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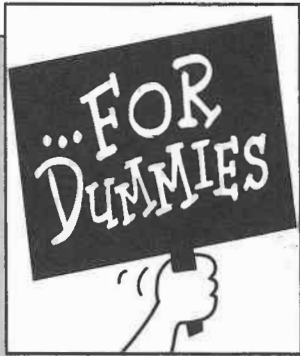


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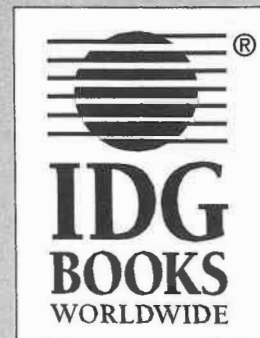
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# AQUARIUMS FOR DUMMIES®

by Maddy Hargrove  
and  
Mic Hargrove



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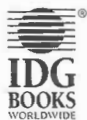
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## Chapter 1

# The Practice of Aquarium Keeping

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Discovering the joys of fishkeeping
  - ▶ Differentiating among freshwater, marine, and brackish tank systems
  - ▶ Choosing the system right for you
- 

**L**et me be the first to welcome you to the world's greatest hobby! I have always loved fishkeeping, and hope that you do, too. This book can help you achieve your goal of setting up and maintaining a successful aquarium.

Imagine it: It's eight o'clock and you're just getting home from the office where you spent the last half hour listening to your irate boss rant and rave about problems beyond your control. Your ears are still ringing, your head is pounding, and your mood is ugly. You walk in the front door of your home, plop down in your best easy chair, and let the healing therapy begin.

Directly in front of you is your beautiful 55-gallon aquarium. In your private underwater world, you see bright green hairgrass plants waving softly in the gentle current. The aqua blue water soothes your tired eyes as it swirls endlessly through a cheerful airstone. A frolicking school of brightly colored neons dart merrily through a small hole in a towering rock wall. The smooth pebbles on the aquarium floor reflect the dazzling array of colors around them. The soothing bubbling from the filter reminds you that there is always a place you can go to relax and get away from it all. (Hey, your aquarium sounds fantastic! Can I come over?)

At first, any hobby can be as complicated as an IRS long form, but rest assured that this book dispels the "mystery" surrounding keeping a healthy aquarium.

## *The Benefits of an Aquarium*

Okay, it's time to snag a comfortable chair and travel with me through the

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