

Seasonal Care for Aquatic Plants

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1. When your Pond is open

a. Bog Plants

- i. You can supplement your Bog plants' nutrients by adding fertilizer. We recommend you do this once a month with Bog plants whether they are tropical or Michigan Hardy. You can add time release fertilizer and you can add it only twice a season. Generally we say one tablet of fertilizer for every gallon of soil in the pot.
- ii. Adding rocks (No limestone or quartz. Using these types of rocks can affect your pH and make it more difficult to keep your pond clean and clear.) to the top of the soil in the pot may be a good idea for you if you have large koi with a taste for plant material it will help prevent the koi from ripping your plants from the pots themselves.

b. Water Lilies

- i. You can supplement your Water Lilies nutrients by adding fertilizer. We recommend you add time release fertilizer twice a season to your water lilies. Once in the early Spring and once in Summer.
- ii. We would also suggest that adding rocks to your water lily pots if you have large fish with a taste for your water lily. (No limestone or quartz. Using these types of rocks can affect your pH and make it more difficult to keep your pond clean and clear.)
- iii. Keep in mind where you will be placing your water Lilies some Varieties do well in shade and will bloom other varieties prefer full sun and will not bloom in shade. Some varieties like shallower water then you may expect and others will thrive in deeper water please keep this in mind while browsing our selection of water lilies

c. Lotus

- i. When placing a lotus generally most like warm shallow water. We suggest placing it in water where the lip of the pot is roughly 6 inches below the water surface.
- ii. When placing a lotus in the pond make sure you keep them away from turbulent water.
- iii. When using a time release fertilizer you can fertilize twice a year. If not using a time release fertilizer we would suggest fertilizing monthly.

d. Floating Plants

- i. Generally all you have to do for floating plants is make sure they don't get eaten by your koi. Try to place them in an area where large koi can't reach them.
- ii. For water hyacinth specifically; you can force them to bloom if you keep them contained and you can see blooms start to form.
- iii. One thing that can affect the health of your floating plants is poor water quality. Generally as long as your pH stays between 7.4 and 8.0 with buffers at 100 ppm and your salt levels at 1lb for 100 gallons of water your floating plants should be happy and healthy.
- iv. We affectionately call floating plants the canary in the coal mine. If something is off with your water chemistry for a few days the Floating plants will show signs of stress. (browning of the leaves and yellow discoloration.)

2. When Closing down your pond

a. Bog Plants

i. Tropical

1. Tropical plants cannot live through the winter if we get a frost. You have a few options:
 - a. You can try to keep them alive in the house by keeping them in a sunny window and keep the soil completely saturated.
 - b. You can compost them and purchase more when there is no danger of frost in the late spring

ii. Hardy

1. Hardy Bog plants can stay in the pond typically if they are in a pot we like to trim back the foliage.
 - a. Tubular types of foliage (Cattails, Hibiscus, ect.)
 - i. Keep the first 6 inches of foliage, cut the rest off and compost.
 - b. Grass types of foliage (Iris ornamental grasses)
 - i. Keep the first 4 inches of material and cut the rest of the foliage off and compost.
2. We like to cut a good portion of the foliage off the plant so we don't have as much decomposing plant material in the pond. This will provide a safer and cleaner environment for our fish during the winter. The nitrogen that is released into the pond water can become toxic to the fish when in large quantities.

b. Water Lilies

i. Hardy Water Lilies

1. We suggest removing the pads and the buds or blossoms within about 6 inches from the pot.
2. Once all the pads and buds are removed we suggest moving the pot to the deepest portion of the pond for

the winter so it has a better chance of survival throughout the winter.

ii. Tropical water lilies

1. We suggest if you have a tropical water lily to purchase a new one in the Late Spring or early summer. These plants are really temperamental and would be difficult to over winter in your home unless you have a greenhouse that can keep water temperature above 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

c. Lotus

i. Hardy

1. We suggest removing the large leaves, buds and seed pods from the pot and sinking them at the bottom of the pond for the winter. This should be retrieved from the bottom of the pond in the Spring when you're getting your pond ready for the season.

d. Floating Plants

- i. Net them all out of your pond and compost them.
- ii. Floating plants such as water hyacinth and water lettuce are tropical plants and would have next to no chance of survival during a Michigan winter.