



# Charleston Showa Koi Club

## Last meeting...

Our last meeting was at the home of Bob and Gwen Lowe. We had a very exciting meeting. Robert showed us slides from Ray Abel's mud pull. There were lots of nice fish.

Unfortunately, Rod our Vice President resigned stating that he could not devote the time he wants to the club. Rod has been our Vice president for a year and a member of the club for several years.



We would like to Welcome Cindy Combs as our new Vice President. Cindy is an active KHA and we look forward to having her as our Vice President for the next year.



## Next Meeting...

Our next meeting will be at the home of Jim and Mary Leard February 8<sup>th</sup> at 2:00. Our pond tour committee meeting will be at 1:00. We have a great meeting planed. We will be discussing water quality. And don't forget you have to have a photo with measurements of your grow out fish to stay in the contest.



## Calendar of events...

Feb. 09 2:00 Jim and Mary Leard/

grow out photo

1:00 Pond tour meeting

Feb. 11-15 - AKCA seminar

April Butch and Lorna

May Trish and Kathy....Grow out

May 09 - last grow out photo

June 13 is the pond Tour..

June 14 Robert and Linda

September 18 - 20 Atlanta Show

October 11 Cindy and Charlie

October 16 - 18 NCKWS show in Cary, NC

Meeting times and places may be subject to change.

Dues are due, please pay Ralph at the next meeting or mail them to him.

# From the Pond

By Robert Lewis

One of the big problems people call us KHA's about is an ammonia spike with fish dying. What can the problem be?

These are the most common factors: Overstocking the pond, over feeding the fish, inadequate filtration on the pond.

1. Overstocking: too many fish in the pond = not enough filter.
2. Over feeding: more waste than the filter can handle = not enough filter.
3. Not enough filter: inadequate filtration system both mechanically and biologically leading to an ammonia spike that can kill the fish.

Seems like there isn't that much to it huh? Though inadequate filtration is the most common cause of most pond problems, in our area a pH crash is becoming the leading cause of many fish losses.

If you monitor your pond water for proper KH readings, it is nearly impossible for the pH to crash. Though the KH can be reduced by natural effects like acid rain, organic debris on the bottom of the pond and accumulation of fish waste, you should also be aware that if you are using city water (and some types of well water) in your pond, it contains a KH reading of only 1 or 2dh (degrees KH). With a low KH like this, it won't take much to cause a deadly pH crash. We would

like to see a much higher KH to prevent this from happening to your pond.

Now with all that said I know we have told you several times in the past that the fish can live in a pH of **almost** anything as long as it remains stable. The bacteria in your filter, however, cannot do their job of breaking down ammonia and nitrite adequately if the pH falls below 7.0. The bacteria either become dormant or even worse; die when the pH crashes to levels below 6.0. Without the help of the bacteria, the ammonia climbs to dangerous levels that will kill your fish, especially if the pH and KH are suddenly brought back to normal levels. In order to save your fish and the bacteria in your filter you must bring the pH and KH up, however, you **MUST** test how much ammonia is in the water **BEFORE** you begin. Ammonia becomes more toxic to the fish as the pH rises. You can kill your fish if you bring the pH up above 7.0 with ammonia levels testing high in the pond water. Before you bring the pH up, you **MUST** reduce the ammonia by adding a product like Amquel to the pond water. Once the ammonia level tests below .25ppm on your test kit, you can safely begin to raise the pH and KH using a buffering agent like common Baking Soda. After you bring the pH up, you **MUST** test the water daily for ammonia, pH and

KH until all of the levels return to normal. The pH is more stable if kept at a reading of 7.5– 8.0, the KH should be maintained at no lower than 5dh and the ammonia should eventually read zero. It takes 22 days for the bacteria in the filter to cycle (become biologically established). You will need to keep testing the water until the test results above are achieved.

So what does all of this mean? (1.) Test your water regularly (2.) Low KH will cause a pH crash (3.) the pH crash kills your biological filter and with no bacteria to break down the ammonia, the fish die.

Your fish are dependant on you to keep their environment safe to live in. Take 10 minutes out of your busy schedule once a week and perform a quick water test on your pond. Your fish AND your pocketbook will thank you!

## **Education in the club**

For those of you who are new, our club is a wealth of knowledge. If you have questions about your fish, pond, or plants, we have people that can answer just about any question you have. We also have a very good library with books on whatever subject matter you would like to read about. The thing is, we don't know what subject you would like to discuss or get educated on.

Chris, the owner of Tideline Aquatics and a long-time member of our club, can answer your questions on water quality, plants and just about anything pertaining to fish. Cindy Coombs is a KHA (Koi Health Advisor) and will be able to help you with most health

issues. Grant and Penny Patton are Koi Judges and would be very helpful if you have a question on Koi types, color, and body shape. They can also explain the process of showing your fish. Another great avenue to gain information is to attend Koi Shows and get to know members of other clubs. These are just a few of the knowledgeable people in our club. There are a lot of others that have been in the hobby for a long time that have good Koi husbandry. Talk to people -- networking is beneficial in all aspects of life.

Throughout the year we have had wet labs and discussions on different subjects. If there is a subject you would like the club to discuss, let me know and I'll do my best to put something together to discuss at a later meeting. If you just have a question, give one of us a call. Email me and let me know what you would like to hear discussed at our meetings. I could also put articles in the news letter. I'm pretty smart also, at least as far as the fish go. [Robe8lew@aol.com](mailto:Robe8lew@aol.com)  
Robert

## **Pond tour news...**

We are moving right along with the pond tour. We still can use all the volunteers we can get. If we don't get enough we will start our own little draft! (Ha Ha)

If you know anyone who needs an ad in the booklet please see Trish.

If you know anyone who wants there pond on tour please see Butch and Lorna.

And if anyone has a few hours to help please see Beth.

Thanks for all your help!