

# Fish Facts

## Basic Fish Care For Koi, Orfe, Shubunkins And Goldfish

Most pond varieties of goldfish, shubunkins, orfe and koi, winter well in an outdoor pond as long as the pond water does not freeze completely to the bottom and there is a small, open surface area for gas exchange. As the water turns colder the fish activity almost comes to a complete standstill. By the time the pond is beginning to freeze over, the fish are just hovering almost motionless. They have gone into a type of 'hibernation' and since they are not exerting any energy, they will need no food.

In spring, as water temperatures begin to rise, you may gradually begin to feed again. **BUT BE CAREFULL!!** Fish can, at this time, overeat, bloat and die. Feed sparingly until they return to full activity levels. Or use a wheat germ based food for early spring and fall feeding. This whole process is dependent upon water temperatures. Below 50 degrees the fish should not be fed. Between 50° and 60° they can be fed early spring and fall food. Above 60° they can be fed summer fish food.

In an outdoor garden pond fish will do well in what ever temperature the season may bring. Occasionally fish will become ill. When they do, you must react quickly to control the problem. It is helpful to realize that all fish carry pathogens that do not cause problems until fish are placed under stress. Since summer brings about the combination of two stress factors. Heat and increased oxygen consumption, you may want to treat your fish at this time with StressCoat. **ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW THE MANUFACTURER'S LABEL DIRECTIONS.**

StressCoat can also be used when adding new fish to the pond. To find out how many fish you can safely add to your pond, keep in mind the Fish Rule. "Buy one inch of fish (not including the tail) for every 7 gallons of water". When introducing new fish to the pond, place the bag in the water for 10 –15 minutes to allow water temperatures to equalize. If it is sunny and hot, shade the bag with newspaper to avoid the greenhouse effect in the plastic bag. After the water temperatures have equalized slowly add the fish to your pond. Feeding the fish in your pond will be one of your favorite activities. Feed the fish once a day; usually in the morning or evening when the water temperature is lower and feed them only what the fish can eat in five minutes. If you can't be there to feed the fish every day it is no hardship for the fish. They can go four or five days without supplemental feeding. Don't forget, in the natural world Mother Nature provides food in the form of insects and plant material for the fish to eat. Another way of providing food for your fish while you are away is to use Pond Feeder Signal Blocks. They slowly dissolve releasing food pellets. A brightly colored float bobs to the surface, signaling it is time for a new block.