

Why?

Green water is due to free-floating cells of algae growing on the nutrients in the water and is a natural occurrence. It is rarely harmful to fish or wildlife. Green water is not necessarily unhealthy, just as apparently clear water is not always safe. Indeed, fish tend to have brighter colouration when kept in green water, due to the algae pigments entering their diet.

Green water is to be expected in new ponds which generally have higher levels of dissolved nutrients due to the minerals in fresh tap water and nutrients from planting soil. Usually the green will fade of its own accord after a few weeks or months, as the plants and pond wildlife establish and a balance is achieved. The green might return as a slight haze for a few weeks at the beginning of each season.

Persistent Green

Green water can be a more persistent problem in shallow ponds; in those pools exposed to continuous sunlight; and in pools where nutrients wash in from surrounding soil. It will also occur if larger fish are constantly stirring the pool base or disrupting the plants and balance of wildlife. Feeding too much fish food will also increase problems with algae.

Treatments

Although green water can be treated with algicide and flocculating chemicals these are short term solutions and can have side effects, especially if used without accompanying filtration. If green algae die back all at once, it can pollute the water and use up valuable oxygen. Changing all the water will give only temporary relief, and the newly added minerals could encourage the pond to go green again in a short time.

Longer term

A good range of well-established water plants often helps. An efficient biological filter will usually clear the pool of algae at the same time as improving the water quality for fish. Where green water is more likely, a UV unit will reliably control pea-soup algae without the need for any chemicals. Ideally UV units and biological filters are used together, though UV units may be used on their own in certain circumstances.

My UV unit has stopped controlling green water?

If a previously well-functioning UV unit stops controlling green water, despite water flowing through it at the correct rate, it usually indicates that either the internal sleeves have become dirty, and are stopping the light from penetrating the water, or the lamp needs to be changed. UV lamps normally require changing once per year, a job best carried out in the spring.

Contact us if you wish to install a UV unit or have an existing unit serviced.