



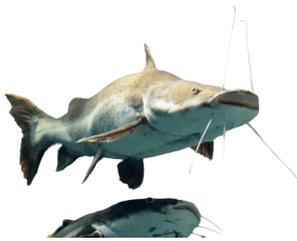
Animals of the World: Fish



CATFISH

If you are a lover of fish and cats, you are in luck today because I present to you the catfish. It is a popular fish in aquariums and can be found in fresh and shallow waters all over the world, except Antarctica.

It is fascinating to see how its tentacles come out of the mouth, which resemble the long and thin whiskers of cats. These tentacles are called filamentous barbels and are used as a sensory organ. Thanks to them, they can find the food they need to feed themselves.



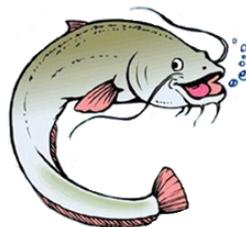
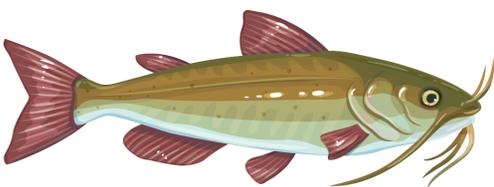
Their diet is different depending on the species of catfish. Some eat only algae or other plants, while others prefer small invertebrates or other species of fish. It is interesting to see the variety of foods they eat, even though they are all catfish.

There are many different types of catfish. In fact, it is estimated that there are more than two thousand species of catfish. Depending on the species, its body may have spines on the pectoral and dorsal fins.

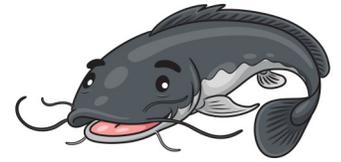
These are used to defend themselves in case of an attack by a predator. Most species have a hard skin, which they use as a shield against attacks from other animals. Likewise, the colors of the catfish vary. Some catfish species have brown and dark tones, while others have white and bright grayish colors. In Thailand, there is even a species of bumblebee catfish with brightly striped colors, as if it were a sea bee.



Bumblebee Catfish



Catfish are widely used in aquariums because they help keep them clean. With their "whiskers," they find the leftover food deposited on the walls and bottom of the aquariums and eat it, preventing the remains from clouding the water quality. Some species also eat different types of algae. So, if there is an algae infestation, catfish can eat it, cleaning the aquarium efficiently without using chemicals.



Before you start caring for a catfish in an aquarium, study its habits and way of life. Generally, all catfish enjoy an aquarium with a bottom full of logs, rocks, and caves to hide in. Furthermore, you should know what kind of food the catfish you want likes to eat and if they prefer a dark or light environment. It is also necessary to know what other types of fish they like to live with or if they would be predators to the other fish in the aquarium. Regarding the cleanliness and oxygenation of the water, it must be measured, filtered, and controlled continuously so that the habitat is optimal for its survival. Finally, before keeping a catfish as a pet, you should think about the aquarium space because the size of a catfish varies from species to species.

Most catfish are nocturnal, although there are some species that are diurnal. It is important to remember this because it will be at night when they get more active and swim through the water.

Now that you know a little more about the life and care of the catfish, would you have one as a pet? Or would you rather have it for dinner?



Name _____

Date _____

CATFISH

Answer the following questions:



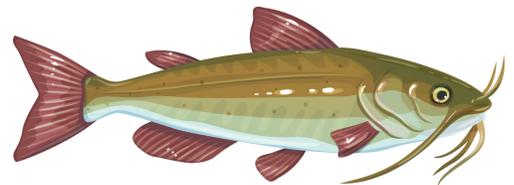
1. Which of the following is true about catfish?
- a. They have tentacles that look like cats whiskers.
 - b. They come in many different sizes and colors.
 - c. They can help keep an aquarium clean.
 - d. All of the above

2. Catfish use their tentacles to _____
- a. attract other catfish.
 - b. defend against attacks.
 - c. scratch their backs.
 - d. find food.



3. Although it is very cold, catfish can be found in Antartica.
- a. True
 - b. False

4. There are more than 2,000 _____ catfish.
- a. colors of
 - b. teeth in a
 - c. species of
 - d. sounds made by a



5. Catfish are good to have in an aquarium because _____
- a. they never have babies.
 - b. they only eat bread.
 - c. they only live for a few years.
 - d. they help to keep the aquarium clean.



Name _____

Date _____

CATFISH

6. How do catfish help keep an aquarium clean?

- a. They eat leftover food on the floor and sides of the aquarium. Some even eat algae, preventing algae infestations in the aquarium.
- b. They eat tadpoles, which prevents an infestation of frogs in the aquarium.
- c. Their skin acts like a broom and sweeps up any garbage in the aquarium.
- d. With their sense of smell, they can find old food and throw it away.

7. You should know which kind of catfish you are getting before choosing an aquarium, because _____.

- a. catfish come in many different colors
- b. catfish come in many different sizes
- c. some catfish can be very loud
- d. some catfish like green water

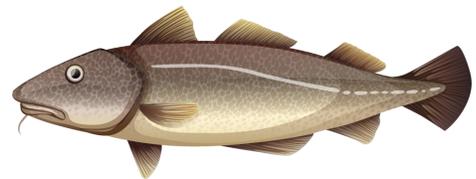


8. Most catfish are nocturnal, which means _____

- a. they take turns cleaning the aquarium.
- b. they are active during the daytime.
- c. they are active at night.
- d. they have an extra set of eyes.

9. Some catfish eat other fish.

- a. True
- b. False



10. Some catfish can be predators for other fish, which means _____

- a. they eat other fish.
- b. they play with other fish.
- c. they look like other fish.
- d. they live in the same place as other fish.