

# Mosquitofish

Mosquitofish (*Gambusia affinis*) are small, freshwater fish that provide an effective and natural method of mosquito control. They are available to residents throughout San Diego County, free of charge.



## Why Use Fish To Control Mosquitoes?

Adult female mosquitoes bite people and can spread diseases. Young mosquitoes (larvae) live in standing water. Mosquitofish can eat 3-5 times their bodyweight in mosquito larvae every day and are an effective and natural method of controlling mosquitoes before they become biting adults.



## How Many Fish Do I Need?

- **Small sources** (such as fountains or troughs): 2-3
- **Ponds** (surface area up to 200 sq ft): 3-5
- **Larger sources**: 1 fish for every 20 square feet of surface area

Fish are available free of charge at the Vector Control Program office and at distribution sites throughout the county. If you need more than five fish, please call our office at (858) 694-2888.

**For more information, visit [SDVector.com](http://SDVector.com) or contact the Vector Control Program:**  
**(858) 694-2888**  
**[vector@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:vector@sdcounty.ca.gov)**

## Caring For Your Fish

### Introducing Your Fish:

Place the container or baggie containing your fish into the water and leave it there for 15 minutes before releasing the fish. After that, mosquitofish need little to no care.

### Feeding:

During warm months mosquitofish usually do not need to be fed. Feed fish regular flake food if no mosquito larvae are present.

### Living Conditions:

Mosquitofish tolerate water temperatures between 33°F and 104°F, but prefer temperatures around 80°F. Ideally, water should have a pH between 6.5 and 8.0

Keep chlorine, garden insect sprays, and yard chemicals out of their water.

### Living with other fish:

Mosquitofish are compatible with most pond fish of about the same size. If the mosquitofish are living with larger fish (who may eat them), they need hiding places like rocks and plants.



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## No Fish In Natural Areas

Never place mosquitofish in a natural habitat such as a lake, stream, river, or creek. They are not native to California and can destroy natural species and disrupt the ecological balance.

### County of San Diego Vector Control Program

(858) 694-2888 | [vector@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:vector@sdcounty.ca.gov)

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County of San Diego  
Vector Control Program

