



Leptoseris gardineri

JAKE'S FAVE FIVE - CORALS

JAKE ADAMS

There are so many different types of corals available these days and so many variants and strains of the same corals that it's sometimes hard to tell which corals are trending. Beginning with the collectors and all the way through the exporters, importers, retailers, and hobbyists, every year the aquarium hobby experiences pulses of new corals and new coral strains. If you know what to look for, it's easy to score super-sweet corals before the rest of the world even has them on their radar. Here are a few that have recently risen in visibility and availability.

Leptoseris corals have been in the aquarium trade since the beginning of the surge in stony coral collection. I can remember having some nondescript colonies of *Leptoseris tubulifera* and another unidentified species as early as 2003. Back then, I thought no one would ever care about any species of *Leptoseris* coral regardless of how neat I thought they were, but I had no idea that so many color forms existed. Fast forward 10 years, and now it is not uncommon to come across reefers who identify themselves as *Leptoseris* collectors. This coral genus is currently available in a wide range of species and colors, and we have just begun to scratch the surface of what's out there.

The most common species of *Leptoseris* you are likely to come across is *L. mycetoseroides*. This species has a somewhat wrinkled appearance which varies from fairly smooth to highly convoluted. The features of the corallites are very regular and form distinctive lines of color and pattern which radiate out from the central corallite. Commonly available in orange, green, and a much rarer pinkish-orange, *L. mycetoseroides* also includes the ever popular Jack-O-Lantern Lepto.

Once you know what to look for, you'll start seeing *Leptoseris* colonies everywhere, especially on the sides of zoanthid, mushroom