



Final 2010 Meeting Features Elections, Fun

The first meeting of the St. Louis Water Gardening Society in 2011 is likely to have a new leadership look. That is because the final meeting of this year will include a short business meeting to elect officers for two year terms, and a long social meeting to have dinner, exchange stories and generally get to know each other better!

Our bylaws call for an election of officers to be held in November every other year, making necessary this additional meeting for the year. We will elect a president, vice president and treasurer at the meeting this month. All will serve two-year terms.

First, however, we will say a big 'thank you' to Gail Abernathy, who is completing her third consecutive term as our treasurer. The bylaws limit all officers to three consecutive terms. A big

'thank you' also should go to Dave Stahre who is finishing his first term as president, and Alice Gibson, who has been vice president for one term.

At the October meeting, nomination forms were distributed and collected. Those nominated for office and accepting the



Don't Miss This!

What: Pot Luck and Biennial Election of Officers
Where: Missouri Botanical Garden, Beaumont Room
When: Tuesday, November 16, 7 p.m.
Who: All Members of SLWGS

challenge (a condition of nomination) included Stahre and Gibson for a second term in their present offices, Susan Abernathy as treasurer for a first term and David Poos for a first term as treasurer. Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor. Again, all nominees have an opportunity to decline the office prior to the election.

Officers automatically are members of the SLWGS board of directors. Several coordinators or committee chairs also are likely to change, bringing new faces to the board of directors, since all coordinators and chairmen also are a part of it. However, SLWGS members also may attend any and all board meetings. The dates, times and places for the meetings are usually in the monthly Calendar of Events.

Think of any way you can use your talents and skills to contribute, and then—please make your talents known!

A Gift of October's Warmth

The warmth of summer lingered well into fall this year and gave us many lovely October surprises in our gardens and ponds. With the hardy lilies trimmed and nestled under the pond netting for the winter, this tropical bloom, Nymphaea Trudy Slocum, appeared in mid-month under the nets.



Time To Eat!

pot•luck: *n.* 1. the regular meal available to a guest for whom no special preparations have been made—Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary

We're calling it a potluck, but the definition above simply does NOT apply! Special preparations are being made by Pam Jokerst, our special events coordinator. She will cause to appear a meat dish prepared just for us, beverages, breads, tables to go with our chairs, tablecloths, napkins and utensils.

She is counting on us, however, to supplement her efforts by bringing side dishes, salads and desserts to share. And, she can use some help in setting up and decorating for the evening. Please call Pam at 314-514-8348 or send her an e-mail to pamjokerst@gmail.com to let her know how you can help and what dish you will be bringing.

It is one of our most fun evenings—and we only do it every two years! Don't miss it!



2010—It Was A Pretty Good Year!



As anniversary celebrations go, it would be hard to ask for more. We celebrated the 20th anniversary of the St. Louis Water Gardening Society with lots of special speakers and events—we named our logo frog “Sir Croaks-A-Lot,” and we produced commemorative pins for both



our 20th anniversary and the 10th anniversary of Pond-O-Rama. We honored Pond-O-Rama with a first-ever poster publication and the biggest-ever public tour. Here is an end-of-the year look back at our 20th. Enjoy the memories!



At our 2010 annual banquet, Don Ganim presented the service award named for his wife and him to Mary Nies, far right, while Dave Stahre, right, picked up the Bonnie



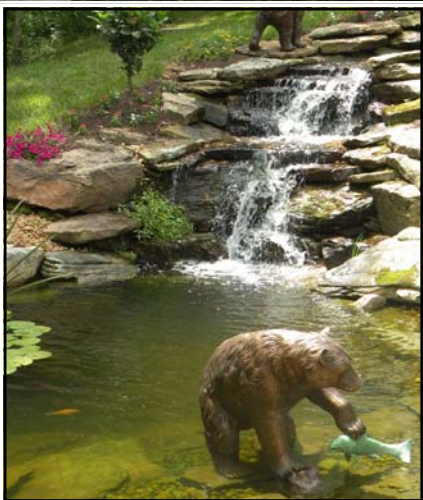
We welcomed speakers who are prominent in their own fields. They included (left to right above) Peter Ponzio, a certified goldfish judge who introduced some of his favorite species. From Cindy Gilberg, a Missouri native, we learned about using native plants in our water gardens. Lisa Berman of the St. Louis Zoo told us about ‘awesome amphibians’ and Dr. Charles Giedeman related tales of life in small wetlands known as ephemeral ponds. Bottom row, Jamie Beyer and friend of Boone, Iowa, told us how to have fun in our garden; Clarke Smith of Toronto gave us tips on designing a Japanese Garden. Chris Siewing finished the year in October. He is featured on page 5 of this issue.



Our Tiki Tour gave us a chance to see how great ponds look at night. We had a particularly charming guide in 3-1/2 year old Eli Rundquist, below, at his backyard pond, left.



Special Events included our annual auction—which Pat Tosie handled admirably at the July meeting. We had another great summer at the Jewel Box—and, finally, some community recognition. A record-breaking Pond-O-Rama—54 ponds—included the home of Frank and Sherry Arvisio, below, left, and a new feature at the Jokerst house below right. We were “On the Plaza” at NewsChannel 5 to publicize our favorite event, below right.





Presidential Ponderings



Howdy folks! Well, this is my last column for the year. A little bird has told me that I will likely return in January but in this season of “vote the incumbents out” who knows? I can live with either result! I’m not really sure where all the time has gone. The last two years have flown by! There is only one more meeting

in my current term—our biennial potluck dinner and election meeting. We will be electing or re-electing officers for two-year terms. In addition, as we reorganize for 2011, we have many support positions that are necessary to the operation of the group that can use assistance and/or “fresh blood.” Our membership co-chairs, for example, have indicated that they would like to be replaced so they can do different jobs of interest to them. Others may have the same idea, so we do need help! Do you have a talent or skill that can help us, or is there some group activity you might like to help with? Let me know.

As to the pot luck dinner, someone else is doing most of the work for this part of the meeting—Pam Jokerst! The board has voted to supply meat for the dinner. If you plan to attend please contact Pam at (314) 514-8348 (pamjokerst@gmail.com) and let her know what side dish you plan to bring. This promises to be a pleasant evening of socializing as well as a delicious meal. Come out and enjoy the dinner and the fellowship.

Our October meeting was an unqualified success. Feedback on Chris Siewing’s presentation on pond construction was overwhelmingly favorable. Chris gave us his perspective on the way to approach pond building. One notable concept Chris promotes is rain water recovery. In this age of pavement and concrete it offers an interesting solution to preventing excessive runoff as well as water conservation. In future meetings I plan to invite other builders so we can experience a range of different ideas and construction techniques.

I’m still planning our programs for next year. If you have

suggestions on topics or speakers, I’m interested in hearing them. One thing we are considering is an overnight field trip. To help keep the price for individuals reasonable the organization may underwrite some of the cost. Would you be interested in an overnight venture if we can keep the costs down? Let us know—more on that later.

Things are ready for winter at the “white house.” The pond has been netted and the leaves are under control. One unforeseen problem I had was that a dove somehow got inside and nearly beat himself to death trying to get out. I had to pro a section of the downwind netting up to provide an opening.

Well, Sammy (the snake) continues to get into trouble. Last month I had my netting out to cover the pond. My older net (with fairly large mesh holes) was lying on the ground and attracted Sammy’s attention. The silly serpent slithered through a slit and got stuck. It seems that Sammy’s “Beer (mouse?) Belly” wouldn’t fit through the hole and rascally reptile was unwilling retained. The first lady was reaching for the rake and I had to step between her and Sammy to keep him his original length. I used wire cutters to free the poor creature—he was very concerned about having a cutting tool along-side his stomach. Free at last and apparently anxious, he slithered off without even a “thank you” hiss.

The rest of the critters are behaving themselves. Tubby (the blind goldfish) is still clowning around.

It is with considerable sadness that we have noted the death of our co-librarian Roger Lehr. Soft spoken and studious, Roger and his wife, Jeanne, labored to organize and publicize our club library. Often a thankless job, they dutifully lugged our club’s literary treasures from home to meetings and back, keeping things organized and presentable. Roger will be greatly missed.

Thank you again for your outstanding support!

Dave Stahre

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St. Louis Water Gardening Society Calendar of Events 2010

Membership meetings in 2010 will be held on the dates listed below at the Missouri Botanical Garden, Beaumont room, between 7 and 9 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

November 16—THIRD TUESDAY—Election of Officers and Potluck Dinner. Nominations will be accepted for president, vice-president, and treasurer. Note: The treasurer's position must be filled by a new person, as Gail Abernathy has served the three consecutive terms allowed by SLWGS bylaws.

January 4, 2011—The first SLWGS board meeting of the new year will be at the home of Joan Woelfel. 7 p.m. All members are welcome to attend.

Planning for 2011!

Discussions are now being held to plan meetings for 2011. The year will include some perennial favorites—Pond-O-Rama, auction, awards banquet, members' tours and expert panels—but that leaves lots of room for speakers addressing special topics and other special event ideas. If you have a desire to see something specific on our calendar in 2011, now is the time to make it known. Contact Dave Stahre NOW at dstahre@hotmail.com, with your suggestions. NOW also is the time to let Dave know if you can give the Society some time as a volunteer. Contact Dave at the above e-mail or call him at (618) 785-2501.

Roger Lehr Dies Suddenly



Roger Lehr

Roger J. Lehr, who, with his wife, Jeanne, served as the St. Louis Water Gardening Society librarian, died unexpectedly October 17. He was born in St. Louis and attended Rossman School and Country Day School. He held a PhD in History from Princeton University. For many years, Roger and his brother ran an independent insurance agency founded by their father. Roger and his wife were married in 1987.

The Lehrs joined SLWGS in 2002 and have handled the organization's lending library for several years, including helping to institute an on-line listing of available materials. Roger also was an accomplished pianist and enjoyed travel.

Memorial donations may be made to St. Mary's Health Center Foundation in memory of Roger Lehr. Send donations to the attention of Lindsey, 6420 Clayton Road, St. Louis, MO 63117, or make them online at www.stmaryshealthcenterfoundation.org.





Did You Miss This?

Plan to Avoid Problems When Building or Expanding Your Pond

Knowing what you want, having a plan for getting there and keeping as close to nature as possible will help assure a satisfactory result when planning for a new pond or a pond expansion, said Chris Siewing of Nature's Re-Creations, LLC. Siewing has a degree in Horticulture and Landscape Design and is a Certified Aquascape Contractor (CAC).

Siewing has been the owner of Nature's Re-Creations for 14 years, and for the last seven or eight has concentrated primarily on water features. Siewing says the name of his company—Nature's Re-Creations, LLC—also is his business philosophy. "I try to recreate natural settings—to make something that looks like Mother Nature made it," he said.

His own water features—which take up most of the back yard and some of the front—were created to give him his own "weekend getaway," he said, since actually getting away for a weekend is rare.

Siewing said that while there is some concern with water usage for backyard ponds, they actually are helping the ecology. "Commercial developments are depleting natural habitats. Backyard ponds are helping to replace them," he said.

Planning is essential, however, he noted. Most ponds are 2' to 3' deep—deep enough for fish to survive during the winter months, but not so deep as to qualify as "swimming pools" that would require fencing in some communities.

Water quality will depend on a number of factors, and everything else—insects, frogs, plants and fish—will depend on the quality of the water. "I try to do it naturally, staying away from chemicals," Siewing said.



Chris Siewing of Nature's Re-Creations gave members a list of things to consider when building a new pond or renovating an existing one at the last SLWGS meeting. After his presentation, he answered questions from the members present.

Good filtration is one of the essentials in providing good water quality. A simple filter that keeps things from being sucked up into a pump can work, but will need constant monitoring and cleaning.

A filter/skimmer/pump that keeps the water moving and captures debris works better. Upflow filtration is the most effective kind of filtration, he said. Most biological filters are upflow—the water enters at the bottom of the unit and moves upwards through rocks and/or filtration material, then back over the waterfall and into the pond.

A typical set up is to have a skimmer placed opposite the waterfall, and have the biological filter under or behind the falls so water goes from the skimmer to the falls and back into the pond.

Plants also are an important part of a successful water garden. Not only are they beautiful, but they also play a part in

Continued on page 7



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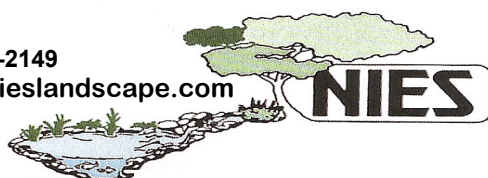
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Water Word is published by the St. Louis Water Gardening Society 10-11 times annually, and is distributed to all members. The newsletter contains information about water gardening and fish-keeping, as well as information about SLWGS meetings and activities. Contributions of articles and photos are welcome and should be sent to the Water Word editor listed below. Documents should be in common text formats, and photos should be in high resolution (300 dpi or higher) jpeg format. The deadline for submissions is the first of each month.

SLWGS membership dues are \$20 annually per household. Information about the Society, including how to join, can be found at our website, www.slwgs.org or from any of the officers, board members or coordinators listed below.

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Planning to Build or Expand

(Continued from page 5)

controlling algae.

“When you are designing a pond, know what plants you want to use and at what depth they need to be placed to grow,” Siewing said. Then, when you are digging the pond shape, you can allow for shelves at various depths, or create depressions that can be used to place plants directly in the gravel on the bottom of the pond.

There are two schools of thought on pond planting. While some prefer to keep plants in pots in the pond. Siewing said he prefers to plant most things directly in the gravel in the bottom of the pond.

“You can make ‘plant pockets’ in the soil before the liner is put into place, then put plants in them in the gravel.” However, there are exceptions. Lotus, for example, does need to be contained in a pot to avoid overgrowth.

Siewing said most pond owners want a mix of both hardy and tropical varieties of plants. “I like to use at least 85% hardy plants so I don’t have to redo them every year,” he said. To help control algae growth, try to get 40% to 60% of the surface covered.

“Look at a water garden the same way you would a landscape garden,” he said. Choose plants for size, color, texture and season, just as you would for a garden bed, he said. When making a plant list, think of the effect you want and determine the plants you need and how you would place them to get that look. “Play with textures and colors. Think about the mature size and what it will look like as the plants grow,” he said.

Fish are another pond essential, Siewing says. “Most people say ‘I want fish!’ I say you *need* fish.” Fish help to maintain the pond’s ecosystem, he said.

“Use fish like slave labor,” he said. If fish are fed less

frequently—say three times a week instead of every day—they will eat from the pond and help to keep it clean.

One of the prominent features of Siewing-built ponds are the rocks used and how they are placed. “Don’t just think about using rocks to cover your liner,” he said. “Rocks are the face of your pond. The top row of stones will make or break the pond.” The size and type of rocks you use, and how you place them will make all the difference, he said.

Siewing said using a line of stones ringing the pond opening works, but look monotonous. He often chooses specific rocks as “character rocks” and plans their placement for the best impact.

Using the right stones and in the right way also helps stabilize the pond and liner. The use of large, heavy stones on the first shelf of the pond creates a more stable pond and a sound way to edge and hide your liner. You also may use big stones on the inner shelves for stability.

Once the liner is in place, don’t trim off the excess until it is filled with water and the edge rocks are in place. The water can cause shifts in the liner—you want to make sure there is still enough liner under the rock edgings to avoid edge leaks.

When building or expanding a pond, “the difference is in the details,” Siewing says. “Pay attention and take care to make things look natural and aesthetic”

Siewing also recommends careful consideration about choosing a spot for your pond. “Try to place it so there are views from all parts of the house so you can enjoy it and keep tabs on things going on in the falls. That is especially important in the winter,” he said.

You can see examples of Nature’s Re-Creations ponds, waterfalls and pondless waterfalls at the company website www.re-createnature.com.

A Whole Other Thing...Rain Harvesting

One of the latest developments in the “green movement” is the idea of harvesting rain water and saving it for later use. Chris Siewing of Nature’s Re-Creations, LLC, told the members of SLWGS that one of the issues recreational water gardeners face is the fact that the Environmental Protection Agency “frowns on using potable water” in the ponds. By harvesting the rain water, our water features can become self-sustainable, he said.

Flash floods—which are regular features of hard rain storms in our area—are caused by the fact that much open ground has been paved over with asphalt or concrete and water has no place to go. If we can catch that water and use it for landscape watering, car washing or in other non-consumable ways, we can reduce the amount of potable water used for such things.

Many people already collect rainwater from their roofs in barrels or cisterns. However, rain harvesting systems turn the rain-barrel concept into beautiful water features—and keep the water clean and usable. Rain harvesting systems can be installed as a part of a water feature—at the bottom of pondless waterfalls or under permeable patios, for example. The system moves water from the roof into hidden tanks; pumps are used to retrieve it when it is needed.

For more information about rain harvesting systems, contact Siewing, or visit www.rainxchange.com.



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An Editorial Comment

The Responsibilities of Membership

I am a member of a number of volunteer groups and I often seem to meet myself coming and going. I sometimes wonder why, but only momentarily. I know why I do it—it is because I get a great deal back from the groups I work with or for, and I want them all to survive. I am a volunteer usher at the Fox Theatre because I love watching live theatre and I love that old, tacky building. I want it to be there for many more years.

I'm a Jewel Box volunteer because I believe garden groups should be committed to a civic project—and I can get up close to take lovely photos of exotic plants.

I belong to a number of other garden clubs besides the St. Louis Water Gardening Society. I get something I want from each one—knowledge, friends, plants and shared interests.

When my husband and I joined SLWGS ten years ago, I knew only that I wanted to keep the recently installed small pond with its sound of splashing water outside my sunroom doors working properly. I could not have told you the name of a single aquatic plant or why I needed them. I have learned a great deal since—and have saved a lot of money—from Society members who shared both their knowledge and their plants.


When my original small pond developed a leak and needed to be replaced, I, of course, wanted it bigger. I also wanted to know how to avoid some of our earlier mistakes. The advice I got from members of SLWGS—again—saved us hours of toil and lots of money. I'm still learning, and now I know enough to also sometimes do some sharing.

I firmly believe that paying your dues (MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE NOW!) is never enough. If you get something—anything—from a group to which you belong, then I believe you have a responsibility to help assure it survives and operates well. Payback? Yes, but it also is survival. There MIGHT be a bigger waterfall in my future. If so, I want the SLWGS members to be there to help me plan it.


All of this is simply to say that each of us has some talent, some skills and some knowledge to share. Time is sometimes an issue, but not all activities require a major commitment of time. So—don't forget to fill out the membership envelope that comes with this issue and send in your dues. But please also consider the responsibilities of membership as you do so. Come join and come lend your skills and abilities to help SLWGS continue into the future.

Alice Gibson

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Hunt for Gold—Laura Lynne

(continued from page 10)

in creation beneath the silky tan coating.

It is photography heaven! Now is a great time to hunt and hike. Pull your boots out of the closet; stash a granola bar in your camera bag and head for the woods.

Maybe there is a park nearby with a trail that will guide you to paradise. Breathe in the special scents of the season and stalk through the trees like you were seeking gold.

The opportunities are bountiful! You will find an image that will forever lock this moment into your memory banks and the precious gift of a camera allows the balance of the world to embrace the joys of your excursion.



Now is the time to get ready for winter—and to find great photos of creatures doing so.



Mary Ann Fink

Winterberry's Beauty Appears First in Fall

Ilex verticillata 'Nana' (also fondly known as 'Red Sprite') is a well-rounded, small slow-growing female shrub that is truly an easy addition to the landscape and a real end of season show off! Although her common name—winterberry—is easy to remember, it

is important to note her profuse red berries are extremely attractive in fall AND winter. (Perhaps we should start a renaming campaign for Fallberry! No—never mind, I am tired of all campaigning!!!!) In any case, you can look for the berries to first appear in the fall—you don't have to wait for winter.

The most notable feature of this specimen is the way her framework is truly berry "laden." It is hard to imagine how so many berries can develop so close together! Her simple green leaves are very pleasant but they are easily forgotten once they slip to the ground exposing her "berry nice" branches. She is truly worth remembering!

This is never a messy shrub. Her berries remain intact and attractive well after the winter holidays. Eventually after several freeze/thaw cycles, the berries become a slightly softened treat for hungry song birds.

Ilex verticillata 'Nana' is a perfect choice for foundation planting or low hedging. Place her anywhere compact mature height is a consideration, yet maximum impact is a necessity!

She is a Missouri native holly, so she is happy with average soil and variable moisture levels. This deciduous holly (remember this means she drops her leaves) naturally tolerates sites with drainage issues. You can choose her where "pretty" is important, habitat friendly is desirable and where soil erosion might become a problem. She is perfect for rain gardens, but she is also fairly drought tolerant, once established!

She does produce flowers but they are relatively inconspicuous to everyone except her male companion, *Ilex verticillata* 'Jim Dandy.' He needs to be planted nearby to insure good pollination and profuse berry production. Generally only one male winterberry is needed for pollinating 9-10 female 'Nana' plants.

Care Factor Rating: 2. Winterberry must be watered regularly till established. She does **not** require pruning when given adequate space! Flowers and berries develop on the new growth so gently prune her to shape in the early spring before new growth appears. Never ever remove more than 1/3 of the total growth on any shrub at any time! (If you are having to do this—you have a misplaced shrub!) Otherwise remove only the occasional damaged or dead branch any time of the year.

This is a cane shrub that spreads by increasing from the crown/base by producing new shoots from the base annually. This makes her a perfect choice for hedge use or screening. If her individual personality is to remain defined, consider limiting the basal area/spread of this shrub in early spring before the leaves develop. In drier garden soils, she tends to form a tight well defined clump with some basal sprouting that can easily be removed at pruning time.

There are many hybrid cultivars and normal genetic variation available on the market today and more are being introduced



Ilex verticillata 'Nana' (aka 'Red Sprite')—Commonly known as winterberry, this shrub has a profusion of red berries that appear in the fall and last through the holidays, even after the foliage is gone. Photos courtesy of Missouri Botanical Garden Plant Finder.

every year so be sure to do some research and check with local experts for cultural details for this area ! This plant can range in height from 3 feet to 15 feet depending on specific selections. The width of the plant is also variable.

Some of my other favorite winterberry cultivars include *Ilex verticillata* 'Sparkleberry,' *Ilex verticillata* winterberry, *Ilex verticillata* 'Afterglow,' *Ilex verticillata* 'Cacapon,' *Ilex verticillata* 'Maryland Beauty,' *Ilex verticillata* 'Spriber' Berry Nice, *Ilex verticillata* 'Winter Gold,' and *Ilex verticillata* 'Winter Red.' You can find more information about these varieties at www.mobot.org. Search for the Plant Finder page.

Mary Ann Fink is a life-long horticulture practitioner and green industry representative. She shares her best management practices, known as "Show Me Smart Gardening," with professional horticulturists. Fink appreciates the functional and ornamental aspects of native plants for the lower Midwest and encourages their use in the cultivated landscape. She can be reached at maryann@maryannfink.com.



Time to renew your St. Louis Water Gardening Society family membership. Use the enclosed envelope to renew and to update your membership records!



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**Ask Laura Lynne—Photo Tips for the Artist in You
Hunt for Gold**



A brood of baby ducks provide unusual, but wonderful fall color for photographs.



The season of color fades quickly as cascading crispy leaves in muted tones swirl like dancing fairies into clusters that fill every corner of our path. Fall is the time to gather, prepare and ready ourselves for the coming stillness that abides in winter. It's also a time to hunt.

I long to hunt for savory herbs and spices to make a hardy soup. I'm ready to unearth my favorite cozy sweater. As I prepare to release the once tiny abandoned squirrel that I rescued from my dog's mouth, I watch

his eager agility and tenacity in gathering what he needs to prepare for his journey into hibernation.

Unique birds fly overhead on their migration routes and grace us with their attendance at our feeding stations. A hint of autumn remains on an occasional tree or bush packed with berries; the migrating birds will spread their seeds through digestion and flight.

On my hike through the woods I see the desire for reproduction as deer scrape and rub looking for mates. I return with a bevy of burrs clinging with hooks on my once smooth yoga pants—not the best choice in apparel for the brush.

There is an abundance of color everywhere. My sweet Muscovy just hatched her first flock of ducklings. I turn over a stack of wood and find a beautiful fuzzy cocoon with a moth

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Laura Lynne Dyer is a professional photographer and owner of Laura Lynne Designs, Inc. She designs outdoor excursions for her clients, always thinking about the photographic opportunities she creates while installing her works of art. Visit her website at www.lauralynnedesigns.com.