FISH MANAGEMENT IN WARM WATER & COLD WATER PONDS

1. Largemouth Bass Fishing Protocols

Once a pond has been established and fish have spawned once, fish the pond moderately or heavily to maintain a good population balance

Start fishing bass in the third year in early June

Return all bass under 10-inches

Fish bluegill heavily and remove 3-4 pounds of bluegill for every pound of bass removed

Usually, removing 25 to 35 pounds of fish per year leads to a well-balanced pond

2. Assessing Condition of Bass and Lesser Sunfish

Examination of Catch

BALANCED
Bluegill average 6-inches;
Bass average weight is 1 to 2-pounds

BLUEGILL UP
Bluegill range is 3 to 5-inches;
Bass few, and weigh 2-pounds or more

BASS UP
Bluegill are ½-pound or larger;
Bass average less than 1-pound

Shoreline Seining in Mid-Summer

Balance: Presence of young bass and bluegill

Imbalance: Presence of many intermediate-sized bass; 3” to 5”
FISH MANAGEMENT IN TROUT PONDS

1. Rainbow Trout Supplementary Feeding

Feed according to feed dealer recommendations; about 3 percent of estimated body weight

No feeding below 55F

Feed about 3 percent of estimated body weight at 55F to 65F

Above 65F, no feeding

In cooler weather, go to afternoon feeding during warmer portion of the day

Do not fertilize a pond receiving a feeding ration

Feed trout fingerlings twice a day as the by splitting the recommended amount

2. Rainbow Trout Fishing Protocols

Using good management and no supplementary feed, the pond usually reaches its carrying capacity in a year.

Unless fish moderately or hard, there will be little fish growth in the second year

Start fishing when the trout are 6 to 8-inches in length

Early in the second year the trout should be between 12 and 14-inches, and weigh about 1-pound
3. Rainbow Trout Restocking Strategies

Ponds stocked in the Fall will have many small, but usable fish the first year

Fish lightly and you will have many 1 ¾ to 2-pound fish in the first year

After 2-pounds, growth may be slower and mortalities may increase

Spawning seldom occurs in ponds, unless there is a stream containing a riffle-area entering the pond

Fish hard and restock with 5 to 5-inch fingerlings every two years

Fish lightly, and you can restock less frequently

Natural mortality of stocked trout is usually characteristically high, averaging at least 50 percent per year in un-fished ponds, even though dead fish are seldom seen