

FALL/WINTER POND PREP GUIDE



Blue Thumb

Ponds / Waterfalls / Fountains

PRODUCTS

- Pond Netting
- Sakana® Spring & Autumn Food
- Pond Thermometer
- Spring & Fall Clean Treatment
- Thermo-Pond De-Icer
- KoiAir™ Pond Aeration Kit

WINTER FISH CARE

Fish can survive the winter with a little help. Most importantly, your pond depth should be at least 24" deep in order to overwinter fish.

Secondly, a hole must be kept open in the ice to provide an escape for toxic gases. The best way to accomplish this is to use a pond heater or de-icer. We recommend an energy efficient, thermostatically controlled unit like the Thermo-Pond De-Icer.

In addition, running an aerator will assist in keeping an opening in the ice, as well as oxygenating the water. The constant motion of air bubbles through the water will help prevent ice from forming.

Fall & Winter Pond Preparation

With the weather beginning to chill and the leaves starting to fall it is time to begin prepping your pond for the winter. By following the steps below you can ensure an easy transition into the winter months.

- 1 Cover It Up** — As the leaves begin to fall, you will want to cover the pond with a net, this will prevent the accumulation of leaves in the bottom of the pond. A build-up of leaves and other organic material can cause an imbalance in the pond, reducing oxygen levels and releasing poisonous hydrogen sulfide as the debris begins to decompose. The net will also prevent the skimmer box from being over burdened with leaf debris.
- 2 Feeding Fish** — When the water temperature is consistently below 70°F begin feeding a reduced protein, high carbohydrate food to ease your fish into their winter hibernation. Because fish are cold-blooded animals, the water temperature controls their metabolism. We recommend using a food specifically formulated for the nutritional needs of koi and goldfish in the cool water seasons. Once the water temperature is consistently below 50°F stop feeding your fish. Purchase a pond thermometer to easily monitor the varying water temperatures.
- 3 Fall Water Treatments** — Begin using Fall Clean Treatment (cold weather bacteria) when water temperatures are between 45 - 55°F. This is a four month treatment that you will want to use during the coldest months. A Fall Clean Treatment is beneficial bacteria that reduces the build up of dead leaves and residual organic sediment on the pond's bottom.
- 4 Pump Removal** — Depending on the climate you may or may not want to operate your pump and filters during the winter months. If the temperatures are in the freezing range you may want to pull the pump and store it in a bucket of water where it will not freeze. This keeps the seals in the pump moist so that they will not crack and potentially leak. This is also a good time to clean your biological media and filter mats and store them for the winter months.
- 5 Wintering Plants** — Before winterizing any water garden plants, remove dead leaves and dying plantlife. To overwinter cold-hardy plants, like lotus and water lilies, you may immerse them in the deepest part of your pond to insulate them from repeated freeze and thaw that lowers their winter survival. Some plants are best cut down to ground level for Spring regrowth. Others may not tolerate winter temps may need to be submerged in a bucket and stored in a basement or garage, or potted and treated like a houseplant. Be sure to research specific plants for best results in your location.

By following the steps provided above, your pond will be best prepared for the cold winter months ahead!