

Aquatic Critter Eggs Culture Instructions

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Add eggs directly to the bladderworts water or culture in another container. Sodium Free Spring Water is best. You don't have to use all the eggs at once. Very little often produces huge results. Eggs hatch in 24 - 72 hrs. If algae is present there is no need to feed.

Do not use aeration unless your container holds more than 5 gallons of water. Use extreme caution when adding air, one medium bubble per minute or so. Air gets trapped in daphnia shells and floats them to the surface. If this should occur and it is still alive a gentle nudge back down usually does the trick. **Air generally does not bother copepods.**

They are very tolerant of the light conditions, 16 hrs. on 8 off is preferred but anything works. Any rooms light, natural or not is fine. Just make sure they are not going to overheat in the sun.

Temperature must remain below 86° F at all times. Any higher and some if not all will die. 60-80 is best. Copepods can take it slightly warmer for longer periods. Use **"Sodium Free" bottled, spring or reverse osmosis water**, that way its safe for your plants. If your starting a large culture (2 gal +) you should set it up and add 4 - 6 drops of food then let it sit for 24 hours before adding eggs. **No mater what size the container, the water should be in the open air 24 hrs before adding eggs.**

Feed 1 - 6 drops of our Water Flea Feed morning and night depending on container and colony size.

The biggest killer of these, second to water type, is over feeding. A light green on the bottom of large tanks (5 gal +) is ok, and even seems to spur multiplication. You may notice a film develop on the surface of the water. This is a pretty good indication of the protein in the water as that film is protein. Skim the surface once or twice a day. A slight film over the surface is ok, but excess film is an indication of over feeding. If you aerate the water this film will not be present.

They eat particulate type feeds. One such feed can be made by mixing 6 - 8 grains of bakers yeast with a tablespoon of water. They can live exclusively on this mixture but a pure yeast diet is easy to over feed. Add 1/4 teaspoon per 5 gal every couple of days or so for large colonies. If you see a thick fungus like white growth on the bottom of the container you are adding too much. Clean the container.

You can make another source by putting floating pond goldfish food in the blender. Mix on high until you have a very fine powder. Mix per instructions for our feed. You can add yeast, fish flake food, shrimp, algae pellets or just about any other type of aquarium fish food to the blender but I wouldn't add more than 25% "other".

Change the water in the culture once a week. A partial water change is fine most of the time, but always use "Spring Water" with 0 sodium. Copepods can live in just about any conditions so long as there is not a drastic change in conditions in a short period. In general, copepods are very hard to kill off.

Reproduction is sometimes sporadic and sometimes large numbers die for what seems to be no reason at all. For these reasons I suggest keeping two cultures going. It only takes four or five water fleas to make a large culture in just a couple weeks. Copepods produce slower but as long as you have one female and one male they will be ok. The female copepods have the split "tail"(really egg sacs) while the males have a single "tail". A healthy culture will contain around 300 fleas or 150 copepods per gallon of water.

Water fleas can be hard to keep alive until you get used to them. Once you have had them for a few months it will all become very easy. If you have any problems let me know. I strongly recommend splitting the culture right off because it doubles your chance for success. Copepods are very hardy and it takes extreme changes in a short period to kill them off. Water fleas can be feed to any pet that can eat in the water including fish, frogs, etc. Copepods can too but should be researched before feeding to anything but carnivorous plants.

Just about any clean container can be used, I prefer fish tanks or bowls, but tupperware works just as well.

The main thing is to be able to get them out of the container as needed by using a pipette (copods can be mighty fast) or a brine shrimp net. A turkey baster works better for the copepods.

If you have any questions or if we can be of any help please drop us an email. We're always happy to help and we generally reply the same day.

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