

Goldfish Varieties – Oranda

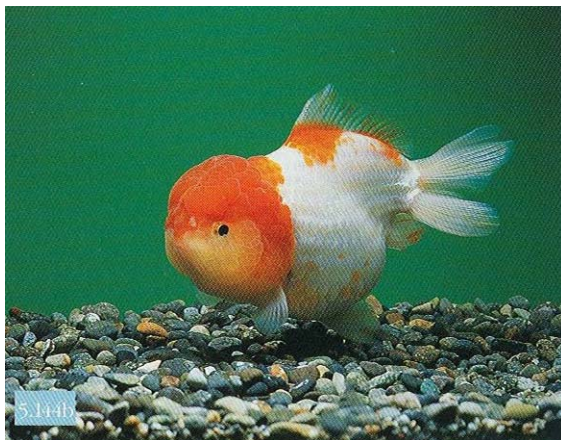
By Peter J. Ponzio

In the original article for this series, we defined a number of characteristics common to all goldfish, and introduced the concept of goldfish varieties, or different types of goldfish. Each subsequent article would provide detailed guidelines to appreciate and understand the characteristics of each variety recognized by the Goldfish Society of America (GFSA). Line Art for the GFSA standards has been provided courtesy of Merlin Cunliffe.

The prior articles of this series covered all the varieties recognized by the GFSA, and now the American Goldfish Association (AGA). The Oranda is probably the most popular variety of goldfish kept worldwide, due to a combination of its large size, headgrowth, finnage, and available colors.

The Oranda was originally thought to have originated as a cross between a Ranchu or Lionhead and a fantail or Ryukin-type fish. Dr. Matsui intentionally bred several of these crosses, especially of the Ranchu/Lionhead type to a Ryukin in an attempt to reproduce an Oranda-type fish. Matsui eventually concluded that the Oranda originated as a result of natural mutations from a Ryukin or Fantail-type fish that produced the head-growth that we see in the modern Oranda.

Matsui's Ranchu/Lionhead and Ryukin crosses resulted in fish that have the stout body and heavy headgrowth that is characteristic of a Lionhead with a dorsal fin. It is important to note that the dorsal fin of these fish appears to be located too far on the back of the fish, and does not look proportional to our eyes. Examples of these types of fish are pictured below, and it is apparent that they do not resemble a modern Oranda.

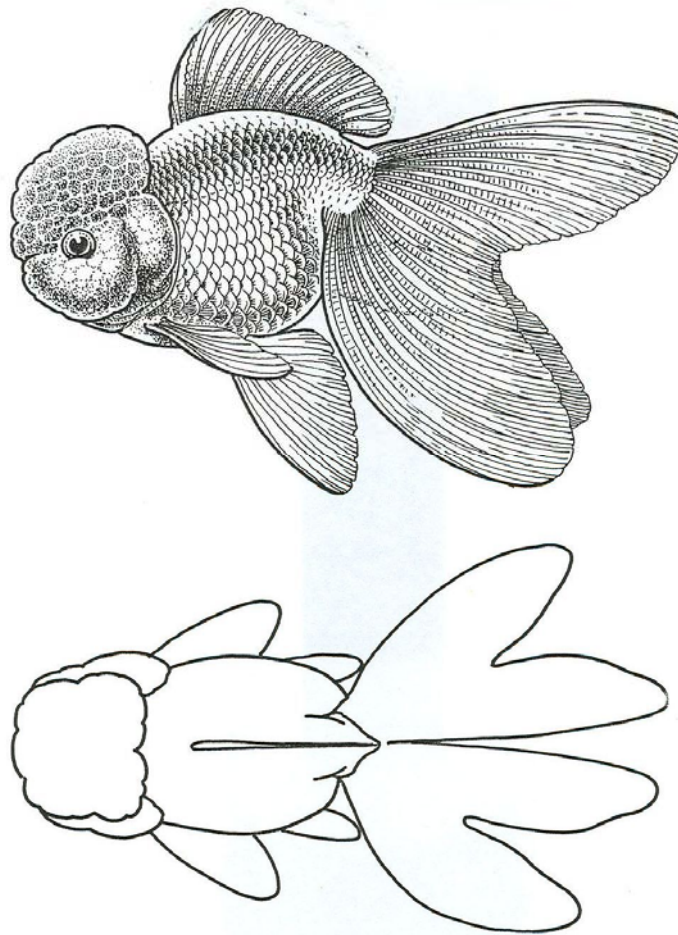


Lionhead with dorsal fin, from *Goldfish in Hong Kong*



Lionhead with a dorsal, from *Goldfish in Hong Kong*

The line art drawing of an Oranda, done by Merlin Cunliffe, appears below.



The Oranda, like the Telescope, comes in a variety of body styles and exhibits a wide range of variation in fin length and style. Due to the variations in

body shape, finnage, and head-growth characteristics, Orandas are difficult to judge and purchase. One thing that all types of Orandas have in common is the ability to reach large sizes. It is not unusual to see Orandas that range in size from eight to twelve inches, and with fins that add several inches to the body size. There is also a type of Oranda known as the "Jumbo" which has a body length in excess of eighteen inches. It appears that "Jumbo" Orandas have a longer body style that is described in more detail in this article. We'll attempt to describe the body, finnage, and head-growth characteristics often seen in these fish.

Body Style

There are two predominant body styles seen in Orandas. The first type of body style tends to be more rounded, and looks egg-shaped. The line illustration shown above reflects this body style. The following photographs depict this body style type.





The second body type tends to be more streamlined, and less robust. The following picture shows this second, more streamlined body type.



Generally speaking, the more rounded body shape is preferred, since it provides a better structure for the placement of fins, and permits the fish to balance the wen or head-growth, which can become quite heavy as the fish matures.

Fin Style

Finnage on Orandas can be quite variable, ranging from a thin style of fin (which is also known as ribbon-tail, forked, or basic double tail), to a fuller style of fin, which looks similar to a Veiltail. There are also versions of

Orandas which have tail styles that are intermediate between a true ribbon-tail and a Veiltail. Shown below are pictures of Orandas which illustrate the two types of tails which are more commonly seen in this variety.

Dorsal fins seem to be linked to tail type. The ribbon-tail varieties seem to possess less well-developed dorsal fins, while the Veiltail types seem to produce dorsal fins that are higher and carried more fully erect.

Body style also seems to be linked to finnage. Generally speaking, the fuller body types seem to have better developed fins, while the thinner body types tend to have less well-developed fins. Longer, more flowing fins are preferred, and tend to be rated more highly when judging these fish.



This is an example of an Oranda with a ribbon-type tail



Here is an example of an Oranda with an intermediate-type tail.



Here is an example of an Oranda with a more fully developed, almost “Veiltail” tail type. (photo courtesy of Carolyn Weise)

Headgrowth

Headgrowth in Orandas can be quite variable, and there are three areas where headgrowth occurs in these fish. The first area of growth is in the cranial region, that is, on the top of the head. The second area of growth is on the checks of the fish, and the third area of growth is on the gill plates. Ideally, the fish should have evenly distributed headgrowth over all three areas of the fish. It is often common for Orandas to have headgrowth in one or two of these areas, or to have uneven headgrowth in any of the areas. Fish with uneven headgrowth should be avoided. The following pictures show different headgrowth patterns in Orandas.



An example of a Redcap Oranda with excessive cranial headgrowth



An example of an Oranda with well-developed and balanced headgrowth (photo courtesy of Carolyn Weise)

Color

Orandas occur in all colors common to goldfish. Several specific types of coloration have been developed in Orandas, including a Redcap which is a white fish with a red headgrowth, and the Azumanishiki, which is a Japanese term for a Calico Oranda. The Azumanishiki is believed to have developed from a cross between a Ryukin with some headgrowth, and a Telescope that was bred to encourage head development. Shown below are outstanding examples of a Redcap Oranda and an Azumanishiki.



Outstanding Redcap Oranda, Grand Champion Portland 2006, owned by Valerie Burston (photo courtesy of Dale Rohrer)



"Stoney" – Azumanishiki, perhaps the most beautiful goldfish ever developed, owned by Valerie Burston

Conclusion

Orandas are variable fish with a combination of size, finnage, and color that make them popular with collectors the world over.