



Better Plants. Better Advice. Better Results.

WG-2 Winterizing Your Pond

Prepare Water Plants for Winter

Fall is the time to start preparing your pond for winter. Water plants are slowing their growth and fading while they are getting ready for dormancy. Transplanting and dividing your pond plants should not be done until spring. The foliage on all containerized water plants should be cut back at this time and fertilization discontinued. Remove and bring indoors your tropical marginal plants before the first frost. Hardy water plants should be lowered to the bottom of your pond. (No, they will not rot.)

Protect Pond from Fall Debris

Install a protective net over the pond if you have a lot of falling leaves. Plastic bird netting is available at most garden centers. You can insert a stick or garden rake into a potted plant to give your net a higher point, like a tent. This allows the leaves to be swept from the net. Do not allow the net to drape into your pond; fish and frogs can become entangled in it. Remove the leaves regularly from both pond and net. Keep them picked up from your yard so that the wind does not blow them into the pond.

Perform Maintenance and Prepare Water

Repair any damages and leaks before winter. Also, reseed your bio-filters with bacteria. This will help maintain good water quality during fall. We use Pond Perfect year-round to break down the debris – follow instructions for winter use. This product works in water temperature under 55° F and will help to decompose the leaves, scum, sediment and other organic matter during fall and winter. It is also all-natural, nontoxic, nonpathogenic and contains psychrophilic, a cold weather bacteria. Remove all dead leaves and debris from your pond. If you have a skimmer, clean it at least once a day to prevent blockage. Clean the filters and store any pumps or equipment not used during the winter. Remember to store oil-encapsulated pumps in a bucket of water that won't freeze to keep their seals from drying out.

Prepare Fish for Winter Months

As summer ends, feed your fish food that is higher in carbohydrates and lower in protein. Carbohydrates will fatten them for the long winter. While fish do not hibernate during the winter, their metabolism does slow down as the water cools. Stop feeding fish when the water temperature stabilizes at 55° F. **DO NOT FEED THEM AGAIN UNTIL SPRING WHEN THE WATER TEMPERATURE WARMS UP ABOVE THAT TEMPERATURE.** Even if there are warm days during winter, do not feed them. Remember to always keep an opening in the ice (pond) so that the gases can escape. We suggest running an inexpensive pump with bubbler which will keep water moving enough to keep a small patch of the water from freezing solidly. Breaking the ice creates shock waves which can be very harmful to fish, so we don't recommend it. Fish will survive in as little as the 24 inches of water as long as the water doesn't freeze solid.

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