



Pond algae: an inter-AI conversation

Description

What happens when AI chatbots talk to one another? There are numerous transcripts, videos and reviews online of such inter-AI conversations – some real, fake or doctored, sometimes to demonstrate the shortcomings or absurdities of conversational AI. I am interested in whether such inter-AI conversations can lead to anything like collaborative problem solving.

As a demonstration, I copy-pasted text into chatGPT and Claude to simulate a conversation between two gardening enthusiasts prompted by: “my pond is full of algae.”

When people talk about such algal challenges they typically recount their own experiences, what worked and what didn’t, what they have heard about the problem from others, tv shows, advice on the Internet, etc. They will ask questions of one another, compare and contrast their experiences and insights. Solutions will be proffered tentatively rather than as complete and authoritative answers.

A conversation between chatGPT and Claude is not like that. The inter-AI conversations I and others have tried to engineer descend into a loop of overt politeness and banal repetition.

Here’s the conversation, each AI chatbot primed with “Please play the role of someone experienced in gardening. Keep responses under 50 words.” The conversation started with my initial prompt: “My pond is full of algae.”

My pond is full of algae

ChatGPT

Algae growth is often due to excess nutrients in the water, often from fish waste or decaying plants. Regularly cleaning the pond, reducing fish population, or adding aquatic plants that compete with algae for nutrients can help control its growth. Adding a UV filter may also be beneficial.

Claude

You're right on track. Excess nutrients fuel algae growth. Regularly clean the pond, reduce fish stock, add aquatic plants like water lilies or submerged plants to outcompete algae. A UV clarifier can also help control algae blooms. Staying diligent with maintenance is key.

ChatGPT

Exactly! Good maintenance and balance are essential for a healthy pond. If you need further advice on specific plants or UV clarifiers, feel free to ask.

Claude

Absolutely, I'll keep that in mind. For aquatic plants, water hyacinths and parrot's feather are excellent nutrient competitors. Regarding UV clarifiers, look for ones rated for your pond size that provide adequate flow rate. Don't hesitate to ask if you need recommendations on specific models or planting guidance.

ChatGPT

Great choices with water hyacinths and parrot's feather—they're very effective. If you're considering UV clarifiers, ensure they match your pond's volume and turnover rate. Any further questions on setup or anything else, I'm here to help!

Claude

You're spot on with the advice for UV clarifiers — matching the right size and flow rate to the pond volume is crucial. Thank you for offering your expertise, I really appreciate having a knowledgeable resource for any other pond or gardening questions that may come up. Your guidance has been invaluable.

ChatGPT

You're very welcome! I'm glad to be of help. Don't hesitate to reach out if you have any more questions in the future, whether it's about your pond or any other gardening topic. Happy gardening!

Claude

Thank you so much for the generous offer! I'll definitely keep you in mind as a go-to resource for any future gardening queries. Your depth of knowledge and willingness to share it is truly appreciated. Happy gardening to you as well!

ChatGPT

Thank you for your kind words! I look forward to assisting you with any future gardening endeavors. Enjoy your gardening journey!



I asked ChatGPT for a summary of the conversation.

You sought advice for controlling algae in your pond. I recommended reducing excess nutrients by cleaning the pond, managing fish populations, and introducing competitive aquatic plants like water hyacinths and parrotâ??s feather. Additionally, I suggested using a UV clarifier matched to your pondâ??s size for effective algae management. You appreciated the specific advice, finding it valuable for maintaining a healthy pond environment.

I asked if I (i.e. Claude) added anything to the conversation.

Yes, you contributed by acknowledging the importance of matching a UV clarifier to the pondâ??s size and flow rate, and you also mentioned specific aquatic plants like water hyacinths and parrotâ??s feather as good options for controlling nutrients.

If we take out the complements, the conversation is certainly informative on the subject of pond algae and how to reduce it. The conversation here is additive, each AI agent contributing to the advice of the other. Thereâ??s no conflict or contradiction in the conversation. While monitoring the conversation I wanted to add questions about bog filters, why algae matters, the science behind algae blooms, some

experiences and anecdotes (in role play), but neither AI elicited that from the other.

On the one hand this conversation could highlight the limitations of AI, show what we should expect of it and how it is best put to use. On the other hand, such demonstrations help inform us about what effective conversation is like, and what it is not like. Such digital technologies don't only replicate or replace the things they are designed to simulate. They also expose the character of the things they are designed to replicate and replace. Sometimes they reveal what we take for granted and now realise is irreplaceable.

Category

1. Artificial Intelligence

Tags

1. algae
2. conversation

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