



Stocking Your Trout and Keeping Them Happy

Stocking Your Trout

Trout are very stress sensitive to sudden changes in temperature, oxygen, carbon dioxide and pH, for this reason, extra care should be taken to slowly adapt trout to your pond water.

1. Place oxygen bag containing trout in your pond. Do not open bag. The bag will float, leave bag in water for 15 minutes. This procedure will lesson the stress factor of temperature between your pond water and the water in the oxygen bag. After 15 minutes, cut off top of oxygen bag and gradually pour one gallon or so of pond water in to the bag then slowly pour the trout and water into your pond. This procedure will enable the trout to adjust to your ponds water chemistry.
2. Watch trout carefully after releasing into pond. In some cases, trout may try to swim in the shallow areas of the pond and become caught in weeds. Remember that these trout are accustomed to concrete raceways, kept at a constant depth. Usually trout will school together and swim to the coldest temperature in the pond.
3. Walk around your pond, closely observing the shoreline for trout. If any are caught in shallows, move them to deeper water. This period of adjustment usually takes 24 hours before all stress factors are eliminated.
4. If you plan to supplement feed, wait at least 24 hours after stocking. Trout adapt best on an empty stomach. Dry, pelleted trout feeds from commercial dealers are easy to use. Dealers furnish a detailed feeding schedule based on fish size and water temperature.

Keeping Your Trout Happy

1. Keep weeds down around your pond. It is best to manually pull or keep them cut down. Chemicals are available, but it is best not to use them unless it is necessary.
2. Ponds without constant inflow of water should be observed closely during hot summer months. It is a good practice to purchase a thermometer to keep in your pond. If the surface temperature rises above 70 degrees, it is best to aerate. Using a small inexpensive electric pump to splash the water back into the pond can do this. If your home water source is well water, you can use a sprinkler or splash water into the pond to add oxygen. Do this in the evening when cool to avoid heating the water. Warm water holds less oxygen than cold water.
3. If warm water temperature is a problem, it is best to have plenty of shade trees around your pond. A good way to protect your pond against winter and summer kill is to invest in a reasonably priced aeration system.

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Natural Resources Conservation Service**

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Although avoid placing deciduous trees within 100 feet of the shoreline. Leaves that enter the water will use oxygen when they decay.

4. Start fishing as soon as trout reach pan size. The trout grow slowly after reaching 1 pound and keeping a pond of large trout is non-productive. Do not let them die of old age!
5. Reduce aquatic vegetation before ice forms. Vegetation decomposing under the ice uses oxygen and releases harmful gasses.
6. If possible, provide inflow of fresh water during the winter. Well water is good if untreated. This is the surest way to prevent winter kill.
7. The best size trout to restock is 3-4 inch and 4-5 inch. This size trout adapt and survive best. Natural mortality is high in trout smaller than 3 inches.
8. A well-managed small pond gives more satisfaction and productivity than an inferior large pond.

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