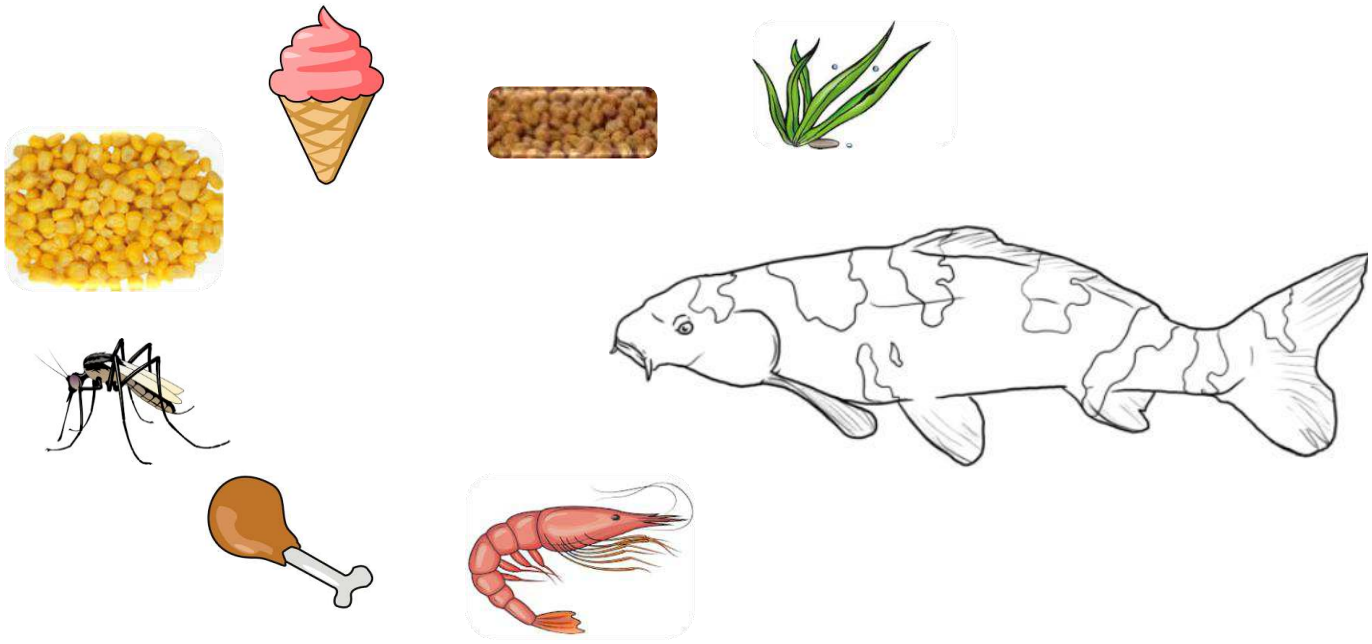
Have you met the only fish species that live at ZooMontana, the Koi fish? Their incredible pond feature and gorgeous scale colors have always drawn peoples' eyes, but they have so much more to teach us! Did you know that there are over 27,000 species of bony fish in the world, and Koi fish are domesticated from Amur Carp, which means they have been bred and cared for by people and cannot be found in the wild. There are over 100 varieties of Koi now, but they were first domesticated over 400 years ago!



Koi Fish are very hardy and cold weather fish, which is part of why you can find them here at ZooMontana. While they don't swim in the super cold waters all winter, they are able to hibernate at the bottom of their deep ponds through winter. These fish are also big, getting 2-3 feet long and weighing up to 35 pounds, which makes them difficult for most predators to go for! If well taken care of, these colorful fish can live 40 years, with some living as long as 100 years!
Here are some of their adaptations:

- They are a social species, so they do better in "schools" or groups.
- They are omnivorous, meaning they can eat both plants and meat, and though most of the time they eat specific Koi pellets with a certain protein amount along with insects around the pond, they will also eat rice, shrimp, and even their own young, called fry, if they are hungry enough.
- Koi Fish have molars, like the flat teeth in our mouth, that they use to grind food to prepare it for the digestive tract, except their teeth are Pharyngeal, or located in their throat!

Can you help this Koi get a healthy meal? Make sure to feed them a good variety of foods!



Imagine you get to build your own Koi Pond! Their ponds need to be deep so they don't get sunburned, and so they can hibernate if the location has cold winters, so with these specifications, many people all over the world keep them as pets. Koi can be many different combinations of splotches, stripes, & spots, and any combination of black, white, blue, green, orange, red, & yellow, so color your pond bright!



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