

From the Headwaters of Aquatic Biologists, Inc.

What's Wrong With My Fish?

Aquatic Biologist's Inc. biologists field numerous calls each year from concerned customers asking the question; "What's wrong with my fish?" The concerned pond owner will proceed to tell us how they used to be able to catch big bass and blue gill, but they have mysteriously disappeared. Many believe trespassers are sneaking into their pond and taking their fish or there must have been a fish kill. In a few cases the concerned pond owner may be correct with this diagnosis, but usually the fish population is simply out of balance and needs a little help to get back in line.

So, how does a pond get out of balance? This can happen in a variety of ways. The most common way is through unbalanced harvesting. Many people believe that all bass should be released. This may be the case in large reservoirs that have poor recruitment and abundant forage, but in most pond scenarios, if bluegill are being removed largemouth bass should also be removed in order to maintain balance. A pond owner should remove one pound of predator (largemouth bass) for every five pounds of forage (bluegill), or roughly one 12-inch bass for every 15-20 bluegill. If only bluegill are harvested that leaves too many predators and not enough food resulting in slow growing largemouth bass.

This scenario can work both ways. As you can probably figure out from the above harvest ratio, a pond can easily be thrown out of balance if only bass are removed. Remove twenty bass from a small pond without taking bluegill and you will end up with not enough predators to thin out the bluegill. This in turn will lead to a stunted bluegill population. This problem is very difficult to correct.

The second most common cause of an unbalanced fish population is stocking of adult fish to an already established population. It is very tempting to bring home a big fish to add to ones pond. This can lead to many problems. The pond has a specific carrying capacity, and if you add another big mouth to feed somebody will have to go hungry. This is especially true for blue and flathead catfish. These species of catfish feed primarily on live fish unlike their relative the channel catfish. Many pond owners have destroyed their bluegill and bass fishery by stocking one of these fish eating machines.

There are numerous other ways to throw a pond out of balance. If you feel your fish population is in bad shape and in need of assistance Aquatic Biologist, Inc. can help! We offer several different types of fish surveys to fit your needs and budget. Fish surveys are the best way to supply our biologists with the correct information to diagnose and correct an unbalanced fish population. Feel free to contact our office for a free estimate.

NEW PRODUCT

BIOHAVEN WILD FLOATING ISLANDS

You can now create your own floating islands!

- Improve Water Quality
- Encourage Wildlife Habitat
- Provides Aesthetics

Water Quality: A BioHaven Wild Floating Island will reduce the concentration of nutrients in pond water, which reduces algae growth, leaving the water cleaner and better oxygenated.

Wildlife Habitat: You can influence wildlife use by the way you plant, locate, and manage your island.

Aesthetics: A BioHaven Wild Floating Island is a living, floating garden. Like any garden, it takes a little time to fully develop.

Buoyancy: A unique blended recycled polymer matrix material provides the island's primary buoyancy. Also, as the island gets heavier and denser from plant growth, gases produced by plant roots and microbes add some natural buoyancy to compensate.



Preventing Algae Growth It Starts Now!

Preventative maintenance on algae control begins now. If your pond has a history of nuisance algae growth early in the season adding a preventative algaestat should start before algae begins to grow. (GreenClean *Pro* or PAK 27)

With summer fast approaching, it's not too early to think about your pond and the joy it will bring you this summer, or maybe it didn't look as good as you would have liked last year. Now is the time to think about preventative maintenance. Adequate aeration will reduce nuisance algae growth by 30-60%. Planting competitive decorative aquatic plant species may further manage an addi-

tional 5-10% of the nutrient load.

Fathead minnows feed on algae, organic material, mosquitoes and other organisms and they in turn tie up nutrients as they grow and multiply. One pound of fish stores as much nutrient as 400-700 pounds of dried algae. Phosphorus, nitrogen, and carbon are the primary nutrients that grow algae and nuisance levels of aquatic plants.

Phosphate Cleanser removes phosphorus from the water and also seals phosphorus in the bottom sediment provided adequate oxygen is maintained at the sediment layer.

Bio Boost enzymes and bacteria further break down organic material whether suspended in the

water or settled on the pond bottom. These products compete directly with algae for available nutrients. Bio Boost bacteria and enzymes are always a good all natural way to maintain the health of your pond.

Some of the blue dyes on the market can filter light and slow down photosynthesis especially early in the season.

Specially formulated algaecides that release their active ingredients by biological demand instead of waiting for an algae outbreak is another way to reduce algae early in the season.

Now is the time to schedule any consultations, management planning or pond design work.

Industry Trends

Natural swim ponds are the newest development in our industry. You're thinking - "What's new? ABI has been helping me with my natural swim pond for years".

The new concept is to take the small water garden, enlarge and deepen it so you can swim in it. Plus

you can enjoy the aesthetic beauty of the plants and utilize their water purification benefits.

A great place to swim is not the only benefit that a natural swimming pool provides. It becomes the center piece of your own personal paradise; your own reflection pool, one you



can retreat to whenever you want. With flowering plants, a waterfall and a few fish, your pool becomes a beautiful water garden. You can enjoy it all year round.

If you or someone you know would like to talk about this new concept, please give us a call.

*Specialists in Lake and Pond
Management, Services,
Supplies and Consulting*

Corporate Office
N4828 US Hwy 45 S
Fond du Lac, WI 54935

H2O Hotline: 800 4H2O MGT
(442-6648)

920-921-6827

Fax: (920) 921-1690

Email: abi@dotnet.com
www.aquaticbiologists.com

Fountain Winter Maintenance Program

Fountains should be removed from the water in areas that experience freezing conditions. Aquatic Biologists, Inc. can provide you with a Fountain Winter Maintenance Program to help take the headache out of winterizing your unit. The program includes the removal of the fountain from your lake in the fall. We will clean the fountain and perform a visual inspection on the unit. Oil and seals will be changed as prescribed by the manufacturer. We will store the unit in our warehouse and then install the unit in the spring. Quotations will be sent for any additional repairs necessary, along with any light bulb replacement that may be needed. If you are a new fountain owner or one that is tired of wrestling with fountains every fall and spring please call our office for a proposal.

Kasco's New Lighted Floating Fountain

Beautiful. Calming. Economical. Functional. Affordable

*Add beauty and illumination while
aerating your pond*

Versatile—Perfect for ponds up to 1/5 acre. Decorate small water gardens and reflection pools, or enhance large ponds with a stunning center display.

East to Install—Fully assembled, “plug and go”. Floating fountains require just 12” of water.

Energy efficient—1/4 HP motor draws 3.1 amps at 120V; LED light ring draws <12 watts and is rated up to 100,000 hours.

Complete—Everything you need. Fountain includes two 15’ black polyethylene mooring lines, 50’ power cord, and control panel with timer, Ground Fault Interrupter, and photo-eye for lights.

Unique—Five easy-to-change, unique spray patterns included. There is no comparable product on the market

Quality Manufacturing—Made in the U.S.A. For more than 35 years, Kasco has manufactured top-quality products.

