

KOALA T KORNER

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Fall 2007 Newsletter

PET-SITTING, DOG WALKING, & HOME MANAGEMENT SERVICES

How About a Betta in A Bowl?

Referencing,
Vol XIII Issue 3,
The World of
Professional Pet
Sitting.



When I do a new customer orientation, I ask, "Do you have a Betta in a bowl?" So many of us have the quiet, almost forgotten little pets tucked away on a bookcase or table somewhere. But, they could use a little attention while you're away, too. Koala T Care doesn't charge extra to monitor these tiny warriors, so be sure to tell your pet sitter if you've recently acquired one.

Bettas are Labyrinth Fish belonging to a family of fish with labyrinth organs, which are structures in their heads allowing them to "breathe" atmospheric oxygen. They can be seen gulping at the air at the surface of the water. Their bowls should be filled leaving at least an inch of air space between the top of the water and bottom of the tank lid. Native to Thailand, these "Jewels of the Orient" were first discovered making their homes among the rice paddies and drainage ditches of an environment noted for frequent storm flooding and devastating droughts. For short periods, they can survive out of water, breathing air provided they stay moist. Although they can exist in small spaces, a small aquarium (at least 2 gallons) is recommended. Bettas are not schooling fish. They will fight each other which is why they derived their name from an ancient clan of Asian warriors, the "Bettah". They are also called Siamese Fighting Fish.

Bettas normally live 2-3 years, but have been known to live well into their teens. They have upturned mouths and feed primarily off the surface of the water. A good diet of

Don't delay!

It's time to call in reservations for



Thanksgiving and Christmas Pet Care!

bloodworms, brine shrimp, or daphnia in commercial food (which includes vitamins and minerals) will add to their longevity. Despite the misconception that they survive well on the roots of peace lilies, these little guys need high protein diets and can enjoy some finely chopped soybeans, carrots and broccoli with their standard diet.

Bettas prefer water temps between 76-82 degrees, and about a third of their water should be changed out every few days to allow the fish to gently adjust to the temperature and pH of the fresh water while not upsetting the biological balance of the fish's environment. Decolorinate any water you are about to add to the tank. Don't use soaps and disinfectants to clean the Betta's bowl or ornaments. An acquaintance was washing the Betta bowl with soap every week and couldn't figure out why her Bettas kept dying. You can use a small turkey baster (used only to clean the aquarium) to siphon debris from the bottom of the tank.

In the mid 1800s the King of Siam regulated and taxed the very popular fighting fish sport. Spectators of the sport based their bets on the bravery of the fish rather than the damage inflicted by the victor. The fish who gave up first was the loser. The winner was only allowed to fight one or two more battles before retiring to a life of comfort and breeding.

Special Dates in 2008

By Aug 2008, all of our Koala T Care customers are going to be tired of seeing the little date reminders I'll be making about a couple of vacations Lara and I plan to take in the upcoming year. It's important, though, for you to know. I want to be sure that everyone is made privy to this information, so plans can be made accordingly. Since Koala T. Care's inception, ten-plus years ago, Lara and I have taken very few trips, other than to visit my folks in Tennessee. 2008 will be different, if all goes according to plan. Feb 11-15 and Aug 10-16, 2008, Lara and I will be on family vacations that will send us to some of the places we usually watch our customers going to. My grandkids have never been to Disney World (Feb), and the entire Spiker family is taking a cruise to the Bahamas (Aug). During those times, Koala T Care pet sitters will be working an "advanced reservations, limited space available" schedule. (KTC's regular midday customers are already on that schedule.) We will not be able to provide overnight pet sitters during those times, and I, obviously, won't be able to board any pups at my home then. The message on the office phone will give you emergency contact information while I'm not accessible. By repeating this information so early and so often, we hope to spare our valued customers any inconvenience.

Please, pardon the actions of a proud mom! Tanya Michna, my oldest daughter, is a local author doing a book signing at Barnes & Nobles October 9 at the Avenue on Dallas Hwy in Marietta from 7-9pm to launch her newest book, Necessary Arrangements!