



# Harvest Elementary School Quest Michigan Lake Habitat Fish Feeding Tips

Thank you for volunteering to help out in feeding our Michigan Lake Habitat fish! This tip sheet should give you all information you will need in purchasing the feeder fish and caring for them until they are put into the tank. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to ask Linda McCormick, at 944-8901 x5573 or [mccormil@saline.k12.mi.us](mailto:mccormil@saline.k12.mi.us).

## Where to Purchase Feeder Fish

While feeder fish can come from many locations, the **Fish Doctors** (<http://www.fishdoctors.com/>) in Ypsilanti, Michigan has been very supportive of the tank and has generally had good quality feeders. It is important to get feeder fish that are not sick and will not carry diseases into our habitat. Fish Doctors is located at **2703 Washtenaw Ave., Ypsilanti, MI 48198**. They are located next to Wendy's, between Golfside Dr. and Hewitt Rd. They are open 11am-9pm, M-F (plus 11am-6pm on Sat, and 12pm-5pm on Sun).

## What to Purchase

Ask for **100 small feeder goldfish**. Sometimes their supply runs low on small goldfish. If they do, you may purchase feeder "Rosie Reds" instead. However, due to the smaller size of the Rosie Reds, purchase 50% more than the small goldfish. So, for example, if they only have 50 small golds, then purchase those 50 small golds, and supplement with 75 Rosie Reds. If all they have is Rosie Reds, purchase 150 of them. Do not purchase any large feeder goldfish. While some of the habitat fishes may be able to eat them, many will not. The fish will cost approximately \$7-10.

## How to Care For the Feeders

The fish store will put the feeder fish into one or two plastic bags. They will usually also pump pure oxygen into the bag(s) to help keep the fish healthy. It is ideal to purchase the fish and bring them directly to the school (within 30 minutes). If you are not able to do this, please follow the instructions on the back to care for the feeders for an extended period of time. It is normal for a few feeders to die between the store and the tank.

### ***Feeder DO's***

- Bring them directly to the school within 30 minutes of purchase
- Keep them out of direct sunlight

### ***Feeder DON'T's***

- Keep them in the plastic bag for more than one hour
- Leave them in a hot or cold car

## How to Care For the Feeders for an Extended Time Period

Feeder fish need space, a stable temperature and oxygen to survive. Dead feeders are not good for the habitat (they are not likely to be eaten until the habitat fishes get really hungry, and they will excrete a significant amount of waste into the water in the meantime). If you are not able to bring the fish to the school within an hour of purchase, you can use the following steps to help keep the feeder healthy. It will take a little more effort and planning, but will be good for the habitat and the feeders.

1. Use a large (5 gallon) clean bucket (the Quest room is equipped with a couple buckets, see Linda McCormick if you would like to borrow one for this purpose).
2. Fill the bucket approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  full with tap water. Make sure that the water is approximately the same temperature as the water in the fish bag. It doesn't have to be exact, you can go by feel.
3. Using an aquarium water conditioner, such as Prime, (the Quest room is equipped with a bottle, or you may purchase a small bottle at Fish Doctors), pour 1-2 capfuls into the bucket water.
4. Open the feeder fish bag(s) and pour them (and their water) into the bucket.
5. Scoop out and discard any dead feeders.



Following these steps, you can keep the feeders healthy for hours. If you will need to keep the feeders in this bucket overnight, some will likely die, but that is OK. You may also want to borrow one of the portable "bubblers" that are located in the Quest room. These will provide a constant stream of air bubbles for the feeders, which will keep their water well oxygenated. If you plan on keeping the feeders in the bucket overnight, the bubbler is recommended.