



Live Jewells

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Ornamental fishes are attractive and colourful, which one keeps as pets in the confined spaces of an aquarium for the purpose of enjoying their beauty. They are immense commercial value because of their aesthetic value. The Ornamental fish culture is reflected omnipresent aquaria that feature as an integral part of modern interior decoration (Katia Oliver, 2001). The ornamental fish culture is making a source for creating self employment through services of aquarium maintenance in public place like hotels, railway station, park and hospitals.

They are of two kinds, oviparous (Gold fish, Angel, Fighter, Gowrami, Koi carp, etc.,) and ovoviviparous (Guppies, platies, Mollies and Swordtail). Among them, oviparous produce more eggs with extremely parental care and nursing for fry maintenance. However, ovoviviparous gives birth to large youngones with high survival value. They are commercially valuable and biologically interesting.

In ovoviviparous forms, red swordtail, *Xiphophorus helleri* has been popular all over the world. Red swordtail is generally preferred by hobbyists due to its attractive morphological characters, colour and adjustability with other fishes. The body of the fish is short and mature even in a lesser size. The success of breeding in red swordtail fish depends upon the proper selection of active and healthy brooders. The males are slender whereas the females have bulged abdomen during the breeding season. The sex ratio is usually three females to one male. A healthy female red swordtail releases 60 to 150 youngones depending upon the size and nutrition (Izquierdo *et al.*, 2001). Female fish need adequate protein, fat, vitamins and minerals for eggs development and breeding (Degani and Gur, 1992; James and Sampath, 2003).

Ornamental fish farming can be a promising alternative for many people at this covid-19 lockdown. It requires less space and smaller investment than most other forms of aquaculture. For starting of an ornamental fish farm, sophisticated equipments are not necessary. Only a clear understanding of the habits and biology of the fishes, basic needs are required. As smaller amount manpower is required, the women can run small home units.

Reference

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Katia Oliver 2001 Ornamental fish trade - over view. *INFOFISH International*, 3: 14-17