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With spring arriving, people will be spending more time fishing or relaxing on their ponds and lakes. The aesthetic quality of a pond can be reduced by the presence of dense plant growth. There are several methods that can be used to solve the problem of weeds in a pond. If the problem is light, hand removal as you would in your garden may be the best solution. If there are too many weeds to remove easily by hand, one option may be stocking grass carp.

Grass carp can be useful in a pond for the removal of rooted plants, and some floating plants such as duckweed. Grass carp require flowing water to spawn, and will therefore not spawn in ponds. Many states require the use of triploid grass carp; however, Alabama does not currently require the use of these sterile fish. Grass carp can be successfully used in almost any stocking regime including bass/bream and catfish ponds. If bass populations are established, larger grass carp fingerlings (at least 8 inches) should be stocked.

The use of grass carp to control weed problems in ponds is cost effective. Sources of grass carp are readily available, and individual fish are not cost prohibitive. Generally, once established, grass carp can effectively reduce the amount of weeds in a pond for 3 to 5 years compared to some chemical treatments that may require seasonal application.

Grass carp will not muddy ponds as do other species of carp, and can be caught on hook

and line with a little luck. As weeds begin to reestablish in your pond, additional grass carp should be stocked. Stocking densities for ponds depend on the degree of weed coverage and the presence of largemouth bass. Moderate weed problems call for 10 to 18 fish per acre.

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