

Meet the Dealer

Tim Waddington of UKNishikigoi

With more than 20 years' experience in the koi industry, Tim Waddington is the driving force behind UKNishikigoi Ltd



Tell us about your facilities

We believe we have one of the best and most modern facilities in the UK/Europe. Our main indoor pond is 10,000 gallons. Then we have four smaller ponds all of which are 2000 gallons. The indoor ponds are where we keep our high class and Jumbo koi. We then have a further four smaller ponds outside the main shop where we sell baby koi at lower prices – but they are still good quality koi.

Our main outdoor polytunnel, which is our quarantine facility, has seven ponds ranging from 7500 gallons down to 2000 gallons, with a total of over 25,000 gallons.

We also have a concrete sided pond with a clay base which holds around 200,000 gallons. This will be covered by a polythene structure to keep high temperatures during the spring and summer months. We will use this to grow on both our own koi and our clients' koi that have been purchased from us.

Over the back area of the property we then have room for four 100m x 7m four-span poly tunnels with one pond in each. This will be used for us to grow on stocks from Japan. When we have finished we will have over 1,000,000 gallons of water!

Along with the many koi we already have, we also have a full range of dry goods. We are a Hikari Saki premier dealer as well as an Evolution Aqua master dealer.

What is it that you love about koi?

I have worked with koi all my life, I have travelled to Japan almost 40 times and I couldn't imagine myself doing anything else. It's a fantastic industry to be part of. I get to see and sell the best koi on the planet, what could be better? And dealing with a full range of koi keepers day in day out is great.

Are you part of any professional koi organisations? If so, how do these



organisations benefit dealers and koi keepers?

I am part of the Shinkokai which is the Japanese Dealers Association.

I think the best thing we have which benefits us here at UKNishikigoi is the work we have done and continue to do with Cefas (Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science). UKNishikigoi is one of the very few, if not the only, koi outlet within the UK to be fully tested by Cefas, and we can export koi all over the world with our authorisation from them. We work very closely with Cefas all year round and get frequent visits from the fish health inspectorate.

As an approved farm we are monitored annually for SVC disease (visceral samples are taken from 30 fish at random and the sample is then processed at the laboratory using cell culture techniques). As an approved farm you are only allowed to receive stocks from sources that are from zones that are free from SVC and have health certification to verify this.

How do you feel the industry has

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changed since you first opened your doors?

The industry has changed a great deal. It's now much harder than it was. There is a lot of competition within the market and cheap is what the majority of people are looking for. So it makes higher end koi almost impossible to sell. Unless you sell things at what they cost you then you will be known as a rip off etc. It's tough.

It's also changed in the fact that I now sell koi all over the world. Since UKNishikigoi started we have already sent koi to France, America, South Africa, Malta and Cyprus. It seems to be really growing in countries where before it was unheard of. We are also now supplying many dealers throughout Europe. It's a busy time.

What would you say is the most important aspect of running a koi dealership?

Service. You must offer a good service to clients and get return business. Return business is by far the most important thing to keep any business going. I have been dealing with some of my customers for over ten years.

The koi industry has seen many new products that have revolutionised the hobby. What do you consider to be the most innovative product in the last ten years?

I grew up on huge filters which took up more room than the actual pond. Chambers of brushes and sludge-filled Japanese matting chambers which required days to clean them, and you got covered in whatever the media was covered in!

Nexus and K1 have changed that. It amazes me when people come into the shop and ask about filters and then look at a Nexus 300 and say, "That's huge!" If they had seen the previous method of filtration they would have been really shocked! They are so compact for the work they do. A unit like the Nexus 300 filtering 7500 gallons is quite amazing, and they do the job perfectly.

How often do you travel to Japan?

We travel to Japan two or maybe three times per year to buy stocks.

How has your relationship with



Further information:

Find out more about UKNishikigoi Ltd at www.uknishikigoi.com. Alternatively you can contact Tim by telephoning **01744 850276**, or emailing info@uknishikigoi.com.

Japanese breeders enhanced your enjoyment of the hobby?

For myself it's one of the best things about working in the koi industry. There's nothing better than arriving in Japan and catching up with the breeders. There's hardly anyone in the Niigata region I haven't been to or know from various events like shows etc. I'm lucky to have a social relationship with most of them so frequent nights out are always fantastic! I even play a few of them on the Xbox!

On our first trip to Japan as UKNishikigoi we managed to sell Toshio Sakai's very best two-year-old Sanke, Yamamatsu's very best three-year-old Kohaku, Yozaimon's best five-year-old Showa and many more. We have great relationships with the breeders.

Do you specialise in any particular variety of koi?

We try and specialise in all koi really. If they are good examples we will always try and buy them if the price is right for us and our clients. None Go-Sanke are slowly becoming more expensive than Go-Sanke. Finding good examples of none Go-Sanke is getting harder and harder.

How do you enhance your customers' enjoyment of the hobby?

We are a 'proper' koi outlet and it may sound strange but there are not many of us around these days. Many people now sell their fish from the gardens of their houses and you need to ring in advance to make sure someone is on hand to see you. Some people have told me that they feel awkward and pressured into buying koi in this kind of situation. I hope UKNishikigoi will offer a relaxing environment where clients can walk in and walk out at their leisure.

This year alone we have imported over 5000 koi. We can offer the very best value for money koi by far, and the very best and biggest selection of koi in the UK. This factor alone should increase the enjoyment for true koi enthusiasts.

Do you have any advice for our readers?

My only advice is something that mostly everyone knows. Don't cut corners when it comes to koi keeping. It may be cheaper short term but not in the long term. 鯉



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