

Sea Grant Extension  
Telephone 251/438-5690  
October 7, 2003

By: P.J. Waters, Aquaculture Extension Assistant  
Alabama Sea Grant/Auburn Marine Center

With the cooler weather, nature is telling us summer is ending and fall is fast approaching. How was your summer fishing experience? Hopefully it was great. However, if you were not happy with your fishing experience, or would like to revitalize a pond for next year, you should begin now.

Fall and winter are good times to gain control of aquatic weed problems. If you are able to draw the water level down in your pond, the colder temperatures can help to kill weeds along the exposed edges. Once excessive pond vegetation is removed, a fertilization regime can be started next February/March. You should not fertilize prior to removal of pondweeds. By adding fertilizers to a pond with a weed problem, the pond manager will see no benefit to the pond, and the weed problem will magnify. Use the fall and winter months to remove excess vegetation in preparation for a spring fertilization schedule.

If your fishing efforts resulted in skinny bass, your pond may be out of balance. If adjustments in harvest will not correct balance issues, or if your pond is infested with unwanted species, it may be necessary to start over. Adding rotenone will destroy the fish in a pond. However, rotenone is a restricted pesticide, and required an applicator's permit to purchase. The late summer or early fall is the best time of year to use rotenone. Your local extension office can provide details for obtaining a private applicators permit.

Fall and winter months are a good time of year to get out and perform necessary maintenance on your pond. The temperatures are more comfortable for working outside, and your efforts will pay off next spring.

For additional questions or information, contact P.J. Waters, Auburn University Marine Extension and Research Center, 438-5690.