

#### NOTES ON OUTSIDE FISH-PONDS

by Joe Schill

Winter or early spring is the right time of year to clean out your fish-pond, because your plants and fish do not appreciate such a disturbance later in the season. That would adversely affect both the growth of the plants and the breeding of the fish.

Cut all dead leaves, etc. away, to avoid the accumulation of excessive mulm at the bottom of your pond. Do not feed the fish during winter as they are not active and unused food would pollute the water.

If ice appears on the surface, it is no real danger, provided it is promptly broken up, before the oxygen content of the water becomes depleted. Goldfish need a temperature below 8°C during winter, otherwise they will not breed in the spring. That is why one hardly ever obtains fry in an indoor aquarium.

In my pond there are also some Weather loaches (Misgurnus) but when I cleaned it out last week, 2 of them were missing--not unexpected, perhaps, but to my surprise, I found them still alive on the back-step of my house 24 hours later! I had evidently thrown them out with the mud, but of course, they would not have survived as long as that long in summer, when conditions are hot and dry.