

MGP

CARE SHEET : FRESHWATER CRUSTACEAN

The unique characteristics and wide variety of freshwater crustaceans provide an appealing addition to your aquarium.

Facts:

Includes:	freshwater lobsters, crayfish species, algae shrimp, bamboo shrimp, ghost shrimp.
Average Size	depends on species
Life Span	depends on species
Diet	omnivore
Minimum aquarium size	5+ gallons depending on species
Water temperature	72-82 degrees F

Diet: A well-balanced freshwater crustacean diet consists of:

- * typically feeds off excessive food or debris in aquarium
- * plant (algae) or animal matter
- * sinking pellets and wafers

Feeding: Things to remember when feeding your freshwater crustacean:

- * feed daily
- * ensure food reaches the bottom of the tank; if unsure drop sinking pellets into the tank at night; alternate protein and algae based pellets.
- * feed a variety of food to ensure complete nutrition

Housing:

- * Keep in an appropriately sized aquarium; provide hiding places and plenty of room for movement. They need calcium to grow their shells and some species like soft water. Most crustaceans benefit from freshwater salt; follow package instructions.
- * Copper based medications can be toxic to crustaceans.
- * Stable water quality and parameters are critical to the health of aquatic life. If you are unsure of your water quality, test.

Characteristics:

- * crustaceans are characterized by their hard, jointed exoskeleton, which they molt during growth periods; they may burrow or hide during molting stages.
- * scavengers that will help keep tank clean by consuming excess food.
- * some shrimp feed exclusively on algae and are great for algae control.

Habitat Maintenance:

- * Daily - check filter, water temperature and other equipment.
- * Weekly - check water quality at least once a week.
- * Monthly - change 10 to 25% of the total volume of water every 2 to 4 weeks or as needed
- * Introduce new inhabitants to the aquarium gradually.

Compatibility:

- * Some species can be aggressive towards fish and other crustaceans.

Signs of a healthy crustacean:

- * Even coloring
- * Healthy Appetite
- * Active movement

Avoid overcrowded conditions which are a major cause of stress and disease. Maintain good water quality with regular water changes and adequate filtration.

DO NOT USE SPRAYS OF ANY KIND AROUND FISH TANK including insecticides and air freshener.