

Clown fish is the name of several types of fish that live in tropical oceans. They also are called anemone fish because they live among sea anemones. Their unusual habitat and bright colouring have made them popular aquarium fish.

Two of the best-known types are the true clown fish and the false clown fish. They look nearly the same. The true clown fish is also known as the Eastern clown fish. The false clown fish is also known as the Western or common clown fish. The main character of the animated movie *Finding Nemo* (2003) is a false clown fish.

Clown fish live in warm, shallow parts of the Indian and Pacific oceans. They inhabit coral reefs where sea anemones are found. Each fish makes its home among the tentacles of an anemone, called the host. A dominant female, her male mate, and a few young clown fish may live within one anemone. The fish are not harmed by the anemone's stinging cells, which can kill other sea creatures. The close relationship between clown fish and anemones is called symbiosis.

Clown fish can grow to a length of about 4 inches (10 cm). Females are larger than males. Most types of clown fish have bright white stripes on a colourful body. In true and false clown fish, the body is usually orange. Three wide, white bars circle the body. The white bars and the fins are outlined in black. The black outlines are thicker in true clown fish.

A thin layer of mucus covers a clown fish's body. The mucus protects the fish from being stung by its host anemone.