

MOSQUITOFISH PROGRAM

The Salt Lake City Mosquito Abatement District (SLCMAD) has a program where mosquitofish can be placed in ornamental ponds for the control of mosquito larvae. Following the agreement with the Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR), to be eligible for mosquitofish, ornamental ponds must be clean and cannot drain into natural waterways.

Ornamental ponds in residential areas can be stocked with mosquitofish (5-10 adult fish) by a trained SLCMAD technician starting mid-May throughout the summer. Ponds are then inspected at least twice during the summer months. Feeding is not typically needed due to their opportunistic feeding habits, but if supplemental feeding is needed almost any live or dead feed (dog food, chicken feed) can be sparingly applied.

Because of the agreement with the DWR and SLCMAD, it is illegal for the homeowner to move or transport mosquitofish to another pond (including ponds at neighbors, family, or friends). This is to limit escape of the fish into natural waterways or spread of disease.



PHOTO: SANDIEGOCOUNTY

COST

Mosquito control is funded through property taxes and is provided to you for about the cost of two cans of insect repellent per year. Delivery of mosquitofish and inspection of mosquito sources around your yard is done at no additional cost.

DON'T DITCH A FISH, ITS ILLEGAL

IF YOU HAVE ANY UNWANTED FISH, VISIT:

WILDLIFE.UTAH.GOV/DONT-DITCH

OR CALL

UTAH DIVISION OF WILDLIFE
RESOURCES **801-538-4700**



IF YOU HAVE AN ORNAMENTAL POND AND WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST MOSQUITOFISH, PLEASE CALL OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

PHONE: 801-355-9221
2215 N 2200 W, SLC, UT
WWW.SLCMADUTAH.GOV



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PHOTO: AZGARDENS

MOSQUITO-FISH



**Salt Lake City
Mosquito
Abatement District**

GENERAL INFORMATION



Mosquitofish were introduced to Utah in 1931 from Shelby, Tennessee. Mosquitofish are considered to be larvivores since they primarily consume larvae and other small organisms. Because of how well they consume mosquito larvae, mosquitofish have been distributed globally as a biological control of mosquitoes.

Mosquitofish can be found throughout the state, however are not native to Utah. Due to their aggressive behavior, they can have a negative impact on native ecosystems and outcompete native fish species for food.

Although they can have negative impacts on native habitats, the DWR recognizes the importance of using mosquitofish as a biological control of mosquitoes. Utah mosquito abatement districts have a written agreement with DWR that allow the use of mosquitofish in closed system ponds for this purpose.

DESCRIPTION

Western mosquitofish (*Gambusia affinis*) are small freshwater poeciliid fish that are native to the north-central America and the southern United States.

They are sexually dimorphic, which means there are different morphological characteristics between both sexes of the same species. Full grown females are around 2 ½ inches in length and have a gravid spot on their posterior abdomen while males are 1 ½ inches in length fully grown with no gravid spot. They are a dull gray/silver color with light olive green. They can consume about 100 mosquito larvae a day (up to 3x their own bodyweight!).

Mosquitofish can survive in inhospitable environments and are resilient to low oxygen concentrations, high salt concentrations, and temperatures up to 42 °C.

LIFE CYCLE

Mosquitofish are ovoviviparous; the fertilized eggs hatch in the female's body and are delivered as live births. Juveniles are born as free-swimming and independent. Their gestation period can be 18-35 days and several broods of young may be produced from a single fertilization (30-300). Juveniles reach maturity after 4 to 6 weeks of age during the summer and may commence breeding activities shortly thereafter.



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DONT DITCH A FISH

"Don't ditch a fish" is a program with the DWR all about the prevention of transporting and releasing live fish into ponds, lakes, and streams. It's illegal and harmful, damages fisheries, harms native species, and endangers fragile ecosystems. If for any reason you no longer want mosquitofish in your ornamental pond contact your local mosquito abatement district.

- Call your local MAD if you want mosquitofish for your pond; don't purchase them online
- Don't ditch your mosquitofish or other fish into another pond or waterbody; this is illegal
- Report observations of invasive fish to DWR
- Report illegal introductions of invasive fish to DWR
- Dispose of aquarium fish properly

It is illegal to possess, raise or transport mosquitofish in Utah without special permission from the DWR. Utah code 23-13-14 strictly prohibits the release of any live fish, including mosquitofish, into the wild. Violations are punishable as Class A misdemeanors.