



ANIMAL CARE SHEET



Betta Fish

Bettas are Anabantoids. This family of fish are carnivorous & bubble nesting. This family includes the Gouramis, Paradise fish, and all the betta species. The Siamese fighting fish is the species Betta Splendens, of the genus Anabantoid.

Bettas are found in mud puddles & streams in the Orient. They are very hardy fish & can live in almost any type of water.

Their aggressive attitude was bred into them by the ancient peoples who, after plowing the fields, would fight their wild bettas (also known as plakats). The loser would be released & the winner would be bred. The different fin types of bettas were bred by selective breeding, as well.

Care:

Bettas are Carnivorous fish. They require water above 68 degrees Fahrenheit, although, mine have survived lower temperature for short periods of time. Bettas are very easy to take care of, they breathe air so aeration in their aquarium is not really necessary. Don't change your betta too often. For one gallon of water, change once a week, 2 gallons, every two weeks, 3 gallons, every 3 weeks & so on. If you have a filter in your aquarium, water changes are almost unnecessary.

Bettas need meat protein & should be fed once or twice a day for normal upkeep. An appropriate diet for these fish is a tropical fish flake food, Bettamin, blood worms, steak, beef heart & any assortment of red meats (beef) & manufactured foods, as well as, Daphnia, brine shrimp, ect.

A betta should not be kept in a vase with a plant in it if you do not intend to feed it. Contrary to popular belief, the betta cannot survive on plant roots & the plant cannot efficiently filter the water. While a plant may cut down on water changes, you must still change at least once every 2 weeks-depending on the size of your container. Your betta should be fed an appropriate diet of the above listed foods, even if he is in a tank with a plant. Neglecting to feed & change his water will result in a dead betta & very dirty water. Keep it clean, keep him fed, keep your arrangement beautiful!

Bettas, don't do well with other fish, especially males. Females may get along with some types of fish but most bettas must be kept in solitary tanks. If you have multiple bettas, put them where they can see each other. This keeps them from getting bored & gives them exercise. If a betta is willing to get along with other fish, usually the other fish are not willing to get along with him. They will usually pick at his long fins & irritate him & in-turn he will do the same to them. Characoids (tetras) are a bad choice for betta tank mates. They are the kings & queens of nippiness.

Don't put your female betta where she can see male bettas, unless you are planning to breed her. She will get eggs & if you don't breed her she can die of being egg bound.

What's the size container/tank I should get? The Male Betta should be placed in a jar no smaller than 1/2 gallon. Preferably 1 gallon. Anything smaller than 1/2 gallon does not give them sufficient living space. And their waste and uneaten food will deteriorate the water conditions rapidly in a small container.

What temperature I should I keep the tank at? A good temperature range is 76-79 degrees. Anything colder than 74 degrees, a Betta will start to show signs of Stress. And Stress leads to many Diseases.

What type of water Should I use, Tap, Spring or Distilled? Tap Water is best, since it is constant. Make sure you use a good Dechlorinator to remove the Chlorine and Chloramines. Spring Water is the 1 next best thing. The only problem with Spring Water is the PH "may" be different from bottle to bottle. DO NOT use Distilled Water, as it has many 1 of the Minerals missing that a Betta needs to thrive. In addition, the lack of : Minerals in Distilled Water, does not allow the water to properly be "buffered" against PH swings. Your best bet is Tap Water with a good Dechlorinator (such as Amquel & Novaqua).

How often should I change the water? A general rule of thumb I use is 1 gallon/per week. If you have a 1 gallon tank change it weekly. Anything smaller change it 2x a week. Anything larger can go longer without changes.

What should I add to the water? Use a good dechlorinator that removes Ammonia, Chlorine and Chloramines. I recommend Amquel & Novaqua. They should be used in conjunction with each other.

Should I use a Filter, Air Pump or a Heater? A Filter will help keep the tank cleaner. I do use an Air Pump. But it's kept on low for my Adult Bettas. My Fry get it turned up a bit more.. A Heater will keep the temperature constant. Please note when using a Heater, the Bettas should be in

a minimum of 2.5 gallons. All of these are optional, except the Heater if your tanks drop below 74 degrees.

What about accessories such as Plants and Gravel? You can use either Live, Plastic or Silk Plants. They are more of an aesthetic option rather than a necessity. Just make sure they don't tear the Bettas fins. Gravel is eye-candy for the owner. It's not necessary and may make cleaning the jars a little harder to do.

What should I feed my : Betta? Bettas are "Carnivores". Which means they like meat. Some of their favorites are: Brine Shrimp, Bloodworms, Blackworms, etc. You can buy Frozen Brine Shrimp and Bloodworms at your local pet store. If you don't want to deal with those, then you can try Freeze-Dried Bloodworms or get a good pellet food. I recommend "Hikari Betta Bio Gold".

My Betta came with a Plant in a Vase will that be enough for him to eat? The answer is NO! Bettas are Carnivores and cannot survive for any length of time off of a plant. It's equivalent to slow-starvation. See above for Betta's foods?

How much/how often I should I feed my 1 Betta? A Betta's stomach is about the size of his eyeball. Overfeeding is a common problem, as Bettas will get fat and unhealthy when overfed. This can lead to a shorter lifespan. They should be fed a small amount once a day.