

Damselfish

Family Pomacentridae



Far Left:
Black Tailed Humbug



L: Allens Damselfish



Below:
Female Blue Devil Damselfish



Left:
Blue/Green Chromis



L: Yellow Belly Damselfish



Below:
Yellowtail Blue Damselfish

Introduction

Damselfish are beautiful marine aquarium fish that are not difficult to keep in aquaria and are extremely popular. They are usually brightly coloured, brilliantly hued in blues, greens, violets, reds and browns. They are always active, are great feeders and their hardy nature makes them an excellent fish to keep in captivity. Some damselfish are known to have been kept in captivity for more than ten years

Maximum Size

Average maximum size is around 8 cm

Water Quality

Damselfish are not too fussy with water chemistry and will tolerate less than water perfect conditions but it is best to keep parameters at:

- pH 8.0 –8.4
- Specific gravity—1.020 –1.025
- Temperature 24-26°C

Feeding

Will eat most aquarium fish foods and they will thrive on a greatly varied diet including some live, frozen or fresh food occasionally, along with a dried food such as Tetra Marine Flakes. Frequent small feeds 2-3 times a day of a variety of food will sustain them well. They should not be overfed, even though they are greedy feeders.

Compatibility

Damselfish loosely congregate together and get more aggressive as they mature. They are quite territorial and need plenty of hiding places. They are best suited with semi-aggressive fish that feed well as damselfish are competitive feeders. Do not keep them with shy fish. Suitable tank mates include Angelfish, Triggerfish, Hawkfish and Tangs. It is best to observe your fish behaviour on a daily basis to look out for aggressive display among fishes. Territoriality may be alleviated by under-crowding and re-arranging aquarium decor.

Behaviour

Damselfish are hardy, bold, long lived, extremely disease resistant, greedy feeders that require hiding places that they will call their territory in which they will defend vigorously. Generally the blue varieties are more peaceful than other colour variants. They are commonly added as the first fish in the tank because they are hardy enough to endure the tank cycling process. This can be problematic when adding other fish into the tank as the damselfish may have claimed the whole tank as their territory and behave aggressively to any newcomers. The most aggressive fish should be the last fish added into the tank

Species

Damselfish are a large group that make the family Pomacentridae together with subfamily Amphiprion (Clownfish) and subfamily Chrominae (Chromis).

Common damselfish available include:

Damselfish—white tail humbug (*Dascylus aranus*)

Damselfish—Yellow (*Pomacentrus moluccensis*)

Damselfish—Yellow tail blue (*Chrysiptera parasema*)

Damselfish—Allens (*Pomacentrus alleni*)

Damselfish—Yellow Belly (*Chrysiptera hemicyanea*)

Damselfish –Blue Devil (*Chrysiptera cyanea*)

Chromis—Blue/Green (*Chromis viridis*)

Damselfish are an excellent marine fish for the beginner.