



All About the

Oscar Fish

A complimentary eBook from CheapPetStore.com

Our prices say it all. Our Pet Library makes it better.™



The Oscar

About the Oscar

Oscars (*Astronotus ocellatus*) are cichlids; that is, one of various tropical and subtropical freshwater fish of the family Cichlidae. They are sometimes known as velvet cichlids. These fish originated in the Amazon Basin. Oscars are large, strong, and curious. They are relatively easy to breed.

Average Size	Up to 10 inches	Characteristics	Fairly aggressive
Average Lifespan	Up to 10-13 years	Special Needs	Prefer a slightly darker tank
Coloring	Many colors and patterns	Health Concerns	Can suffer from typical fish problems: parasites and skin diseases



- [Treats for Your Oscar](#)
- [Health Care for your Oscar](#)

Oscar Characteristics

Oscars are popular fish, and have been a little over bred. They will hunt and eat smaller fish in a community tank, so be careful what you put in with them. Because they can be aggressive fish, you want to deny them the opportunity to bully and damage your other fish. However, when managed properly, they are a pleasure to own. They are an attractive, personable fish, and responsive to anyone approaching their tank.

Oscars can grow quite large – up to 10 inches or so. Like other cichlids, they prefer a warmer tank (mid-70s F), but they will tolerate slightly warmer or colder tanks. They can live as long as 10 to 13 years.

Most oscars fit the breed profile of a rounded body, sturdy and strong. They have “frowny” mouths and are quite personable, paying attention to most stimuli. Their bodies are velvety or leather-like, rather than being scaled. Many varieties have been bred over the years.

Selecting Your Oscar

Do some research before selecting your Oscar. Obviously, the fish should be responsive and healthy looking, with no sign of bloat. Other than that, appearances vary a lot.

A Few Words About Pet Stores

Oscars from pet stores can be a fine choice. If you wish to institute a breeding program, a pet store Oscar can work quite well.



Can't miss gifts for the Oscar owner:

- [Oscars Book - Keep/Breed](#)
- [Full Aquarium Hood](#)
- [2-Sided Aquarium Background](#)
- [Cool Shark No Fishing Ornament](#)

 [Send this eBook to a Friend](#)

A Few Words About Breeders

Fish from breeders are usually more expensive, but you will have a wider variety to choose from, and can even select breeding pairs. Because there are so many variants, you may be able to find precisely the Oscar you seek by working with a reputable breeder.

How to Choose your Oscar

Oscars are quite hearty if bred and cared for correctly. If you are buying your fish from a store, their aquariums should be clean and free of dead fish. Most stores have a quarantine tank (or several) for sick fish. If they don't, it's worth asking about.

Unfortunately, choosing healthy fish can be a matter of well-educated guesswork. Signs of unhealthy fish are obvious, however:

- Fin and skin discolorations
- Evidence of injury
- Parasites attached to the fish's skin
- Lethargy or lying on bottom of aquarium
- Scraping body on rocks
- Irregular gill movements

Lack of appetite is hard to determine without seeing the fish eat – ask if your salesperson can give your potential fish a little food. They should be perky and notice the food immediately, because Oscars simply love to eat. They will eat constantly, whenever food is available. Observe your potential fish; they should interact with others. What you see is very much what you get with fish.

Breeding, Care and Feeding

Water quality and temperature is more vital to breeding oscars than the run-of-the-mill pet. Oscars that aren't to be bred will tolerate almost any conditions, but fish that you want to breed should be in very clean and warmer (80°F) water.

Cichlids, including oscars, are quite aggressive in their mating rituals. Once the two fish decide that they are worthy of each other, they will work together to clear a flat stone at the bottom of their tank in preparation for spawning. They may also build little hills of pebbles. The two fish will chase each other, dance together, and sometimes fight. The two fish will also have intensifying color and even pattern changes.

Once the female lays her eggs (sometimes as many as 1,000), the male will fertilize them, and both parents will stick around to defend and care for their young. The eggs start opaque, but will turn transparent in 24 hours, and hatch in 2-3 days. Infertile eggs will turn white, and will generally be removed or even eaten by one of the parent fish. The adult oscars will fan the eggs to assist in oxygenation, too.



You'll need these basics before your Oscar comes home. Click the items below to go to CheapPetStore.com to find the best prices for online pet supplies.

- [Tank Filter](#)
- [Water Treatment](#)
- [Automatic Feeder](#)
- [Aquarium](#)
- [Aquarium Stand](#)
- [Fish Food](#)



[Fiber Optic Ornament Tunnel](#)

Oscar Fry

Newly-hatched fry should be fed with a live diet of freshly-hatched baby brine shrimp. As they age, they can be transitioned to rising proportions of flake food. Fry need to be fed 3-4 times a day. As they get larger, introduce greater variety into their diet.

The Oscar Adult

Oscars are omnivores/carnivores, and do well on a diet of flakes plus some other exciting things. Select a basic flake as the primary food when the fish is still 3 inches or smaller, and supplement your oscar's diet generously with live or frozen brine shrimp, black worms, chopped earthworms, and possibly even guppy fry. Several sources recommend preparing beef heart by blending it, freezing the result, and cutting it into cubes for your oscars. There are various recipes available for this preparation. In all cases, you should be careful that you are not introducing disease with live or frozen food – know your supplier. Adult oscars eat 2-3 times per day – more in warmer tanks, less frequently in cooler tanks.

Once your oscar has grown larger than 3 inches (and it will), start feeding floating pellet food in place of the flakes.

Medical Considerations

Although Oscar are quite hardy, they can suffer from many diseases as well. If your Oscar suddenly changes his behavior for any length of time or if his skin, eyes, mouth, gills or fins look different, you might want to do some research to find out what is ailing your fish. Some common ailments are Ick (a parasite), anchor worms, and a myriad of skin diseases. Most of these diseases and parasites can be treated with medications you can buy at any pet supply store. Obviously, there are other diseases, and you should always follow up with your vet if your fish exhibit any behavioral or appearance changes.

Necessary Items

Fish need a home and food. The home can be spruced up with a variety of décor. Set up their home at least several days before bringing your fish home. Your fish will need a tank, 50 gallons or larger. Oscars need a great deal of room to swim about and investigate – the largest tank you can maintain is a good idea for oscars. You will also need a stand for said tank, a hood with a light and perhaps most importantly, a filtration system. Often a larger tank is easier to maintain with several smaller filters, so you can stagger your filter care. Just be sure to provide enough filtration. You can also decorate your tank however you like. There are huge selections of various products you can choose from. Tank decorations, gravel, rocks, wood, marbles, live plants, synthetic plants are just some of the items you can use.



[Small Fry Food](#)



[Ocean Plankton](#)



[Whisper Tank Filter](#)



[Marina Gravel](#)

 [Send this eBook to a Friend](#)

Popular Products for Your Oscar

- [Millionaire Air Stone](#)
- [Medium Shale Ledge](#)
- [Special Red Gravel](#)
- [Freshwater Master Test Kit](#)
- [Complete Water Conditioner](#)
- [Polyester Floss](#)
- [Pro Balance Color Flake Food](#)
- [Essential Elements](#)
- [Aqua Glo Bulb](#)
- [Wellness Fin Guard](#)
- [Net Breeder](#)
- [Glass Aquarium Canopy](#)
- [Cyprus Drift Woods](#)
- [Glass Cleaner and Scraper Stick](#)
- [2 Sided Aquarium Background](#)
- [Gravel Vacuum Cleaner](#)
- [Ultra Faucet Adapter](#)
- [Elite Air Pump](#)
- [Aquarium Insert Kit](#)



[Mini Lighthouse](#)

 [Send this eBook to a Friend](#)



[Atlantic Anemone](#)



[Liquid Super Ick Cure](#)



[Krill Food](#)



[Internal Parasite](#)



[Siphon Kleen Medium](#)



[Algae Cleaner Scraper Stick](#)

Attention Webmasters: Publishing of this document without express written authorization of Cheap Pet Store, Inc. is deemed unlawful.