Aquarium Oddballs for Freshwater Hobbyists

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Are you bored with buying the same old conventional tropical fish? Are you looking for something new, unique and interesting? Then consider adding aquarium oddballs to your next aquarium. Aquarium "oddballs" are less common fish that have unique physical features. If you're looking for the unusual, aquarium oddballs can be a stimulating and fun way to add new excitement to your hobby.

> I like buying fish in stores because I can see each fish and pick out the one I want. Can I can do the same online?
>
> Yes, it's becoming more common to see websites offering "WYSIWYG" (What You See Is What You Get) or "Eye & Buy" selections online. LiveAquaria.com is a great example of a site that offers this option.

UNUSUAL OPTIONS: Some popular aquarium oddballs include the following fishes:

BICHIRS

Bichirs are primitive ray-finned fishes collected from Africa. They are opportunistic feeders and should be housed with large, peaceful fish. They can breathe air using a lung-like modification to their swim bladder and can travel on land for short periods of time using their strong pelvic fins. Their aquarium setup should include a tight fitting lid and adequate bottom space.

Examples: *Cuvier, Retropinnis, Ornate, Weeksii*.

KNIFEFISH

Knifefish are perennial exotic favorites for home aquariums. When properly cared for, they can reach well over one foot in length, and therefore require a large aquarium. They have a well-developed weak electrical organ that helps these fish maneuver dark waters of their South American homeland.

Examples: *Glass, Black Ghost.*

EELS

Most freshwater eels reach a size up to 24 inches or more. Eels feed mostly on fish and crustaceans, and when kept under proper conditions, most species adjust well to life in captivity and are very hardy inhabitants. A larger aquarium with adequate hiding places and a well-sealed lid is essential for maintaining eels. Provide smooth substrate for ideal living conditions.

Examples: *Tire Track, Fire, and Zig Zag Yellow Tail*.

FRESHWATER "SHARKS"

Named for their sleek, streamlined bodies, Freshwater "sharks" consists of

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multiple genera. They prefer aquariums that contain several hiding spaces, along with driftwood and larger thick leaved plants. No relation to marine sharks, these curious fishes make a wonderful addition to the semi-aggressive aquarium by adding a great deal of activity, personality and character.

Examples: *Bala, Redtail, Columbian, Black, Albino Rainbow, Chinese Hi Fin Banded, Rainbow.*

LARGER CATFISH

Large catfish are a very beautiful and ornately patterned species that make an unusual addition to large aquariums. These fish are often most active at night, adding nocturnal interest that redefines aquarium "night life". Most are omnivores and require a balanced diet of meaty and vegetable-based foods.

Examples: *Redtail, Giraffe Nosed, Jaguar, Black Lancer, Pictus, Tiger Shovelnose, and more.*

Many oddballs will require specific water parameters to thrive in captivity. Make sure to research your specific species so that you can provide a safe, healthy environment.

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