BORONIA AQUARIUM PTY LTD

Algae Basics

Excessive algae growth is not only unsightly but can indicate an imbalance in your aquarium. A certain amount of algae is a normal part of any healthy aquarium ecosystem and is naturally controlled through plant growth, a range of algae eating fish, high quality biological filtration, regular water changes, controlled feeding, and routine water testing. High nitrate and phosphate levels are the main cause of excessive algae growth and as such, newly established or improperly maintained aquariums are naturally at risk.

Algae has little chance of developing where plants are thriving and is often a sign of plant stagnation. Therefore any attack you make on algae must be accompanied by enhanced plant growth (see B.A Plant Basics care sheet).

PROBLEM SHOOTING

Milky/Opaque Water *(common in 'new tanks', often a precursor to algae bloom)*
Causes; Rot processes (food leftovers, decaying plants), excess nitrates and phosphates.
Interventions; Water changes, remove debris, siphon gravel.
Long term maintenance; Control feeding, increase plant growth, UV sterilizer, phosphate free conditioners.

Brown Algae *(brownish slime coating on plants, ornaments and glass, common in 'new tanks')*
Causes; Insufficient light and/or plant growth, 'new' filter or insufficient biological filtration.
Interventions; Manually remove, increase light and/or replace fluorescent tubes.
Long term maintenance; Otocinclus Catfish, boost biological filtration.

Green Water *(suspended algae bloom)*
Causes; Direct sunlight, insufficient plant growth (incorrect type of fluorescent tubes or tubes over 12 months old), excess nitrates and phosphates.
Interventions; Limit direct sunlight, replace flourescent tubes, water changes.
Long term maintenance; UVsterilizer, control feeding, use phosphate free conditioners.

Green 'Spot' Algae *(flat algae developing on aquarium glass, in hose pipes etc.)*
Causes; Naturally occurring.
Interventions; Manually remove using magnet cleaners and brushes.
Long term maintenance; Bristle Nose Catfish, Plecostomus Catfish, Otocinclus catfish.

Thread/Brush/Black 'Beard' Algae
Causes; Insufficient or slow plant growth, excess phosphates and nitrates.
Interventions; Manually remove, replace 'old' fluorescent tubes, 'Seachem Excel' double dose for 3 weeks.
Long term maintenance; Control feeding, Siamese Flying Foxes (to a lesser extent, Rosy Barbs and Mollies), use phosphate free conditioners, regular water changes.

Blue-Green/Slime Algae *(greenish-blue slime coating on water surface, plants and ornaments, unpleasant odour)*
Causes; Insufficient water circulation, excess nitrates and phosphates.
Interventions; Siphon off coatings, increase water circulation (direct filter outlet to ripple water surface or add air stone), water changes.
Long term maintenance; Control feeding, use phosphate free conditioners.

Feel free to contact the friendly staff at Boronia Aquarium for further information

Quality lighting for optimal plant growth

Phosphate free conditioners

Test kits to monitor water quality

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