

## episode 92 show notes and advice

### Episode Description

In this week's episode, Sarah and Arthur explore the wonderful world of water features and garden ponds.

From their favourite native wetland plants to tips for constructing the perfect pond for garden visitors, Arthur shares his breadth of knowledge on the greatest ways to maintain a healthy pond.

### In this episode, discover...

- ❖ Why correct water chemistry is so important
- ❖ The best plants to encourage biodiversity
- ❖ How to make a haven for visiting wildlife

## episode 92 advice sheet

### Arthur's tips for wonderful water chemistry (2:00)

Arthur explains that gardeners often go wrong with aquatics because the chemistry of the pond water is incorrect.

- ❖ Remember, in the first year of establishing your pond, the water chemistry will still be settling and finding momentum. Aquatic plants can be hugely beneficial in helping you to strike the correct balance
- ❖ By midsummer, a healthy pond should be covered in 70-80% leaf – to prevent algae overgrowing
- ❖ Two white waterlilies live in Sarah's water trough, which help to maintain the health of the water and keep algae at bay. Since their arrival, the water quality has significantly improved as the roots help to absorb the nitrogen and are wonderful for mopping up the carbon dioxide – not to mention gorgeous too!
- ❖ A solar powered air pump is great for small ponds and container ponds. It will transform the water chemistry and help with aeration and boost oxygen

### **Construction advice for the perfect pond (4:00)**

- ❖ Flat edges and shallow water 'beaches' are incredibly important for keeping wildlife safe and happy in the garden – incorporating this into the design will help bathing blackbirds and drinking hedgehogs to get out of the water. An absolute must
- ❖ Flat sides on water features are also great for visiting pollinators, such as bees and dragonflies, to enable them to stop and drink from the water
- ❖ When you're digging your pond, make sure you create gently sloping sides to support garden visitors
- ❖ Air stone pumps are suitable for ponds with waterlilies as this gives the waterlily pads room to breathe and ensures they are kept dry on top. They are also effective for creating small air bubbles which will stop mosquitos landing and laying their eggs
- ❖ Ponds are great for attracting toads and frogs – the most fantastic munchers of slugs and snails with a voracious appetite which will help you keep on top of any slug problems in the garden

### **Combat climate change with wetlands (7:00)**

- ❖ Arthur explains that deploying a wetland, or an informal 'bog garden' (if you have a field or meadow) is a great way to retain natural habitats for plants and wildlife, and work as a trap for harmful greenhouse gases
- ❖ A wetland is also effective for collecting and draining excess water after flash flooding
- ❖ Marginal plants and waterlilies will thrive, as will miniature bulrush and irises