

AQUATIC SCIENCE **(County Project Only)**

Project Description:

Raising fish can be exciting, enlightening, as well as a challenging experience. Fish are lovely to look at, and with a little planning they can be inexpensive, easy, interesting, soothing, and educational. Of course, they can be expensive, troublesome, and messy . . . it's all up to you!

Levels: (All animals (etc.))

Beginners Division: First year 4-H members in project

Advanced Division: All other 4-H members in project

Project Guidelines:

- Aquatic Animal: choose and care for at least six (6) weeks
- Project Manual: complete and bring to the fair with your exhibit. Be sure to include your name.
- Exhibit in one (1) of the five (5) regular classes.

Exhibit Requirements:

Note:

- If possible plan to be present when your class is judged. The project leader may be of help in timing.
- Be prepared to answer questions by a friendly judge. Parents can/cannot do this.
- The judge often asks the 4-H'er to remove and handle non-fish animals if handling is appropriate.
- You may have two (2) exhibits (Classes 1 – 5) but they must be in different classes.
- If you bred and raised your aquatic animal, it is eligible for Class 6: Bred by Exhibitor.
- You may deliver and pick up water exhibits at the front of the building, but do not park there.
- All live exhibits will be released between 3:00 and 6:30 p.m. (after the judging is complete). If pick up must be later, make special arrangements with the exhibit superintendent.
- Educational exhibits (minus live animals) will be released on the last day of the fair.
- If your animal dies, choose a replacement and exhibit it with a paragraph explaining your choice. Exhibit judged on appropriateness and not eligible for Champion.
- Bring your Project Manual and Record Sheet to the fair with your exhibit. (Place a General Record Sheet in your green Achievement Folder for your club leader if desired.)
- Be sure your Record Sheet supports your exhibit. Record all animals you carry over from last year. If you exhibit in Class 6, fill out page 16, Breeding Records. Any animals you exhibit must be listed on page 13, Fish Record. Record losses.
- You may use a family aquarium if you have your own fish and do your share of work.

Beginners Division: first year members only. Beginners that are comfortable with more challenge may enter 2 classes. Aquatic animals are judged without separation of age of owner or years in project.

Exhibit: minimum entry is one bowl class but you may choose to enter two classes plus Class 6.

Project Manual: fill out all information or mark NA (Not Applicable). You do not have to complete pages 18-19 unless needed in class 4, 5 or 6. Bring the project manual to the fair.

Advanced Division: all other years. You are expected to learn more each year so choose a new challenge and record it on page 18-19, or use an appropriate format with a note on page 19 in project manual.

Exhibit: any class, but you may enter two classes plus Class 6.

Project Manual: Fill in all information or mark NA (Not Applicable). You must record your learning experience by filling out page 18 or 19, attaching additional pages, or noting that there is a separate notebook. There are four choices to complete your Advanced requirement:

1. Perform a simple experiment and record it on these pages.
2. Write a short report for these pages.
3. Use a separate notebook for a longer report or research paper. Note this on page 19 and bring it with your exhibit.
4. Any Class 4, 5 or 6 exhibit, if it is noted on page 19.

Exhibit Classes

There will be two Sections: Bowl and Project. Each with a Grand Champion (if appropriate). Each

class will have a Champion plaque. Classes may be sub-divided if there are enough entries. Sub-classes will have a Champion but no plaque. The champion of class 6 will compete for Grand Champion in whichever section the judge deems appropriate.

Section I: Bowl Classes –

A Bowl Class entry consists of a Specimen (one), Pair (male/female), or Trio (male/2 females) in a clear, flat-sided container appropriate to animal's size. These are usually drum bowls or small aquariums and can have gravel and an air-stone but not plants, decorations, or any unnecessary equipment. Immature fish will be penalized. Provide a cover such as nylon net. You will be asked for the common name at registration. Remember, a good specimen will do better than a pair with one that is faulty.

Class 1: Livebearers: Fish that bear live young (Guppies, Mollies, Platys, Swordtails and Variatus). Usual exhibit: pair or trio.

Class 2: Egglayers: Fish that lay eggs. Usual exhibit: specimen or pair.

Class 3: Non-Fish Aquatic Animal: Turtles, frogs, crayfish, etc. Usual exhibit: specimen. Exhibits may have more supporting equipment but elaborate set-ups should consider class 4 or 5.

Section II: Project Classes

Entries must be in an appropriate form and labeled correctly. Please notify the 4-H office if you plan a large or unusual exhibit.

Class 4: Aquarium: A living area for water life with appropriate aquatic animals. Label it with your theme or title. Examples: 'Balanced Aquarium', 'Beautiful Blues'.

Class 5: Educational: Any exhibit designed to convey information. This class is designed to encourage you to stretch yourself.

- a) Special Purpose Aquarium: title plus appropriate information. Examples: Isolation Tank, Breeding Tank.
- b) Poster: follow standard 4-H format. See poster rules, page 20, #15.
- c) Combined: poster and live material. Appropriate size or shape. Poster must follow poster rules, page 20, #15.
- d) Written Report: something you did, observed, or read about which is recorded in a notebook – may have photos, illustrations, and clippings.
- e) Scientific Research: A more formal investigation which is recorded in a notebook. Suggestion: Have at least 7 pages with these headings – Title, Abstract (about 100 words), Introduction, Materials & Methods, Results, Conclusions, and Bibliography. This looks long but is really an easy way to organize information. Double space. Pages do not have to be full. Include charts, etc. This may be a display, but notify the Project Leader ahead of time for space and release from poster requirements.
- f) Any Other Method: Audio-Visual, Photography, etc. Example: a computer program for breeding or feeding records. Plan ahead if you need special equipment. A computer program would need a printout.

SPECIAL CLASS;

Class 6: Bred by Exhibitor: Aquatic animal bred and raised by the exhibitor.

- At least one of these specimens (or pair) must be exhibited in one of the regular classes; then the specimen or pair in one bowl and the young in another bowl may be exhibited together in the Special Class (Bred by Exhibitor). These two bowls **must be marked** so that both bowls are judged together in the special class.
- Must be supported by record sheet
- Must be easily identified (not one of many)
- If several fish, will be judged as a group
- May include parents with the young if noted and appropriate project.

Judge's Trophy: For an outstanding exhibit in the Judge's personal opinion (which has not won a Grand Champion).

Suggestions:

- Bring your own aged water and any needed equipment.
- If you need an air-stone, bring a pump, an extension cord, and 3-way connector (used to bleed off excess pressure). REMEMBER, YOUR GOAL IS TO LEARN TO CARE FOR YOUR FISH PROPERLY. THE JUDGE CAN OBSERVE FAULTS SUCH AS PLACING A LARGE FISH IN A SMALL BOWL OR HAVING EXCESS AIR BATTERING A FISH!

- Do not use a net to catch your fish. Try a glass jar. Catch the night before if you can.
- Choose a gravel that enhances your fish's color but does not compete with it.
- Use a sparkling clear, well rinsed container.
- Do not feed your fish in the show bowl. The fish will not starve in 12 hours.
- Plan to set-up early if you expect cloudy water. This often happens in aquariums.
- Transport with a secure cover. Lower the water level to reduce weight and use balloons as floats to reduce slosh in large containers.
- Carry aquariums on a board (cut to size) to prevent leaks or breakage.
- Bring an appropriate cover (glass, nylon net, etc.). Keeps fish in and others out.
- Do not exhibit an animal you cannot afford to lose. Accidents do happen.
- Fish are more likely to need an air-stone if the temperature is over 90 degrees F.
- Do not return exhibited fish to a mixed aquarium immediately after returning home. Isolate them until you are sure that they are not sick or injured.