

Responsible Pond-Keeping

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



Being a responsible pond owner means more than simply taking care of your pond and its inhabitants. Proper stewardship involves being aware of how your pond relates to the greater community. What you do and how you take care of your pond affects natural systems beyond your backyard.

Keep Pond Plants and Fish Where They Belong

Water garden plants or fish released into local lakes and streams may become nuisance invaders. As invasive species, they can crowd out native plants and animals, damage local habitat, or even diminish the intrinsic and economical value of the area. The easiest way to prevent invasive species from affecting local communities is to contain them in your water garden.

Protect Local Wetlands and Waterways

- Never transplant non-native plants into lakes, streams, wetlands, or storm water ponds.
- Check new plants for unwanted and potentially invasive hitchhikers (seeds, plant fragments, snails, insects, or fish).
- Be aware of the regulations regarding possession, transport, or sale of non-native plants and animals.
- Learn how invasive plants spread. Find out if they spread by seed, rhizome, or even tiny plant fragments.

- Recognize which plants and fish are potentially invasive in your climate zone.
- Select plants and fish carefully. Care for them responsibly and, if needed, dispose of them properly.

What to do with Unwanted Fish or Plants

- Trade or give to another pond owner or water gardener.
- Donate to a local pond society, elementary school, or biology department.
- Proper disposal of unwanted plants includes: drying, burning, composting or sealing in a plastic bag for disposal.

In an effort to protect our environment, Drs. Foster and Smith and LiveAquaria.com are proud partners of [Habitattitude](http://Habitattitude.com). We encourage all pond owners to practice responsible stewardship, handling, and management of all species through informed purchasing choices.

