

Alpine Aquascapes

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BeforeTwo pieces of 20-inch drainage tile form the basis for the land bridge, which allows water to flow from one side of the pond to the other. One of two waterfalls flanking the pond fills a stream landscaped with large rocks. When it comes to doing ponds, we've done and heard of everything to naturalize a pond. From using native plantings to finding driftwood, we're always looking at ways to blend our ponds into the landscape.

Perhaps our favorite project, however, has to be the land bridge. We created a land bridge with a flagstone patio, seating area, two waterfalls, two streams and, of course, a pond.

The Hall Family wanted a water feature to spruce up the back yard. Alpine introduced the land bridge to the family after learning about land bridges from Tony Alcala and Lucas Henry of Aquascape Designs Inc. The original design was for a wooden bridge, and they let us install the land bridge instead.

To make a land bridge: Choose and mark out a site connecting two sections of the pond. We used two 20-inch sections of drain tile. Excavate the area and set the drain tile. The top of the pipe should sit a few inches below grade to allow for decorative gravel or sod coverage. Set the drain tile so that the water level comes 3 to 6 inches below the top of the opening to allow debris and surface water to flow through. Once the liner is laid, fill the land bridge area with 2 to 4 inches of gravel to absorb the impact from the edges of the drain tile. For extra support and protection, you can lay slender pieces of stone under the edges of the pipe. Then begin placing rocks in your bridge. Finish your rockwork and disguise the edges of the drain tile with stone. Cover the ridge with decorative stone, mulch or sod. When all was over and done with, the Halls had a backyard haven with a pond that lures you into a sense of sanctuary. Their new 'living room' is a tranquil blend of streams and waterfalls all working together to create the ultimate escape from the daily grind.

Specifications

Designer/Installer: Alpine Aquascapes Inc., Steve Parker, Certified Aquascape Contractor

Contact Information: (281) 578-0627, www.backyardcreations.org

Location: Katy, Texas

Dimensions: The 25- by 11-foot pond features two streams; one 16-foot stream, one 12-foot stream. The flagstone pathway is 4 feet wide and 15 feet long, with a 12- by 14-foot sitting area. The land bridge is 4 feet wide. There are underwater lights in the pond and landscape lights along the perimeter.

Volume: 1,600 gallons of water in waterfalls, pond and streams.

Construction: Underlayment material and 45-mil EPDM rubber liner were used for the pond, streams and waterfalls. Two 20-inch sections of drain tile were used for the land bridge.

Filtration: The filter system is an Aquascape Designs with a standard skimmer, two mini Bio-falls, a 4500 pump and a 3000 pump.

Each issue, Water Garden News will showcase a noteworthy water feature. Featured submissions from designers/installers will receive a certificate of recognition and \$250. To submit a water feature, please send multiple photos of the water feature, a brief description (about 100 words) about what makes the feature special and any challenges inherent in the design or installation of the feature, and a list of specifications, including designer's name; location of pond; size and depth of water feature; equipment and accessories used in feature (liner, filters, pumps, etc.); number of hours to construct the pond; material costs or retail price of the pond; and other interesting features. We will try to return photos but we do not assume responsibility for submitted materials. Submissions will be featured solely at the editor's discretion. Please send to: Water Garden News, Designer Showcase, 3 Burroughs, Irvine, Calif., 92618 or email to tbarthel@bowtieinc.com.