



# HOME & GARDEN

## Water Gardening is an Ancient Art

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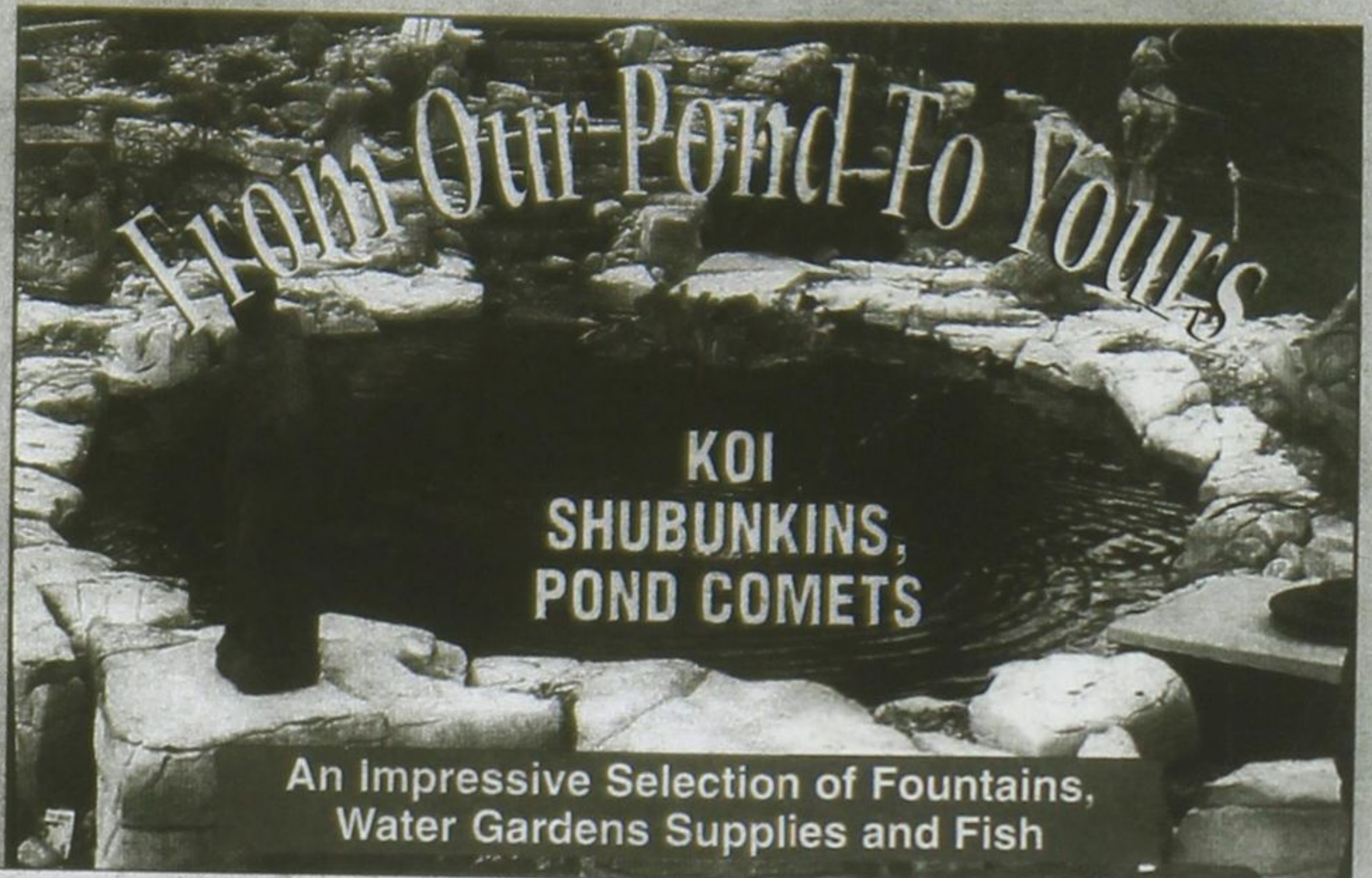
The fascination with water and aquatic plants dates back to ancient civilizations. One of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World was the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, built around 600BC. Buddhists believed that Buddha was born in the heart of Nelumbo, the Lotus. The Egyptians and Greeks covered their tomb walls with drawings of water lily, lotus and papyrus. Thus, with roots like that, the recent phenomenal growth in water gardening is perhaps not all that surprising. So what is it about water gardening that is so appealing?

Water gardens are an excellent way to bring nature to the backyard - birds, fish, frogs. They provide an interesting focal point in an otherwise traditional landscape. Running water is known to be soothing and relaxing. Aquatic plants are unique. For example, tropical lilies are colourful and fragrant, and many bloom at night when you can sit and enjoy them. Water gardens come in all sizes - from small indoor fountains and container water gardens, to large outdoor ponds complete with waterfalls and babbling brooks. And their

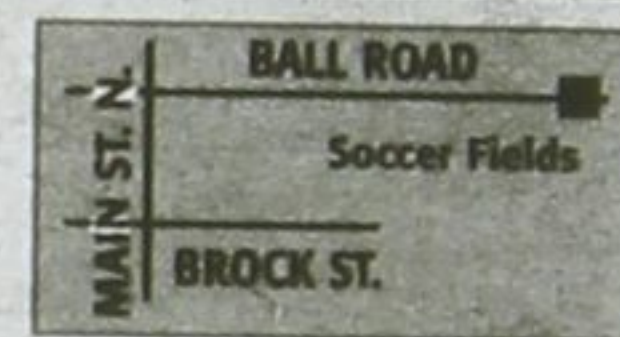
greatest appeal is probably the fact that when properly designed and installed, water gardens are low maintenance.

Water garden maintenance is easy when all the ingredients are in place to create a naturally balanced ecosystem. Approximately 65 per cent of the pond surface should be covered with floating plants. These plants reduce the amount of light penetrating the water and inhibit the growth of algae. Ideal floating plants are water hyacinth, lettuce, fairy moss and duckweed, plus the large leaves of lilies. Submerged oxygenating plants such as hornwort and elodea absorb nutrients that would otherwise feed algae and release oxygen which in turn sustains beneficial bacteria and fish. Biological filters provide surfaces on which bacteria grow. The bacteria not only deplete the food source for algae but also break down fish waste and other organic matter.

So if you want to add something 'splasy' to your garden, think water and take the plunge.



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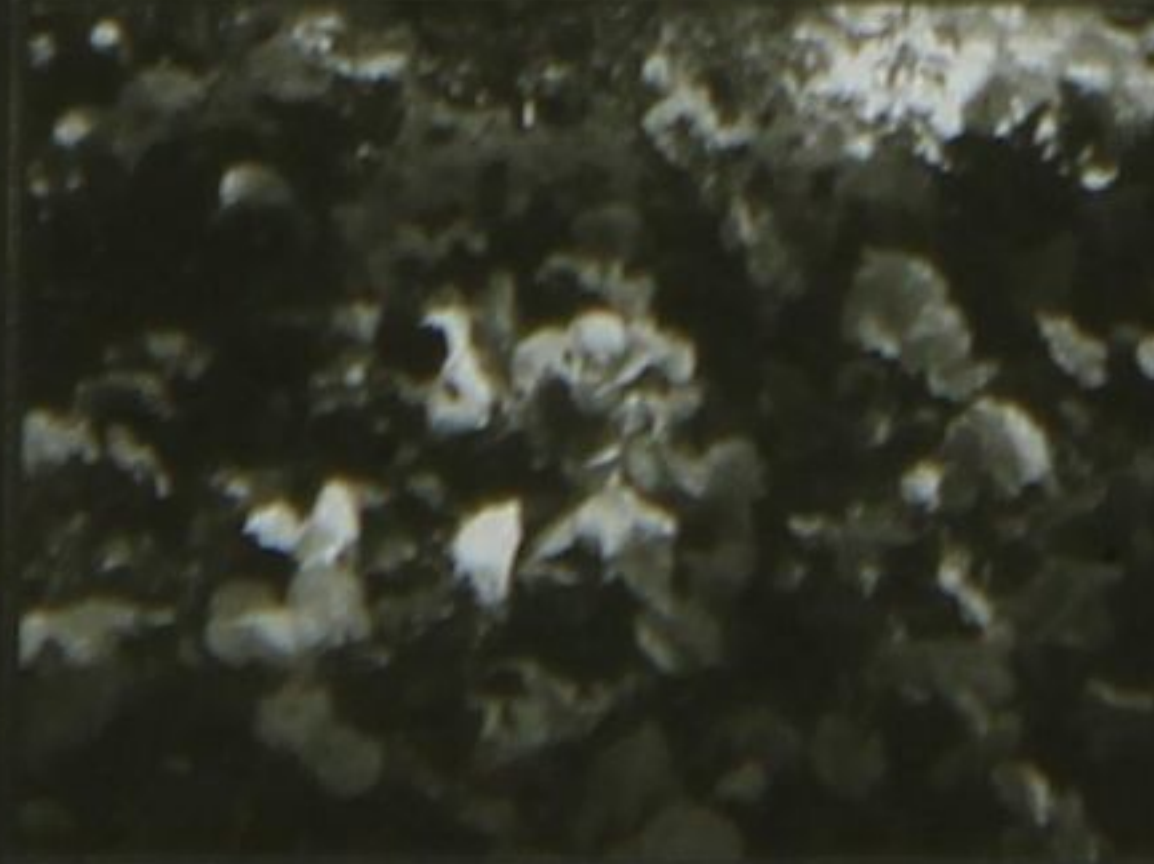
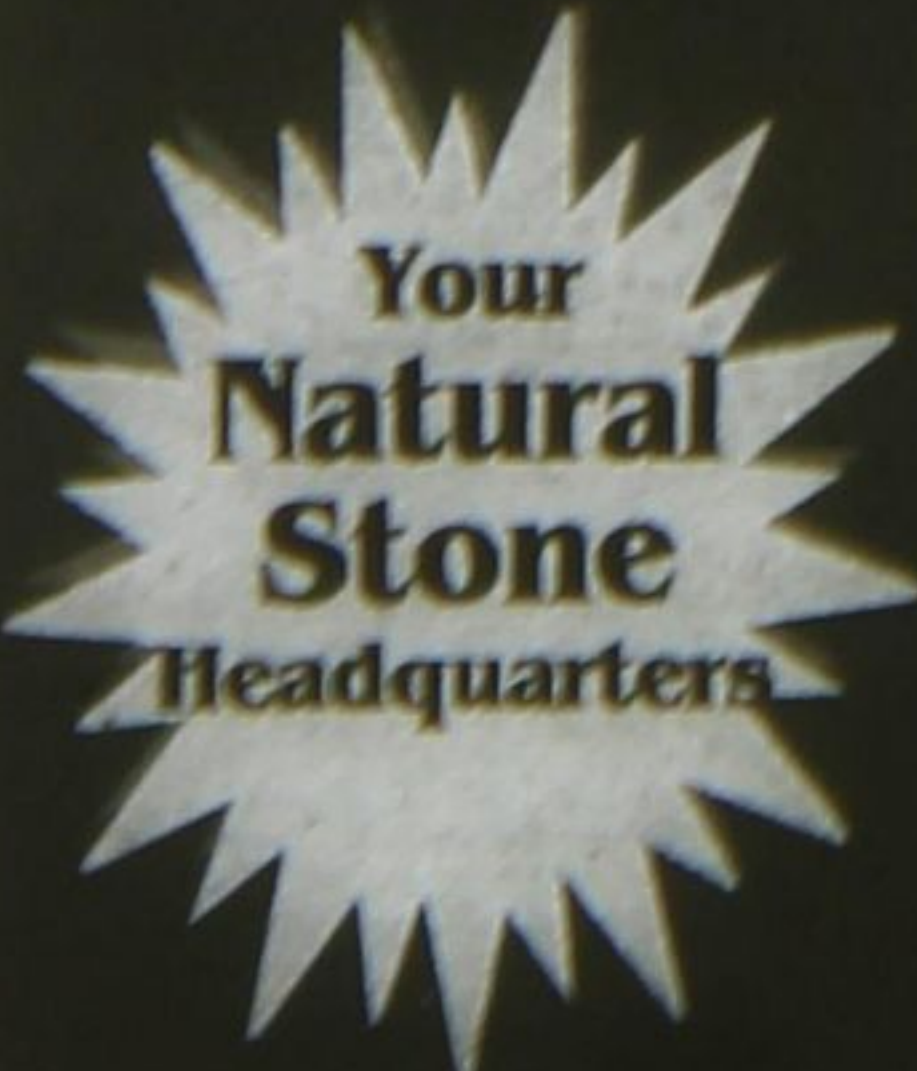


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