



The goldfish is the most common household pet in the world. In the right environment and correct handling they can live for many years, in the wrong environment and wrong handling they will perish very quickly. There is no doubt that fish feel pain and suffer stress and anxiety. They are very delicate and sensitive creatures and before you go head long into buying a goldfish you must first read up on them in order to provide exactly what they need for a happy life. In doing so I can guarantee they will bring a lot of pleasure.

How often have we seen goldfish hanging up in bags on stalls at fetes, fairs etc., waiting to be given as prizes and not given it a second thought about the detrimental effect it has on the fish.

If the stall holder is a member of the Showman's Guild (and this can be determined by asking them) and they have goldfish hanging up in bags, they are in breach of a Resolution that was passed by their Central Council at a meeting held in May 1958 and it clearly states "Any member who shall give goldfish as prizes, shall keep the fish in suitable containers used for display purposes only. Fish shall be passed to a successful competitor housed in a suitable container of not less than 4ins in diameter. Polythene bags may be used for this purpose only, and shall not be used for the display or storage of fish. With each fish a member shall give a pamphlet setting forth advice on the care and feeding of goldfish as supplied by the R.S.P.C.A".

Every member of the Showman's Guild has a membership number and this number should be displayed on their stall. If you see goldfish hanging up in bags and the stall holder is a member of the Showman's Guild they are clearly in breach of their own regulations and this must be pointed out to them. If this does happen then contact the fair organiser (they are usually on site for the duration of the fair) failing that contact the owner of the land, whether it is the local authority or a private land owner who should have the name and address of the organiser. Action will be taken by the S/G against the stall holder who fails to adhere to the rules.

NASSL comment

*The giving of goldfish as prizes is archaic and outdated and has no place in the modern world. Perhaps one day it will disappear altogether. Many local authorities have recognised this fact and have banned the practice from Council owned land just as many have banned circuses with performing animals.*

***For information on how to look after goldfish go to [www.petlibrary.com/goldfish](http://www.petlibrary.com/goldfish).***