

ORNAMENTAL FISH CULTURE

WORLD TRADE OF ORNAMENTAL FISH AND EXPORT POTENTIAL

1.1.1 Introduction

Ornamental fish culture also known as aquaculture, is the culture of attractive, colorful fishes of peaceful nature in confined aquatic systems. Ornamental fishes are also called as "living jewels".

1.1.2 Benefits of ornamental fish keeping as a hobby

Ornamental fish hobby gives pleasure to young and old people.

Relaxation to the mind.

Keep blood pressure at normal level and therefore heart related diseases could be prevented.

Increases life span.

Children could acquire new knowledge and skills, by counting the number of fishes in an aquarium they get mathematical knowledge and by observing the behaviour, colour and fin shape of fishes they get scientific knowledge.

Children could develop sense of attachment with nature.

Ornamental fish keeping is easy over other pets as they don't make noise and also tank cleaning once in a while is enough (Dog barks, sheds fur and daily cleaning of shed is a must).

Ornamental fishes like Arowana is believed to bring good luck, wealth and prosperity.

Ornamental fish keeping can make hobbyists to start their own farms in due course of time thus creates self employment opportunities.

1.1.3 Origin of keeping ornamental fishes as pets

The hobby of ornamental fish keeping as pets has originated from China during the year 1163. Gold fishes were the first used for hobby which was kept in glass bowls. The first aquarium was set up by Englishman S.H.Ward during the year 1855 in United Kingdom.

The Frenchman Carbonnier was the first ornamental fish breeder succeeded in breeding paradise fish *Macropodus opercularis* (1869-70). In India, the first aquarium called Taraporevala aquarium was built in Mumbai in 1951.

1.1.4 Percentage of peoples involved in ornamental fish keeping hobby – country wise

Country	Percentage of peoples
Holland	20%
England	14%
USA	8%
Germany	5%
Belgium & Italy	4%
Japan	3%

USA – 7.2 million houses, EU – 3.2 million houses, India – 1 million fish hobbyist.

1.1.5 International market

The international market for ornamental fishes is valued at about US \$ 5.9 billion. The world export of ornamental fish in 2006 was 282.6 million US \$ and imports valued at 308.9 million US \$. Around 200 million ornamental fishes are sold every year of which 80% are freshwater and 20% are marine. In freshwater 90% are captive bred and in marine 99% are wild caught. More than 120 countries are involved in ornamental fish trade and there are about 1800 species of ornamental fishes available in the market of which 1000 are freshwater. Guppy is the dominating species followed by Neon tetra.

1.1.6 Major countries involved in ornamental fish buying

- USA
- Europe
- Japan

1.1.7 Major suppliers of freshwater ornamental fish

- Singapore
- Thailand
- Hongkong
- Japan
- Malaysia

Major suppliers of gold fish and koi carp :

Israel and Japan.

Major suppliers of marine ornamental fishes :

- Indonesia
- Phillipines
- Sri Lanka

1.1.8 Status of ornamental fish farming in india (domestic / national market)

India is still in a marginal position just contributing 1% of total ornamental fish trade. An estimate carried out by Marine Products Exports Development Authority of India shows that there are one million ornamental fish hobbyists in India. The internal trade is estimated to be about 3.26 million US \$ and the export trade is about 0.38 million US \$ in India. The annual growth rate of ornamental fish trade is 14%. A rich diversity of species and favourable climate, cheap labour make India suitable for ornamental fish culture. Tamilnadu, Kerala and West Bengal are the major states involved in ornamental fish farming. Two categories of ornamental fishes are being marketed from India - exotic and native. The exotic varieties have been marketed domestically and dominating with 99%. Already 288 exotic varieties have been recorded in Indian market. More than 200 species of these freshwater fish are bred in different part of India. Mostly native ornamental fishes are exported. North eastern states, West Bengal, Kerala and Tamilnadu are blessed with highly potential indigenous ornamental fishes. Around 85% of native fishes are from North eastern states. 90% of native ornamental species are collected and reared to meet export demand. Presently about 100 native fish species have been earmarked as aquarium fish. Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai are major exporting centres. About 90% of India exports go from Kolkata followed by 8% from Mumbai and 2% from Chennai. Around 4000 peoples involved in this trade including breeding, live food collection, trading and exporting. There are 20 registered exporters.