

FEDERATION OF BRITISH AQUATIC SOCIETIES

Pond Care Sheet No 10 : Pond Maintenance

4/7/2003

SPRING

Check out the pump and fountain, etc. Make sure the filter is working; replace the filter medium if damaged and re-charge a biological filter with one of the bio starters to bring it up to full efficiency. Watch out for Frog or Toad spawn; remove it to a local wild pond. If the water quality is poor change up to 25%.

SUMMER

Monitor the pond water level and top up if necessary. It does no harm to change some of the water on an established pond.

Keep grass cuttings and leaves out of the pond and remove any dead Water Lily leaves and flowers with as much of the stem as possible. **DO NOT OVER FEED THE FISH.**

AUTUMN

Cover the pond with a fine fruit netting during the autumn to prevent leaves falling into the pond and fouling the water; this not only keeps the pond healthy it saves you the problem of draining and cleaning it out.

WINTER

Waterfalls and fountains should be turned off during the winter months, especially if there are fish in the pond. Due to low temperatures, fish are at rest and inactive and reducing water loss and turbulence helps retain water temperature whilst the fish are at rest.

Fountains and pumps can be removed from the pond cleaned up and checked over, Reduce the flow through Biological Filters, but do not turn them off.

GENERAL TIPS

TOPPING UP

Pond water evaporates to a greater or lesser degree depending on several factors. The time of year, ambient temperature the amount of water movement - fountains, waterfalls and streams. Moving water increases evaporation, so topping up becomes a necessity.

As water evaporates the proportion of any toxins in the water increases i.e. same amount of toxin in less water. If you keep topping up without removing some of the water, from the bottom of the pond if possible, toxins will build up exponentially.

It is a good policy to drain off around 10% a week during the warmer months and 10% a month during the winter, unless the pond is frozen over.

Ensure that the water supply is suitable for fish - there is no guarantee that tap water is.

Water companies are only required to supply water fit for human consumption, not to keep fish; so check it. There are water conditioners available to treat tap water.

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ICED OVER

When a pond is covered with ice it prevents the interchange of gases at the surface, this is when the pond can go sour and the fish die.

A simple way to prevent this is to place a plastic football in the pond during winter. When the pond freezes over remove the football leaving a hole in the ice.

With the minimum of disturbance bale out a little pond water and pour over the ice sheet to thicken it up. When you have made it thick enough to be self-supporting, lower the water under the ice 25mm or so and cover the hole with a piece of hardboard.

Do not break up the ice with a spade or hammer - this can stress the fish to the point of death. Use hot water to make a vent hole.