

Breeding Terms

BROADCAST SPAWNER – Fish that release their sperm and eggs into the open water for external fertilization. These fish show no parental care.

BUBBLENEST – Some fish, including bettas (*Betta splendens*), create bubble nests at the water surface by blowing bubbles with their mouths. They place the female's eggs in the nest to keep them safe. Fish that do this are known as "bubble nesters."

CLONE – One wild molly (*Poecilia formosa*) will actually clone itself as its form of reproduction. The clones are exact genetic copies of the female that gave birth to them.

EGGLAYER – Egglayers lay eggs and fertilize them externally.

EGG SPOT – Found in many cichlids, these are spots on the male's anal fin that look like eggs—females are attracted to them.

FRAG – A "frag" is a coral fragment. A fragment is taken from a larger coral and grown into a separate piece of coral. Fragging is the practice of working with coral fragments. This practice is popular among reefkeepers.

FRY – Baby fish

GONOPODIUM – An anal fin that is elongated that appears in males. Generally, it is used to fertilize eggs.

GRAVID SPOT – A good indicator of pregnancy, this dark-colored spot behind the anal fin on pregnant female livebearers grows larger the closer the fish is to giving birth.

LIVEBEARER – Livebearers internally fertilize their eggs. The mother carries the babies to term and gives birth to live, free-swimming fish that look like small versions of adults.

MOUTHBROODER – Mouthbrooders (mostly cichlids) lay and fertilize eggs, then keep them safe in their mouths until they hatch. After the fry have hatched, the parent will often take the fry back in its mouth if there is any sign of danger.

OVIPOSITOR – A tubular organ at the end of the abdomen that is used to lay eggs.

SPAWN – The act of fish mating or the resulting babies/eggs.

SPERMATOPHORE – A compact mass of sperm released by males directly to reproductive parts of the female.

SPERM-HOLDER – Certain fish, such as guppies, are able to store sperm within them and use it for later pregnancies. This is why a female guppy may become pregnant without a male in her tank.

SUBSTRATE SPAWNER – These fish lay and fertilize eggs on material at the bottom of the tank, whether it be plants, rocks, gravel or aquarium glass.

TERRITORY – An area claimed by certain fish that show parental care, such as cichlids, around where they have laid eggs. It is usually the male who will patrol the tank and harm any fish that comes into this area.

YOLK SAC – A sac attached to an embryo that provides nourishment (yolk) to the embryo during its development.