

Blue Tang

Paracanthurus hepatus



Common Names

Pacific Blue Tang, Palette Surgeonfish, Hippo Tang, Hepatus Tang, Dory, Blue Surgeonfish

Natural Range

Indo-Pacific region

Size and Longevity

Maximum size 25-30cm, with an average life span of 5+ years.

Water Quality

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

Feeding

Blue tangs will readily eat most meaty and dry foods offered to them, but it is important that they are also provided plenty of marine based seaweed such as nori. The nori can be tied to pieces of PVC pipe, to a rock or special vegetable clips and it is best to feed at least three times per week. This approach will help the Blue Tang's immune system leading to overall good health.

Compatibility

Though peaceful towards most tank mates, the Blue Tang can become aggressive towards other tangs if there is insufficient hiding locations provided. If you wish to introduce multiple tangs, it is advised to add them all at the same time, which will lessen the chance of aggression. It is also important to keep in mind its adult size as this fish is often very small when sold. As a result fish keepers can be caught out when it reaches its 25-30cm adult length. Therefore we recommend a 6ft aquarium for their long term health and well-being.

Colour and variants

The Blue Tang boasts a brilliant blue body with bold black markings. These markings are said to resemble the unique shape of a painter's palette, which is where the name the Palette Surgeonfish originates. In the central Indian Ocean there is a colour variant that displays a yellow belly.

Sexing

This species shows no obvious differences between the male and female.

General Information

Due to its vast geographical distribution the Blue tang (*Paracanthurus hepatus*) is one of the most popular and common marine fish. Its popularity was solidified along with the Orange and white clown fish (*Amphiprion ocellaris*) in the 2003 Disney/Pixar film "Finding Nemo".

Careful observation of newly introduced blue tangs is essential, and quarantine is recommended especially for reef tanks as they can be susceptible to lateral line disease, fin erosion, and the ever common white spot outbreak. The blue tang will be the focus of the movie sequel "Finding Dory".

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