

# Ponds

## Popular and Appealing

Ponds take work. There, you heard it from me first. But they also have great rewards. The beauty and sound of water is hard to match. A few simple tips can help prevent problems and reduce maintenance.

## Necessary Equipment (all available at Tower)

**Pond liner.** ONLY use Firestone Pondguard, never a PVC liner. Liner and associated products available through Tower.

**Pumps:** We use and prefer in line pumps rather than submersibles for most applications. They last longer and are more efficient. A 1/2 HP Performance Pro Artesian can produce 7500 gallons/hr. We offer this line from 1/8 to 1/2 HP.

**Skimmer:** Without a skimmer, every leaf will eventually sink to the bottom and create an awful mess requiring a major cleaning. Skimmers also keep fine dust and pollen from clouding the pond surface. Mechanical filtration.

**Biological filtration.** This is best accomplished by bead filters. We offer the Challenger line. This filter is necessary when koi are used. BioFalls and similar styles work only with smaller fish loads.

**Clarity filtration.** This is necessary for most ponds in full sun. Suspended algae causes water to turn green, often making it impossible to see fish. If you have no plants or fish, you can chlorinate the water. Otherwise, use a UV filter for nearly instant results on suspended algae. Some attached algae on bottom and sides is normal and desirable.

## Constuction Tips

Almost everyone wishes that they made their first pond bigger.

4' is minimum depth for fish, but does have code requirements (fence, etc.) so be sure to learn code for your area or use a licensed contractor with pond building expertise.

Large, deep ponds with vertical sides are much less vulnerable to predation.

Our pond has never lost a fish to a raccoon, though they do roam the nursery periodically.

Larger ponds will have areas of relatively calm water, preferred by koi and with greatest visibility due to less splashing, ripples, etc.

We suggest using a bottom drain as well as a skimmer in all ponds of 4' or more depth.

Flex PVC is used for plumbing, typically 2" flex.

## The Work

Fish need to be fed, and fed often to attain good size (water temp. over 50 degrees when you feed). Filters and skimmers must be cleaned, usually at least weekly in the growing season. Water chemistry should be tested with regularity until you know your pond's requirements. Set aside time to ohh and ahh over the pond, that makes the work worthwhile.



# Aquatic Plants

Aquatic plants and bog loving plants to grow on the pond margins are many. We suggest a combination of hardy plants and tender, showy annuals (or tender perennials).

## Tender Plants

- Calla lilies** These South African beauties grow very well aquatically. White is common, but perhaps the most elegant.
- Canna lilies** Tall, bold foliage, available in green, variegation, and bronze. The flowers are in hot colors that show well.
- Gunnera** Foliage spectacle. Leaves can reach 6' diameter in old plant.
- Papyrus** Egyptian is the giant, with stems to 8' or more on mature plants. Tufts of foliage at the apex of the stem give a sort of "palm tree" look. Dwarf varieties are also available.
- Impatiens** If your pond is in shade, this common annual bedding plant will surprise you by its aquatic performance (not available at Tower)

## Bog Plants

Far too many to list comprehensively, but any of these will please:

- Caltha palustris** Bog marigolds are beautiful in spring with buttercup yellow blooms.
- Iris** All the ensata (Japanese) and siberica (Siberian) are adapted to water.
- Ligularia** Likes it wet, but not submerged.
- Lysimachia 'Alexander'** Variegated foliage, yellow blooms, 20", happy with wet feet.
- Typha** There are several sizes available for cattails, as well as variegation.

## Reeds and Grasses

Try at least 2 or 3 in every pond to attain some natural appearance.

**Juncus effusus 'Spiralis'** Interesting twisting habit.

**Glyceria maxima 'Variegata'** Grow in container, it spreads, but it is pretty and easy.

**Carex elata 'Aurea'** Bowles Golden Grass. Yes, it will grow aquatically, part shade.

## Classic Lilies

Every pond deserves at least 1 lily. Pygmy lilies for small ponds.