

REEMS CREEK NURSERY

# Winterizing Your Pond & Water Garden

## A Garden Guide

Many of the steps you need to take are essential for the survival of plants, fish, and equipment. Many will simply ensure that there will be fewer problems in the spring and a more enjoyable, relaxed and trouble free experience in the summer.



## Preparing Your Plants

1. Trim them back. Most water plants can be cut back to the pot. Marginal plants should be moved to deeper water.
2. Stop Fertilizing. No fertilization after September allows your plants to naturally enter dormancy, and their growth to gradually decrease.
3. Repotting & dividing. The best time to repot is in the spring when the first new growth appears.

## Preparing Your Fish

1. Everyday, go out to your pond and warn them that it's going to get colder. While you're doing that check them for parasites or disease. If you need to medicate, now is the time. Do not combine medications or combine medications with salt.
2. Feeding. Stop feeding when daytime temperatures are in the 40's. A gradual change over is best. During cold weather your fish cannot metabolize food. It will just lay in the digestive tract and cause vulnerability to disease, and even intestinal blockage, not to mention a nasty stomach ache.
3. Clean Your Pond. Decaying matter can harbor parasites and promote harmful bacteria (See Pond Care).

## Preparing Your Pond & Equipment

1. Netting. If the pond is in a location under or near deciduous trees, netting should be used. Netting should be kept tight and out of the water.
2. De-icers. If you are in a location where your pond freezes over for any length of time, you need to keep a hole in the ice to allow for gas exchange. Commercial de-icers, running your waterfall, or even PVC pipe, bamboo or styrofoam will accomplish this. Never bang a hole in the ice with a blunt instrument. Shock waves can cause trauma and physical damage to your fish. If you must make a hole in the ice, use a container of boiling water. A better choice is a de-icer. They only need to be turned on when ice forms, and the operational costs are quite low.
3. Equipment. Running your waterfall and filter year round is fine, but keep an eye out for problems. During the coldest part of winter ice dams can form, potentially diverting water from your pond. A waterfall can unnecessarily cool your water and if you don't have a skimmer, your pump should be moved higher in order to not disturb the warm water on the bottom. If you choose not to run your filter or waterfall, remove your pump, and cap your tubing, rodents and frogs have been known to hibernate in these comfy spots, and tubing can burst. Version 2.1 Aug 20

