

## Working with your fish in the spring

Kevin Clark one of our member's and owner of Aquatic Pond Supplies gave a nice seminar on how to move fish into your pond in the spring and how to move them out for pond cleaning. Below are some of the tips Kevin gave us for keeping our fish safe and healthy.

### Netting Fish

When netting a fish always use a large shallow net to catch your fish. Always skim the net horizontally across the water. Once you capture the fish place a container slightly larger than the fish into the net and then with pond water in the container lift the fish and the container out of the net. **Never lift a fish out of your pond using only a net as you may injure the fish. Don't use the type of net that fisherman use or you may harm your fish as their fins may get stuck in the net mesh and injure their fins.** The net pictured below is the type of net you should use. This net is 25 inches in diameter and has a 6 inch depth and a long non-adjustable handle.



When trying to net fish in early spring, you always want to net fish that are swimming near the surface of the pond. To entice fish up to the surface you may pour a cup or two of boiling water into the pond and the fish will swim up to the warm area near surface of the pond.

### Bagging Fish

When moving your fish into or out of your pond, you should always bag your fish. To bag a fish, take a large polyethylene bag, (larger than the fish is long), and using the information above capture the fish head first from your net. Next fill the bag with pure oxygen from a tank, which you can purchase for \$29 at welding supply stores. Place enough water into the bag to cover the fish's gills and then fill the rest of the bag with oxygen. You should also add 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon of Chloram-X to remove chlorine and bind ammonia that comes from fish waste. One fish per bag will remain alive and healthy for 48 hours. You may add several fish to a bag as long as they are less than 18 inches in length. Fish that are 18 inches and larger should be transported in their own bag.

Bags may be purchased from Bradley Bag Company. <http://www.bradleybag.com/>

Once you move the fish out of the pond, you will want to float the fish in its bag in a shady spot in a container of water the same temperature as the water in the bag. **Never place a fish in its bag in the sun, since the water temperature will rise dramatically and kill the fish. A five degree change in water temperature will cause a fish to die.**

When you're ready to place your fish back into a newly cleaned and filled pond, float your fish in it's bag in a shady spot of the pond for three to four hours in early spring, (March/April), so that the water in the bag will slowly cool to the same temperature in the as the water in the pond. In summer, you only need to float the bag in the pond for one hour, since the water in the pond will be warmer.

To contact Kevin, please visit his website at:  
<http://www.aquaticpondsupplies.com/index.htm>