

Pond Algae-Busting Tips

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The spring pond season is an exciting time especially after a long, cold winter. Many pond and water gardeners are anxious to experiment and try out new products and techniques for a refreshing new look. But for many, spring also means the arrival of the dreaded "spring green." The warmer temperatures and longer days create conditions ideal for algae that turn your pond into pea soup.

The following spring algae-busting tips will help you enjoy your outdoor space throughout the summer without having to constantly worry about algae.

Get a jump start

Once algae take hold, they seem nearly impossible to rid. This may be the case if conditions that encourage aggressive algae growth are not addressed in a prompt manner. Simplify algae control by getting a jump-start. Take steps to keep algae growth under control as soon as possible - don't wait until the water turns murky green.

Reduce algal nutrients

Control aggressive algae growth by reducing nutrients available to algae. Replace [chemical filter media](#) such as [activated carbon](#) on a regular basis and use products designed to eliminate phosphate, the main algal nutrient. Consider taking a multiple approach using [Barley Straw](#) products or products designed to limit algae growth.

Increase aeration

When the pond ice has thawed, increase pond oxygen levels with [aeration devices](#). It is one of the easiest ways to improve water quality and curb conditions that encourage aggressive algae growth. Well-oxygenated water not only allows beneficial bacteria to process organic waste materials more efficiently, it also reduces carbon dioxide that feed algae. When using aerators during spring, it is important to place these devices close to the water surface. Even if the air temperature is quite warm, the water temperature may still be significantly cold. Aeration devices placed deep in the pond can churn the cold water, creating stressful conditions for your pond fish.

Bacterial additives for spring

After a cold winter, the reduced numbers of beneficial bacteria begin to slowly increase.

Give these helpful bacteria a boost and replenish their populations by adding a [spring or coldwater bacterial formula](#) for efficient biological filtration. [Remove leaves](#) and large organic debris to accelerate the decomposition of these materials.

UV clarifiers

Early spring is the perfect time to install an [ultraviolet clarifier](#). These units emit germicidal ultraviolet light similar to sunlight (UVC) to help clarify green water associated with free-floating algae. When the water temperature is consistently above 45°F, start up your [filter](#) along with a UV clarifier to maintain clean, clear water. If you already have a UV clarifier, spring is the perfect time to install a new UV lamp for optimum results throughout the season.

Monitor fish food

Do not feed your fish until water

temperatures are consistently above 50°F. Once water temperatures stay above 50°F, start feeding your fish [wheat germ food](#). These low-protein, cool water foods are easier to digest and help minimize waste. Switch to a [staple](#) or [growth food](#) when water temperatures remain above 70°F. Give your fish just enough food they can finish within a few minutes and remove any uneaten food.