

# Aquatic Plants

## A CAROLINA™ CareSheet

### Immediate Care and Handling

*Elodea* and *Cabomba* are shipped in bundles that are secured with rubber bands. Cut the rubber bands to remove the plants. Either rinse the plants in running tap water or swish them about in a pail of aged tap water. This is to clean the plants, so discard the rinse water. Inspect the plants and discard any that appear unhealthy. Also discard any unwanted snails or other animals that may have hitched a ride on the plants. Place the plants in a holding tank of aged, conditioned tap water until you are ready to use them in class. Don't keep them in the holding tanks too long. If the plants must be kept for more than one day, replace some of the water (not more than ¼ of it) with fresh aged, conditioned water. Also turn the plants over so that any that were covered by others will be exposed to light. The plants need bright light for best growth. Duckweed does not require a rinse. Simply add it to a holding tank of aged, conditioned tap water.

### FAQs

#### ***Why aren't the plants growing?***

It can take some time for the plants to adjust to a new home. Fish and other animals in the aquarium release waste products into the water, and it is this waste that serves as nutrients for the plants. In a new aquarium, it may take time for the waste products to accumulate, so be patient.

#### ***Will the plants form roots?***

They may or may not. *Elodea* and *Cabomba* often float free in the water. In an aquarium, they are able to absorb nutrients directly from the water, so roots aren't necessary. If they do form roots, it will probably take some time for them to grow. Duckweed often forms short roots that help absorb nutrients from the water.

#### ***Will the fish and snails eat the plants?***

They may. After all, plants are producers and animals are consumers. If growing conditions are good for the plants, both they and the animals will flourish.

#### ***Why are my plants dying?***

There can be many reasons for this. Are the plants getting enough light? Is the aquarium being disturbed too often? To grow well, the plants must be allowed to "settle in." Also, a nutrient could be missing from the water. Lack of phosphorus and iron may limit the growth of water plants. If possible, add a small

amount of water-soluble fertilizer that contains these nutrients. If your water is treated with a water softener (which is unlikely), aquarium plants may grow poorly.

***What should I do with these plants when dismantling my aquarium at the end of the school year?***

*Elodea (Egeria) densa* (commonly called Brazilian Elodea) sometimes becomes invasive in streams, lakes, and ponds, so it should not be released into local waterways. Either give the plants to other teachers or students for use in their home aquariums or discard the plants in the trash.

**Problems?** We hope not, but if so contact us. We want you to have a good experience.

**Orders and replacements:** 1-800-334-5551, then select Customer Service.

**Technical Support and Questions:** [caresheets@carolina.com](mailto:caresheets@carolina.com)



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