

Guppy

Poecilia reticulata

This species belongs to the Livebearing Tooth Carp Family or Poeciliidae.

- Available in a wide variety of colours
- Very active
- Gives birth to live young
- Can tolerate a range of water conditions
- Appeal to both experienced and novice hobbyists
- Excellent 'tropical' beginner fish

Natural Range

Guppies originate from South America and the West Indies, but nearly all guppies sold in Australia today are bred in Asia.

Maximum Size and Longevity

Sizes can range from 3 – 5cm.

Water Quality

- Temperature: 24°C—26°C
- pH: 7.0—7.5
- General Hardness: 250—300ppm

Guppies need clean oxygen rich water, ensure tanks are well aerated and filters are cleaned regularly. Make sure all biological filters are working properly, ensuring no ammonia or nitrite is present. For more information please refer to our care sheet 'New Tank Syndrome'.

Feeding

An active fish, guppies use an enormous amount of energy and need to be fed at least 3 times a day, with a variety of foods including dry, fresh, frozen or live foods. Guppies are top feeders and will readily take most prepared foods.

Compatibility

Guppies are suited to a densely planted community tank with other peaceful fish. It is best to choose tank mates with similar water requirements - slightly alkaline hard water in their aquarium. Avoid stocking with larger or aggressive species which will nip at them because of their brightly coloured tails. Male guppies may continuously 'harass' female guppies if kept together, a ratio of one male to two females will reduce stress.



Colour and Varieties

While there are many beautiful wild forms of livebearers, guppies have been selectively bred throughout the world to produce a huge variety of colours, body shapes and fin arrangements.

Sexing

Livebearers have the common trait that they give birth to free swimming young (ovoviparous), instead of egg laying like most other fishes. To achieve this, male livebearers have a modified anal fin called a gonopodium that is used to facilitate internal fertilization of the female. Once fertilised, the eggs mature inside the oviduct of the mother. The eggs then hatch internally and she will give 'birth' to the resultant offspring soon after. The fry of guppies are about 7 to 10mm in length when born and are probably the most easily raised species as they will feed on finely ground dry foods and do not require smaller live foods like most other species. Males and females are generally easily distinguished as males have a smaller body with brightly coloured tails, with females also having a dark 'gravid' spot in the anal region.

General Information

Guppies are probably the most popular livebearer among both aquarium owners and advanced breeders. The once humble guppy has become a sought after fish for hobbyists with selective breeding resulting in a wide variety of colours and fin shapes. These fish are generally robust and can tolerate a wide range of aquarium conditions and for this reason they are often recommended for beginners. However, because of intense selective breeding, fancy guppies can be harder to maintain than their wild ancestors. For this reason it is important to try and maintain water which is slightly hard and alkaline otherwise they can become prone to bacterial infections.