

# Feather Duster

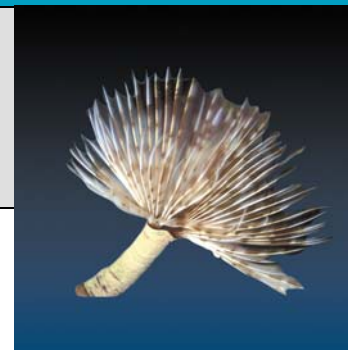
*Sabellastarte spp*



## CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Feather dusters are a type of fan worm (annelid) found in coral rubble in most tropical waters around the world. Their body secretions create a parchment casing like skin around them. The feathery plumed head that protrudes from this casing filters plankton from the water, on which the feather duster feeds. The plume is quickly withdrawn when the feather duster detects motion. Recommended for experienced aquarists.



### Is a feather duster the right choice for your aquarium?

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check "Yes" or "No" after reading the following statements:

1. I have room for a reef aquarium.
2. The feather duster would be compatible with my other aquarium inhabitants.
3. I can commit to providing proper care for this feather duster.
4. A mature person will provide responsible and primary care for this annelid.

If you answered "Yes" to these statements, a feather duster may be the right choice for you! Continue reading about how to care for a feather duster and consult with a PETCO associate to learn more. PETCO is committed to responsible aquarium care.

**Average Size** 4 to 7 inch plume

**Life Span** Up to 1+ years with proper care

**Diet** Live, floating micro-plankton  
Supplements of phytoplankton and liquid foods

**Feeding** Keep floating micro-plankton alive in the aquarium  
Feed supplements to feather dusters by dispensing food just upstream with a pipette or straw

**Housing** Saltwater invertebrates should be kept in the appropriate size aquarium  
Full spectrum lighting and strong filtration are essential  
Water temperature should range from 75° F to 82° F  
Salinity levels range from 1.020 to 1.026

**Stable water quality, water temperature, and pH levels are critical to the health of the invertebrate. If you are unsure of your water quality or pH levels, PETCO provides free water testing.**

### Recommended Supplies

- |                                                                       |                                                 |                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reef aquarium                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Micro-plankton         | <input type="checkbox"/> Décor          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water conditioner                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Organic supplements    | <input type="checkbox"/> Filter and Net |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water test kit                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Full spectrum lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Heater         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Protein skimmer        | <input type="checkbox"/> Airstone       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrometer                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Gravel or substrate    | <input type="checkbox"/> Air pump       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Book about feather dusters or reef aquariums | <input type="checkbox"/> Aquarium salt          |                                         |

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<b>Characteristics</b>	<p>Sensitive to nitrates and copper-based medications</p> <p>Use of copper-based medications can be toxic</p> <p>Can be kept singly or with other annelids</p> <p>Peaceful filter feeders</p> <p>Inhabit rocky reef areas of the aquarium</p> <p>Difficult to maintain due to care requirements</p>
<b>Habitat Maintenance</b>	<p>Check filter, water temperature and other equipment daily</p> <p>Check water quality at least once a week</p> <p>Check salinity levels at least twice a week</p> <p>Change 10–25% of the total volume of water every two to four weeks, or as needed</p> <p>Introduce new inhabitants to the aquarium gradually</p>
<b>Compatibility</b>	<p>Compatible with all fish and other aquatic life that do not try to eat them</p> <p>Not compatible with angelfish or butterflies</p>
<b>Signs of a Healthy Feather Duster</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evenly shaped, erect plume of feathered tentacles</li><li>• Rapid withdrawal of plume when disturbed</li></ul>
<b>Common Health Issues</b>	<p>Little is known about diseases that affect invertebrates; as long as environmental conditions and food supplies are adequate, invertebrates are fairly resistant to disease</p>
<b>Signs of Illness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limp plume of tentacles</li><li>• Worm leaves its tube</li><li>• Plume does not retract when disturbed</li></ul> <p><b>If you notice any of these signs, test water quality and improve as necessary</b></p>
<b>Preventing Common Health Issues</b>	<p>Avoid crowded conditions; they are a major cause of stress and disease</p> <p>Maintain good water quality with regular water changes and adequate filtration</p>
<b>Sources</b>	<p><i>The Manual of Marine Invertebrates</i> by Martyn Haywood and Sue Wells</p> <p><i>The Tropical Marine Fish Survival Manual</i> by Gordon Kay</p>

**Note:** The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please refer to the above sources or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.