Critter Care
Animals 2x2

Goldfish, Guppies and Aquatic Plants

You will receive a packet contain 4 Goldfish, 8 Guppies and 12 pieces of Elodea (Aquatic Plant) around Weds. of week 2.

Water: Age tap water for at least 24 hours in an open container before using it with your fish – or use a chemical dechlorinator to prepare the water. You’ll need about 5 quarts of water for each of the 3 aquariums. Keep an additional bottle of aged water on hand to refill the tanks as needed.

The fish should arrive in plastic bags. Float the bags in the aged water for about 15 minutes to let the temperatures equalize. Then release the goldfish into two of the tanks and the guppies in a 3rd. (Goldfish will eat Guppies.) To start, put all the Elodea in with the Guppies.

Don’t feed the fish before conducting Part 1.2. (Students will be looking at feeding behavior, so you want the fish hungry.) Goldfish and Guppies will eat Tropical fish flakes.

(More about Caring for Goldfish and Guppies in on pages 6-9 of the Investigation 1 Booklet in the Teacher’s Guide.)

Land Snails & Pond Snails

Snails will arrive around Weds. of week 4. You should receive about 12 of each. Put two or three damp paper towels in the bottom of the clear basin and add the snails when they arrive. Feed them bits of lettuce, carrots, or other vegetable matter. Pieces of chalk added to the terrarium will provide snails with needed calcium. Be diligent about keeping the lid on the basin – or you may end up starting with a snail hunt! Lay a sheet of plastic wrap loosely over the top to maintain the moisture level in the tank.

Plan a snail Wake Up call. To make the snails active, plunge them into a ½ liter container of water just before activity time. (This also cleans then off.) Return them to the terrarium and put the lid on tightly.

Set up a clear basin for the water snails. Fill it with 5 quarts of aged water. Let the temperature equalize before putting the snails in the tank (See Goldfish) Add one bunch of Elodea. Water snails will eat water plants and algae that forms on the sides of the aquarium.

Earth Worms & Redworms

Worms and isopods will arrive around Weds. of week 5

Redworms - Potting soil is provided in the kit, but loamy soil from a yard or garden will be even better, You can mix some local soil with the potting soil. You will need a little less than half a bag of soil (1 kg/2 lbs) for one class. Use a ½ liter container to put two scoops of soil into a clear basin. Moisten the soil,
but don’t make it wet. Put the redworms in the terrarium. Add a sprinkling of oatmeal for food and a few decaying leaves on top of the soil.

Earthworms – Keep the night crawlers in the container they came in, or a ½-liter container about three-quarters full of damp soil. Poke holes in the lid for ventilation. Store the worms in the refrigerator or a cool place for a few days before they are introduced to students. The day before you do 3.3, add the earthworms – soil and all – to the terrarium after the children have left for the day.

**Pill Bugs & Sow Bugs**

Isopods are interesting, big enough to see, and don’t bite, smell, fly or jump, and the are easy to care for! The most important thing to remember is to keep their terrarium moist at all times. You should put a time limit of 3-5 minutes for students to handle isopods outside of their moist environment.

Put wadded, moistened paper towels into two ½-liter containers and add the isopods. Keep a piece of potato or carrot in each container for a backup moisture supply. Keep the lids on the containers. Isopods will be OK in a closed container with no air-holes for a short time – up to a day. Poke holes in the lid with a nail or pushpin for longer stays. Isopods will survive well on slices of potato or carrot and a moist paper towel.

**Plan for the End of the Module**

Plan for the care of the animals at the end of the module. The organisms might find a permanent home in your classroom. You will need to provide your own containers for permanent habitat and observation as the kits need to be returned. You might pass the organisms on to the next user of the kit XXXXXXXXX. If no other option is possible, the most humane thing to do is euthanize them by placing them in a freezer for a day or two, and then dispose of them.