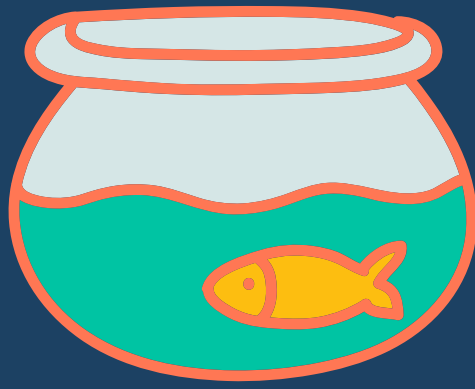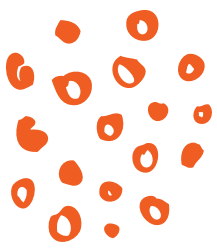# THE 2HR AQUARIST

WHAT CAUSES GREEN DUST ALGAE?

3 Steps to rid your tank of this algae

BIOMATURITY

GDA is **prevalent in new tanks** that have not attained biological maturity. In simplistic terms, insufficient mass of 'good bacteria' allows for undigested organic waste and ammonia to be present in the water. When combined with **high light**, it is one of primary triggers of GDA.

SOLUTION: Accelerate tank cycling by adding bacteria culture with a proper diet of ammonia (yes, ironic) and leave the tank to cycle (without lights) for at least 7 days before planting. Details here.

ORGANIC WASTE

In mature tanks, GDA can be triggered by the **build-up of deteriorating leaves and detritus**, which release organic waste as they decompose. When the build-up of organic waste /ammonia exceeds the 'bacterial digestion capacity' of the tank, GDA is triggered.

SOLUTION: Clean your filter, change water The 2Hr Way and review why plants may be unhealthy or stressed.

HIGH MACROS

Starting a tank with **elevated macro nutrient levels** (dosing EI style with high NO3) often results in persistent GDA issues that remain even after a tank has matured.

SOLUTION: switch to a leaner dosing regime (e.g. APT 3 / Complete) and maintain NO3 levels below 5 ppm. A secret technique of competition aquascapers who require sparkling clean tanks is to minimise macro nutrients (NO3/ PO4) in the water column, while compensating through nutrient-rich aquasoil. APT 1 / Zero was especially designed for this 'super lean' technique.

DEDICATED TO YOUR SUCCESS

Finally, having **Dominant Plant Mass** (more than 70% planted) is the simplest and best defence against all forms of algae. For a new tank, an effective hack is to start with **lower light levels** and to increase it accordingly when plant mass increases.

GDA appears as a thin green film on the glass walls. It is easy to scrape off, but it can be frustratingly persistent, recurring after a day or two. It is different from Green Water Algae, which turns water into a 'green pea soup'.