

August–September 2021

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# AKA Reporter



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# AKA Reporter



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For all advertising enquiries please contact Gordon Kilborn 02 9153 9012 or 0429 664 916

**Our cover: Supreme Champion B for this superb Ginrin Matsukawabake at the KSWA Koi Show in Perth.**

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# The Australian Koi Association Inc.

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Patron: Professor Simon Chapman AO PhD FASSA

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Website [www.akakoi.com.au](http://www.akakoi.com.au) Facebook [www.facebook.com/AustralianKoiAssociation](http://www.facebook.com/AustralianKoiAssociation)

## Life Members

Ethel Allen\*; Ian Andrews; Jack Cohen\*; Mary Cohen; Max Farrugia; Ron Farrugia; Barbara and Bryce Hough; Arthur Johnston; Gordon Kilborn; Yvonne Louis; Betty and George Ludbrook; Kate McGill-Andrews; Dorothy Miglionico; Paul Miglionico; Ken Newton; Dave Pogson\*; John Rhodes; Arthur Robinson; Alan Walter\*; Barbara Walter\*; Harry Watson\*; Robert Wood\*; Heinz Zimmermann.  
\*Deceased

## All correspondence

Australian Koi Association, 17 Westmore Drive, West Pennant Hills NSW 2125

# President's Report



Well here we are again in Sydney, all locked down with the COVID-19 Delta strain causing havoc amongst Sydney residents. As for AKA we have had to cancel our July Meeting night as Georges Hall Community Centre automatically closes during any lockdown.

Now that winter has set in, at times our poor koi are lined up like soldiers on the bottom of our ponds. This is a tell-tale sign that their systems have slowed down due to the effects of the colder water, and the principle reason why we should all but cease feeding. Our new North Coast members are no doubt still enjoying pond water temperatures in the mid teens, so they can keep feeding without any concerns—although preferably with a wheatgerm-based foods).

Our next event on our koi calendar will be (COVID-19 permitting) the running of our Annual Young Koi Show, hopefully in September. If we can, we will aim to hold this day at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre. This venue should be perfect, as there is an enclosed comfortable room with adjoining veranda and BBQs to make it a great social day as well.

This show will be held using the clear Japanese judging bags we have successfully used in the past. Two sizes only: Size 2 (200 to 299 mm) and Size 3 (300 to 399 mm). Varieties this year will be Kohaku, Sanke, Showa, Utsuri, Metallic Doitsu, Non Metallic Doitsu, Ogon and Shusui. Prizes of \$200 for GC and \$100 for Reserve, as well as \$50 Variety Champions, should make it a great day out. Lets hope we can make it happen.

It's been quite a while since at our meeting nights we had a glimpse into our members' ponds and setups via our Members' Armchair Pond Tour. I personally think this is a great way for members to get to know each other and to broaden everyone's knowledge on different approaches our hobby can offer. I am very keen to reintroduce this format for every meeting and welcome YOUR contributions in our future meetings. Remember all I need are a few photos beforehand...so give it a go...I'm sure you will enjoy it too! Please contact me to get the ball rolling.

Now that the Sydney Koi Show is behind us we are not far from starting to put together ideas and changes to improve next years Sydney Koi Show. The Show Committee can be easily contacted with any idea you may have.

*Yours in koi*  
*Ian Andrews*  
*President, AKA* ■



**WA Koi Show 2021.**

# AKA News and Events

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## Meetings of the AKA

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Our monthly meetings will be held at the Georges Hall Community Centre. Meetings take place on the second Monday of each month with the exception of December where no meeting will take place. Details of all our meetings are also now 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 9 August 2021

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The next meeting of the AKA will be on Monday 9 August 2021 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. Raffle Draw

Note that any COVID-19 lockdowns will cancel any meeting. ■

## Meeting of the AKA, Monday 13 September 2021

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The next meeting of the AKA will be on Monday 13 September 2021 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. Raffle Draw

Note that any COVID-19 lockdowns will cancel any meeting. ■

## New members

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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).

## Koi food

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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. ■

## AKA's banking details

*Australian Koi Association,  
NAB BSB 082 343  
A/C 8525 90813.*

*Please always enter your  
name on the transaction.*

## 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 25th September 2021 TBA  
Saturday 13th November 2021

Current COVID-19 restrictions as administered by NSW Government means that all these dates are tentative and will be confirmed or cancelled at a date closer to the auction date.

### IMPORTANT CHANGE TO AKA AUCTION VENUE

New venue for AKA auctions is Fairfield City Showground (bottom of markets) Smithfield Road, Prairiewood.

Entrance to auction: Main entrance is drive through to Gate 13, keep driving until you see entrance to the car park for the auction area on the right. Alternatively the back entrance is the entrance closest to the golf course. Follow around until you see the entrance to the car park and our area on your left.

## Reminder to all AKA Members

*(except those who recently joined) that the Annual Membership fee of \$30.00 was due on 1 July 2021. Please pay either by cheque made out to Australian Koi Association, in person, or preferably by EFT to NAB BSB 082 343 A/C 8525 90813. Remember to enter your name on the transaction.*

*Further details Heinz 0428 478 594*

## KSA Auction Dates

Saturday 4th September TBA  
Saturday 23rd October  
Saturday 4th December

Current Covid-19 restrictions as administered by Auburn 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 AUCTION

August Auction **CANCELLED!**

**NEW VENUE!**

Fairfield City Showground, Smithfield Road PRAIREWOOD NSW

**Bookings: Contact Heinz Zimmerman 0428 478 594**





# AKA Mid Northern Region, Coffs Harbour

## June meeting—koi autopsy

Our June meeting was excellent and very well attended to include guests from KSA (both the President and the Treasurer).

We were fortunate to have a local fish based veterinarian, Dr Duane March (right), attend to talk with us on a variety of fish disease-related matters—common diseases, symptoms, diagnosis and identification, treatment and of course the water column and transmission...see the diagram below.

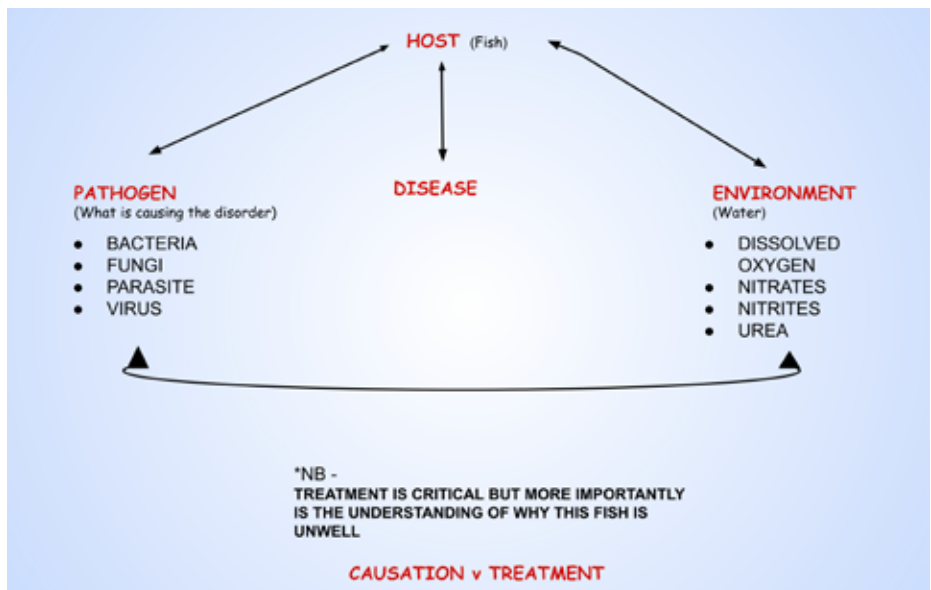
Dr March then went on to perform two autopsies as we fortunately, (not so for the fish regrettably), had fish available where an autopsy was invaluable in determining cause of death (COD).

With fish #1 the owner believed he knew the likely COD, while with fish #2 it was necessary to euthanise a living fish that was badly deformed (scoliosis) to determine COD and contributing factors.

Fish #1 provided unforeseen COD factors, (peritonitis) and confirmed a significantly large abdominal tumour.



**Veterinarian Dr Duane March talking on koi diseases.**





Fish #2 again provided further unforeseen anatomical surprises and showed a fish with numerous complications for which the causes could only be guessed at but were believed to arise from severe blunt force trauma. There was considerable and severe spinal injury, swim bladder compromise, together with significant other organ displacement and difficulty.

To enable optimised viewing by all members we had secured the services (on-site) of Coffs Harbour's leading audio visual company ('INSPIRED AUDIO VISUAL') who set up the projection and film capture necessary to relay this

event to the big screen as it were.

They did an outstanding job—as did of course Dr March.

It was a first for us and one that was enthusiastically received as it took a lot of what we thought we knew a step further by educating us, taught us new techniques or confirmed what we were already doing.

Additionally we had the pleasure of forming new friendships with an outstanding local vet, our KSA guests as well as a vital A/V connection (pun intended). ■

# Tribute to Dr Takeo Kuroki

On the morning of 25 March 2003, Dr Takeo Kuroki died in his hometown of Beppu-City, Japan.

Dr Kuroki had a fulfilled and successful life. He was born a hundred years ago on 8th July 1921. He studied medicine at Kyushu University and finished his studies with a degree as specialist in orthopedics.

He became the founder and CEO of what is today known as the 'Kuroki Memorial Hospital' at Kasugaki Shohaen.

Despite his sons later taking over the management of the hospital, he still worked there daily, almost to his life's end. However, he became known worldwide because of his koi hobby.



He is the founder of a Japanese koi magazine known today as *Nichirin*, which is now printed in both English and Japanese, and mailed monthly to all ZNA members worldwide.

Dr Kuroki also published several books on koi keeping and evaluation. Particularly known is *Manual to Nishikigoi* and *Modern Nishikigoi*.

We also owe to him the uniform, internationally-known koi names. Previously it was complicated to get an understanding, as in Japanese—and also in English—there were often several names for the same koi variety.

Dr Kuroki was also very successful and well known for using the koi as a symbol for friendship and international understanding. Brazil honored him in 1982 with the order 'Honorifica Orden Academica de Sao Francisco' for his efforts in cultural exchange and development between Japan and Brazil.

With Dr Kuroki's passing the koi world lost an important man who worked most of his life intensively and enthusiastically for the development of the koi hobby.

His legacy lives on today in the organisation he founded, Zen Nippon Airinkai (ZNA) and the koi hobby has continued to grow worldwide. It is hoped that its strength will continue to unite koi hobbyists through friendship, koi keeping and mutual understanding. ■

## Founding of the ZNA

In 1957 Dr Kuroki began keeping koi. In 1962 he founded the 'Oita Airinkai Koi Club' in Beppu, Oita, Japan and became its chairman. The activities of the club spread greatly into the other areas in Japan under his ideas to pursue the beauty of nishikigoi. In 1965 the koi club developed as 'Nishinohon Airinkai' in the western area of Japan, and before long it was established as an all-Japan association, or Zen Nippon Airinkai, that has chapters located in all the prefectures in Japan.

Around that time there were several koi organisations in Japan. Dr Kuroki realized that a united, umbrella organisation would be of great importance in order for koi advancement and exhibition, etc. In 1962, this became the internationally known Zen Nippon Airinkai (ZNA). Dr Kuroki was its first chairman, serving until 1991, and built it up during his time to a worldwide organisation. He had countless contacts with koi enthusiasts the world over.

After a serious cardiac operation in 1990, he retired as Chairman of ZNA, but was nominated as Honorable Chairman, and still contributed actively to the organisation. He was continually striving to inform the koi enthusiast in Japan and overseas about the best koi keeping. He also participated in many koi shows, not only as a judge, but also as a very successful exhibitor.

# The Koi Society of Western Australia Show 2021

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*Kate McGill-Andrews*

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Ian and I anxiously watched the news every day during the week before the scheduled date for the Koi Society of Western Australia Show (KSWA) this year, since a few COVID-19 hot spots had appeared again, one in Bondi, Sydney. However, the border to WA remained open and we had no cancellation notices so by Friday, we thought we actually were going to make it! We travelled to Perth on Saturday morning, everyone in the airport and plane masked—a current requirement likely to be in place for a long time to come, if not permanently. Actually disembarking in Perth was something new also, what you might expect in historical times travelling to somewhere behind the Iron Curtain. Police everywhere, huge entry forms (G2G) to fill in, heaps of questions asked! We finally were given the green light, collected our bags (thankfully both arrived—always a worry for me) and found a taxi to take us to Guildford, the suburb we were staying in.

We were quite happy to look after ourselves that afternoon; we know from long experience how frantic show set-up usually is! Always a drama or three for the crew to sort out.

Guildford was only about twenty minutes from the airport, a rather quaint little town in its own right, with many period buildings and a lot of antique shops! We were rather surprised at the almost total lack of any other kind of store in the area—unless they were elsewhere? We stayed at the Rose and Crown, a very attractive hotel, meeting John and Leanne Zammit there, also over for the show. John has decided to begin judge training. We joined them both for breakfast the next day and John very kindly drove us to the show held at a local boutique brewery, Elmars in the Valley, only about ten minutes from where we were staying. It was a cloudy morning, but calm and dry, luckily remaining so all day. The sun came and went, to be honest; it was easier to see the koi when the clouds came over! The venue was lovely, a grassy area under several trees at the back of the main



**(1) Kate with the KSWA team.**

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**(2) A dedicated photographer.**

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**(3) Hard at work.**

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brewery buildings (photos 1 and 2). Fifty bins held just under three hundred koi (293), the largest number being in size 5 (71). It was going to be a bit of a marathon to judge! I did not change my opinion on my first circuit of the bins in search of Grand Champion candidates with trainees Spencer Tan and John Zammit (photo 3). Quality of the koi was very high and there were several contenders in the running for GC, including a Kumonryu, Shiro Utsuri, Showa, Sanke and Kohaku. After very



**(4) WA Grand Champion Kohaku.**

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**(5) Young Champion.**

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**(6) Supreme A Champion Showa.**



**(7) Supreme Champion B Gin Rin Matsukawabake.**



**(8) Superb 93 cm Kumonryu takes out Jumbo and Kawarimono Variety Champion.**



**(9) Variety Champion Hikarimuji.**



**(10) Beautiful Platinum Ogon.**



**(11). Mature Champion B Tanchō Sanke.**



**(12) Variety Champion Koromo.**



**(13) Mature Champion A Shiro Utsuri.**



**(14) Variety Champion Hikarmoyo Kikusui.**

careful consideration and with the agreement of my trainees, I finally selected the Kohaku (photo 4). At 78 cm she wasn't the largest of the five koi shortlisted but had an excellent figure, beautiful lustrous skin, pure white (shiroji) and strong, homogeneous red (hi). Her nose hi (kutchibeni) was charming, as was the 'beret style' hi on her head.

A change to the judging order of previous shows followed and I was asked to select the young champions from the winners of the on-going table shows next; champion A (Kohaku, Sanke, Showa and Shiro Utsuri), champion B (most

other varieties), champion Kin-Gin-Rin and champion doitsu, finally selecting an overall Young Champion koi. This competition is very important to KSWA members as it reflects recent koi breeding skills. The final winner was a lovely and very well-grown Sanke, with an excellent conformation and skin quality (photo 5).

We then continued judging the rest of the show entries, beginning with two awards we do not field for the Sydney Koi Show; Supreme A and B. In WA these two awards replace our reserve GCA and GC B. Supreme A is given to the best of the remaining Go-Sanke (including Shiro Utsuri) and Supreme B to the best non-

Go-Sanke. All sizes may be considered. The high quality Showa short-listed for GC took Supreme A (photo 6) and a superb Gin Rin Matsukawabake was a must for Supreme B (photo 7). It would be difficult to find a more stunning koi of this variety. Jumbo Champion was an outstanding Kumonryu showing a perfect figure and sumi like polished coal (photo 8).

With a short break for morning tea and later for a quick lunch, we continued until close of judging at about 3.30pm. A marathon



**(15) Variety Champion Kin Gin Rin A.**

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**(16) Variety Champion Asagi.**

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**(17) Variety Champion Bekko.**

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**(18) Judge's Award Best Novice bin.**

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**(19) Trainee question time.**

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**(21) AKA Friendship Award to a quality 70 cm male kohaku.**

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indeed, but a very enjoyable one with some very memorable koi involved. For example, a truly beautiful Gin Matsuba (photo 9) and a Platinum Ogon (photo 10); rare to see these varieties at all, let alone examples so clean and well finished. A lovely Tancho Sanke (photo 11) also caught my eye; another koi not often seen to such a high standard plus the variety champion Koromo was an excellent youngster with a lot of promise (photo 12). Impossible to mention all the lovely koi seen at the show (photos 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 show some examples); I thoroughly enjoyed

every minute of the judging, long day though it was, finishing with selection of my judge's award; given to the best novice exhibitor at the show (photo 18). We must have walked quite a few kilometres (photo 19)! The day closed with a lovely dinner at an Italian restaurant and a chance to relax and discuss the show at leisure. I had no time to visit the vendors and bonsai exhibition at the show (photo 20), but Ian took time out from his photography to do so and bought two koi to ship back to Sydney! Ian also selected a koi for the AKA Friendship award;





**(20) Exhibit by the WA Bonsai Society.**

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**(25) Ping Chang receives the AKA Friendship Award from Ian.**

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deciding upon an attractive and well finished 70 cm male Kohaku (photo 21).

We had two more days in Guildford and on the Monday Paul and Wendy Middleton took us for an excursion around Fremantle (neither Ian or I had been there before) with a visit to the famous prison (photo 22)—perhaps I should say infamous—it was quite a grisly place, only retired from active use in the 90s. We saw the tiny cells, without any ventilation, where prisoners actually suffocated in the early days before space was increased; the room with a drop-down floor where hangings took place, again, until relatively recently; the small, grim concrete yards (photo 23) where prisoners were turned out winter and summer in all weathers without shelter. Our guide was incredibly knowledgeable and gave us many



**(22) Impressive entrance to Fremantle Prison.**

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**(23) One of the prisoners exercise yards. The cover was a later addition for tourists.**

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**(24) The lovely GC trophy goes to Allan Bennett.**

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anecdotes about life in the prison throughout its history. I am pretty certain I could not have survived the conditions. It was a sobering experience, visiting the prison, although at the same time, exceptionally interesting, we were grateful for the opportunity to see it. Paul and Wendy took us for a late lunch before returning us to our hotel to prepare for the awards dinner that evening held at the Swan Valley Brewery, another excellent venue providing a delicious meal. I really enjoyed discovering the owners of all the superb koi I had selected the day



**(26) Red, red rocks at Cape Leveque.**

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**(27) On the road to Cape Leveque 3 hours each way of nothing much.**

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**(28) Some of the miscellaneous collection of waterfowl at the bird park.**

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**(29) The famous Cable Beach camels.**

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before and particularly, presenting the Grand Champion trophy to Allan Bennett (photo 24)—he has worked so hard, for so long, to improve the standard of koi in WA and has succeeded incredibly well. Ian presented the AKA Friendship award to Ping Chang (photo 25).

We were lucky on the Tuesday to be able to spend the day with Allan and Julie, long-time friends we don't see often enough. In the morning Allan took us to visit the new state-of-the-art museum in Perth—quite an experience—it is huge! We were advised to start on the top floor, which we did, with a walk around the pre-historical and geological sections showing us basically all the rocks and minerals Australia is built from. The vast display included models and skeletons of dinosaurs, their footprint casts, an enormous tooth from the largest ever shark plus a model of the beast's head—it could have swallowed anyone whole without even noticing it! Every floor was fascinating, working through history towards the time WA was first populated. The morning just disappeared. We could have happily spent hours more exploring the place, but we also wanted to have time to spend chatting to Julie at home plus visiting Allan's numerous koi ponds!

Dinner that evening saw the end to our time

in Perth, next morning we boarded the plane for a new adventure—three days in Broome, somewhere neither of us had ever explored before but have heard a lot about. Our first afternoon and evening was very much a reconnaissance, trying to get our bearings and find some shopping. We had decided just to eat at our lodgings that night, as there were cooking facilities—if we could find some food to buy! We never discovered a centre to Broome that afternoon, we walked forever, I asked several people for directions to a supermarket and we finally ended up back close to the airport in a small complex which sported a Woolworths. Suitably armed with pizza and various other goodies, we trekked back to our B&B, cooked our dinner and collapsed, absolutely exhausted! Broome so far was a bit of a puzzle, no obvious centre, a lot of vacant land with small communities set here, there and everywhere in between. Although it was not long since the end of the rains (April), everywhere looked very dry and dusty, mostly scrubland, very few trees in evidence. A few gardens were quite nicely maintained but generally the properties we walked past that afternoon appeared sadly in need of TLC!

We were up very early the next morning to catch the tour bus taking us to Cape Leveque. This was the one excursion we had booked



**(30) A take home memory, the boab trees are pretty amazing.**

ourselves on, (unfortunately the horizontal waterfall tours were all full), and our neighbours at home had recommended Cape Leveque as worth seeing. I cannot say, at the end of that day that we honestly agreed! Yes, the Cape itself was quite dramatic with interesting rocks and a nice beach (photo 26) and yes, we enjoyed a visit to a pearl farm on our way there but the trip itself was effectively six hours of not very comfortable nothing (photo 27)! Flat, dry landscape, not a tree in sight, just scrub in every direction as far as you could see. Rather disappointing. If we could have gained a place on the aircraft option to fly back to Broome the tour would have been more enjoyable, but again, that was full, unfortunately. So...it was a case of 'been there, done that', (probably never again)!

On our last full day in Broome we had a car and so could obtain a better idea of the layout of the place. However, we first travelled out of the town to investigate a bird park we had seen a brochure for. It turned out to be well

worth a visit; I have never seen so many parrot species plus many other ducks, geese, chickens, pheasants, finches, even emus were represented (photo 28). They were all well kept and we especially enjoyed the small wild birds ducking into the cages through the wire to steal a meal!

The rest of the day was spent looking around Broome—yes we did find a small shopping centre eventually—a lot of it was being renovated and the whole place confirmed our view that however the town had begun its life, there had been a lot of 'add on' communities over time without much planning. The town sprawled over a huge area. We explored the coast; very interesting cliffs with huge upended rock slabs and tried to decide if some huge holes down at water level were actually the prehistoric dinosaur footprints advertised to be in the area. Finally, we made our way to the famous Cable Beach with its camel rides (photo 29) and attendant row of cafes—all very full of tourists. Cable Beach is huge with beautiful firm sand interspersed with rocky stretches. Unfortunately that day the weather was very unkind with an almost gale-force wind, a lot of cloud cover and pretty cool temperatures for Broome—not the best day to enjoy a beach! Our plan of a glass of wine and watching the sunset did not quite work out.

Saturday, of course, dawned bright, clear, calm and warm again—naturally—this was the day we were flying home! We had the morning free so visited the open-air market before heading back to Cable Beach for a last look around, certainly it made a much better impression on a bright day. We had our lunch there before heading to the airport to catch our flight home. Take home memories of Broome? The occasional trees were fascinating, the boabs of the Northern Territories with their hugely swollen trunks (photo 30). The rocky coast was quite spectacular and the beaches lovely, however we did not find Broome itself had a great deal to offer and was not particularly attractive—more of a jumping-off point for many tours of the interior, all too far away for us to explore on our short trip. Perhaps another time!

Before closing, on behalf of Ian and myself I wholeheartedly thank the KSWA committee and members for making us so welcome during our time in Perth and looking after us so well. We very much look forward to our next visit! ■

*(Photographs courtesy Ian Andrews and Jun Hun Gou.)*

# 2021 Dave Pogson Memorial Breeders Trophy

At our June general meeting we once again held our annual Dave Pogson Breeders Trophy, with a somewhat lower number of entrants this year, possibly to the later time in the year it was held, as a number of our AKA breeders have their better young koi growing on in warm heated water and removing them to the cold temperatures of winter would possibly cause some issues. Thank you to those that did exhibit 10 koi from their last breeding season. Most tanks had at least one 'show quality' koi and many exhibitors had more than one.

The award was set up to remember one of our hardest-working, most knowledgeable and original founders of our club, Dave Pogson. He was very keen that members strived to improve the overall quality of our koi here in Australia and the award night is a legacy to his efforts.

Paul Miglionico and Lee Nguyen judged on the night and were in agreement, selecting a vat containing quality Kinginrin Showas and Ginrin Shiro Utsuris. Congratulations to Kim and Tai Trieu, winners of the 2021 Dave Pogson Breeders Trophy.

Also on the night we saw the Jack Cohen Memorial Trophy, which again was put in place to remember and celebrate one of our special members. The award was awarded to a lovely Ginrin Shiro Utsuri also owned by Kim and Tai Trieu.

Congratulations to all our breeders, your efforts in striving to improve the quality of your koi will contribute to the long-term betterment of koi in Australia and our club. We all look forward to seeing these koi at future shows. ■





# Membership application/renewal

All details are kept confidential and will only be used by the AKA for the purpose of keeping in touch with you.

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 Email zimmo55@yahoo.com.au

EFT Details:  
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 (Please add your name)

# Appreciating Asagi and Shusui

Kate McGill-Andrews

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## Introducing Asagi and Shusui

To begin, an Asagi is a blue-coloured, or blue-grey, fully scaled koi with a netting pattern (*vignette*) all over its body in a darker shade of blue. Variability of these two colours can be quite marked between different koi. The head of an Asagi is generally very pale blue, grey or white. Additionally, Asagi may demonstrate red (*hi*) in quite a range of styles but most typically around the nose and cheeks, at the base of the pectoral fins (*motoaka*) and along each side of the koi below the lateral line (photo 1). Red tends to increase with age although some Asagi have no red patterns at all (photo 2).

Shusui are identical in all respects except one. Shusui are *doitsu*, meaning they show only two lines of scales along the dorsal ridge plus sometimes a row along the lateral lines



Pic 1. A classic Narumi Asagi.



Pic 2. A very clean Asagi with only a touch of hi in the tail.

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(*kagamigoi*). Therefore the netting pattern only occurs within the scales, the rest of the body is a single colour blue, with or without additional red patterns. Although some doitsu koi are completely scaleless (*kawagoi*), Shusui are expected to have the two dorsal scale lines as a variety characteristic (photo 3).

## Some history

Asagi are recognised as being the oldest variety of koi, first recorded around 150–200 years ago, arising from the very dark blue/black Asagi Magoi type of wild carp and gradually becoming lighter in colour through Konjo and Narumi to Mizu, the lightest shade or 'water Asagi'. Netting patterns can vary between Konjo and Narumi Asagi; Konjo netting appearing on the outer one third of scales (photo 4), like that of Koromo and Goshiki (developed from Asagi originally). Conversely, Narumi Asagi exhibit the darker



**Pic 3. Beautiful clean Shusui with excellent scaling and interesting, although minimal hi.**



**Pic 4. Reverse vignette, dark scale borders on this Hi Asagi.**



**Pic 5. This Shusui is bent to the left.**



**Pic 6. A well-shaped young Shusui with no visible hi.**



**Pic 7. A pale, elegant Asagi.**



**Pic 10. Rather uneven scaling on this Asagi.**



**Pic 8. Our Gin-Rin Yuki or Snow Asagi in 2016.**



**Pic 9. Same koi in 2018.**





**Pic 11.** Full Gin-Rin scaling has blurred the vignette.



**Pic 12** Gin Rin scale borders or kado gin.



**Pic 13.** Shusui showing redundant scales and a dark forehead.



**Pic 14.** Black spots and stains spoil the appearance of this Shusui.



Pic 15. The so-called red hands are very dramatic.



Pic 16. An Asagi with an unusual head pattern.



Pic 17. Interesting head pattern on this Hi Shusui.



Pic 18. A lovely Hana Shusui pattern.



**Pic 19. Beautiful and unusual Hana style hi patterns on this Shusui.**



**Pic 20. A true Hana Shusui with perfect scale lines.**

colour as a wedge in the centre of each scale, leaving a pale border (see photo 1). This style is mirrored on koi like Matsuba and Kujaku.

Shusui were developed later, with the advent of European Mirror Carp in Japan. The first Shusui is credited to Mr Kichigoro Akiyama around 1911, produced by crossing Asagi with the doitsu European carp. Today, doitsu koi appear in practically every variety, but Shusui was probably the very first doitsu koi.

### **What should our Asagi and Shusui look like?**

Both varieties must have an excellent body shape or conformation. The ideal shape demonstrates a rounded nose and broad forehead leading to the widest part of the koi between the gill plate and the leading edge of the dorsal fin (see photo 1). From this point a gradual, bilaterally symmetrical tapering to a well-muscled tail (*peduncle*) is the ideal. Common faults are a narrow, triangular head with a pointed nose and a tail area too thin for the rest of the koi. A big belly or any inequality between the flanks—a bend or possible tumour—cannot look elegant (photo 5).

Obviously, young koi are always slimmer overall, but they should still look neatly in proportion (photo 6). Looking at the koi side on, the back should express a gentle curve upwards from the head. A flat or concave back is undesirable and may be associated with a sagging belly.

There is some variability in base colours on Asagi and Shusui. Beginning with the head however, both really need to show a very light colour, as close to white as possible with no spots or stains (see photo 3). Many Asagi and Shusui in Australia suffer from dark grey heads (see photo 11 and 13)—these koi really should be culled early as they rarely change, although some hobbyists believe if the nose of a very young Asagi or Shusui is white, the rest of the head will follow in time—unfortunately not often in our experience!

The body colour of an Asagi depends upon two criteria; the colour of the vignette pattern plus the base skin colour between and at the edges of scales. A large contrast between the two provides the most dramatic finish, especially if the vignette is very sharply focused within each scale area (see photo 1). However, even when the two colours are more closely matched, a very elegant Asagi

can result, as long as the vignette is clear (photo 7). Interestingly, when selecting young Asagi, we have found (to our cost) you really need to look for very pale colours as colour deepens with time—certainly with our Australian lines. An interesting example is given by a snow white (*Yuki*) Gin-Rin Asagi Ian selected some years ago. This koi is now a regular, quite dark blue Asagi, although still an attractive one (photos 8 and 9).

The take home message here is that the critical variety characteristic of an Asagi is the clarity of its vignette plus how neatly the scales are lined up (photo 10). Actual colour is of less importance. Always remember, full kin-gin-rin scaling on any Asagi is quite valid (Kin-Gin-Rin B class), adding another difficulty in achieving an excellent vignette, because the kin-gin-rin scaling can blur it (photo 11). However, when the kin-gin-rin is on scale borders only (*kado gin*), this problem does not arise and the result can look very elegant. Such koi are not classified as Kin-Gin-Rin (photo 12).

Because Shusui have a maximum of four lines of scales, the actual base skin colour is more obvious and ideally looks a very pale blue (see photo 3) although pale grey or even almost white are acceptable. Criteria for the vignette match those for Asagi. Shusui unfortunately often demonstrate odd, large redundant scales, between dorsal and lateral scale lines (photo 13), typically appearing on the shoulders, or have part of the dorsal scale line missing altogether. Both issues are undesirable. Another commonly seen base colour problem for Shusui is the development of small black spots, interfering with the lovely clean finish required for this variety (photo 14).

## Looking at the red (*hi*) patterns

Most Asagi and Shusui have additional red (*hi*) patterns and ideally the colour should be very bright. 'Shusui bire' (Shusui fire) is a term I am sure, hobbyists will have heard of? Original hi patterns for both Asagi and Shusui appeared around the nose and cheeks and along both sides of the koi below the lateral line (see photo 9). Red in all fins is common for both Asagi and Shusui and quite acceptable, very appealing if only the joints show red, for example motoaka in the pectoral fins, or the entire pectoral fin is red (photo 15). As Asagi and Shusui age, red tends to increase, creeping up over the back (see photo 4), occasionally taking over completely resulting in an Aka Matsuba.

Over time, more interesting hi patterns have appeared, on the head particularly (photos 16 and 17). The most desirable Shusui pattern is the Hana style, where two wavy lines of red appear between the dorsal and lateral scale lines, not touching either. These lines may be either continuous along each side or appear as smaller blocks of hi (photos 18 and 19). If hi is more extensive (see photo 17) the koi is called a Hi Shusui. The Hana pattern seems to be especially prized in Japan; on visiting shows we have seen Shusui with inferior scaling win if the Hana pattern was superb (see photo 18). Rather confusing when we are taught how important the complete, neat scale lines are for this variety (photo 20)!

As mentioned, Asagi and Shusui may have minimal or no hi patterns at all (see photos 2 and 6). If all other features are excellent; good shape, clear skin, a perfectly focused, neatly aligned vignette, they are still very worthy of appreciation. ■

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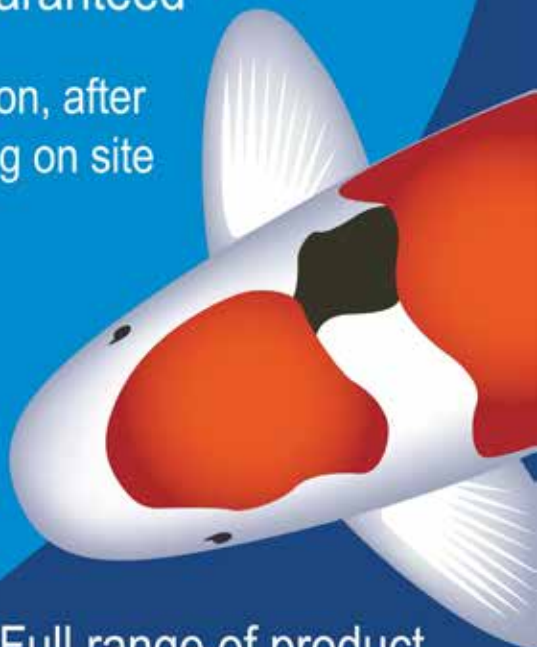
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