



Tri-Valley Fly Fishers "Trout In Classroom"



Aquarium Cleaning Procedure (Using Vinegar)

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1.0 Overview

Disinfecting and cleaning the aquarium prior to use is very important to the health of the fish. All traces of unwanted bacteria must be eliminated or they will continue to develop, which will contaminate the system and greatly reduce the fish's chances of survival. Vinegar has proven to be an effective disinfectant for destroying the bacteria in the system.

Although we use bottled spring water in the aquarium when it is in operation, tap water (city water) may be used (with the vinegar) to clean the equipment. However, it is very important to allow all of this water to dry (in accordance with the procedure) so that any chlorine and other purification chemicals dissipate before the system is put into operation.

2.0 Procedure

NOTE: The best time to disinfect and clean the aquarium is immediately after fish release and before it is stored for the season.

Before returning the aquarium to service (for a new season), if there is any question about whether or not it needs to be disinfected "do it". Better to be safe than sorry.

2.1 Disinfecting Procedure

- 2.1.1 Aquarium should be assembled and operational.
- 2.1.2 Add tap water to tank (near full)
- 2.1.3 Add approx 1 cup of distilled white vinegar to tank (1 cup for 10 gallon tank).
- 2.1.4 Turn on Power head for a few minutes to circulate the vinegar water.
- 2.1.5 Place all of the aquarium components and accessories (including thermometer, net, pitcher, etc.) that has been in contact with aquarium water into vinegar water solution and allow to soak for an hour, minimum.
- 2.1.6 Stir gravel, rock etc. to ensure vinegar water solution is exposed to all surfaces that might be contaminated.

2.2 Rinse and Dry

- 2.2.1 Carefully drain and dump vinegar water into sewer.
- 2.2.2 Refill with fresh tap water and run Power head for a few minutes to flush out the vinegar water solution.
- 2.2.3 Thoroughly rinse all equipment with clear tap water.
- 2.2.4 Disassemble, rinse and remove power head, under gravel filter, etc.
- 2.2.5 Empty tank, spread all equipment, gravel, rocks, etc. in open area to dry.
- 2.2.6 Dry for several hours to let vinegar, chlorine, fluoride etc. dissipate.

Hint: When necessary, to help expedite the process, the gravel (for the under gravel filter) may be spread on a suitable tray etc. and placed in a warm oven until it is thoroughly dry.

NOTE: If the equipment, gravel, etc. are not thoroughly dried before it is stored there is a good chance a mold or fungus may develop on them. Make sure everything dries well before the aquarium is reassembled for operation or, it is packed away for storage.

Hint: If you have thoroughly cleaned, disinfected, and dried the equipment prior to storage, attach a note (dated) to help you remember that it has been cleaned and is ready to assemble for operation.