

# Betta Fish

## CARE SHEET

### Introduction

Betta fish (*Betta splendens*) are a very common fish kept in captivity and are known by many names e.g. Siamese fighting fish and Japanese fighting fish. These names come from the aggressive nature of the male Betta towards each other. Betta fish can be housed with other fish, but careful selection of the right species and tank size is needed to prevent fighting.

Betta fish can live 3-5 years when kept in good conditions.

### Diet

There are many commercial betta fish diets on the market that can be found in most pet stores. A combination of pellets or flakes with occasional insects to enrich their diet should be fed each day. Overfeeding is common and a good guide of how much to feed is the size of your fish's eye. The eye of a fish is roughly the same size of their stomach, so feeding this amount once or twice a day at a maximum will prevent overfeeding.

Your fish should be able to eat all the food on offer within 5 minutes of feeding.

### Husbandry

Betta fish are known for being tough however, they still benefit from maintaining good water quality. A tank of 15-20L is recommended for a single Betta fish, with the water temperature maintained around 26°C. An internal filter should be used to remove and recycle the ammonia that your Betta will produce as a waste product. To assist the filter, water changes should be performed each week. A water change should remove 25% of the water volume in your fish's tank, and the same volume should be replaced from tap water. However, as tap water has chlorines added, a water conditioner should be used to remove these harmful chemicals from the tap water, before it is added to your fish's tank.

Finally, to prevent any rapid changes to your fish's tank, make sure to have the tank placed away from any windows or air conditioners.

### Common diseases

Betta fish are vulnerable to certain bacteria, particularly if their water quality or environment is not ideal. Common signs of illness in Betta include loss of their bright colours, uneven or thin fins, weight loss or inappetence.

### Looking for more information?

The Unusual Pet Vets have several veterinarians that will see fish. We recommend health check-ups for fish every 6-12 months. However, for any non-urgent questions all off our clinics can be emailed or called for advice.



**Above:**  
Betta fish

**Right:**  
Thin fish  
(no fat reserves)

