Four ducks on a pond, / A grass-bank beyond, / A blue sky of spring, / White clouds on the wing: /  
What a little thing / To remember for years

William Allingham (Irish Poet 1824-1889)

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Do you have an area of interest you love to talk about, or find yourself answering a lot of questions about from friends or forum members, even total strangers? Please tell me about it - I'd love to include your article. And if writing's not your thing, let me interview you, or just give me the relevant facts and let me write the article. For this newsletter to be full of great information I need your expertise. I know nothing about discus breeding, setting up a fowlr tank, or CO2 dosing, to name only a few. Send your email to [newsletter@ovas.ca](mailto:newsletter@ovas.ca) or PM me (Anja) on the forum.

The Ottawa Valley Aquarium Society (OVAS) is a non-profit, educational, and recreational organization. It has four main objectives:

- to further the study of all forms of aquatic life,
- to promote interest, exchange ideas, and distribute information concerning the hobby,
- to encourage breeding and displaying of aquatic life,
- and to work toward the conservation of endangered species.

OVAS is a member of the Canadian Association Of Aquarium Clubs.

OVAS club meetings are held at **7pm on every 4th Monday** of the month. Everybody is welcome! Meetings take place at the **J.A. Dulude Arena - Mel Baker Hall**, located at **941 Clyde Avenue**.

Please note that there are no meetings in December (Xmas), July and August (summer break).

## **Editorial**

My husband tends to warily watch the multiplication of tanks in our small house, but, really? It's all his fault. A few years ago, he voiced the wish of having a pond in our backyard. He had no idea how quickly infections of MTS spread.

Last weekend we spring cleaned our pond; and considering the season and our April presentation about Koi, I thought I'd spread the bug and tell you a bit about how we built our serene little backyard oasis. Maybe I can pass on the delight and the deep, soul-resting peace we always find at our pond. That is, after the hauling of rocks, of course.

Spring also means the end of the executive year, elections, passing of torches saying goodbye to some and welcoming others willing to carry the club for the coming year. As for me, I'll have to take my bow; an increasing workload leaves me no time for my editorial activities in the foreseeable future. I hope whoever you elect will find your strong support and participation. Come out for the May meeting, make your voice heard, [run for office and/or cast your vote](#), and help to continue making this club the best it can be.

The May meeting will be the last one before our summer break. We are deeply involved in the planning of our annual BBQ on Sunday, June 26<sup>th</sup>. Rumor has it, there will be a live band this year as well as the pig roast y'all loved so much last year. Please check the calendar on page 11 and the forum for details. Oh, and don't forget to let us know if you are coming and how many will be in your party: <http://ovas.ca/index.php?topic=50163.0>

Happy fishkeeping,  
Anja Krebber

## **How We Built a Pond in Our Backyard**

The first decisions we had to make were about size, style and place. What would still 'look right' and in scale? How much maintenance could we/did we want to put up with? We have a stamp size backyard, part of which is taken up by our deck, so it was pretty clear from the beginning that it would be a small pond, roughly the size of a large bath tub.

We knew we wanted flowing water and a pond deep enough to overwinter fish, but didn't have the space for a riverbed, so a tiered pond with a small waterfall was our choice. Since our backyard is completely flat, we had to create a berm the waterfall could 'spring' from. This was also the easiest solution to get rid of the soil we dug out.

As for position, we wanted part shade, part sun. A compromise between having flowering plants and keeping algae in check. We also didn't want to have to fish out too many leaves in the fall, so opted for a position at the edge of an overhanging lilac bush, took out the day-glo spray can and marked our territory:



We removed the plants that were in the way, relocating the ones we wanted to keep to a temporary home, then started to dig in earnest. We sculpted out two shelves, trying to keep a natural look and different heights for plants, and dug the deepest part down to a little over two feet, since it would be partly filled back up with gravel, and two feet is the sweet spot

between giving your fish a survival chance and needing a pool permit from the city. At the same time we dug the hole for the skimmer.

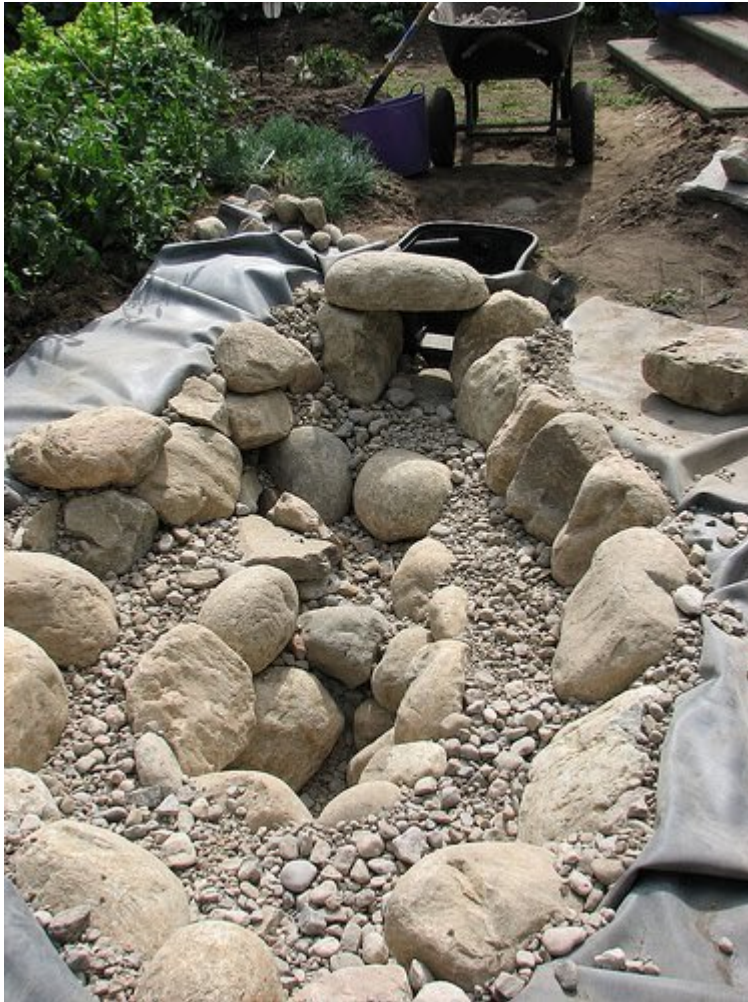
But we weren't done digging just yet. The skimmer still needed an overflow trench (not quite finished here and later filled with gravel - Remember to guide the overflow AWAY! from your foundations) and the feeder hose for the filter from which the waterfall would start (the thin line running between the pond edge and the tomato plants behind it):



Next came the placement of underlayment and liner:



When the pre-ordered three tons of boulders and gravel were dumped in our driveway, we squared our shoulders, put a couple of bottles in the fridge and did some heavy lifting. (You can see how you might want to invite some friends and neighbors for the digging and rock-hauling part. Try to entice them with the promise of a pond party later, or maybe some help with the building of their own pond.)



We hid a sturdy 3-way PVC pipe connector under the rocks to give our fish some escape route from potential predators (they love their hidey-hole).

We had ordered some granite slates and set to work on the waterfall with expanding foam and silicone. It's a bit tricky and takes some experimenting and rearranging to get the flow just right. It's worth taking your time.

We connected the pump, installed the net and brushes in the skimmer (lower right) and mats and bio balls in the filter (upper left), filled'er up and sat back to enjoy the show. I think we still tweaked the position of the rocks a few times after this picture, but at the end of the day, we were pretty darn proud of ourselves:



The main work was done. Remaining tasks included cutting excess liner (conservatively!), re-locating any ousted plants/planting the rim and the berm. If you look at the far rim, you'll see a gravelly gap between some rocks, where we made a 'beach' to break up the sheer sides. Frogs and insects love the sun spot, birds take their baths there, and it's a potential escape route for any unwary furries that might fall in the pond.

We added some underwater, marginal and floating plants, seeded with starter bacteria and, after about three weeks introduced our first three goldfish.

The pond holds about 250 gallons, so we won't go the Koi route, but we're happy with our three comets and a handful of fathead minnows that were added the second year. Be prepared for some predation. Garter snakes, raccoons, cats and others like to fish, and only one of our goldies is of the original three. So far, however, we've been lucky enough not to attract a heron. I'm keeping my fingers crossed and hope our yard is just too small and crowded to make it attractive.

We started our work at the end of the summer, so the plants didn't really fill in until the following year. But by now we have some established perennials in and around the pond, and I'll leave you with an impression of late last May:



Enjoy!

Picture of the Month - Congratulations to all winners!

### **February - no theme**



fischkopp with a shot of a young adult male Blue Diamond discus.

### **March - small tanks**



Anja Krebber (yours truly) with a full tank shot of a 5G planted tank housing assassin snails.

### **April - planted tanks**



Patrick S With a full tank shot of a 180G planted tropical community tank



## **Upcoming events**

### **May**

**16<sup>th</sup>**, Monday, 7pm – General Club Meeting  
OVAS Executive Elections

This is one of the best ways to give something back to the club. If you want to know more about a position, feel free to pm the person currently in that position to get more info.

All OVAS Members are eligible to run for a position and vote during the election. Voting is at the meeting only.

If you'd like to run for a position, you can declare your intention the forum, [here](#), add your real name, the position for which you have decided to run, and, if you so choose, a brief blurb as to why you would be a good candidate for that particular position.

Names in the above forum thread received by May 15th at 10:00 p.m. will be entered on the elections ballot, anyone declaring to run for a position after the deadline will be added manually to the ballot at the time of the election. Nominations will be accepted at the meeting.

Following are the positions and their roles.

The President shall:

- Act as an official representative and spokesperson for OVAS.
- Seek to ensure that the other Officers and the Executive carry out their duties, but this does not imply that the President must assume the duties of any Officers who are absent or derelict in their duties.
- Chair all Executive meetings and membership meetings, and serve as an ex-officio member of all OVAS committees.

The Vice-President shall:

- Assist the President in carrying out all of his or her duties.
- Act for the President, in the President's absence or at the request of the President.

The Treasurer shall:

- Keep a complete and accurate record of the financial transactions of OVAS and make these available to the Executive at all reasonable times.
- Prepare an annual financial statement for the approval of the Executive and the membership.
- Ensure the safekeeping of OVAS' financial assets.
- Attend to correspondence and records relating to OVAS' finances.

The Secretary shall:

- Ensure minutes of all Executive meetings, and Annual General Meetings, are prepared and distributed to the Executive.
- In collaboration with the President, attend to correspondence to and from OVAS and the OVAS Executive.
- Maintain a complete record of all minutes, correspondence, and business records of OVAS from the last seven years.

The Membership Chair Shall:

- Maintain a current and complete record of all members, and make it available to the Executive at all reasonable times.
- Collect membership fees and provide them to the Treasurer, with a reconciliation of the fees collected and the membership list.
- Promote membership in OVAS.

The Corporate and Public Affairs Chair shall:

- Help the Membership Chair increase the membership of OVAS
- Seek advertising revenue for OVAS
- Seek business contacts to promote OVAS and OVAS activities, and seek sponsorships and other tangible ways of increasing the financial soundness of OVAS.

The Program Chair shall:

- Develop and recommend to the Executive ideas for OVAS meetings.
- Develop contacts in the aquarium hobby, and hence develop a list of potential speakers for OVAS events.
- Make arrangements for the smooth running of OVAS meetings.

The Newsletter Editor shall:

- Be responsible for the regular publication of the OVAS newsletter.
- Edit the newsletter, using judgement as to the suitability of submitted articles.
- Be responsible for all equipment and supplies associated with the publication of the newsletter.

The Breeders/Aquatic Horticulturalist Awards Program Chair shall:

- Promote, provide, maintain, and make available to the General Membership and the Executive the society rules and standards for the Breeder Award Program (BAP) and Aquatic Horticulturalist Award Program (AHAP).
- Update and maintain accurate records of participation in the BAP/AHAP.
- Award points for captive reproduction of species and supporting materials as provided in the BAP/HAP rules.
- Advise the Executive and the General Membership of any certificates or memberships earned per season.

The Library Chair shall:

- Maintain the OVAS Library in good condition.
- Ensure that library requests are fulfilled at each General Meeting.

- Ensure that articles loaned from the library are returned in good condition and in a timely manner.
- Ensure that materials are loaned only to current OVAS members.
- Make periodic suggestions for further acquisitions for the library.
- Promote the use of the library's resources

The Auction Chair shall:

- Organize and run the monthly auctions and Giant auction.
- Provide appropriate documentation to the Treasurer at the close of each auction for audit purposes
- Maintain an accurate list of all current auction statistics

The Social Convener shall:

- Highlight and promote the social aspects of the society
- Organize the society's social events such as the Annual Barbeque
- Supply appropriate refreshments at the monthly meetings and other OVAS events

## June

**26<sup>th</sup>**, Sunday, 12pm - 2011 Summer BBQ  
[Vincent Massey Park, site "H"](#)

We will try to get the covered area just inside the park again at the end of the parking lot in case of inclement weather. We are planning a pig roast again this year with a "Pot Luck" for side dishes ie: salads, fruits, desserts. Pop, juice and water will be provided by OVAS

Weather permitting we will be having some LIVE entertainment.

As in past years this event is FREE for card holding club members and their families. Forum-only members are welcome to attend, but will have to pay \$5 per person and bring something for the "potluck"

Parking is \$7

Please let us know, how many of you will attend and what you plan to bring for the potluck, so we can plan for the proper size of roast and beverages.

You can find pictures from last years BBQ [on the forum](#).

Many thanks to our sponsors: 1000 Islands Aquaria, Aqua Valley, Big Al's Aquarium Services, Fish Tail Aquariums, Forty Fathoms, La Niche, Marinescape Aquarium, Ray's Marine Livestock & Aquatic Supplies