

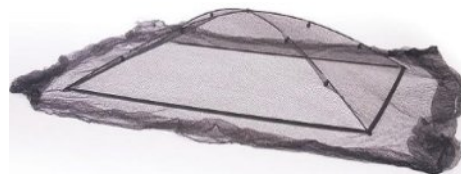


# 5 Tips to Prepare Your Pond for Autumn

## #1 Netting

Keeping leaves out of your water feature should be your first goal this time of year.

Leaves and debris in the water will cause the water to turn toxic for your fish and wildlife. Netting can help keep leaves and other debris out! It is available in different styles and in 3 grades. The higher the grade the longer it will last and also the easier it is to use.



If you only have a few leaves to remove from your pond a scoop net will do the job. Our favorite is the PondShark. It is a net, rake and scraper - all in one.

## # 2 Prepare your Water

Bacteria that stays with your pond all winter long.

As the water temperature changes, you should change to a cool weather fish food and cool weather bacteria. Autumn / Winter Prep bacteria reduces buildup of dead leaves and organic sediment all winter long.

Barley is a natural algae preventative. Barley bales are something that need to be replaced every six months. If you placed a bale in the pond during the spring, now is the time to add the new bale. After 1 month of having both bales in the water remove the old bale.



## #3 Protect your Fish

Your fish will need special attention to help prepare.

Use a pond thermometer to help decide when to switch bacteria and fish food. When the water temperature falls below 60 degrees for a week, change to a wheatgerm based fish food.

Feed this low temp food until the water temp falls below 40 degrees. Then no food all winter long. This wheatgerm food is much easier for the fish to digest. Whereas the summer blends of food can actually spoil in the fish system as their metabolism is too slow digesting the food.



A Koi Kastle is a great idea to consider during the winter months. The Koi Kastle will give your fish a place to hide when all the plants are dormant. If you have a predator problem the fish will be safe in the deep part of the pond under their Kastle.

## #4 Keep your Water Safe

Keep a hole in the ice so that there is still gas exchange between your pond and the air.



This hole can be created a few different ways. You can add an air pump to the system, keeping the air stone in the top third of the pond. The moving air and water will not freeze.

You could add a de-icer, which has a thermostat, controlling their on / off cycles. The de-icer will allow the pond to freeze everywhere except near the de-icer.

The third choice is to allow the pump to run. The moving water can not freeze. You will be rewarded with fantastic ice formations. You need to plan ahead as you will need to add water during these freezing periods. So have a hose and water source ready to go. If you don't run the pump, it is safest to bring the pump and check valve into a non freezing location. Place the pump in a bucket of water to keep the seals moist.

## #5 Trim your Plants

A good time to trim back your water plants is after the first heavy frost.

You should cut them back just above the water level. If the plant is an annual then either put it in the compost pile or bring it indoors prior to that first heavy frost.

For specific plants just bring a leaf or two to Chalily and we can help figure out the best course of action.

Perennial water lilies should be left in the pond; simply remove the leaves after a heavy frost. Annual water lilies can be kept if you save the tuber indoors. At Chalily, we have the steps to save the tropical lilies on a hand out. Stop by to obtain your copy.

