Paddletail Newt Habitats, How to Create

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Fully aquatic and highly territorial, Paddletail Newts have specific housing requirements that must be met if they are to stay healthy and happy. The following information will help you to set up the perfect habitat for your Paddletail Newts.

Aquatic Enclosure

Paddletail Newts are fully aquatic, and their enclosure should mimic their natural environment as closely as possible. A 10 gallon terrarium is the minimum size for one newt. Each newt will require 5 to 10 gallons of water, or 6 to 20 inches in depth. Though they only need enough water to cover them, deeper water is better for their physical and mental health. Though they will spend their time in the water and cannot climb, you will still need a secure lid, as they may be able to jump out.

Substrate is not necessary, and it will be easier to keep the terrarium clean without it. If you choose to use substrate, use fine sand or large gravel that they cannot ingest. They may ingest smaller gravel while eating, which can lead to impaction.

Filtration

In their natural environment, Paddletail Newts live in clear, swift moving, highly oxygenated streams. To create this in captivity, you must use a good filtration system. This will keep the water clean as well as create the aquatic environment that Paddletail Newts need. Canister, box, submersible, or undergravel filtration systems are the best choices. Avoid sponge filters and bubble stones, as they are not as effective and will require more frequent water changes.

When you set up the filter, do it in such a way as to create a current of flowing water within the habitat. Failing to provide flowing water within the habitat will result in a low oxygen content, which can have a negative effect on your newt's behavior and health.

Aquascaping

Paddletail Newts generally need minimal cage décor to allow the water to flow freely throughout the habitat, but there are some things you will need to add. There

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should be at least one hiding spot per newt, and these can include PVC pipe, terrarium decorations, and clay flower pots. Use rocks and aquatic plants to create visual barriers. This will increase your newt's sense of security and prevent aggression if you are housing more than one newt. Some of the accessories should be placed to create still spots of water within which your newt can rest.

A land area is not necessary unless you are housing more than one newt and you are concerned that one will be bullied. If this is the case, create a small land area for the newt to escape to, and, if the aggression is bad enough, put the aggressive newt into another terrarium.

Temperature & Lighting

Paddletail Newts should be housed in cooler water, between 50° to 65° F. They can survive in temperatures as high as 72° F, but not for long periods of time. Because the water should be cool, you shouldn't have to use any kind of submersible heater. Monitor water temperatures with a thermometer.

Paddletail Newts require no special lighting, though you can use a low wattage UV light during the day to maintain the aquatic plants. There should be no lights used at night.

Cleaning & Maintenance

Change 20% of the water weekly. Remove all uneaten food from the tank promptly to keep the water clean. Keep a freshwater test kit, and check the pH, ammonia, nitrite, and nitrate levels regularly. Paddletail Newts are sensitive to pH fluctuations, so keep levels as stable as possible.

Housing Multiple Paddletail Newts

Paddletail Newts are highly aggressive and territorial, so if you want to house more than one, you will need a large tank with numerous hiding spots and sightline breaks. There should only be one male per habitat, and if you see any signs of serious aggression, move the aggressive newt to its own terrarium. To lessen the possibility that there will be a problem when adding a new newt to your newt's tank, rearrange the entire terrarium when you add the new newt. This will allow both newts to choose their own territory at the same time.

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