

Handbook of Freshwater Ornamental Fishes of Kanyakumari



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Fishes that are kept in home aquariums for aesthetic purposes are considered ornamental fish. These fishes include a wide variety of species, of many shapes, sizes, and colors. The common freshwater ornamental fishes of Kanyakumari District are as follows.

1. Gold Fish



Scientific Name: *Carassius auratus*

Common Name: Gold Fish

Colouration: Bright orange, Yellow, Red.

Feeding: Prefer aquatic plants, insects, larvae, crustaceans, and other smaller fishes

Breeding season: April to August, when the weather is warmer.

Life span: 10 years

Behavior:

- ❖ Goldfish are not aggressive.
- ❖ They generally can be found in slow-moving and freshwater bodies of water in the wild.
- ❖ They can also thrive in slightly sludgy water, live their close relative the carp.
- ❖ They can thrive in a pond environment.

Advantages:

- ❖ Easy to maintain

- ❖ Cheap and available everywhere
- ❖ Reduce stress and anxiety
- ❖ Adapt to climatic changes

2. Angel Fish



Scientific Name: *Pterophyllum*

Common Name: Angel Fish

Colouration: Silver in colour with a slight brown tinge and four black vertical stripes

Feeding: Feeds on flakes, pellets, shrimps, daphnia

Breeding season: Reach sexual maturity at 6th month and breeds at a temperature of 80°

Life span: 12-15 years

Behavior:

- ❖ They are fearful and get nervous easily by loud noises and sudden moves.
- ❖ They are quite aggressive if they are not kept with the right species.
- ❖ Usually peaceful fish but tend to become territorial at the time of breeding.
- ❖ They prefer middle of the tank and are known to be active swimmers.

Advantages:

- ❖ Reduce stress and anxiety
- ❖ Gives esthetic pleasure to the aquarium
- ❖ Can thrive within a small tank
- ❖ These fishes are a lovely sight to behold when they swim elegantly in an aquarium.

3. Gourami



Scientific Name: *Trichopodus leerii*

Common Name: Gourami

Colouration: Diagonal stripes or spots of alternating blue and red colors

Feeding: Larvae, small insects, eggs, and algae

Breeding season: Breeds during warmer at a temperature of 77°F to 82°F

Life span: 3-5 Years

Behavior:

- ❖ Male have a tendency to be aggressive
- ❖ Slow moving and are best kept with similar sized fish
- ❖ They are less stressed

Advantages:

- ❖ They demand mid-level care and are of peaceful temperament
- ❖ Easy to keep and extremely adaptable
- ❖ Provides extra beauty to the aquarium.

4. Tetras



Scientific Name: *Moenkhausia pittieri*

Common Name: Tetras

Colouration: Pure silver with slight red coloration around the top of their eyes.

Feeding: Brine, shrimp, worms and insects as well as plants

Breeding season: Breeds during warmer at a temperature of 72 and 75 F

Life span: 10 Years

Behavior:

- ❖ It thrives in softer water
- ❖ Non-aggressive schooling fish
- ❖ The female will have a larger more rounded belly than the male.

Advantages:

- ❖ Non-aggressive
- ❖ Do not require any specialized care
- ❖ Can tolerate moderately hard water

5. Koi Carp



Scientific Name: *Cyprinus carpio*

Common Name: Koi Carp

Colouration: White, black, red, orange, yellow, blue, and cream coloured.

Feeding: Small bugs, insects, plants and algae

Breeding season: May and June – in late spring and early summer

Life span: 25-35 Years

Behavior:

- ❖ Act differently when they're stressed
- ❖ Hate quick changes
- ❖ Under stress they speed around the pond or act sluggish

Advantages:

- ❖ Friendly fish
- ❖ Social fish that enjoy living in groups
- ❖ Will not eat other fish or fight with each other

6. Fighter Fish



Scientific Name: *Betta splendens*

Common Name: Fighter fish

Colouration: Vibrant gold, reds, blues, greens and violets

Feeding: Brine shrimp, dried bloodworms or daphnia

Breeding season: Breeds in the age of 14 months

Life span: 3-5 Years

Behavior:

- ❖ Highly aggressive
- ❖ Males are very notorious fighters
- ❖ They live in warm water of 75-80 degrees

Advantages:

- ❖ They are easy to take care
- ❖ Very beautiful and unique-looking fish
- ❖ Have brightly colored bodies and long, flowing fins which provides extra beauty

7. Platy Fish



Scientific Name: *Xiphophorus maculatus*

Common Name: Platy fish

Colouration: White, black, red, orange, yellow, blue.

Feeding: Need a good mix of plant based food and proteins.

Breeding season: Instantly when the temperature is about 64°F

Life span: 3-4 Years

Behavior:

- ❖ Very peaceful and great community lover
- ❖ Very active and love being in groups
- ❖ They are live bearing fish, as they give birth to live young fish

Advantages:

- ❖ Great interactive fish
- ❖ Easy to care
- ❖ Can adapt to very hard water
- ❖ Very calm and peaceful fish

8. Tank Cleaner Fish



Scientific Name: *Plecostomus*

Common Name: Tank Cleaner Fish

Colouration: Brownish Black, Greenish black.

Feeding: Food left over by other fish, Pellets, Brine Shrimp, Blood Worm, Tubifex and Daphnia.

Breeding season: June to July

Life span: More than 15 Years

Behavior:

- ❖ They become active at daytime
- ❖ Fish prefers a school of 5-6 fishes
- ❖ They are not aggressive

Advantages:

- ❖ Peaceful ground species
- ❖ They are excellent tank cleaners

9. Molly Fish



Scientific Name: *Poecilia sphenops*

Common Name: Molly Fish

Colouration: White, black, Orange

Feeding: Flakes, pellets, and frozen foods

Breeding season: When temperature is at 70-82 °F

Life span: 5 Years

Behavior:

- ❖ Can live in either salt or freshwater
- ❖ Love to dwell in densely planted aquariums
- ❖ Mid-level swimmers
- ❖ Small peaceful species adapt well to a variety of water conditions

Advantages:

- ❖ Never aggressive
- ❖ Easiest variety to breed
- ❖ Reproduce extremely quickly

10. Guppies



Scientific Name: *Poecilia reticulata*

Common Name: Guppy

Colouration: Fluorescence colour, orange

Feeding: Feeds algae and aquatic insect larvae.

Breeding Season: Summer, January to May

Life span: 1 to 3 years

Behaviour:

- ❖ It is a peaceful fish that like to be kept in groups.
- ❖ They are active swimmers
- ❖ It move around all the time and lot of pretty
- ❖ The males chasing the females trying to impress them by wiggling their fins.

Advantages:

- ❖ They are small and cheap.
- ❖ The males are smaller and flashier than the females, but the females still sport colorful tails.
- ❖ Guppies are incredibly easy to keep alive
- ❖ They are great for mosquito control.

11. Swordtail



Scientific Name: *Xiphophorus hellerii*

Common Name: Sword tail

Colouration: Red, Black, Red Simpson, Spotted red and green

Feeding: Bloodworms, daphnia, brine shrimp, mosquito larvae, or fruit flies, algae

Breeding Season: 22°C - 28°C

Life span: 3-5 years

Behaviour:

- ❖ They can take care of themselves when there are bigger fish in the tank.
- ❖ The males may become aggressive towards other males.
- ❖ They should be able to handle themselves with many fish their same size or larger.

Advantages:

- ❖ It has been used extensively in genetic studies and medical research.

12. Zebra Fish



Scientific Name: Danio rerio

Common Name: Zebra Fish

Colouration: Blue, yellow, purple, white with stripes

Feeding: Brine shrimp larvae, tubifex worms

Breeding Season: During dawn at a temperature of about 23° and 28°c

Life span: 3-5 Years

Behaviour:

- ❖ Active Swimmers
- ❖ Become stressed if their numbers are too low
- ❖ They are known to jump so you may want to keep your tank covered
- ❖ Tend to be so zippy and lively

Advantages:

- ❖ They are very easy to care
- ❖ They are prized for their instantly striped pattern

13. Arowana

Scientific Name: Osteoglossidae

Common Name: Arowana

Colouration: Gold-tinged to deep red, dark brown.

Feeding: Live or frozen fish and insects, krill, worms and shrimp

Breeding Season: August to October

Life span: 10 – 15 Years

Behaviour:

- ❖ Can survive in areas with less oxygen
- ❖ Mostly surface dwelling
- ❖ Solitary predators

Advantages:

- ❖ Considered a symbol of luck, strength, prosperity, and wealth
- ❖ Body structure gives them a drastically different appearance