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Raising Koi has become a very popular hobby, and the reasons are clear as to why. They are beautiful, vibrant fish that can literally brighten up your day. They come in many colors and varieties, so it's likely that everyone can find at least one type of Koi they like. They also have an interesting history.

In Chinese culture, Koi ponds are said to bring good luck to their owners. In other parts of the world Koi ponds are considered to provide a form of serenity and people in the United States, seem to find raising them a fun hobby. No matter what the reason you why you want your own Koi pond, they are sure to brighten your life.

However, Koi keeping should not be taken lightly. Like any other animal, they require time and money to maintain. The majority of first time Koi owners fail because they get the idea that keeping them won't be a challenge at times. Don't let this discourage you. Educating yourself properly will greatly improve your chances of maintaining a beautiful pond for years to come.

It's important for you to learn everything you can before you begin obtaining the things you need for keeping Koi. This way, you won't waste time and money or have to replace anything that you have already finished or bought. Proper planning ahead will not only save you money, it can potentially save your sanity as well. Here are a few things to keep in mind as you move forward.

- Koi Have Personality

You would not believe that Koi actually have personalities similar to other animals. They are social, and can even be trained to eat directly from their owner's hands. The more time you spend with them, the more you will notice that they all have individual characteristics and traits.

Koi have been known to live for up to 200 years at time, but generally the average lifespan of a healthy Koi is about 30 years. So if you are looking for a long time pet, they may be the perfect choice.

- Building Your Koi Habitat

Before buying Koi, you must create a proper habitat for them. This is where information from your pond builder and supplier will come in handy. However, you should not rely on the opinions of just one person. It may be a good idea to do research on your own, before you go to purchase the materials needed for your pond. Because of its popularity, an unlimited supply of resources can be found on the topic of Koi keeping. Visit your local library, fishery center, or research online. There are quite a few things needed to sustain a habitable pond.

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When it comes to pond size, bigger is always better. Koi have a habit of growing rather fast, so you have to consider pond size at the same time you are considering how many Koi you are going to put it in.

Your filtration system is extremely important. There are 2 types of filtration, mechanical and biological. Mechanical filtration relieves the pond of solids such as dead algae, insects, and Koi wastes. It's important to have enough filtration to sustain the size of the pond, and the amount and size of your Koi. Biological filtration causes a nitrogen cycle, which is what removes dissolved wastes from your pond. Without biological filtration, built up waste will turn into ammonia and kill your Koi within just a few days.

Besides the technical aspects of your pond, you will also have the ability to create a visually appealing area as well. Waterfalls, fountains, and other water features will not only add a visual show to your pond, but it will also create movement and sound. A variety of plants and flowers are also available for your pond.

Keeping a Koi Pond Made Easy

There are certain items that you need to have on hand at all times. Because your pond is outdoors, emergency situations do occur. Nature is simply unpredictable at times, and you don't want to be caught in a situation where an item is needed and there is no quick way to obtain it.

- Filters

Having a working filter is essential for removing unwanted pollutants, and maintaining proper water quality. If you don't have a proper filter, water quality issues can occur, which in turn will cause your fish to have health issues.

- Pump

A pump is essential to the health of your pond. If your water is not moving, there is no way the system can process the water. Moving water can also be from waterfalls, fountains, and other water features, but in no way should completely replace your pump.

- Dechlorinator

Tap water contains chemicals that can potentially harm your fish. When adding new water for any reason, you must add Dechlorinator to eliminate these chemicals.

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- Test Kits

You will need to have ammonia and nitrite test kits on hand at all times. You will need to perform weekly water tests on your water to ensure proper water quality. Emergency tests may also be needed in the event that you notice discrepancies in your Koi behavior or in the water.

- Pond Salt and Baking Soda

Pond salt and baking soda are used to regulate PH and Nitrate levels in the event that you find a discrepancy. Pay close attention to the amounts you are supposed to add to your pond, which depends on size and the issues you are currently having.

- Bags

You must have the proper bags on hand to transport Koi. Don't attempt to transport your Koi in trash or regular plastic bags, as they are not designed for this, and may cause damage to your Koi. Unless you remembered to keep the bags you brought your koi home in originally, you will have to make a trip to your local pet store. Make sure to get bags sizable enough to hold your Koi.

- Rubber Bands

You will need quite a few rubber bands for each bag you buy. Make sure that your rubber bands are good quality, as you don't want the pressure from the water to pop the rubber band in the middle of the transport.

- Net

You will need to have a net sizeable enough to compete with your Koi. You will never need the net to pull the Koi out of the water with, but you will need it to lead and direct your Koi into the place you want them. Nets can potentially damage your Koi, especially as the larger they get.

- Bucket

A paint bucket is a better option for catching your Koi, as they cannot hurt your Koi like a net can. Make sure that your bucket is sizable enough to hold your Koi.

- Koi Staple Food

Like any other pet, Koi need to be fed daily. Talk with your local pet store or Koi dealer when picking foods for your Koi, as different seasons may dictate the type of food you

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need to be feeding. Koi have even been known to eat out of their owner's hand, so make sure to get food in which you are able to do this with.

- Treats and Snacks

Like other animals, Koi delight in treats, and will respond in a playful manner to them. Specific Koi treats are available at your local pet store. If you don't mind feeding "human" food to your pets, you may even consider feeding your Koi veggies, fruit, and bread.

Koi pond's popularity are on the rise, and the reasons are obvious. Who would not want living creatures as a part of their garden? However, Koi keeping should not be taken lightly. Koi, like any other animal, require time and money to maintain.

The majority of first time Koi owners fail because they get the idea that keeping Koi is easy in some way. Don't let this discourage you though, as educating yourself will greatly improve your chances of succeeding.

It's important for you to learn all you can BEFORE you begin obtaining the things you need for Koi keeping. This way, you will not slip up and have to replace anything that you have already done or bought. Planning ahead will not only save your money, but it will potentially save your sanity as well.

It's important to learn the information for yourself rather than relying on other sources. People such as your product dealer and pond builder will have limited knowledge, but should not be trusted for a reliable source, as they are selling products, and may be bias. Plus, once you are at home with your Koi, your product dealer or pond builder may not be available to help you in the event of a problem.

- Your pond

Before ever buying Koi, you must create a proper habitat for them. This is where information from your pond builder and supplier will come in handy. However, you should not rely on the opinions of just one person. It may be a good idea to do research on your own, before you go to purchase the materials needed for your pond.

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It's important to have enough filtration to sustain the size of the pond, and the amount and size of your Koi. Biological filtration causes a nitrogen cycle, which is what removes dissolved wastes from your pond. Without biological filtration, built up waste will turn into ammonia and kill your Koi within just a few days.

Another consideration is the water quality. It's sometimes said that having Koi is literally just a side effect of having the proper water quality. To keep your Koi alive, you must have the proper knowledge on how to maintain your water quality.

Buying Koi

There are potentially thousands of different types of Koi, with about 20 different popular versions. Koi are popular because of their beautiful colors and patterns.

Your pond should be complete before you even look into buying your Koi. The size and number of Koi you buy should be highly based on your pond. Be careful, overstocking will cause problems right away with you pond, potentially killing many of the Koi you purchase, causing you to lose time and money.

Most fish owners understand that most fish will only grow to the size of their enclosure. Koi, unlike other fish, will grow until they are the size of their specific type. You must be able to accommodate the amount of fish you purchase in the future.

Keeping a Koi Pond Made Easy

The first Koi were produced by breeding Carp such as the Asian and German Carp. After years of selective breeding, various color mutations started showing up. The first colors were recorded as early as 1805. Today, there are literally thousands of color variations available.

The most popular colors found are white, silver, yellow, orange, red, black, blue and green. Combined with the patterns available, the possibilities are almost endless. Each noticeable pattern and color have their own names, which are typically as unique as the color they are referring too. Favorite types vary by country and location.

Koi are raised for purchase in countries like Japan, Singapore, Israel, and in the warmer American states such as Nevada and California. Koi can be purchased at most local pet stores. If they don't have stock on hand, typically they can be ordered. Ordering Koi has

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its advantage and disadvantages. You have more options when ordering Koi, since you don't have to pick from the stock on hand, but the disadvantage lies in the fact that you will not be able to pick specific Koi.

Your pond should be complete before you even look into buying your Koi. The size and number of Koi you buy should be highly based on your pond. Be careful, overstocking will cause problems right away with your pond, potentially killing many of the Koi you purchase, causing you to lose time and money. Talk with your local dealer about your setup so that they can inform you on the number of Koi in which you should have in your pond.

Most fish owners understand that most fish will only grow to the size of their enclosure. Koi, unlike other fish, will grow until they are the size of their specific type. You must be able to accommodate the amount of fish you purchase in the future.

Koi are none-aggressive fish. Koi don't have teeth, so you will not get bit if you decide to attempt to feed your Koi out of your hand. This even allows you to get smaller children involved. Smaller children will be delighted by the beautiful colors and gentle nature of the Koi.

Koi, like any other wild animal, will naturally be afraid of you in the beginning. Instincts tell them to be afraid of you, which is what keeps them alive in the wild. You must build up trust with your Koi, and this takes time and patience.

Koi are omnivorous fish, which means they will eat both meat and plants. This means that their diets are very versatile. Koi will eat pretty much anything that you put in the pond with them, no matter if it's good for them or not. Since Koi don't have a sense of what is bad and good for them, as their owner you must control their diet.

- Koi have personality

You would not believe that Koi actually have personalities similar to other animals. They are social, and can even be trained to eat directly from their owner's hands. The more time you spend with your Koi, the more you will notice each Koi individual characteristics and traits.

Koi have been known to live for up to 200 years at time, but generally the average lifespan of a healthy Koi is about 30 years. So if you are looking for a long time pet companion, Koi may be a good choice.

Koi pond keeping is quickly becoming a very popular hobby among fish enthusiasts. Koi proves to be an interesting hobby, as it's ever changing. The nature of this hobby makes it almost imperative to communicate with others who have knowledge in Koi and Koi pond keeping. However, what happens if you run into a problem when your Koi

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dealer just is not available to answer your questions? This is when a network of Koi enthusiasts would come in handy.

This network can also provide sheer fun and entertainment. Who better to discuss your hobby with than others who find just as much enjoyment out of it as you do? No matter what the reason you find to join a Koi community, you will find that you are glad you did.

The majority of online Koi communities are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and are typically free to use. All that is required of you is to go through a sign up process, and then begin reading, posting, and responding to other member's posts.

Even if you have never joined an online community before, you will find that it's extremely easy to do so, and the benefits of being a part of such a community is rewarding. In just a few steps, you will be able to start talking with other Koi enthusiasts, potentially all over the world.

- You must find an active community.

While there are literally thousands of communities available online, the vast majority of them are old and outdated, and may not even be visited anymore.

Most message boards have statistics available right on their main page, you just have to look for it. Typical statistics include the number of posts for that day and month, the total number of users that are members, and the total number of members currently signed in to the board.

The larger the number is generally better, especially when looking at the number of members currently online. The higher amount online signals that you will not only be able to post and respond to messages, but you may potentially even be able to talk to other members in real time.

After you find a community with the amount of activity suits your needs, then you must become a member of this form. Some message boards don't require you to sign up to post messages. This option is a good idea if you don't plan on posting more than a couple of posts. However, if you plan on visiting the board more than that, then it would be a good idea to obtain a member name and password. This will be your identity.

Once you sign up, you may be able to create a member profile. Only add information to this profile that you would want the general public to view.

Then you can begin flowing through the various topic boards. Topic boards break different topics into separate divisions, allowing users to easier find and discuss what interests them. Topics can range anywhere from Koi keeping for beginners, advanced Koi keeping, all the way to specifics such as Koi behavior and health issues.

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Remember to only post messages on the topic listed to prevent any confusion and the possibility of your post being deleted. Also, always try to follow typical online typing etiquette when posting messages. Don't post in all caps, spell out each word instead of using abreactions, don't argue, etc.

Finally, help out! Other Koi enthusiasts or even people that are new to the hobby will find your opinion helpful and will welcome anything you have to say. Providing the knowledge, you have may mean the difference between someone else's pond crashing, or making it through an issue.

Keeping you Koi pond clean should be one of your number one priorities. A clean pond could mean the difference between you Koi living a beautiful stress free life, and potentially suffering until they ultimately die. The water in which your Koi live is not only where they eat, sleep, and feed, but It's also where they use the bathroom as well. If you don't properly clean your pond, It's almost as if your Koi are living in the bathroom toilet.

The water in your pond should almost be completely clear. Your pond should contain no floating or suspended debris, and the Koi should appear to be floating in air. If you are unable to see the bottom of your pond, then chances are your pond is not clean enough.

We know that you take great pride in your pond, especially when you were constructing the beautiful landscape around it, and picking out flowers that bloom in beautiful colors and have beautiful smell that are unmatched. However, no matter how beautiful the landscape around the pond is, a pond is not successful unless you can sustain beautiful fish within the water. While ponds are designed to resemble nature, you must remember that your Koi pond is actually just a really large outdoor fish tank, and that it needs to be treated as such.

Unlike natural water systems, fish tanks need a large amount of care. Filtration systems are needed to maintain water quality, and a pump system is needed to keep the water moving.

In nature, Koi would not nearly the amount of food that they do in controlled ponds. It's not unheard of for pond owners to feed many pounds of food to their Koi per week. This produces a larger amount of waste, whether it comes from the digestion process on the Koi's part, or the amount of uneaten food that has settled to the bottom and spoiled. It's important to vacuum the bottom out as much as possible, and make sure all types of drainage systems are clear and in working order.

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Another issue is the fact that your pond is indeed, outside. Being outdoors, your fish tank faces problems that a normal indoor fish tank would never have to deal with. Debris can easily find its way into your pond. It's important to skim your pond as much as possible.

No matter if you blame the Koi, yourself, or nature for the pond not being clean, It's important for you to clean it up. The health of your Koi is at stake if you do not. Even if your water quality is clear, a large amount of debris can cause your Koi stress. Stressed fish are more susceptible to disease and viruses.

Preventing Cleanliness Issues

Above cleaning your pond on a regular basis, adding preventative measures can also increase the cleanliness of your pond.

Keeping your pond moving is one way to help keep your water quality up. Moving water adds more Oxygen to your water, as well as potentially keep floating debris from collecting in your pond. Moving water can be achieved several ways such as waterfalls, fountains, and pump filtration systems designed to move water.

Another way you can avoid cleanliness issues is by keeping your amount of fish down. Start by buying smaller amounts of fish as spawning will cause you to have babies in the near future. The less fish, the less waste is involved.

So you finally finished your water garden construction. You have finally come to the fun part of creating your water garden: picking the flowers and plants that will make your water garden a beautiful oasis.

Not only should you consider beauty when you are picking your plants, but you must also remember that plants provide another, more important value to your garden, biological life. Biological life helps maintain your pool by doing what they would do in nature.

Be sure to pay attention to your climate and area. Some plants can simply not survive in certain conditions, so It's wise to do your research beforehand. Talking with your local dealer will give you some idea of what plants you can and cannot have in your pond.

- Lotus Plants

Undoubtedly, since your pond contains Koi, a tropical fish, you may want to keep with the theme and place Lotus plants in your pond. Pretty much everyone with a tropical water garden will want a Lotus plant because the beauty is simply unmatched by other flowers.

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Lotus plants provide beautiful blooms, and a smell that is unmatched. However, unless you live in an area that sustains temperatures higher than 65 degree Fahrenheit, you will need to have a place to house your Lotus plants during the colder months. A greenhouse setup specifically for water plants will work the best.

Lotus plants require soil, and a large amount of sunlight. They should be planted in water about 2 to 3 feet deep during the warmer months, and indoors during the colder months.

- Water Hyacinths

If you simply don't have the time to plant and maintain your water garden's foliage, or you are somewhat lazy when it comes to gardening, you may want to consider adding Water Hyacinths. Water hyacinths have become very popular recently because of their simplicity. They don't require any type of soil or planting; you must simply throw them into the water. Only minimal time is needed to anchor them down so that they don't float all over the pond freely.

Water Hyacinths are not only pretty, but are also very functional as well. These plants aid in the fight against both algae and blanket weeds.

One downside when having Water Hyacinths is the fact that they will take over your pond and yard if you allow them. Water hyacinths are very invasive, and will spread if allowed. In extreme cases, it may even jump the fence and take over the neighbor's yard as well. Once they have caused this kind of infestation, It's notoriously difficult to get rid of them.

- Hidden but Functional Plants

Alternatively, you may want to consider investing in plants that are not necessary seen. These plants live below the water line, and provide many needed functions to your pond. Some help you battle algae, put oxygen back into the water, or feed your fish for you.

You can find these plants in bundles at your local pet store or Koi dealer. The majority of underwater plants will not need additional support during the winter, so once you place them in the water, you may not think twice about them again. However, the benefits that you gain from having these types of plants make up for the fact that you are not able to actually see them.

Population control is typically easy with the majority of domesticated pets. It's usually as simple as removing the possibility of conception until the time in which the opportunity

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has passed. Unfortunately, this is not the case with Koi. Koi, no matter whether you want them to or not, will spawn, lay eggs, then another Koi will fertilize them.

It's nature, and there is little you can do. Since contraceptive methods are not available for fish, population control really comes down to removing the unwanted babies after they are already born.

As a new comer to this hobby, you may simply disregard this information. For whatever reason, whether it's that you feel removing unwanted babies is cruel, or if you believe that the more fish the merrier, you will quickly realize that keeping all the babies that are born could be a potentially harmful situation to both your pond, and the original parent fish.

Why are the babies harmful?

What is so harmful about having more fish than you originally started with? Well a number of things can happen.

First, Koi can and will grow to up to three feet in length. Koi, unlike some other fish, will grow, no matter the size of their habitat. This will turn a beautiful pond in a wasteful, extremely overpopulated pond. Not only will too many fish cause damage to a smaller pond, but they will not be comfortable in their habitat.

When you originally setup your pond, surely you set the filtration system up for a specific amount of fish. Adding extra fish without adding more to your system will ultimately cause a surge in unwanted gases and chemicals in the water that is dangerous to your Koi.

- There are several ways of removing babies from your pond.

One way is to stop feeding your Koi the minute you realize that spawning has occurred. You should stop feeding your Koi for no less than three weeks. Don't worry about your Koi starving, as they will focus more on natural foods if you are not feeding them daily.

This "natural" diet includes their young. Koi are not cannibalistic animals by any means, but they will eat their young when they are still eggs or if they are small and resemble insects. Once the baby Koi actually resemble real fish, and the adult fish recognize this, they will no longer see them as food, so it's important to start this process as soon as you notice spawning or babies.

While this is a process of nature, you may still find this method to be cruel or unusual. Another way of removing unwanted babies from your pond is to give them away.

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First, check with your local pet store. Many pet stores have programs in which they will accept unwanted animals and give them good homes. Some may even pay a certain amount for each fish since they sell them, but don't count on this. Local zoos may also have programs.

If you know of a local Koi society, you may let them know that you have unwanted babies. Alternatively, you can find a message board or group online and post messages there. Who knows, you may even start another person on a Koi keeping hobby.

First, you must understand that Koi ponds are not just simply holes in the ground that you can keep fish in. For a Koi pond to work properly, and actually sustain fish, a number of different things must be considered when you begin planning it. A few simple rules will ensure that you don't end up with an expensive hole with dead fish.

First, unless you have a large amount of knowledge in outdoor landscaping, fish keeping, and construction, it may be a good idea to leave the pond building up to a professional. While some people think that building the pond yourself will save you money, this could not be further from the case. If your pond is not built properly the first time, you will end up spending a large amount of money on fixing the problems that come up. Not only that, if your pond is not properly set up, you may not even be able to keep fish alive.

Remember when you hire a professional, it's their job to give you what you want. They can give their knowledge when it comes to decision making, but ultimately, they will do whatever you want them to. Because of this, you cannot blame them if your pond fails due to location, size, or other factors. However, beware of extremely cheap quotes as they may cut corners that could potentially cause you problems later. While quotes will come in different, there should not be a very dramatic difference between them.

Koi ponds, are by no means, swimming pools or animal water troughs. This is the reason why so much care must be taken in planning and building your pond. It may cost more money than building a typical swimming pool, but the rewards are much greater. Be sure to keep all children and other non-fish pets out of the pond, as they can cause problems.

If your children swim in your pond, not only could they cause a chemical imbalance, but they could also cause major problems such as leaks. While it's typically ok to have other pets around your Koi pond, some pets may get the idea that it is fun to mess with your filtration system or chase your Koi around.

Remember, the majority of Koi ponds are permanent once they are built. This means that you cannot decide in two or three weeks that you don't want your Koi pond in the front yard, that you would rather have it in the backyard. Carefully plan each and every

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aspect of your pond, because once it's built, there is little you can do to change it. Remember such things as size requirements, and placement.

Finally, remember that maintaining a Koi pond can be a substantial amount of work. Make sure that you will have enough time to carry out the everyday needed maintenance, and remember that, like with any other pets, issues will arise that require extra special attention.

Vet visits may be needed, or you may need to take some extra time out of your weekend to clear up an algae infection. Have a plan, and make sure that if you are going to be going away, make sure someone with enough knowledge to properly maintain your pond is available until you return.

KHV or Koi Herpes Virus is a potentially deadly virus which has recently shown up in the Koi industry. The first outbreak was reported and confirmed in late 1998, early 1999 in Israel. Since then, outbreaks have been reported all over the world, in Asia, Europe, and in the United States.

As with the majority of Herpes type viruses in the world, Koi Herpes Virus is believed to remain with infected fish for their full lifespan. Even Koi that was exposed to the virus at one point or another are considered carriers, even if they did not show signs of the virus. The mortality rate for fish exposed to the virus ranges from 60 to 80 percent.

When it comes down to it, any Koi is susceptible to the virus. The only real way to prevent it's to make sure that your Koi is never exposed to it. As long as you are knowledgeable about the disease, the chances of your Koi catching Koi Herpes Virus is substantially less.

- Koi Herpes Virus Facts

Since the first outbreak in 1998, quite a bit has been learned about the virus. Knowing the facts about the virus may mean the difference between potentially infecting your pond, and preventing it.

Once a fish has been exposed to the virus, it will always be a carrier. Even with proper treatment, these fish will never be able to go to a new home. Sending exposed fish to a new home can potentially spread the virus to other fish. Likewise, adding new Koi into your pond could cause the new fish to get the virus, and cause a potentially higher mortality rate.

- There is no known cure for Koi Herpes Virus.

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Stress does not cause the disease in any way. However, stress can cause the disease to have a higher mortality rate. 74 degrees Fahrenheit activates the disease. This is extremely useful information because it allows for quarantining and testing to see whether or not fish have Koi Herpes Virus.

The virus can be spread a number of ways, including coming into contact with infected fish, water in which infected fish swam in, tools used when handling infected fish, and so on.

- Preventing spread

Once your fish have been diagnosed with Koi Herpes Virus, the only real way to ensure that you don't infect any other fish is to consider depopulation. Depopulation is essentially the elimination of your entire population of Koi. While this might seem harsh, It's truly the only way to completely eliminate the possibility of any other fish from catching the virus.

When purchasing new fish, It's a good idea to quarantine the new fish separately from your current population for no less than 15 days. Knowing that the disease is activated at exactly 74 degrees Fahrenheit allows you to expose your fish to the right conditions for the disease to show itself. Koi that live in the conditions for this amount of time and don't develop any symptoms will have a substantially less chance of having the virus.

It's important to remember that when you quarantine your new Koi, they should remain under total isolation. This means that you should not allow anything to come into contact with the quarantined Koi, especially items that also come into contact with your current population.

Separate tools, food, and water should be used, and never under any circumstances, should the tools used for your quarantined fish leave the area in which they are used. Another important thing to remember is proper hand washing procedures when handling both Koi and Koi items within the same time period.

One of the best features of Koi is their lack of fear for humans. Once the Koi understand that you are not going to harm them, and that you are the one who provides them food, they will likely eat right out of your hand with the right training. Hand feeding can be one of the funniest and most entertaining experiences.

Koi are none-aggressive fish. Koi don't have teeth, so you will not get bit if you decide to attempt to feed your Koi out of your hand. This even allows you to get smaller children involved. Smaller children will be delighted by the beautiful colors and gentle nature of the Koi.

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Koi, like any other wild animal, will naturally be afraid of you in the beginning. Instincts tell them to be afraid of you, which is what keeps them alive in the wild. You must build up trust with your Koi, and this takes time and patience. You will not be able to hand feed overnight.

Koi are omnivorous fish, which means they will eat both meat and plants. This means that their diets are very versatile. Koi will eat pretty much anything that you put in the pond with them, no matter if it's good for them or not. Since Koi don't have a sense of what is bad and good for them, as their owner you must control their snack diet. Another potential problem is over feeding treats.

Again, Koi don't have the knowledge to know when to stop eating, and weight issues may come from overfeeding non nutritional foods. The healthiest treats for Koi are what they would find naturally in their ponds, such as earthworms and tadpoles, but it will not hurt to feed Koi treats such as lettuce, bread, fruit, and veggies.

You should pay special attention to the certain foods such as corn, beans, and grapes, as they contain an outer casing, which cannot be properly digested if swallowed by Koi. If you must feed this type of foods to your Koi, be sure to completely remove the outer casings before giving it to your Koi.

The trick is to start slow. Never make any sudden movements, as this will scare even the most trusting of fish. It will be best to begin hand training your fish from the very moment you get them, but it's not impossible to train a fish that you have had for a while either.

Begin by placing a few pellets or snacks in your hand and submerging your hand under water. Slowly allow the food to fall out of your hand into the water. The Koi may not seem to be paying attention, but rest assured that they are aware of your hand, and are aware that your hand is providing the food. Do this for a couple of days.

After you have dropped the food into the pond for a couple of days, and have gained the interest of your Koi, begin making the fish remove the food from your hand. If the Koi refuse to take the food from your hand, don't feed them that day. You will not stare your fish in this process. They will quickly get the idea that if they want to eat, they must get the food from you. Doing this everyday will get them comfortable with you.

Once you have the fish eating out of your hand, then you can start getting your Koi to eat the food directly from your fingers. If the Koi will not take the food out of your fingers, don't feed them that day. Food is your number one motivator when it comes to wild animals, and no fish will simply stare itself because it's unsure of the situation.

Once your fish are comfortable with hand feeding, you can alternate between hand and regular feeding. If you are in a rush, there is no reason to attempt to take the time to

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hand feed. Also, once you get your Koi taking food from your hand, be careful when allowing visitors to feed your fish. Always supervise children and adults alike, making sure that they are feeding the fish proper foods, and not making any sudden movements that will scare the fish.

First off, take time to breath. Your pride and joys are probably fine. They may be somewhat traumatized by the whole experience, but that would be any pet caught in unusual situation. Unless extreme damage was done, their health probably is not an issue, however their home may be in need of some repairs.

You may have been completely prepared for the storm, or the storm may have taken you by complete surprise. Whatever the case may be, you must jump into action as soon as you physically can to ensure that no further damage is done to your pond.

First, you must undo all of your storm precautions to survey the possible damage.

If you've netted your pond, clear as much debris off the net as possible and remove the netting. Once you removed the netting you will be able to survey the damage and the condition that your fish are in. If high waters were expected and your sand bagged the area around your pond, as long as the water level is normal, remove all sand bags so that you can easily access your pond. Don't get discouraged if things seem out of place, and it may not be as bad as it originally looks.

Once you have removed all netting and other precautions, take time to look at the area. If any debris is present, remove it by skimming and netting. If plants or decorations are uprooted or out of place, replace them to their rightful area.

If you find major damage to your pond, it's important to remove your Koi as soon as possible. Proper bagging and transporting techniques may be needed if the damage done will take a large amount of time to fix, but there are several temporary options available if damage can be fixed quickly.

You may want to consider using a children's pool to house your Koi. If nothing is available at the time, get into contact with your local pet store or zoo, as they may have a program available to help you house your Koi until maintenance can be done.

Once you have decided that only small repairs are needed, then you must focus on the water quality. Your water may seem cloudy or murky due to the storm and the amount of extra water from rainfall. If the storm lasted for a long amount of time, you may be facing ammonia issues as well.

Test your water for Nitrates. If Nitrates are present, add the proper amount of salt to the water. Typically, you would add 3/4 to one pound of salt per 100 gallons of water.

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However, if your fish are especially shocked by the situation, or seem to have sustained any type of injuries, it may be a good idea to add more. If you have plants in your pond, it may be a good idea to remove them before adding the salt into the water. Your fish should be the most important issue at this point, not your plants.

If you are having KH issues (especially if it's below 100) you will want to add baking soda to your pond. Generally, you can add 1 cup of unpacked baking soda per 1000 gallons of water. This will protect your pond from a future pH crash.

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