



Tri-Valley Fly Fishers "Trout In Classroom" Program



TIC

Notes On Feeding The Fish

First; don't start giving them food until they are up swimming around the aquarium. If they have not "buttoned-up" completely and are still on the bottom they will not get the food anyway, and the food will deteriorate and contaminate the water.

Once they do start swimming you may start feeding them, however, give them only very tiny amounts (only a few granules) especially at first until they learn what the food is. Try to put the food right above them so they will see it. As they learn what the food is they will be a little more aggressive about going after it and you can increase the amount (only slightly) you give them. They should be grabbing all you put in the tank and none should sink all the way to the bottom. Once it gets down into the gravel it only turns to waste.

I want to stress the point that it is NOT good to overfeed them. The reason for this is that the extra food (plus the extra food-waste from the fish) will lead to serious water quality problems. Our small aquariums (with the small chillers) will not support the extra filtering we would need to handle the additional contamination.

Once the fish are swimming and eating etc. it is time to schedule your fish release. This again, is because of the water contamination problem. The fish may be released within a week after they start eating, and should be released within two to three weeks.

If you decide to keep them more than a week you will need to plan on changing about half of the water in the aquarium every week. To do this have the amount of fresh bottled water that you will be replacing pre-chilled. Carefully remove the water from the aquarium (be sure not to remove any of the fish) then add the fresh water. Repeat this every week as long as you keep them.

DFG insists that if you release the fish within a week after they start swimming it is best to not feed the fish at all and they will be fine. I can see their point, however, I think it is important for the students to experience the feeding process. I believe it is good for the kids more so than for the fish and helps form a sense of responsibility for the fishes well being. This is what the program is all about. Therefore, I recommend feeding them but do not overdue it or we will have to deal with water quality issues.

My recommendation is my (Derrell's) opinion but the decision to feed or not to feed is yours (the teachers). If you choose not to feed and release early I do not have a problem with that.