

FEDERATION OF BRITISH AQUATIC SOCIETIES

Fish Care Sheet No 30

Angelfish

27/09/99

Genus: *Pterophyllum* Typically *Pterophyllum scalare*, *P. altum*, *P. eimekei*, *P. dumerilii* and *P. leopoldi* have been cited in aquatic literature.

Family : Cichlidae

Geographic Origin: South America. Many of the species are from Brazil but most aquarium stock probably comes from commercial breeders in the Far East!

Common Names: Angelfish

Compatibility: Generally peaceful enough for a community collection. Adults may become territorial when spawning and small fish (Neon Tetra size) may not be safe.

Minimum Aquarium Size: One pair of *Pterophyllum* will be fine in a 600 x 380 x 300mm (24" x 15" x 12") tank, providing that it is glazed so that it is 24" tall rather than long. This will give this 'tall' species enough depth of water. A 1200 x 380 x 450mm (48 x 15 x 18 (height) tank will hold several pairs of fish.

Temperature : 23⁰C to 28⁰C, whilst a rise of a couple of degrees is better for breeding.

Habitat : Fine gravel /coarse sand. Several clumps of 'grassy' plants (*Vallisneria*, *Sagittaria*) will provide resting places. Large pieces of inclined slate or thick 'bamboo/cane' sticks will make ideal spawning surfaces for these egg-depositing fish.

Water Parameters : Ideally, these fish prefer soft acid water but most specimens adapt to whatever comes out of the tap. Water should be filtered.

Regular partial water changes advised. This is especially important in the breeding aquarium to where fertilised eggs (removed from the parents) are transferred for separate hatching. Any accumulation of dirt will result in fry deaths.

Health : Generally hardy.

Diet : Omnivorous. Relish live or frozen foods. *Daphnia*, Mosquito larvae excellent for getting fish into optimum condition for Showing or breeding.

Plants : Will not destroy plants, although some broad-leaved specimens may be 'over-cleaned' and left a bit battered if not regarded as an acceptable spawning site.

Breeding Notes : Eggs may be removed from the spawning tank and raised artificially using an airstone to simulate parent fish action in keeping eggs well-oxygenated and clean of debris.

Availability : A number of colour variants, together with 'Lace' and 'Veil' long-finned specimens, are readily available. Whilst fish with split, or branched, pelvic fins may well be healthy, they will not make good exhibition fish.

Show Class : FBAS Show Class Da.