

PIPEFISH CARE
SOP# = Ostei10

PURPOSE: To describe methods of care for pipefishes.

POLICY: To provide optimum care for all animals.

RESPONSIBILITY: Collector and user of the animals. If these are not the same person, the user takes over responsibility of the animals as soon as the animals have arrived on station.

IDENTIFICATION:

Common Name	Scientific Name	Identifying Characteristics
Bay pipefish	<i>Syngnathus leptorhynchus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very long inflexible bodies - Covered with abutting bony plates - They have tiny mouths and tails fins - No pelvic fins - Can reach 33cm in length - These fish move forward upright by vibrating a single transparent dorsal fin 

CAPTURE:

Location	- Pipefish are often hidden among marine plants, especially eelgrass, growing in shallow bays or around pilings.
Methods	- Pipefish are easily caught by dip net. - Can also be caught by a beach seine.
Transport	**Please follow transport and handling of fish SOP.

ANIMAL CARE:

Holding Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- These fish need to be held in continually flowing seawater.- Water must be aerated.- Lids are necessary, as the slender bodies of the pipefish tend to easily slide over and out of the top of the tank.- It is very stressful for pipefish to feel exposed so they should always be provided with habitat including eelgrass and sediment.
Feeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Feed pipefish tiny shrimp-like prey, and zooplankton.- They can also eat cultured artemia but need supplemental nutrition.- Pipefish generally only eat live and moving prey.
Tank Cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Once every 3-4 weeks, fish should be removed from the tank and placed into a holding bucket with air.- The tanks should be drained and the sides and bottom should be scrubbed and rinsed with warm freshwater- The tanks should then be rinsed with cold seawater and allowed to refill, and the fish replaced.
Daily Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Ensure water is flowing into the tank at a reasonable rate.-Ensure the standpipe is in place and not blocked.-Check for and remove dead animals.-Check for and remove any uneaten prey organisms.-Check for and remove foreign organisms.
Animal Return	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Animals should be returned to the site of their collection- Be sure to have well oxygenated water in bucket that they are being returned in- If any anesthetic chemical has been used on the fish during its holding at BMSC, the animal must not be released before the drug withdrawal time. Withdrawal time should be on the label of an anesthetic in degree-days or 'ATUs' (degree-days are the accumulated thermal units for a given day. One day at 10 is 10 degree-days)