

Mussel Mates

What are they mate?

Mussel Mates are a fresh water clam-like animal made up of 2 shells hinged together.

They are a great biological filter and are constantly sucking dirty water in and ejecting pure clear water out.

As a nature's Cleaning Crew they not only clean your water and gravel but are an interesting new pet.

They can be surprisingly mobile and fun to watch as they move around the tank looking for new spots to nestle. Mussel Mates will keep a tank clean naturally so are an environmentally friendly remedy for dirty aquariums.

Mussel Mates range in size from 4 to 10cm long and 2.5 to 5cm wide and can be up to 4cm thick.

They have a muscular foot that they use to burrow into the bottom of the aquarium.

When feeding, a pair of siphons sticks out the back of the shell, sorting the rubbish from the water flowing into the shell including algae, plankton and pollutants from the water.



DETAILED CARE INFORMATION SHEET



Oxygen

Freshwater Mussel Mates breath oxygen from the water the same as fish. They require oxygen in the water for survival. They are tolerant of low oxygen levels (2.0 mg/L) but they will only be surviving not thriving. Ideally, anything over 3.0 mg/L is preferred.

Temperature Fahrenheit

Preferred operating temperature is 64 – 82 ° F is best but keeping towards higher temperatures will increase life span.

50 °F – 59 °F reduced growth and activity. 41 °F -50 °F no feeding.

Below 41 °F survival mode only.

Salt

Mussel Mates are salt intolerant, over 4 gram/Liter (0.4%) (4 parts/thousand) is a problem. No problem for short term (day or 2) but after that then definitely a problem.

pH

A pH of 7.2 – 8.4

They survive at 6-9 however low pH is not good for long term shell health

Lighting

Standard community fish tank lighting is appropriate. No real lighting issues whether bright or dark-both okay as well as anything in-between.

DETAILED CARE INFORMATION CONTINUED

Ammonia NH₃:

Ammonia and Nitrites should be 0 ppm, and levels should be kept in check with regular partial water changes. Freshwater Mussel Mates are generally intolerant of ammonia anything over

0.5 ppm is a worry and you should do a partial water exchange, anything over 1 ppm will be fatal, usually your Mussel Mates will die first, then your fish. Best to have plants in the tank to help reduce ammonia, etc.

Calcium

Calcium is important to the health and growth of your Mussel Mates. They require adequate amounts of calcium and other minerals for the formation of their shells at least 1 mg/L Typically, supplement with your food.

Copper

Freshwater Mussel Mates are intolerant of copper. Copper based fish treatments/medications are a problem, as Mussel Mates don't like even small amounts of copper. If you need to treat your fish, do so in a separate tank well away from your freshwater Mussel Mates.

Feeding

You can supplement feed for your Mussel Mates. Typically, you can puree food, place it into an ice cube tray and freeze. Just pull out a cube once or twice a week and drop into the tank. As the cube thaws food is released into the water column and your Mussel Mates can feed. Pureed carrots, peas or spinach are good. If you have fish or yabbies in the tank they clean up any chunky bits.