

Hilltop Pet & Aquariums

Yabbie Information Sheet

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Open Monday - Friday 9:30am-6pm Weekends & Public Holidays 10am - 5pm

Introduction

Yabbies can grow to over 20cm in length and are generally found to be green, brown, pale or bright blue in colour. Although it is not recommended, yabbies can live with fish as long as they are housed in a suitable sized aquarium and the fish are happy and healthy. Be aware that yabbies can nick at the fish if given the opportunity. If you are looking at housing fish with yabbies in your aquarium, choose fish that swim in the centre to the top of the aquarium. It is recommended not to house bottom dwelling fish (e.g. gudgeons and catfish) with yabbies.

Housing

If using a small aquarium, it is recommended to keep only one yabbie. Be prepared to get a bigger tank, either to start with or later on to accommodate for the size of the yabbie or for multiple yabbies. Yabbies can be territorial if they are overcrowded, so offer plenty of hiding spaces using rocks, ornaments, volcanic rock or driftwood. Plants and decorations can be used but be wary if they come close to the top of the aquarium as the yabbies can climb and could escape so glass lids are recommended.

Temperature

Temperature for yabbies can range between 5°C to 30°C. The optimum temperature is between 12°C and 25°C.

Water Conditions and Filtration

The water should be kept at a neutral pH of 7.0 (6.8-7.2 is the ideal pH range). If using tap water, chlorine neutralizer must be used at a triple dose to remove the chlorine and chloramines, as the chlorine and chloramines will burn the yabbies. Rainwater (assumably not toxic) can also be used. Aquarium salts should be added to rainwater as it can be too soft. There are corner filters, power filters and canister filters available. The filtration needed by a tank all depends on the size of tank and the number of yabbies/fish being kept. Replacement filter media/sponges are available for most filters. Yabbies breathe through their gills (located on each side of their body). If their water becomes polluted and the oxygen level drops, it can be deadly. Regular water changes are recommended.

Water Changes

If your aquarium has satisfactory filtration, water changes should be done every 3-4 weeks. If there is no filtration weekly changes are recommended. This should be done with a gravel syphon cleaner, taking out a maximum of 25% at any given time - unless advised otherwise. Taking out too much water will change the pH, hardness and other water conditions too much which can stress the yabbies and may even result in death. The sponge from your filter must always be rinsed in tap water with chlorine neutralizer added as chlorine kills the good bacteria set up in the sponge. They are not meant to be spotless, as long as you remove the major debris, it is clean enough. The best way to add water is to put the new water into a bucket, add de-chlorinator (at a triple dose rate) or water hardening crystals if rainwater, then add to your tank. Recheck and adjust your pH every 6-8 hours until it is correct. When cleaning your tank, be sure never to use any chemicals as these are deadly to your yabbie. Using an ammonia test kit is the best way to monitor if the tank is polluted and can often save the lives of the yabbies.

Feeding

The diet of aquarium housed yabbies consists mainly of Fish Fuel Frozen Marine Green or Frozen Goldfish food, crayfish pellets and also live plants and peas. They are predominantly herbivores that should not be given meat based foods.

Health

Growing yabbies regularly shed their outer skeleton. This process is called molting. During this time their new shell is quite soft, and they can be easy prey for larger fish. If a yabbie loses its claws or limbs, they will be re-grown over the next few molts. Yabbies, and other invertebrates, are sensitive to copper. Do not use any medications that contain copper.

Breeding

Yabbies can breed when the temperature is greater than 15°C and the day length exceeds 14 hours. The female can house up to 300 eggs underneath her tail. The eggs can take anywhere from a few weeks to several months to hatch. Once hatched, the baby yabbies should be separated from the adults and fed appropriate food, e.g. live plants, frozen marine green.

This brochure was put together by the staff of Hilltop Pet & Aquariums as a general guide to assist you in raising your pet and advising requirements to keep your friend happy and healthy.

If you cannot provide the proper care and housing, we strongly suggest you not purchase the animal.

We have books available for sale should you require more information.