END BETTA CUPS

Open Letter

Welfare Concerns Regarding the Retail Display of Betta Fish in Small Cups

To the executive leadership of major pet retailers,

As veterinarians, scientists, and professionals with expertise in fish and animal welfare, we have serious welfare concerns about the routine use of small cups as a retail display method for betta fish.

The low water volume of small cups allows waste to concentrate quickly, exposing fish to harmful ammonia. In busy retail environments where numerous bettas are kept on display at once, these conditions are difficult to monitor and maintain consistently. The limited space and lack of environmental enrichment restrict natural behavior, while the absence of stable temperature regulation and filtration can create unstable conditions that contribute to chronic stress and disease.

As prominent leaders in the pet industry, your companies help define retail standards and influence how animals are displayed and cared for. This practice should not remain an acceptable retail norm. We urge you to end small cup displays for betta fish.

Signatories

- Stacie Grannum, DVM
- Larrea Cottingham, DVM
- Crystal Heath, DVM - Executive Director, Our Honor
- Noémie Hofman, DVM, WAVMA-Certified Aquatic Vet
- Catalina Lopez, DVM, WAVMA-Certified Aquatic Vet
- Jena Questen, DVM, WAVMA-Certified Aquatic Vet
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- Julia N Allen, PhD, DVM
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- Jennifer Doll, DVM
- Jill O Kulig, VMD
- Michael W. Fox, BVetMed, PhD, DSc, MRCVS
- Kirsten Jackson, BSc, BVMS (hons), PhD, MANZCVS (Eq Dent)
- Lori Mihalcik, MS, LVT, CVT
- Erin McDonald, CVT
- Claire Hobson, RVN
- Heather Schrader, RVT
- Dr. L.F. Lunn, B.Sc., B.V.Sc (Hons)
- Dr. Elizabeth Ormerod, BVMS Churchill Fellow
- Jonathan Balcombe, PhD - Biologist, author of What a Fish Knows
- Naomi Clark-Shen, PhD - Fish welfare researcher
- Wasseem Emam, PhD - Aquatic ecologist and Founder of Ethical Seafood Research
- Prof. Culum Brown - Professor of Fish Behavioral Ecology, Macquarie University
- Lynne Sneddon, PhD - Professor of Aquatic Animal Biology, University of Gothenburg
- Haven King-Nobles - Executive Director, Fish Welfare Initiative
- Eliane Gonçalves de Freitas, PhD - Senior Professor of Animal Behavior and Physiology, São Paulo State University
- Caroline Marques Maia, PhD - Biologist, Researcher, and Science Communicator specializing in fish behavior and welfare
- Sonia Rey Planellas - Senior Researcher, Aquatic Animal Behaviour, Cognition, and Welfare
- Émilie-Lune Sauvé - Senior campaign manager, Animal Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, Montreal SPCA
- Jennifer Jacquet, PhD, Professor of Environmental Science & Policy, University of Miami
- Claire Paris, PhD, Professor of Ocean Sciences, University of Miami
- Becca Franks, PhD, Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies, New York University
- Spencer Roberts, PhD Candidate, Fish Conservation Ecologist
- Friends of Philip Fish Sanctuary
- Fish Feel
- Fish Defender