

# FEDERATION OF BRITISH AQUATIC SOCIETIES

## AQUARIUM MANAGEMENT CARE SHEET No: 14 Aquarium Lighting 14/01/05

All aquariums require lighting but the amount needed varies depending on the type of aquarium and its contents.

### HOODS

Most aquarium hoods are equipped to hold a simple lighting system tungsten bulbs or a single fluorescent tube either are adequate for viewing the contents of the aquarium.

Brief guidelines as to the amount of light needed are as follows.

#### Freshwater & Coldwater

- A) An aquarium furnished with rockwork and/or plastic plants will be adequately lit by the amount of light provided by the original standard hood fittings.
- B) An aquarium furnished with natural aquatic (submerged) plants may require double the amount of light as one with plastic plants to ensure their maintenance and growth. This is best achieved by introducing a mixture of lighting by including special 'plant-growing' fluorescent tubes within this scheme.

#### Tropical Marine

Marine macro-algae such as *Caulerpa*, is the nearest thing to aquatic plants in a marine aquarium but many of the invertebrates kept in such aquariums also have algae growing within them. For these reasons, marine aquariums often require yet another doubling of the light provided.

### DEEP TANKS

Light's intensity falls off dramatically (both in amount and in colour spectrum) as water depth increases. For tanks of over 15" or 18" in depth, extra lighting will be required.

Metal-halide, Mercury-vapour and other high-intensity type lamps may be used to better effect than fluorescents in these cases. Most recent designs are 'Luminaires' using latest T5 tubes, to stand on open-top tanks.

### LENGTH OF LIGHTING PERIOD

This is best arrived at by trial and error the correct amount of light being that which sustains healthy plant growth without over-encouragement of algae growth. Generally 12-14 hours each day is about right; where 'multi-tube' arrangements are used, it is quite practical to switch some tubes off in the evening.

#### Note on performance

No matter what type of light is used, best results will not be obtained if lamps are not renewed regularly and reflectors and cover glasses not kept spotlessly clean.

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### TYPES OF TUBES AND THEIR USES

The following information was correct at time of preparation of this Care Sheet.  
Naming certain brands and tubes does not imply recommendation nor guarantee of performance.

**FLORAGLOW:** Tending to the Blue/Green spectrum for plant growth.  
Use in conjunction with other tubes. Rolf C Hagen.

**LIFEGLOW:** Enhances the colours of fish and plants should be used in conjunction with other tubes unless plants are not a concern. Rolf C Hagen.

**REPTIGLOW:** Is suitable for Reptiles as it converts Vitamin 'D' to 'D3'. Builds Calcium.  
Rolf C Hagen.

**SUNGLOW:** Nearest to Sunlight best used with 'Floraglow' if plants are a concern.  
Rolf C Hagen.

**DAYLIGHT PLUS:** For tropical planted, marine fish and coral aquariums. Interpet.

**BEAUTY LIGHT PLUS:** For bringing out the colours in Goldfish and tropical aquariums.  
Interpet.

**TRI PLUS:** Stimulates lush plant growth in freshwater aquariums and promotes coral growth in marine aquariums. Interpet.

**DAYLIGHT BLUE:** Combines daylight and actinic lighting for a bright reef effect which promotes coral growth. Interpet.

**BLUE MOON ACTINIC:** Makes corals fluoresce, creates moonlight effect. Interpet.