

AQUARIUM FISHERIES

Unit 1: Introduction to Aquarium Fish Keeping

The potential scope of Aquarium Fish Industry as a Cottage Industry, Exotic and Endemic species of Aquarium Fishes.

Q. Define an aquarium.

An aquarium is a glass tank containing ornamental fishes, colourful invertebrates, plants and other decorations for visual impacts. It is also called as vivarium. Fish keepers use aquaria to keep fish, invertebrates, amphibians, marine mammals, turtles and aquatic plants. The term combines the Latin word aqua- meaning water, with the suffix-arium- meaning “a place”.



Philip Henry Gosse was the first person to actually use the word “aquarium” (instead of “vivarium”) in 1854 in his book ‘The Aquarium’.

Q. What is the potential scope of the aquarium fish keeping industry as a cottage industry?

This art or technique of ornamental fish breeding and trade has a tremendous scope as a cottage industry.

- i) It requires very small investment only of a couple of thousand rupees initially.
- ii) The money automatically gets generated by the sale of the fish and aquarium accessories.
- iii) The further expansion of the business does not require funding through loans etc from the financial institutions.
- iv) The whole set-up could be accommodated in the backyard of the cottage.
- v) The amount of water required is also not much.
- vi) Training of a month or so could equip the entrepreneur to start this business. Later, by practice and experience he or she becomes an expert aquarium fish breeder and even trader.
- vii) Ornamental fishes are very easy to breed and even maintain.
- viii) Besides, the making of the aquarium fish food from the locally available ingredients, fabrication of different sizes of glass aquaria, small dip-nets, sale of the bottom material in the form of small round stones, coloured gravel, marble chips, plastic toys and even the air diffusers and aerators can be collected and stored or manufactured at the cottage level.
- ix) The learner does not require any special formal education.
- x) Ornamental fish trade is a multi-million rupees industry in India and virtually multibillion dollar industry in the world. Financial institutions like **NABARD**, and National Fisheries Board support this industry as a cottage venture.
- xi) Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Kochi are the main business centres for this industry who get their supplies from the small entrepreneurs.

Q. What do you mean by classified and non-classified ornamental fish? Give suitable example.

Classified Indian ornamental fish-

The fishes that can be reared in aquarium throughout their life span.

Example-*Botia dorio*, *Danio dangila*, *Badis badis*, *Colisa lalia*.

Non-classified ornamental fish-

The food fishes that are used in aquaria during their juvenile stage.

Example-*Chitala chitala*, *Labeo gonius*, *Channa marulius*.

Q. Give example of ornamental fish for the following ornamental characters.

(a) Jumping behaviour, (b) Stripes and banding pattern, (c) Beautiful colour.

(a) *Esomus danricus*, *Chela laubuca*

(b) *Botia rostrata*, *Botia dario*

(c) *Tetraodon cutcutia*, *Colisa lalia*