

Wanda's Welcome

For many of us, one of our greatest pleasures is the daily joy we get from our faithful friends. It's our responsibility to care for them and better educate ourselves to ensure their lifelong happiness. For 25 years, Drs. Foster and Smith have shared their professional advice to help us return our pets' loyalty and unconditional love. **Faithful Friends** is about maintaining that special relationship.

The beautiful serenity of a fish or coral aquarium has become one of the most popular and rewarding ways to enjoy the underwater world and its inhabitants. A saltwater aquarium has recently become much easier to maintain in your home. There is nothing as comforting as the beautiful colors and shapes of the many tropical and freshwater species available for an in-home fish or coral tank.



Guest Interview: our Guest today is Kevin Kohen

Kevin Kohen is Drs. Foster and Smith's Director of LiveAquaria.com



What's a saltwater aquarium?

A saltwater aquarium contains seawater or ocean water, and also contains fish or corals and marine life from around the world.

What's a freshwater aquarium?

A freshwater aquarium uses conditioned tap water and contains fish that are found in the rivers, lakes, and streams from around the world.

Can coral live with fish?

Many species of corals cohabitate well with fish. They're found naturally on coral reefs together, where other species of fish actually consume corals.

Dr. Andy Walker Visit



This goldfish has some white spots on him. What are they?

This is a parasitic infection in fish called "Ich." What's happening is there's a parasite burrowing into the skin of the fish, causing the skin to swell and form a little white cyst. As the infection gets worse, these white cysts will appear on the fish, and that's how you can tell they're infected.

What causes it?

The parasite gets into the water. If the fish are stressed, like a drop in water temperature in their tank, then it can allow the parasite to get a foothold and start to infect the fish. The most common reason is the water temperature is fluctuating.

Once fish get this parasite, what can be done to control it?

There are medications available that work quite well. We can control it, but we want to elevate the temperature of the water a little bit from normal, just a couple degrees, and then add the medication to the water and treat it for a period of two weeks or more.

Do the filters need to be changed also?

Yes, we should change the filters. When you're treating the water, you want to remove any carbon filtration because that can bind up the medication and keep it from working. So, remove the carbon filter, change the filter, and add the medication to the water and make sure they're treated for at least two weeks. The parasite needs to go through its lifecycle long enough to be killed by the medication.



Victoria's Tips

The number one training request I get is to help teach dogs not to pull during walks. Unfortunately, pulling is a very successful strategy for dogs. They pull, we follow. We're going to learn how to slow down the frantic puller in your house.

Now, the technique goes like this: You start walking. As soon as the leash goes tight, I want you to stop. Now, when the dog turns back, she gets a treat for coming back, and off we go again. Now, if she's pulling towards something, she's going to do it again.

I'm going to do something called a penalty yard. This is where I back up a few steps. She gets a treat and then off you go again. I'll be honest with you--this technique takes patience. You need to really work with your dog on this one, but it will work if you work it. Try it with your dog.

Road Trip

to Rhineland, WI Aquaculture Facility

We love taking you out on the road to see interesting places and to meet the committed people whose lives and expertise are dedicated to the wellbeing of our Faithful Friends.

Welcome to Drs. Foster and Smith's Aquaculture Coral and Marine Life Facility. In this 20,000 gallon facility, we propagate and grow live corals in captivity. This is a very eco-friendly, sustainable way to promote corals in the aquarium trade. It contains a vast array of corals and tropical fish that are found on coral reefs around the world. The lights are actually moving back and forth above each raceway in a specialized lighting system with the proper spectrum and intensity of light for live corals to grow in a captive environment. In order for corals to be healthy, they require proper water flow and excellent water chemistry.

Most of the fish in this facility are more difficult to obtain. These fish are considered rare in the aquarium trade. There are very few of them harvested in the ocean in their natural environment and distributed through the aquarium trade, which makes them rare in the trade. Some of these fish make great reef fish, where others are ideally suited for aquariums that just contain fish.

We ship live fish and corals injecting pure oxygen into the shipping bag. It has enough oxygen to do well during transit. We use Styrofoam coolers and shipping boxes to ship the fish and coral along with packaging peanuts to help keep the fish insulated from extreme hot or cold temperatures.

When Drs. Foster and Smith customers receive their fish at their homes, it's extremely important to properly acclimate, or adjust, your new fish to the water temperature and water chemistry of your aquarium. The easiest way to do this is to take the unopened shipping bag and float the bag in the water for about 15 or 20 minutes. That way the temperature of the shipping bag water will be the same as the water in the aquarium. This will make a lot easier transition and a lot less stressful transition for your new fish for your aquarium. After 20 minutes, take a pair of scissors and cut the top of the bag. Roll the top of the bag to create a lip, which creates a little air pocket so the bag will float on the surface of the water. Then take a small container of water and dump about a 1/4 to 1/2 cup of water in the shipping bag. What this is doing is adjusting the water chemistry of the bag slowly to the water chemistry of the aquarium. It's really important to not only acclimate the fish for water temperature, but also to acclimate the fish to the same water chemistry so we don't shock the fish with differences in pH or other water parameters.

Slowly net the fish after its acclimation process out of the shipping bag and gently place it in the aquarium. Discard the water that was in the shipping bag and then shut the lights off on the aquarium to make an easy transition for the fish in its new surroundings.

www.drsofostersmith.com
www.liveaquaria.com

Did You Know?



With Electra and Dr. Smith

Why are the colors of saltwater fish brighter than the colors of freshwater fish?

If you look at the reef, it's real bright with corals. The fish have to kind of match their background because of natural predators. Additionally, there's hundreds of different types of fish on the reef, and if they all looked the same, they wouldn't know which ones were their friends or not, so they all have to look a little different.

Why do girl clown fish fight with each other?

When you see a little group of clown fish on their anemone, there's usually one female. She's kind of the dominant one. I call her the queen. All the other ones are either juveniles or they're males. And you know what happens if she dies? One of the boys turns into a girl and becomes the dominant one.

Itty Bitty Buddies with Electra Mustaine



I have two clown fish. One named Peter and the other named Tony. Another name for a clown fish is anemone. An anemone is an animal that lives in the ocean. They are found in the Pacific and the Indian Ocean. They make great Itty Bitty Buddies because they can live in small saltwater tanks. They come in many colors like pink, peach, red and orange, black and white, just like Nemo.



Ask The Vet

with Dr. Race Foster

Can you tell me a little bit about what you do with coral and how it helps the environment?

The last 6-7 years, we've pulled the coral trade and the marine fish trade into the veterinary profession. In doing so, we can propagate coral. We actually surgically dissect and propagate them so the aquarium trade doesn't have to take as many out of the ocean and then supply the aquarium trade.

Did you start your program because coral was becoming endangered?

Being veterinarians, we look at animal health and remember corals are an animal that traditionally have not been included in the veterinary profession. We looked at things that we could do better and how we could help the corals. So, we pulled the corals, the marine fish and the freshwater fish into the veterinary community. They get diseases, parasites and have all the same problems as dogs and cats, really, in a sense.

Where can I find more information on helping me with my saltwater aquarium?

There are some very good websites including www.liveaquaria.com that we're a part of on the Internet. On this website, there's very good information written by some of the more notable experts including Kevin Kohen.