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Understanding Different Types of Ponds

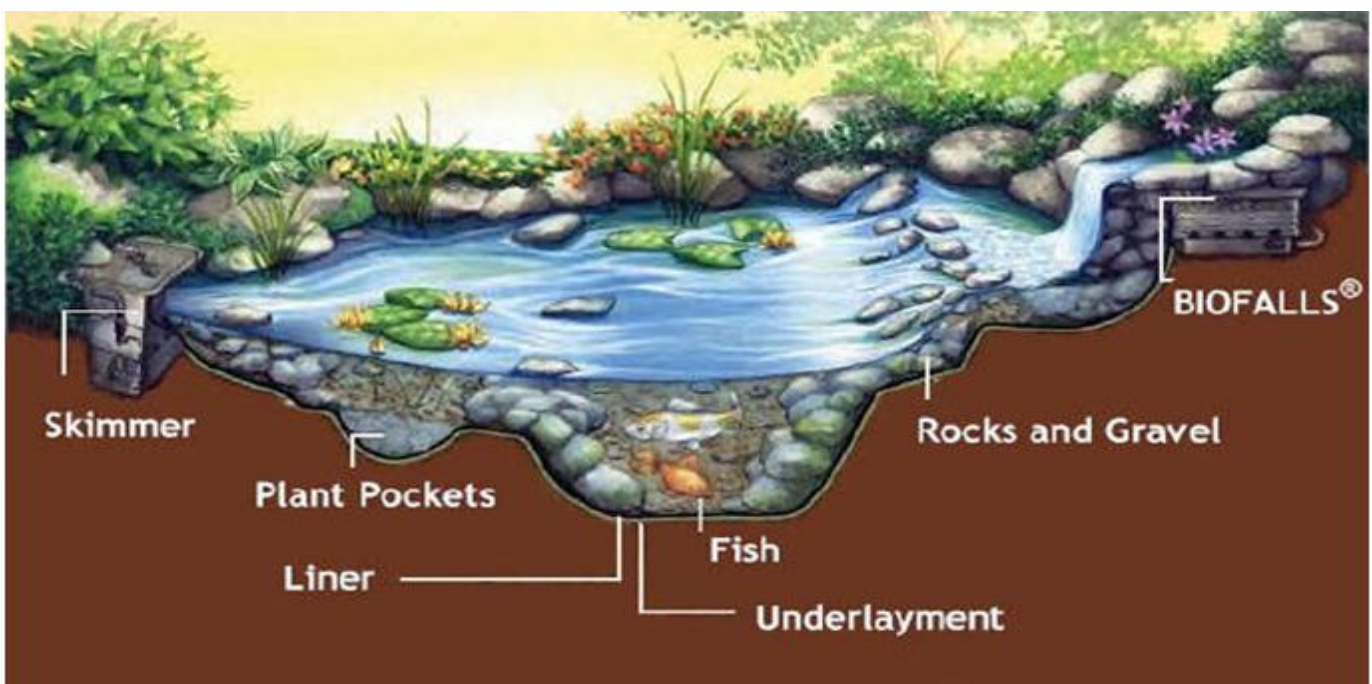
Often there is much confusion as to how one should filter their pond. Many people will try many different methodologies to keep pond water clear and algae free. It is important to understand the differences in pond setups in order to be successful in maintaining one. Typically a pond will fall within one of two main genera.

Eco System Ponds

An Eco-System pond or water garden as they are called consists of 5 major components. They are:

- Mechanical & Biological Filters – These trap debris and provide surface area for beneficial bacteria to grow.
- High Flow Pumps coupled with surface skimming – Good water turnover is critical for pond health. Skimmers catch most leaves and yard wastes before they get trapped in the bottom of the pond.
- Aquatic Plants – 40-60% coverage is recommended. This help out compete nuisance algae's, it provides shade which further assists in algae control as well as protective cover for your fish.
- Rocks & Gravel in the bottom of the pond – Provides more surface area for beneficial bacteria as well as a place for your plants to root into. This forms a web of root structures that will absorb much of the waste in the pond.
- Fish – The best part about the pond! Just be careful not to over feed. All fish waste should be broken down by bacteria and consumed by the plants.

All these components are critical to success of an eco system pond. This bacterial driven system cannot run successfully without all components. A UV sterilizer is not recommended in this type of pond as it will kill a large portion of your bacterial colony as well as promoting string algae.



Traditional / Formal Koi Ponds

Traditional Koi ponds are essentially a larger aquarium that happens to be outside. The maintenance on this type of pond would be more akin to the maintenance that you would perform on a swimming pool. These ponds are less about the “water garden”, or plants, than they are about the fish. These ponds are typified by the following:

- Mechanical & Biological Filter – Filters come in many sizes, from small box filters that sit on the side of the pond, to large swimming pool type filters that are designed to handle high solid waste loads. The larger filters typically need to be backwashed on a routine basis much like a swimming pool filter.
- High Flow Pumps coupled with surface skimming – Good water turnover is critical for pond health. Skimmers catch most leaves and yard wastes before they get trapped in the bottom of the pond.
- Bare liner or Concrete Bottom – Typically coupled with a bottom drain, the thought is to pull from the bottom and have all debris sucked into the pump and pushed through the filter. Since there are no rocks in the pond, it can be maintained with a vacuum much like a swimming pool.
- Ultraviolet Sterilization - These ponds are typically run with large amounts of UV filtration. This helps clarify the water and keep disease at bay. If you are using a UV on a pond, it must be shut down when dosing any bacterial product, algae control product, or fish medication as the UV will break down these compounds as well.
- Fish – The best part about the pond! Just be careful not to over feed. All fish waste will be broken down by the bacteria and trapped by the mechanical filter. This filter needs to be backwashed as it gets saturated; essentially performing a water exchange on the pond, much like you would on an aquarium.



All the components are critical to the success of a formal koi pond. The filtration is the critical component as this is doing all of the waste processing. Because of this it is important to size mechanical and biological filters correctly.

