

## Five Steps for New Fish Breeders

**Bonus content from the August 2009 AFI magazine column "Freshwater Q&A."**

*From the Editors of AFI magazine*

1. Choose a fish. Decide which fish you'd like to breed and research its breeding habits. Choose a species that's for your level. Some good species for beginning breeders are easy-to-care-for livebearers, such as guppies, platies and swordtails.
2. Set up a breeding tank. Get an appropriate size of breeder tank (this will depend on your species and the information found during research), a sponge filter and water from the parents' tank.
3. Condition the parent fish. Choose healthy fish to breed, feed them a lot of live foods, keep their water clean and do any other species-specific steps found during research.

Click image to enlarge

Swordtail illustration by Tom Kimball. 4. Breed and grow out the fry. Some species breed at early morning light, others need to be separated for a day or two with a tank divider, some need large water changes or an increase in water temperature. For easy livebearers, you should be able to just sit back and watch. Once baby fish are in the tank, feed the fry foods small enough for them to eat. Some breeders culture infusoria or buy commercially made baby fish foods. After a while, move the fry to a larger tank so they can grow out without getting any diseases or having stunted growth from an overcrowded tank.

5. Find homes for the fry. Some stores take donations of fry, but often are overrun with easy livebearing species, so make sure to find homes for the baby fish before trying a breeding project. If stores won't take the fry, give them to friends or auction them at a local fish club. Some hobbyists also let other fish in the community tank eat them.

Want to read the full story? Pick up the August 2009 issue of Aquarium Fish International, or subscribe to get 12 months of articles just like this.