



CONTROLLING STRING

ALGAE

Controlling string algae in your pond is akin to "controlling" a teenager (I've been told). If you actually have control 50% of the time you're doing quite well!

All you can really do, is lay the proper groundwork. After that, it will be controlled by "outside influences".....some good and some not-so-good. The groundwork is key though!

One of the most important items is keeping your pond clean. That doesn't mean taking a toothbrush to the rocks, but it does mean keeping debris out. This should not be a problem during the summer, as long as you did a good job in the spring to clear out leaf debris and any bottom sludge. Debris decomposes and leads to excess nutrients in the pond. These nutrients are great for plants, a family to which string algae also belongs.

Plants are the next most important item. You want to be sure you have plenty of plants in your pond. You should have 40%-60% of plant cover in your pond. For example, a pond with 150 square feet of surface area should have 60 s.f. to 90 s.f. of the pond covered with plants. But remember, this doesn't mean just foliage. For the part of the plant that is going to be absorbing the lions share of the excess nutrients is actually the root system. So a tall plant with a wide-spread root system under the water is just as good as a plant with wide-spread surface area. On the other hand, plants that have surface foliage are good in that they provide shade. The shade reduces the UV rays reaching the pond, thus reducing the ability for photosynthesis to take place and for the algae to grow. This shade is also good for keeping the pond water cooler as well as providing the fish with some cover from the hot sun and any potential predators. I have yet to see a pond that has so many plants that they will not be able to thrive. You might not be able to see your fish, but that's another matter.

Plants in your stream, biofalls and bog areas are also great places for the removal of the pond's excess nutrients. If you need more plants, there are plenty of locations to purchase locally or you can go online. If you want great prices and aren't too picky about exact types of plants, wait until late summer and early fall when garden centers cut their prices. The plants might not look great when you buy them but as long as they have a good root system they will come back strong next spring.

Finally, be sure you do not have an excess of fish in your pond. A good rule of thumb is 1 inch of fish for every 1-2 s.f. of pond surface area....a 100 s.f. pond = 50 to 100 total inches of fish. If you have too many fish, you have too much fish waste, which means an excess of nutrients, which leads to ALGAE! On the flip side, if you have large koi and an excess of string algae, they will feast on the algae if you reduce the amount of fish food you serve them.

By laying the proper groundwork you are not guaranteed an algae-free pond, but you have helped reduce that which causes algae blooms. As with your teenager, sometimes, even with all the proper groundwork, you need to take a "stronger" stand. With your pond you may decide it's time to BE FIRM and use an algaecide. I have found good results with **Microbe-Lift Algaway 5.4** & **Microbe-Lift Oxy Pond** along with **Algae-Fix** and **Green Clean**. They are all EPA approved and are fish and plant safe. I would recommend staying away from any copper-based algaecide due to the toxicity. When using any algaecide be sure that you're oxygenating the water (via waterfalls or aerator) as algaecides will temporarily reduce the oxygen levels in the pond. One final item to remember with algaecides, is that they will reduce the string algae, but the underlying problem is left unresolved.

Always follow the product directions carefully!!

Questions? Contact Lifestyle Creations Inc. @ 952-988-0191