

# Care for Fish

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## 1. Introducing New Fish to your Pond

### a. If Purchased through Grass Roots Pond and Garden.

- i. When you purchase a fish from us. We can ensure that the fish have been quarantined and run through a gambit of medications to ensure that when you purchase a fish it is healthy and won't spread pathogens to your existing pond fish.
- ii. When you bring your fish back to your pond we suggest that you float the bag the fish is in for 10 to 15 minutes and some of your pond water so the fish become acclimated to the water temperature and the pH of your pond water.

## 2. Care Through the Open Season

### a. Feeding

- i. We suggest feeding your fish once a day as much as they will eat in 5-10 minutes

### b. Water testing

- i. We suggest testing your water once a week to help gauge if your pond water is healthy for your fish. ( reference Basic Water Chemistry Cheat Sheet)

### c. Plants

- i. Adding Pond Plants to your pond will give your fish a place to hide from predators and also help pull out fish waste from the pond that in high concentrations can be detrimental to your fish's health.

### d. Bacteria

- i. We suggest adding Beneficial Pond Bacteria to your pond every week.
  1. We use bacteria to help remove nitrogen from the water to help keep the water healthy for the fish.

e. Dealing with predators

i. Heron

1. You can use Heron decoys

a. We suggest not using them during mating season (March through April in Michigan) because Herons are typically territorial but during mating season they will come out and check out your decoy and drown its sorrows in your beautiful fish.

2. We have also had some success with using fishing line strung up around the pond. We suggest putting above your field of view so you don't have to see it.

a. If that's not possible. We suggest that you put some around the perimeter of the pond around a foot or so off the ground.

i. We suggest this because the Heron doesn't like to be tangled up in the fishing line and will typically leave.

3. ScareCrow Product

a. This is a motion activated sprinkler

i. Remember using this product that if it's turned on you may get wet so if you're going to be enjoying the pond make sure you turn it off before you get sprayed while feeding your fish and enjoying your pond.

ii. Racoons

1. This particular predator doesn't swim but it will wade in your pond to try to get your fish.

2. Typically if your pond is deep enough

a. We suggest if you're having an issue with a raccoon, call a professional to trap and relocate.

iii. Mink

1. This is generally a predator that we deal with in the winter when their normal hunting grounds are iced over

and our ponds have a convenient hole for them to access the pond.

a. What to do to prevent the Mink

i. When you're closing down your pond you want to dye your pond black.

1. Mink hunt by sight so by dyeing the pond black we are removing all opportunity for the mink to find your fish.

3. Care when you close your pond

a. We suggest doubling or tripling your salt in your pond

i. We do this because it helps promote the slime coat on the fish ( the first line of defense of the fish's immune system)

b. We suggest turning off your pond pumps so that an ice dam doesn't build up and accidentally lose all the water in your pond.

c. We suggest you add an aerator to you pond to help out with removing the nitrogen from the pond and adding oxygen to the water.

i. KEEP A HOLE IN THE ICE

1. This is for gas exchange (the removal of nitrogen and the adding of oxygen.)

d. If your pond shallower than 3 foot we suggest putting a heater in the pond to insure there is a hole in the ice

i. If your pond is deeper than 3 foot there is no need for a heater but it is nice if you are away for a significant amount of time during the winter months, you can rest easier if there is a hole in the ice for gas exchange.