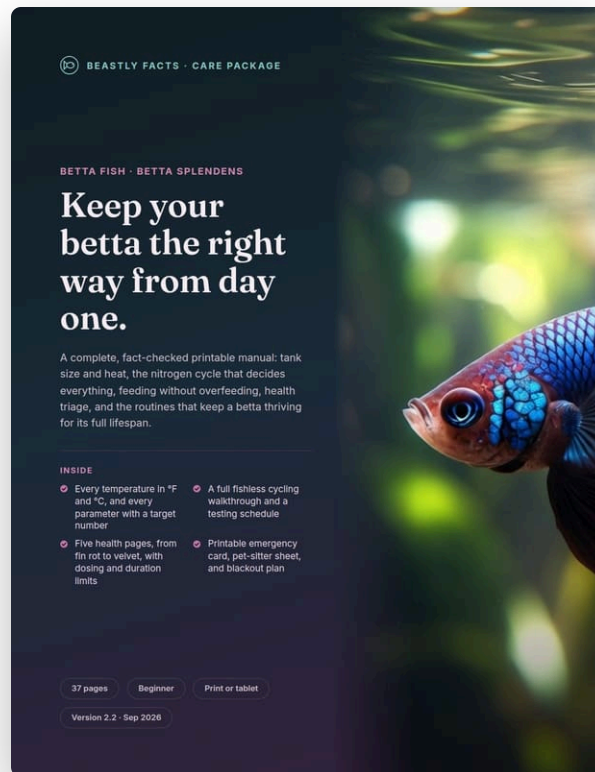


FREE SAMPLE

Betta Fish Care Package

The first 4 pages of the 37-page printable manual, free to keep.



In this sample: What's inside, How to Use This Package, Quick Profile & Cost Overview. The contents page shows every one of the 37 pages, so you can see exactly what the full package covers before you buy it.

Not in this sample: the 33 pages that follow, which are the full care guide, the health section, the quick reference cards, and the owner tools, checklists and logs.

The full package is \$8.99 at beastlyfacts.com/care-packages/betta-fish/. One purchase, and every corrected edition is a free re-download from your library. The free betta fish care guide it was built from is at beastlyfacts.com/guides/betta-fish/, and stays free.

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Every page is written to be used, not just read once.

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START HERE

How to use this package

Three ways to get value from it, depending on where you are right now.

If you haven't set up yet

Read pages 4 through 12 in order before buying anything, and before buying the fish. The single most important thing in this book is that the tank is cycled before a betta goes in it, and cycling takes weeks, not an afternoon. Almost every betta that dies in its first month dies of something that started here. Use the Budget & Shopping List on page 25 to buy once, then start the cycle on page 7 while the fish is still in the shop.

If your betta is already set up

Go straight to the Setup Checklist and Water Targets on page 23 and audit what you have. If the tank has no heater, no filter, or has never been tested with a liquid test kit, fix that this week rather than reading further. If your betta already looks unwell, start at Health Red Flags on page 16, but test the water first: the answer is in the test tube far more often than it is in the medication cabinet.

Print these first

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Page 23: Setup Checklist & Water Targets | ☐ Page 31: Pet-Sitter Sheet |
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WHY THIS PACKAGE EXISTS

The betta is sold worse than almost any other pet: in a cup, next to an unheated bowl, described as a fish that wants a small space. None of that survives contact with the research, and the peer-reviewed enrichment work on page 14 says the opposite outright. This package reflects current tank-size, filtration, and enrichment standards, cross-checked against veterinary and aquarium-science sources listed on page 36, not recycled pet-aisle copy.

NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR

An aquatic veterinarian. Fish vets are rarer than reptile or avian vets, and most betta problems really are solved by correcting water quality rather than by treatment, but "rare" is not "nonexistent." Find out now whether one practices within reach of you, and write the number on page 24 before you need it.

SECTION 01

Quick profile

Everything at a glance before you read the detail.

Scientific name	<i>Betta splendens</i> , also called the Siamese fighting fish
Adult size	2.5 to 3 in (6 to 7.5 cm) body. Male finnage is fin, not extra size
Captive lifespan	2 to 4 years, up to 5 with excellent water quality. Often months old when sold
Native range	Shallow rice paddies, floodplains and slow streams in Southeast Asia
Diet type	Obligate carnivore, a surface ambush feeder. Pellet staple, never flakes
Tank minimum	5 gal (19 L) heated, filtered, cycled and lidded. 10 gal (38 L) is far easier
Temperature	78 to 80°F (25.5 to 26.5°C), held steady. Never room temperature (page 5)
The one hard rule	Ammonia and nitrite read 0 ppm, always. Anything else is an emergency (page 8)
Housing	One male per tank. Surface access is a physiological need (page 5)
Handling difficulty	Beginner, but observation only. Never bare hands (page 15)
Conservation status	Vulnerable (IUCN) in the wild, despite huge numbers in captivity

Cost overview

Initial setup

\$157 to \$336 for a complete cycled setup including the test kit, plus \$5 to \$30 for the fish itself and up to about \$55 for a rare variety.

Monthly ongoing

\$10 to \$25 for food, conditioner, test reagents, electricity, and a medication reserve. Roughly \$120 to \$300 a year.

WHERE THE MONEY ACTUALLY GOES

Not the fish, and not the food. A betta eats a few pellets a day, so the recurring cost is a heater running around the clock and fresh test reagents. The upfront figure looks high next to a \$6 fish because it includes the two things the pet-aisle bundle leaves out, a heater and a real filter, and those decide whether the fish lives two months or four years.

Fun facts worth knowing

- They breathe air. The labyrinth organ above the gills takes oxygen straight from the surface, an adaptation to warm paddy water holding very little dissolved oxygen. It also means a betta blocked from the surface can drown.
- Males build nests out of spit. A bubble nest is a raft of saliva-coated bubbles built at the surface to hold eggs. Captive males build them with no female present, and it reads as a comfortable, well-warmed fish.
- The aggression is partly built, not born. Research found that the timing of isolation from an enriched environment shapes later aggression, so your fish's temperament was set before you bought it.