

# All About Bettas



## **Introduction**

Bettas are a popular fish for both beginning and advanced hobbyists. Their low maintenance and wide range of colour and fin types ensures that there is a betta to fit everyone's tastes. In the wild, bettas live in shallow streams and rice paddies of Thailand. Because of this, many assume that they can spend their entire lives in small bowls, however bettas will live a much longer and happier life if given more space. With proper care, a betta can live as long as 3 – 5 years.

## **The Tank**

A 5.5 gallon tank makes an excellent size home for a single betta, but the bigger the better. The minimum recommended size is a 2.5 gallon aquarium.

Bettas will greatly appreciate plants. Live plants will help mildly maintain the water quality, but if you're unable to add live ones, fake plants work as well. Popular plants for bettas include anubias, java fern, windelov, and cryptocorynes. They will also enjoy wood or branches to hide in. Ensure that there are no sharp spots on any décor, as these could easily damage the betta's fins.

## **Lighting and Heating**

Bettas should be provided with 8 hours of light per day. Special lighting may be required for live plants. The lights should always go off after the 8 hours to give the betta a chance to rest, and to prevent algae growth. The tank should not be in direct sunlight, as this will also cause algae growth, and make it difficult to maintain the temperature.

The water should be maintained between 78° – 80° F (25.5° – 26.6° C). A small heater may be needed to achieve this. A thermometer should be used to measure the temperature.

## **Diet**

Bettas should be fed a quality betta food every day. They will typically eat 2 – 4 pellets each feeding. They can also be fed bloodworms, either frozen or freeze dried as a treat. It is important to not overfeed the betta as it can lead to health problems, and the excess food, if not removed, can pollute the tank. If the betta has any tank mates, additional types of food may be needed.

## **Filtration and Water Quality**

Bettas do not like a lot of flow. While a filter should be provided, it should be gentle, and create minimal disturbance in the water.

It is important to test the water quality regularly to ensure that it is within the right parameters for the betta. The pH should be maintained at 7.0, there should be no ammonia and nitrite, and no more than 10 ppm of nitrate. If the water quality is not correct, it can make the betta ill or even cause its death. If something needs to be fixed with your water quality, ask a staff member the best way to correct it.

## **Tank Maintenance**

Weekly water changes are a must. Once a week, use a gravel vacuum to clean the gravel and remove 25% of the water. This is also a good time to clean any algae on the glass or ornaments. Many hobbyists think that they must remove the fish and wash everything in the tank, but this is untrue, and is a lot more work for you. It will also stress out the fish, making it more susceptible to disease. The new water should always be dechlorinated, and it is a good idea to dose with some beneficial bacteria after a water change. The filter should be cleaned once a month as well. Always consult the filter manual or a staff member for the best way to clean your filter.

## **Cohabitation**

Male bettas should never be housed together – there is a reason these fish are referred to as fighting fish! Other tank mates can be a hit or miss – bottom feeders such as small species of corydoras or ottocats can be housed with bettas if the tank is large enough, but fish with flowy fins may be seen as a threat to the betta, and could get attacked. Some fish will also nip at the bettas fins, opening them up for infection.

## **Types of Betta Fins**

Bettas sold in stores come under many different names based on their fins and colouration. They are all the same species, so the care is the same. Here are some common terms explained:

- Veil Tail: A regular betta
- Fringe/Crown Tail: A betta with long, spikey looking fins
- Twin Tail: A betta that appears to have two distinct tails due to a split in the middle
- Half – Moon: A betta that has a perfect “D” shaped tail when fully flared – 180°
- Super Delta: Similar to the half-moon; but not as large of a flare (120° - 160°)

## Bringing Bettas Home

If you're just getting your tank, your new betta can be placed directly in its new home. Additional water may need to be added depending on the size of the aquarium. Tap water can be added, and should be dechlorinated. Beneficial bacteria should also be added into the aquarium when the betta is brought home.

If you're adding your betta to an established tank, it will need to be acclimated slowly. Float the bag in the established aquarium for 5 minutes. After 5 minutes, add water from the tank into the betta bag. Repeat this every 5 minutes 4 – 5 times, then release the betta.

## Our Fish Guarantee

Fish are guaranteed for 3 days after purchase. Should something happen within 3 days from purchase, you must bring the fish back in one bag, a sample of water in a separate bag (at least 50mL) and the receipt. We will warranty the fish if your water quality is good – adequate pH for the betta, no ammonia, no nitrite, and no more than 40 ppm of nitrate. Damage from other fish will not be covered. Fish sold as final sale will not be covered.

## Betta Checklist

- |   |  |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Aquarium (2.5 – 5.5 gallons)             | <input type="checkbox"/> Chlorine Remover                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Filter (with media)                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Bacteria Supplement                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heater                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Water Test Kit (optional, but highly recommended) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Betta Food  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Glass Top/Canopy                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Fish Net  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lighting                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Gravel  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Timer (optional, but highly recommended) | <input type="checkbox"/> Decorations                                       |

**Have some questions? Get in touch with us – we are always happy to help!**

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