



ANIMAL CARE SHEET



Salt Water Fish

Marine fish come in a vast array of sizes, colors, shapes and dispositions providing plenty of choice for fish fanciers. They may remain small or grow to be very large and many have different temperature, feeding and compatibility requirements that must be considered before selecting and setting up your new aquarium.

General

Make your salt-water from a marine mix formula providing all the major, minor and trace salts necessary for optimal health. Salinity levels vary, from a specific gravity of 1.025, for live reef systems, to 1.010 sg for marine fish only. It is very important that changes in salinity be made gradually. Water quality should be monitored regularly, checking and correcting levels of ammonia, nitrite, salinity and pH. Water changes should be made according to the type of system (often for under gravel filters, less for Berlin coral reef systems, etc).

Housing

Aquariums should be chosen according to size, materials and safety relative to the type of fish. A lid or hood should be added, to prevent fish from leaping out and to avoid other pets or people reaching in. Proper lighting should be used so that it illuminates the fish without stressing them or overheating the water. The appropriate temperature range should be considered and a heater, chiller or both (heat pump) should be installed to control the water temperature. Substrate, and such features as natural live rock, corals, marine plants or artificial decorations should be chosen carefully to be certain they are safe.

Diet

To remain healthy, fish must be fed according to their specific needs (for example, tangs should be allowed eat some sort of vegetative diet over several hours each day) and proper frequency of feeding must be maintained

Cleaning

Follow the manufacturer's instructions on maintaining filtration equipment and clean the aquarium itself when debris begins to collect on the bottom or algae starts to cover the viewing panels. Never use soap or detergent in cleaning aquarium equipment.

Health

Check your fish daily for signs of stress, disease, fighting or not eating and take appropriate action. Optional, but recommended, equipment to help keep your marine fish in a healthy environment are: Protein skimmers (to help remove excess organic material dissolved in the sea water) and sterilizers (such as Ultra Violet Sterilizers or Ozonators, which help keep any harmful infectious agents in check).

Warning

When buying decorations for your aquarium beware of toxic materials such as metals or plastics that can leach out deadly chemicals into the water.