

# The Prairieland Splash

**MAY 11 at 9:00 a.m.**  
**Kull Scape, East Peoria**

**Speaker Doug Holmes**

## Directions

From E. Peoria head NE on North Main Street toward Washington Street and turn Right on E. Camp. Continue straight to stay on Washington Street for 3.2 miles until you arrive at 4200 E. Washington Street and Kull Scape.

Prairieland Pond &  
Koi Society

May 2019 Volume 4



**You can pay your dues anytime now,  
they are still only \$20**

**Please give cash/check to our treasurer:**

**or send to:** Letriana Cantrell

311 Arnold Road

East Peoria, IL 61611

**The Pond Tour is on!  
Saturday, July 13**

# Beyond Koi Pellets: Expanding your koi's diet for nutrition and fun

By Toni Jacobs Lopez

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Feeding koi is probably one of the most enjoyable things to do in our hobby. It's always an amazing sight to see your swimming jewels rushing to greet you at the edge of the pond with their mouths wide open, begging for a handful of food. But what are we providing our precious pets? As you may have already noticed, koi will eat almost anything that you offer them. But feeding them poor-quality food will not fulfill their nutritional requirements, so it is important to invest in a good-quality basic pellet food for optimal development, long-term health and good water quality. With that basic premise established, I would like to introduce you to a wide variety of other foods that we can provide our koi in addition to the regular pellet foods. As the majority of you already know, koi are omnivores, meaning they eat both plant and animal foods. So when the water temperature in our ponds approaches 18 degrees Celsius (or 65 degrees Fahrenheit) we can start providing our koi some more interesting foods!

Pasta, natural insects and crustaceans (live, dried or frozen), whole wheat bread, honey and a wide variety of fruits and vegetables will enhance your koi's diet and have them churning the water in excitement!

## Pasta, Rice and Hard-Boiled Eggs

Pasta, rice (preferably whole grain) and hard-boiled eggs are a delicious, healthy treat for your koi and a welcome change from the regular pellet food. Foods like these are rich in vitamins, minerals, trace elements, high body proteins and carbohydrates.

Don't provide your koi raw rice and pasta, but boil them first without the use of salt.

After cooking the rice or pasta, rinse the starch off and you can preserve it in the refrigerator for a couple of days. To make it more attractive to the koi you can add a little bit of honey to the rice or pasta as well. As for hard-boiled eggs, just cut these into pieces and give them to your koi.

## Natural Insects and Crustaceans (Live, Dried or Frozen)

Live insects, little fish and crustaceans are the closest thing we can provide koi to what they eat in nature. Throughout the day, koi seek small amounts of food such as aquatic animals, aquatic insects and sometimes small fish. This natural situation is hard to mimic in our ponds, but we can provide the koi some of these natural foods

ourselves. A few of the natural insects, crustaceans and aquatic creatures that we can give our koi include mealworms, silkworms, shrimp, earthworms, gammarus, daphnia, tubifex worms, bloodworms, black mosquito larvae, tadpoles, clams and wax moth larvae. All of these foods are very high in natural protein, oils, minerals and vitamins, which help to build a koi's natural defense against disease and improve their digestion. They are usually available alive, dried and frozen. It's important to note that maggots are not suitable to provide as koi food! Waste created by rotting meat inside the maggots can bring disease-causing bacteria into the koi, along with all its negative consequences.

## Don't Catch It Yourself!

Another very important thing to note is that you should never catch live food in streams or lakes! Some aquatic animals can be harmful because they carry bacteria and viruses. If you want to provide your koi with live food, the safest method is to breed these animals yourself or buy them in a store.

## Whole Wheat Bread and Oatmeal Flakes

Oatmeal flakes and whole wheat bread are real delicacies for our koi. They love bread so much that they would gladly eat the entire loaf if you gave it to them! When large koi are present in the pond, their feeding can create quite a spectacle — especially when you put honey on the bread. Some koi can bring almost their entire bodies above the water to get a piece of bread with honey. Why give your koi whole wheat bread? Simple: because it is more healthy than white bread! In whole wheat bread, the whole grain is used, so it still contains most of the vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber. White bread, in contrast, has little of that nutrition, and it has the tendency to expand more in the stomachs of the koi than whole wheat bread does.

## Honey

As I mentioned earlier, mixing honey with pasta or spreading it onto a slice of bread is a great technique. This is because honey is a tasty and incredibly healthy product — both for humans and for animals! It contains a high amount of enzymes, antioxidants, minerals, trace elements and vitamins. Raw, unprocessed, locally made honey is unpasteurized and has antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, antifungal and antiseptic properties. Keep in mind that we are not talking about the clear, amber-colored honey from the grocery store, but rather the milky or cloudy honey from a health food store or local source. If you haven't tried it, I encourage you to do so. Both you and your koi will love it!

## Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are a rich food source full of different fibers, vitamins, trace elements and antioxidants. These substances are very important for your koi's diet and

help keep your koi healthy, vital and happy. Koi love fresh fruits and vegetables such as lettuce and oranges. They enjoy pulling the floating leaves off a head of lettuce and chasing orange pieces around the surface of the water! In fact, feeding your koi oranges can be just as much fun for you as it is for them! Just cut the oranges into quarters and put them in the pond with the skin still attached. The koi will jump for joy, enthusiastically pulling pieces of flesh off the peel. As a bonus, both lettuce and oranges are valuable sources of vitamin C, which is essential for growth, repair of tissues and reproduction. Other fruits and vegetables that you can provide your koi include beans, peas, carrots, cabbage, radish, garlic, leeks, broccoli, cauliflower, endive, peppers, tomatoes, pineapple, melons, grapefruit, cantaloupe, grapes, apples, pears, mandarins, berries, kiwi, strawberries, bananas and others. Beans, peas and corn are less suitable for the koi because they are very hard to digest. If you want to feed your koi these vegetables anyway, it's advisable to cook them first.

## Complements, Not Replacements

Remember that all the foods we have discussed above are not regular basic koi food ... they should be seen as tasty additions to, rather than replacements for, the koi's normal diet. When feeding your koi these unique foods, alternate the variety and provide it in small amounts rather than every day. Good and healthy koi keeping starts with a balanced, varied, nutritious diet and the right feeding habits. And healthy koi make for happy owners. So buy some fresh new foods, start expanding your koi's diet and have fun!

You are not going to want to miss this meeting. Doug Holmes is the Herpetologist from Peoria Zoo. He has a wonderful presentation on frogs and toads. I've seen it and it is awesome!



Todd Bong and his pond

Rick and Diana Kolowski hosted the PKPS meeting on April 13. 29 members were present. Thanks to Rick and Diana for being willing to have us this early in the season. They are in the process of moving their original pond closer to their house. Their original pond was dug by hand and completed with do it yourself equipment. Because they really love their pond, they asked for club member suggestions to help make their new pond better.

Anthony Schade from Bloomtastic was our 2nd speaker. He said that since we are always getting new ideas to try with our ponds, we should not make the features too permanent. He then talked about different filter material. - lava rock, pvc ribbon and UV lights. He also said that if the pond bacteria level is correct then algae will not be able to grow. Copper based products will kill algae but also kill invertebrates such as snails and dragonfly larvae. He then spoke about the value of floating plants such as water hyacinth and water lettuce for water quality.

Jeanne reminded members the newsletter will have a classified ad column for items to sell, trade or give away. 10% of every sale should be given to the club.

Now is the time to add bacteria. Koi Medzime is Jeanne's preferred treatment for sores on Koi but if added to the water regularly it will protect fish and won't harm the pond.

After door prize and raffle drawings the Kolowski's gave a tour of their yard's 2 pond sites.

The next meeting will be May 11 at Kuhlscape.

Margy Simmons, Sec.

## PKPS 2019 MEETING SCHEDULES

### GENERAL MEETINGS

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
May 11	Kull Scape, East Peoria	Doug Holmes
June 8	Don Amdahl, Washington	Don Amdahl
July 13	Pond Tour	-----
August 10	Allen Kruger, possibly Todd Bong	Allen and Todd
September 14	Jim & Margy Simmons, Peoria	TBA
October 12	ICC	Genny Gibbs
November 9	Banquet	-----

### BOARD MEETINGS

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
May 25	TBA
June 22	Greg and Letriana Cantrell
July 27	Deb Palmquist
August 23	Rick Moreland
September 28	Lisa Carter
October 26	Jeannie Clarke
November 23	Rick Moreland



# Prairieland Koi and Pond Society

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