

August 2023–September 2023

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AKA Reporter





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AKA Reporter



August 2023–September 2023

Administrative members and contact details _____	2
President's Report <i>by Ian Andrews</i> _____	3
Meeting Notices and Agendas, News, New Members, Auction Dates _____	4–5
AKA Mid Northern Region <i>by Gavan Gribble</i> _____	6
Koi Society of Western Australia Annual Show 2023 <i>by Kate McGill-Andrews</i> _____	9
Naming varieties—the importance of consistency <i>by Kate McGill-Andrews</i> _____	18

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Our cover this month: A superb if not unusually presented Goshiki.

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President's Report



Winter seems to be getting longer and perhaps a tad colder? Our koi have had quite a few days now with their pond water sitting at 10°C. Usually they become fairly inactive when the water gets so cold and sit on the bottom lined up. For us this is a good time

to actually try to count the number of koi in our collection—always a point of debate as most koi hobbyists have far too many koi in their ponds. Thankfully our numbers currently suggest we are probably not too crowded with one koi for every two thousand litres.

I'd like to offer AKA's congratulations to all the Koi Society of Western Australia's exhibitors and members on their success of the recent koi show that Kate and I attended—especially to Allan Bennett and Phong Ta for once again taking out the top trophies. Des Howlett and his team did a sterling job running their show. (See Kate's full report in this *AKA Reporter*).

Planning for the AKA's 23rd Annual Young Koi Show is underway, trying to use the Rider's Retreat Room at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre where there are BBQ facilities and a rather pleasant outlook. The only date available is Sunday 22 October. We have the Japanese-style clear show bags pictured above and could consider allowing all 18 varieties this year in Class 2 (200 mm - 299 mm) and Class 3 (300 mm - 399 mm). Start would be at 10.00 am, judging at 10.45 am, followed by a BBQ lunch and departure, say 2.30 pm. A final decision on holding the show will be made at our next meeting night on Monday 14 August.

A suggestion at our last meeting night was to look at the various parasites that can affect the health of our koi. Therefore, over the next couple of regular meeting nights we plan to focus on the most common koi parasites we are likely to encounter, and the best effective treatments. All koi keepers should be aware of the correct identification of these bugs and should have the correct products available to best treat them.

The winter doldrums are always a good time to start to plan what koi you would like to breed this year. I know Kate and I have been discussing it and



AKA will use these Japanese clear bags at our 23rd Young Koi Show to display Class 2 and Class 3 koi.

maybe it's time to look at Yamabuki ogons again, as it was back in 2018 that we last bred them. We have kept four, now very large ogons, and sadly do not have any small youngsters coming through. I seem to think our recent koi auctions have been light on with young Yamabuki ogons as well? Also, Kohaku is another option as we do not have enough youngsters with potential either.

See you at the August meeting night.

Yours in koi
Ian Andrews, President, AKA ■

AKA News and Events

Meetings of the AKA

Our monthly meetings are held at the Georges Hall Community Centre. Meetings are on the second Monday of each month with the exception of December when no meeting takes place. Details of all our meetings are also on AKA's Facebook page.

Remember all members and visitors must register, preferably using the QR code via the Service NSW app, as AKA is now a registered COVID Safety Plan business. ■

Meeting of the AKA, Monday 14 August 2023

The June meeting of the AKA will be on Monday 14 August 2023 at the Georges Hall Community Centre 188 Birdwood Rd, Georges Hall, 7.30 pm.

1. Welcome to members and guests
2. Apologies
3. Confirmation of minutes of previous monthly general meeting.
4. Raffle
5. Reports
6. General Business
7. Guest speaker.
8. Raffle Draw ■

Meeting of the AKA, Monday 11 September 2023

The July meeting of the AKA will be on Monday 11 September 2023 at the Georges Hall Community Centre 188 Birdwood Rd, Georges Hall, 7.30 pm.

1. Welcome to members and guests
2. Apologies
3. Confirmation of minutes of previous monthly general meeting.
4. Raffle
5. Reports
6. General Business
7. Guest speaker.
8. Raffle Draw ■

Koi food

It is hoped that we can continue to provide as necessary any koi food requirements from our four outlets. We will require payment upfront or similar, and with no direct contact—our suppliers (see advertisement in this magazine) can arrange for food orders to be left out ready for pick up, having nil face-to-face contact.

Have you tried AKA's Sinking Koi Pellets yet? Seems that many of our more experienced koi keepers have given this food a big tick and are getting great results feeding it to their koi. It's best to feed one lot of floating and next feed give them the sinking. Give it a try and I'm sure you will see the improvements in your koi. ■

New members

New members are always assured of a friendly welcome when attending the AKA's monthly meetings. Help and advice is available if required and our Supply Officers can provide you with koi food and accessories at favourable prices. Call our membership officer (details on page 2). ■

*New outlet for
AKA Supplies*

We have a new outlet for
AKA Supplies. Thanks to Heinz
Zimmerman (0428 478 594) for
establishing the Bass Hill location
for koi food, etc.

AKA Auction Dates



Held at Fairfield City Showground (bottom of markets) Commencing at 10.00 am. Quality fish at reasonable prices! Food and refreshments available. Fish food and other fish keeping supplies also available.



Bankstown City
NSW Chapter
Zen Nippon Airinkai

Saturday
5th August 2023

Saturday
30th September 2023

Saturday
18th November 2023



AKA Annual Membership was due 1 July.

*Please pay to
Australian Koi Association,
NAB BSB 082 343
A/C 8525 90813.
Please always enter your
name on the transaction.*

KSA Auction Dates

Saturday 2nd September 2023
Saturday 28th October 2023 (Cumberland Branch)
Saturday 9th December 2023

Current Covid-19 restrictions as administered by Fairfield Council means that all these dates are tentative and will be confirmed or cancelled at a date closer to the auction date.
New venue for KSA auctions is Fairfield City Showground (bottom of markets), Smithfield Road, Prairiewood

AKA Mid Northern Region Chairman's Report



*Gavan Gribble
Chairman Mid North
Chapter.*



Pic 1: The working table prepared in advance.

Treating a sick koi

Some months ago, a member advised us of one of their koi with what was apparently a bruised head and flank, perhaps caused by some apparatus within the pond and/or during a feeding turmoil.

So, the koi was treated accordingly, and the problem was thought to be resolved, but the head damage persisted, necessitating further treatment.

Enter our 'technical officer' with advice and a treatment regime. Peter Colgan, the member and I, agreed to the way the koi needed to be treated, and the risks associated with it were assessed and discussed and treatment commenced.

If you look at photos pre-treatment, there is a clear and perhaps complex wound on the koi's head. Was it *Aeromonas*? No—not likely to be so—it appeared to be an ulcer or even a tumour of some kind, but it certainly needed treatment.

Step 1

Pictures 1 and 2 show preparation, medication used and apparatus required (nets, towels, cotton buds, etc.).

Step 2

Fish caught and the wound area closely inspected (see Pics 3 and 4) together with the previous wound site, the gills, mouth and the fish in general.

Step 3

We prepared an operating table, washed our hands, etc., and the anaesthetic medication was



Pic 2: Products used for the treatment.

measured into the holding bin.

The fish was anaesthetised in 30 litres of pond water with 60 drops of 100% clove oil (two drops per litre); the fish was regularly checked to ensure safety and readiness to proceed.

The wound and infection site

Pictures 5 and 6 show the wound being painted with an application of hydrogen peroxide.

This is done to remove as much as possible of the mucus/slime covering the wound site, so that further treatment will directly impact the wound. This is an important step.

After the application and a few moments rest for the fish, the hydrogen peroxide has frothed and can be carefully but thoroughly wiped away



Pics 3 and 4 show the ulcer before treatment.



Pics 5 and 6 : The wound is painted with hydrogen peroxide.



Pics 7 and 8 show the wound being treated with Mercurochrome.

with a soft tissue to expose the area to be treated.

Photos 7 and 8 show the wound being treated with Mercurochrome via a cotton bud—as sterile/clean as possible.

Note that it is critical at this stage, and prior to treating with any chemical, that the site is made as dry as possible to ensure that chemicals will not leak into the fish's eyes, gills or other

sensitive body parts.

Given that this was not necessarily an invasive treatment, such as surgery, the koi was only lightly sedated; in these circumstances it is better to have help controlling the fish's body in case of involuntary movement.

Also, note that the hydrogen peroxide is not the treating agent, the Mercurochrome is.



Picture 10: The koi being held in free-flowing heavily oxygenated water to ensure recovery

Once treated, the area was coated with an application of Friars Balsam (Benzoin Tincture). The area was then dried after application (by being blown dry—not patted dry as this could remove the balm), to ensure that the treatment chemicals are not immediately washed off once the fish is returned to the pond to recover.

Picture 10 shows the koi being held in free-flowing heavily-oxygenated water to ensure recovery and safe return to the pond. The wound assessment was such that it was not deemed to be a risk in being returned to the pond with other fish.

It's too soon to know how effective the treatment was in the long term, but the fish is behaving normally, the wound seems to be healing, and yes, there are other sites that need further inspection.

Concerns

In our collective opinion this was not *Aeromonas* and likely only to be either an ulceration, a wound or perhaps a tumour as the fish seemed to be showing similar growths/lesions/indications of bruising on other parts of its body. Certainly nothing typical of an *Aeromonas* wound.

Will it ease during seasonal changes or water temperature changes? Not sure.

Can a diet change ease the problem? Unlikely.



Picture 11: The fish a week or so after treatment.

The koi was re-housed and pond obstructions were removed.

The problem was not considered to be contagious, however no swabs or samples were taken. We adopted a wait-and-see strategy with regular visits to confirm the restorative approach.

Picture 11 shows the fish a week or so since treatment and writing this article, and photo 10 shows a vastly improved fish that continues to progress in health. ■

Koi Society of Western Australia Annual Show 2023

Kate McGill-Andrews

This year was a particularly difficult one for securing international judges—as we found for the Sydney Koi Show—it took months and many requests, although Ian finally managed to appoint a team. Sadly, none of the Sydney Koi Show judges were able to extend their visits to Australia to also judge the Western Australia show held a week earlier than the one in Sydney. This left WA in quite a quandary, as no other international judges had been available.

I had been 'on-call' for quite some time as a possible stand-in—not thought to be ideal as I judged the show only two years ago and possible recognition of the koi is seen by some as likely to result in favouritism. In reality, no judge worth their salt judges on 'past performance' of any koi, you judge 'on the day presentation' regardless of whether you have seen any of the fish previously. So when the call came, I was very happy to accept the engagement; Ian and I are always delighted to be able to catch up with good friends in WA. The timing, as you might imagine, was difficult, with the Sydney Koi Show only a week away, but as it turned out, the break from all the preparation did us both good I think, and caused no insurmountable problems.

It was to be quite a short visit, flying to Perth on Saturday morning and back to Sydney on Tuesday morning. Unfortunately, our trip did not get off to a great start! As usual, we arrived at the airport a couple of hours early for a 7.00 am flight

only to find it had been cancelled (Ian thought it likely that there had not been sufficient passengers to make the flight financially worthwhile). We just looked at each other in horror—we really didn't need this at 5.00 am! Very fortunately, as it turned out—after the heart failure episode—we had been re-booked on a flight to Melbourne at 6.30 am with a connection to Perth. Of course, by the time we discovered all this, time had passed and I was very seriously worried about our luggage arriving in Perth with us. However, I talked to the airport staff and a priority label was attached to our suitcase. Yes! It did arrive with us. Disaster averted. We reached Perth about an hour later than originally scheduled, in the end, so not much time lost, just a lot of unwanted hassle!

We were met by the acting President, Jun Guo, who drove us to our hotel for the weekend, the Quality Resort, Sorrento Beach, a lovely spot right on the coast just south of the famous



(2) Hillarys nighttime dining.



(1) Sunset in WA.



(3) Show layout.



(5) Admin Tent.



(4) Showtime.



(6) Another view of the show site.



(7) Ryan Witney running the results paperwork.

Hillarys Boat Yard where Jun accompanied us after booking in, for a bite to eat and a chat. Hillarys is a very interesting place, full of cafes, shops and galleries as well as being a real boat yard housing some magnificent yachts (photos 1, 2). We had some spare time after this to have a bit of a rest before dinner—it had been a very long day already, especially with such a stressful start. Dinner was held at Ishka restaurant at Hillary's Boat Yard, a lovely spot for the evening.

Sunday morning dawned clear (no rain forecast that day) but cloudy and after breakfast Ian and I made our own way to the new show venue at Wanneroo Show Grounds, a very nice

open park where the bins had been set up in a fairly level grass field as a square (photos 3–8). Only one problem with such an open site—the wind! Straight off the ocean (not far away), it was incredibly cold, especially as the sky was overcast until after 11.00 am that morning. I have to admit, I was frozen, early on, hardly able to scribble decisions on my paperwork with blue and almost numb fingers. Not a pleasant experience. I could have done with a fleece-lined judging jacket as well as my shirt and jersey. I have promised myself mittens too—too difficult to write with full gloves on. However, it is all part of the judging experience—not the first time, and



(8) Team WA and Judges.



**(9) Grand Champion 69 cm
KGR Kohaku bred and owned
by Allan Bennett.**



**(11) Supreme A and Jumbo
Champion 70 cm Showa
owned by Todd Bennett.**



**(12) Supreme B Champion
76 cm Karashigoi owned by
Phong Ta.**

probably not the last! UK shows used to be much the same, even in summer and judging the ZNA International in Niigata in November is always an ordeal.

My judging team for the show included Spencer Tan, from Singapore, currently doing veterinary training in Perth, plus one trainee, Luke Bray. Our brief was to select Grand Champion, Supreme A and B (best remaining Go-

Sanke and non-Go-Sanke post GC selection), plus the annual table show champions together, before splitting up to judge the in-size and variety winners. The WA table show is interesting. Every month, meetings host a table show of young (tosai) koi from the previous year's spawning and the winners are then taken to the annual show for selection of the best that year, so a very important part of the annual show in itself and



(13) AKA Friendship Award and Best in Size 5, 59 cm Ginrin Shiro Utsuri owned by Dave Brown.



(14) Variety Champion Kawarimono and Tableshow Doitsu. Kumonryu 41cm owned by Anthony Mellor.



(15) Mature B Champion and Variety Champion 69 cm Tancho Sanke owned by Tim Nguyen.



(16) Variety Champion Hikari Mujimono 85 cm owned by Allan Bennett.



(17) Variety Champion Kohaku 59 cm owned by Phong Ta.



(18) Variety Champion Bekko 49 cm owned by Sharon and Luke Bray.

hotly contested.

We began our rounds by looking for GC. Interestingly, opinions I had heard beforehand suggested it would be very difficult to select GC, because there was not a really 'stand-out' koi benched. In reality there definitely was an eye-catching, very special koi in the show, just not a variety many koi keepers identify as Grand

Champion material—in this case a Kin-Gin-Rin Kohaku with a superb conformation (body shape), excellent skin quality, neat, homogeneous hi (red) patterns with clear kiwa (trailing edges) and very bright kin-gin-rin scaling (photo 9). It was a clear winner which we were delighted to make GC. Strangely enough, this scenario has occurred before at a KSA (Koi Society of Australia) show



(19) Variety Champion Sanke
64 cm owned by Phong Ta.



(20) Variety Champion Shusui
43 cm owned by Jared Conti.



(21) Variety Champion
Utsurimono 74 cm owned by
Allan Bennett.



(22) Variety Champion Hikari
Moyo 22 cm Kujaku owned by
Jun Guo.



(23) Visitors enjoying the koi.

some years ago. When I arrived at the show that day, many people were scratching their heads over possible GC candidates, completely overlooking an amazing Kin-Gin-Rin Kohaku until I pointed it out saying that it would be my choice (I was not judging). It did go on to take GC.

The table show entries were next on the list to judge and the overall Young Champion really stood out, a magnificent Kohaku. I was

amazed at the size most of the table show koi had achieved in a year or less. Keepers in WA can certainly grow koi well! There were several sections listed, we were requested to select young champions for kin-gin-rin and doitsu entries separately, as well as Go-Sanke and non-Go-Sanke. Selection of Supreme A (Go-Sanke) and Supreme B (non-Go-Sanke) followed—these classes essentially equate to best runner-up to GC and



(24) It's always a pleasure to judge in WA, especially under the Show Chairmanship of Des Howlett and alongside fellow Judge Spencer Tan.



(25) Julie and Allan Bennett were awarded the coveted GC Trophy.



(26) Phong Ta receives one of his many awards.

again, any size koi may be selected. Unfortunately, judging Supreme A caused some later controversy although that (clearly) was not our intention at the time. Spencer and I agreed that a lovely Showa was a clear winner for Supreme A (photo 11), only to discover, to our dismay, that the koi had inadvertently not been entered in the show! This was a genuine mistake in the paper work submitted by the owner. Perhaps I should not have done so, but I asked if the koi could be added as a late entry and after considerable discussion

amongst the show officials, it was allowed. It would have been a tragedy for this koi not to have taken the award. It also later won Best Jumbo award, a superb koi indeed.

In contrast, Supreme B was a very simple decision to make; a magnificent Karashigoi (apricot single coloured koi) easily took the award (photo 12). This koi had an excellent shape and beautifully clear skin without a single blemish. An outstanding example of its variety. Spencer and I split up at this point, Spencer judging sizes two to four while I tackled five, six and seven accompanied by Luke. We were asked to select Best in Sizes once we had each completed a size class. Judging progressed smoothly, even the sun came out to warm us a little by this time, very welcome indeed. As always, the quality of koi fielded for the WA show was really excellent, especially two exceptional Gin-Rin Shiro Utsuri. One was size two and the other size five (photo 13). Both won major awards including Best in Size. I also particularly noted a young Gin-Rin Matsukawabake in size three, easily taking Best in Size plus a lovely size four Kumonryu winning the doitsu class in the table show section and Best in Variety (photo 14). Mature Champion B did go to a koi I have seen in the past—it was looking even better this year—a Tancho Sanke (photo 15). Wonderful to see a koi being kept in such top condition over several years.

Lunchtime saw the majority of the show judging completed. We only had variety champions (photos 16–21), best junior exhibitor and the judge's award to select. Ian judged the AKA (Australian Koi Association) prize, awarding it to the beautiful size five Gin-Rin Shiro Utsuri (see photo 13). I selected the size two Gin-Rin Shiro Utsuri for the Judge's Award—this

was probably the best Gin-Rin I have seen in many years. The koi looked spectacular. One area Western Australia koi keepers perhaps do need to work on is their metallic koi however, there were very few in the show (photo 22) and a top-quality metallic koi of any variety can look incredibly special. Worth breeding, guys! Possibly, mirroring koi varieties fielded for the Sydney Koi Show (including Metallic and Non-Metallic Doitsu) numbers of metallic koi exhibited might be increased? Something to consider for future shows.

It was good to complete the judging with time to look around and admire more of the koi (photo 23), but all too soon it was time to begin the pull-down. One day shows are easier to manage for the koi (water parameters are not so critical) but tough on the show staff and keepers! Ian has always advocated a two-day show for Sydney, but no-one else has been interested. The problem of looking after the koi in the bins overnight and maintaining water quality has generally put everyone off, but when you think about it, everywhere else in the world hosts shows over at least two days and up to four in Japan, successfully. Perhaps one year it might be pioneered.

That evening, dinner was at an Italian restaurant (Rimondos) much favoured by the WA Koi Society members where there are usually some really interesting specials served, like lobster linguine. Quite a large group joined us and made a very convivial evening. It was a real treat to relax with friends after the show.

Ian and I were looking forward to our spare Monday since we had been promised a pond tour. Great to have an opportunity to see ponds we are not familiar with. Jun picked us up at 9.00 am and our first visit was to Jared Conti's house, quite local to where we were staying. Jared had a lovely under-cover pond for his large koi with seating from which to admire the fish. The pond was surrounded by large plants in pots, making an almost tropical look to the area. Jared's second pond was quite recently constructed to one side of his garden: an 'out of the ground' rectangle for growing on fry and young koi. It was neatly finished with a roof to keep the pond water warmer in winter. He had some very interesting youngsters and was keen to try more koi breeding this year.

We went on to visit Jun's place in Ballajura, a real construction site for which Jun kept apologizing! There really is no need, we have all been there—building a pond is an incredibly messy business usually meaning chaos in your yard for years, not months. Jun is managing amazingly

well, housing koi in makeshift tanks, while building quite an ambitious project pond in what very little spare time he has. He is a dedicated koi breeder, very keen to make improvements to his lines and showed us some pretty special youngsters. It is really heartwarming to come across someone so enthusiastic for the koi hobby. We so need people like this!

Our third visit was to Carmello (Charlie) and Josie Giorgio at Riverwood, keen gardeners as well as koi keepers. You could easily see the years of care that they had put into their yard, both front and back. Two large ponds housed a selection of high-quality koi and some yearlings were still growing on in a third small pond and a large bin. A lot to look after and they both told us that they were thinking of down-sizing, house and garden were becoming just too much hard work. I am sure the place would be extremely difficult to leave though; they have obviously put heart and soul into it for many years. Josie gave us a wonderful spread for lunch, so kind! We had a really special visit with them both.

Our last stop on the tour was at Allan's home, a place we know well after all these years although we marveled (as always) at the sheer size of some of his koi—especially his breeders. They are truly monsters! He had some nice yearlings growing on as well, mainly Kohaku and Showa; they looked very promising. It was lovely to have a chance to sit and catch up with Allan and Julie over a cup of tea but sadly it was a fairly short visit as we were late arriving—when did a pond tour ever run to schedule! That evening was the presentation dinner (photos 24–26), so we had to return to our hotel to get ready for it.

Paul Jenner was our chauffeur for the evening and duly drove us to the Swan Valley brewery—the venue for the evening and very nice indeed, a good size for the club members. We had the presentation dinner there on our last visit and the meal was just as good this time, very tasty indeed. It was an enjoyable evening, over all too soon. Time to get back to the hotel and pack most of our gear—we had a fairly early start the next day for the airport at 8.00 am, Allan, who drove us there, was concerned about rush hour traffic, he said sometimes it was really awful and he did not want us missing our flight. In reality—as you do when well prepared—we arrived in good time, said our goodbyes and flew back to Sydney. It was a wonderful weekend; we enjoyed it so much and so special to catch up with so many good people.

Until our next visit! ■

ProfiDrum

ProfiDrum is pleased to announce that it has partnered with Clear Water Koi as Australia's sole distributor for ProfiDrum Filters.

ProfiDrum is the worlds No:1 choice for Koi hobbyist who want the very best in pond filtration as they know the best possible water quality creates the perfect environment for producing outstanding healthy Koi.

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No other rotary drum filter has the build quality, reputation or reliability of a ProfiDrum Filter.

ProfiDrum Eco 45/40

The ProfiDrum Eco 45/40 has been designed for the Koi hobbyist who wants the very best in Koi pond filtration. All critical components are made from durable 316 stainless steel whilst the housing is made with economical polypropylene. The ProfiDrum Eco 45/40 uses a 70 micron stainless steel mesh for the best possible water quality with a maximum flow rate of 25,000 liters per hour.



The ProfiDrum Eco 45/40 is fully automatic and comes complete with an electronic control unit and high pressure water pump for cleaning. The innovative control panel gives you access to a fully adjustable duration of the rinse cycle, any duration from 12 seconds to several minutes depending on the amount of food you are feeding your Koi and time of year.

ProfiDrum Eco 45/40 Specifications: 94cm L x 60cm W x 54cm H, 3 x 110mm inlets, 2 x 110mm outlets, 1 x 110mm waste, 25,000 litres per hour.

ProfiDrum CombiBio 50

The ProfiDrum CombiBio 50 combines all of ProfiDrum's experience in the area of mechanical and biological filtration with a maximum flow rate of 50,000 liters per hour.



The ProfiDrum CombiBio 50 system is based on the same principle of the successful ProfiDrum Drum Filter with the addition of a moving bed filter using the award winning Kaldnes K1 Bio Media that is agitated via the built in aeration system. The system is supplied with 100 liters K1 Bio Media with a capacity of up to 200 liters K1 Bio Media. A integrated Bakki Shower can be fitted for additional bio filtration and water quality.

The ProfiDrum Combi Bio 50 system comes complete with integrated high pressure pump utilizing pond water to clean the Drum Filter. The internal air pump and gearbox are contained in a secured dry chamber creating a neat and tidy, compact all-in-one filtration system.

ProfiDrum CombiBio 50 Specifications: 207cm L x 82cm W x 97cm H, 4 x 110mm inlets, 2 x 110mm outlets, 1 x 110mm waste, 100 to 200 liters K1 Bio Media, 50,000 liters per hour.

BlueLab Guardian Monitor

The BlueLab Guardian Monitor is the industry standard for aquaculture, hydroponics and professional Koi hobbyist alike. The BlueLab Guardian Monitor provides 24/7 continuous monitoring of pH, TDS and temperature so there's no need for manual measurements and spot checks. This not only saves you time and money but provides you with continuous and accurate measurements of your pond water allowing you to maintain the perfect environment for your healthy Koi.



The BlueLab Guardian Monitor features a large backlit LED display allowing you to view your pH, TDS and temperature at a glance, high and low alarms to alert you when parameters are out of range and easy pH calibration function with on-screen instructions.

For all inquiries please call 0419 165 782 or info@clearwaterkoi.com.au

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Naming varieties—the importance of consistency

*Toen Feyen, Nishikigoi Vereniging Nederland
(edited by Kate McGill-Andrews)*

Varieties, and how it once was...

Thanks to the Japanese Dr. Takeo Kuroki, we call the fish we all admire so much by the same name all over the world: “Nishikigoi (brocaded carp)” or “koi” for short. This name was accepted based on a proposal from Dr Kuroki during a koi show in Hawaii in 1964. Before that, the koi were referred to by all kinds of names. These were often names translated from Japanese.

Because everyone had their own dictionary, it was difficult to understand each other. Especially if you want to name the various varieties and talk about details, you quickly get stuck if

everyone explains it in their own way. Dr Kuroki argued that since the fish were developed in Japan, the names should, of course, be Japanese.

Through his work, this was eventually accepted worldwide. As a result, we all (generally) understand each other with respect to koi terminology. If someone from America talks about a Showa, then someone in the Netherlands or anywhere in the world knows what he or she is talking about. However, when you talk about “a fish with black, white and red”, it could be a Sanke, Showa, Koromo, Goshiki, Koromo or Goshiki Sanke, Koromo or Goshiki Showa or even a Beni Kumonryu.” Dr Kuroki laid the foundations for the classification of all Koi through the many books he wrote in the past.

Of course it all sounds very obvious, but



A classical Sanke.



A classical Showa.

benching is not as easy as one might think. Nowadays, so many Koi are bred that there are many borderline classification cases. Suppose the rule is that a Sanke cannot have black on the head, so, you discover a Sanke that does have black on its head but otherwise has all the specific characteristics of a Sanke, including *tejima* (black stripes in the fins) and *sumi* (black) confined to the back of the fish in small patterns. Is it suddenly a Showa? No, not at all, it is simply a Sanke with a demerit in most cases. And as usual when judging koi, we first look at the positive points of the fish and when we have a “tie” between two fish; then we consider any demerits.

So, it can occur that a Sanke with *sumi* on the head takes a major award, as happened in Japan a few years ago, purely because other positive points rated so highly. Incidentally, in this particular case, the *sumi* spot, centered on the Sanke’s forehead, actually bestowed a perfect balance to the rest of the koi, which took Mature Champion. In 2021, both the Grand Champion and the Supreme Champion, at the Belgian Koi Show were Sanke with *sumi* on the head, Grand Champion at the 2021 All England Show also displayed this trait.

Why am I raising this topic again? It is because nowadays my toes curl every now and then when I see koi presented on social media with names that just don’t fit. It seems like we are being thrown back in time, and I mean the time before Dr Kuroki, when everyone just named the fish exactly what they wanted.

For example, I recently came across four koi, which the dealer presented as “Twice Showa” and “Twice Sanke”; each showing a *Tancho* (*hi* (red) spot on the head only). One of the *Tancho* still had a lot of underlying *sumi* to develop but still appeared to be a Showa and the other was already developed much further and was just plainly a *Tancho Showa*. However, the dealer called it a *Tancho Sanke*! To my response that I believed it really was a *Tancho Showa*, the dealer defended himself by saying the breeder had told him it was a Sanke because it came from a Sanke bloodline. There’s no way of knowing if this is true but, if we start to discuss it in this way, the end is of course lost. So a completely white koi from an amorous adventure between two *Kohaku* is not called *Shiro Muji* anymore but a “white *Kohaku*” if we continue to follow this ridiculous logic. How else should I understand it?

As an aside, anyone who has bred koi will understand just how many different varieties may turn up in the offspring. For example, out of a *Soragoi* (grey koi) and *Kohaku* (red and white) cross aiming to produce *Ochiba Shigure* (grey koi



A Goshiki Sanke.



A Koromo Showa.



Beni Kumonryu.

with orange patterns), even Matsukawabake (black koi with white patterns) and Karashigoi (apricot single colored koi) resulted, quite un-looked for!

Recently someone sent me a picture of a koi that clearly had the pattern of a Kumonryu, only, (and that was a bit more difficult to see in the photo), it turned out to be a Wagoi (fully scaled) koi. A scaled Kumonryu has been defined as a Matsukawabake for many years now. So I named the fish a Matsukawabake. But surprisingly, this had to be a “Wagoi Kumonryu” because *according to the breeder it came from crossing two Kumonryu*, so therefore the offspring was also a Kumonryu, even though it was scaled. So if I cross two Asagi and a doitsu (scale-less koi or one having only a maximum of four rows of large scales) comes out, we now call it a “Doitsu Asagi” instead of a Shusui? Man, man, man! Where are we going? The whole variety terminology is already a tough one for most hobbyists to crack, if one wants to try to crack it at all. Should all the rules that have been established for years be thrown overboard to make it even more opaque in the end?

And now to come up with arguments such as that, for example, “the sumi looks more like Showa sumi than Sanke sumi”. For years, attempts have been made to make sumi more beautiful and shinier on, for example, Sanke, and not without success. I have already seen Sanke pass by where the sumi was absolutely lacquer-black with a shine that many other Sanke would indeed envy. Achieving Showa quality sumi on Sanke, while maintaining the appearance of “Sanke sumi” has been a work in progress for very many years.

The fact is that, at a koi show, a fish is benched



Very high quality, high impact Sanke with sumi on the forehead.



Koromo Sanke.

in a certain variety.

And that is simply done according to the rules as they have been in place for years. There will be no question as to what the parents of this fish were. No, benching is simply checked as to which characteristics the fish exhibits and to which variety those characteristics belong. And if you insist that an obvious Showa is assigned as a Sanke, you are not only doing yourself a disservice, but also the koi. Because the fish is judged, (if not already disqualified by the judges as wrongly benched), as a Sanke and so it has considerable demerits, because it looks like a Showa.

My very old friend Bernie Woollands (ZNA Certified Judge) from the UK has also faced these issues many times. Occasionally at shows, but more often on social media and in reply he has developed a standard message he calls the 5 P’s. *“In benching, as in judging koi, we have no knowledge of their price-tag, Previous Performance, Pedigree or Passport. We make decisions on what we see, not what somebody may say.”*

So please, when describing koi, don’t give any other names to fish because according to the breeder they came from a breeding of particular parents. The classification rules are simply based on what we see, not on what weird history suggests.

Then I’m going to look for a Wagoi Shusui now! Koi, koi, koi! ■



Supplies available to AKA members

FOOD

Flake-Tropical: POA, ring for sizes		
Fry Food	1 kg	\$25.00
No.1 High-protein Crumble	1 kg	\$25.00
No.2 High-protein Crumble	1 kg	\$25.00
No.3 High-protein Crumble	1 kg	\$25.00
No.4 High-protein Crumble	1 kg	\$25.00
Baby Koi Pellets	1 kg	\$25.00
Pond Sticks (great in winter)	4 kg	\$50.00
AKA Growth Food	5 kg	\$40.00
AKA Growth Food—Australian sourced and made (small pellet)	5 kg	\$40.00
AKA 42.5% Hi Protein Sinking	5 kg	\$60.00
Orca Quick Grow Medium	10 kg	\$95.00
Orca Quick Grow Small	10 kg	\$95.00

MEDICINE

Malachite Green	20 g	\$30.00
Clean Fish CF 50	1 litre	\$45.00
Condy's Crystals	200 g	\$30.00
Oil of Cloves	100 ml	\$30.00
Hydrogen Peroxide	1 litre	\$17.00
Paragone for parasites		\$60.00
Fungonex		\$40.00
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PUMPS (Japanese made)

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NB: Parts available, POA.

Aquarium Air Pump	\$25.00
Battery Air Pump	\$25.00

WATER

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Powder for ammonia and water stabilisation	1 litre	\$20.00
Stress coat		\$45.00
Bio start to start up filter bacteria		\$75.00
Algicide		\$30.00

MISCELLANEOUS

Air Tubing (UV resistant), per metre	\$4.00
Plastic Bags (large) each	\$2.00
Glass heater 300 W	\$28.00

NETS

6' Nets	\$8.00
10' Nets	\$12.00

TEST KITS

Ammonia Test Kit	\$25.00
Carbon Hardness Test Kit	\$25.00
Nitrite	\$25.00
pH Test Kit	\$25.00
pH up	1 kg \$10.00
pH down	1 kg \$13.00

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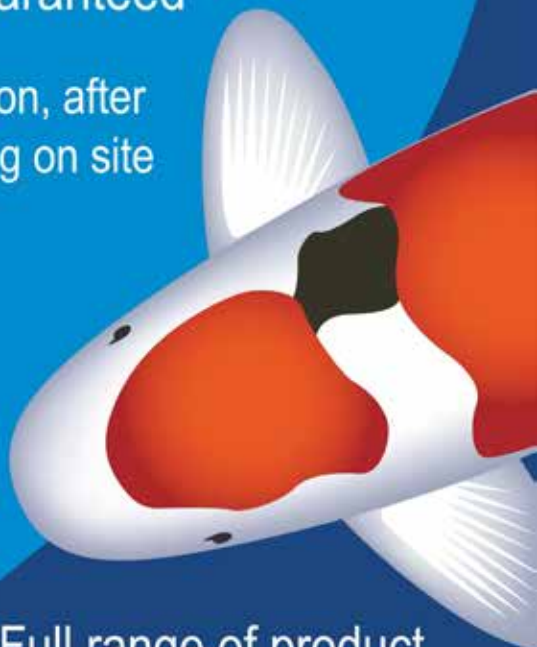
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