

Backyard Ponds

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Algae cause one of the biggest problems in the garden pond. While a little is ok and even pretty, excess algae can clog filters and pumps and make it impossible to see what's in your pond. The following steps will help you keep your pond clear.

In fall clean out all the debris (leaves, etc.). In spring clean out all the debris that blew in over winter. At this time you can also drain the pond and scrub down the walls if you so desire. Refill (be sure to eliminate chlorine before adding fish and plants), and add beneficial bacteria (Eco Balance). Avoid changing the water again. It can take six weeks for it to balance, during which time there may be some algae.

Continue to add beneficial bacteria regularly according to label directions. Barley straw also helps. It provides a place for bacteria to live and releases a natural algae killer.

If you have goldfish or koi, feed infrequently and sparingly. They will eat some of the algae (and mosquito larvae, too). Excessive fish food is also food for algae.

Use lots of plants. Plants compete with algae for nutrients, add oxygen to the water (algae need carbon dioxide to photosynthesize, not oxygen) and provide shade that cuts down the amount of light available for algae to use for photosynthesis. A good rule of thumb is to have at least two-thirds of the water surface covered with plants, either floaters or lily pads or both.

Provide aeration with a fountain and/or a waterfall.



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