

Fall Pond Care Guide

Preparing your pond for winter is one of the most important maintenance processes you can do to ensure the health of the biological systems and the life your pond equipment. A well-treated pond will "winter" better and take less time and less treatment to start-up in the Spring, reducing long-term maintenance cost. Follow these three simple steps to ensure the health of your pond through the winter and reduce future pond maintenance.

1 - Clean

Remove leaves and dead organic matter from pond with a skimmer net, organic matter will decompose causing toxic gases that may harm fish and create additional sludge in pond. Rinse heavy organic matter out your pond filter mats/brushes with a hose. Be careful not to scrub aggressively and over-clean the filter mats or brushes, you may unintentionally remove beneficial bacteria colonies.

Never use soap or any type of cleaner as this will also harm the fish and plants. Keep an eye on your skimmer and dump the skimmer net out several times per week when leaves are falling and blowing. If you have biological material in your filter box, place the bio-media in the bottom of pond in a mesh bag to preserve the bacteria through the winter. It's also recommended to introduce All-Season Bacteria to the pond to help breakdown sludge build up during the winter.



2 - Protect

The surface of your pond can be covered with netting to prevent the majority of leaves from entering the pond and decomposing. Keep the pond netting on through the fall and winter and remove in the spring. Wood stakes or PVC framing help hold up pond netting, keeping it taut above the water. In climates where water temperatures will fall below 55° use Cold Water Koi & Goldfish Food to prepare the fish's metabolism for the winter. When temperatures drop to 40° stop feeding your fish all together, as their metabolism and immune system slows down to the point where typical digestion is not possible. If pond is less than 18" deep leaving the fish outdoors is not recommended.



3 - Prevent

Ice formations in ponds can be deadly to fish because they not only block out sunlight from streaming into the pond, they also prevent gases from escaping through the surface. This is where an aeration system plays a big part in keeping your pond healthy year-round. By using a diffused aeration system you are not only pumping oxygen into the water but the boiling action created by the air maintains an opening in the ice allowing gases to escape. Ice acts as an insulator keeping the pond water from cooling off too much yet maintaining a small area of open water will provide enough of a vent to prevent winter-kill. To ensure the longevity of your pond equipment, disconnect pumps, water fill valves and UV lights. Place pumps in a bucket of water and store at room temperature to prevent seals from cracking, drain remaining water out of valves and fittings and store all removable equipment inside at room temperature.

