

## The Benefits of Green Water

As koi and goldfish hobbyists, we are often nearly obsessed with keeping our water crystal clear. After all, we enjoy our fish, and wish to see them in the most optimal conditions, which we associate with clear water. In most cases, clear water is exactly what the doctor ordered.

In some cases, after recovery from an illness, or to encourage growth, green water can be very helpful. Now, some people might be horrified at the thought of green water, after all, we spend a great deal of time, money, and effort to keep our ponds and aquariums free from “pea-soup” algae. How can this be beneficial?

Actually, in Japan, things often work counter to the way they do here. In Japan, people pay a great deal of money to have their fish raised in mud ponds. Well, guess what? Mud ponds contain green water. Why the big difference between how fish are raised in Japan and here?

Well, I guess it’s just a matter of esthetics. After all, if you have good fish, you want to see them. I’m no different than anyone else. I don’t want my main pond filled with pea-green water – it just doesn’t look right.

On the other hand, there are times when green water, in a controlled environment, is just fine and can be downright healthy for fish. So, what are those times, and how can green water help?

By controlled environment, I mean one or two aquariums, and/or a quarantine tank or small holding tank. It’s easy to get green water to flourish, just add plenty of light (say 18 – 20 hours per day), and slightly warmer water than you regularly keep. In these conditions, your aquarium or tank will develop green water in a short period of time.

Okay, now that we’ve gotten the water nice and green, what do we do? Well, just add fish. Fish that have just gotten over a disease; fish that are being quarantined; fish that you want to color-up or grow can all be added to a green water environment. The green water contains minute traces of iodine, other minerals, and chlorophyll, all of which are extremely good for fish.

There is a web site called Vermillion Goldfish Club, which is located at <http://geocities.com/GreenNgoldSG>, and which contains many articles about green water. In every case that they report, the addition of green water improves fish size, growth, and color. Of course, you may be skeptical of these claims, and think that the disadvantages far outweigh the advantages of green water.

I've known about green water (and had green water in my main pond – haven't we all), for quite some time. When I had several ponds in which to raise fish, I've always kept at least one grow-out pond where I could raise young fish. Since I'm down to one main pond, I don't want it looking like a swamp, so I stopped using green water as a grow-out method.

A few months ago, several of my goldfish got sick (tail rot) and looked pretty bad once they recovered from the main disease. One fish, in particular, my large red Oranda, looked pretty bad. His fins were beat up, his dorsal was ripped, and to top it off, he was swimming erratically with what looked like some sort of bladder problem. I wasn't sure how I was going to nurse this fish back to health, and then I thought about making a green water tank.

I used the smallest tank that I had for this experiment; it was also the shallowest tank, and had a halogen light. I changed the timer on the light from 12 hours to 18 hours and waited a few days. Once the water turned green, I added the Red Oranda. Well, his fins are now repaired, his dorsal is in great shape, and he's swimming much better. And of yes, his color has improved tremendously.



Green water isn't the answer to every problem and every pond, but used judiciously, green water can help in fish care. By the way, be sure to visit the Vermillion Goldfish Club.