

Red Fantail Fish



A whimsical fish made to hang at the beach house or a fun, no maintenance pet.

Materials Needed:

- Paper mache fish form (approx. 24" x 9" x 9")
 - Foamcore or corrugated cardboard
 - Brown wrapping paper, or paper bags
 - Masking Tape
 - Gel medium or white glue
 - Found objects
- Gel medium or white glue
- 1" bristle brush
- Waxed paper
- 5 sheets Red with Gold Thai Unryu Paper

To make a 3-dimensional paper mache fish form, cut a fish shape out of the sheet of foamcore or corrugated cardboard. Wad up tight, smallish balls of newsprint and tape firmly to the fish form. Use the masking tape also for tapering the thickness, going from thick at the head area to thin at the tail. Create facial features if desired, using a Styrofoam ball cut in half and taped into place for the eyes; foam tubing or wads of newsprint (shaped by twisting), formed into lips and taped into place. Using gel medium or white glue with water in a 1:2 ratio, dip various size torn strips of the brown paper over the newsprint and smooth. Cover the form completely, using several layers. Let dry. Check the form for firmness—it should not be soft. If it has soft areas, add a few more layers of brown paper and let dry again. To add hanging ring, tear (4) brown paper strips (approximately 2" x 1/2") and layer through the ring with watered down glue. Attach a few larger layers of brown paper over the ends of these strips to make sure the hanger stays attached. Coat completed dry fish form with undiluted gel medium or glue. When it's dry, the fish is ready for the next step.

Tear two sheets of Red Unryu into various size pieces. Do not use any straight cut edges. Using a thinned down gel medium, or white glue, in a ratio of 1:3, lightly coat the fish and smooth the torn pieces of Unryu into place with a moistened bristle brush, overlapping the edges as you work. Cover completely. Paint facial details if desired. Coat the fish with a thin coat of undiluted gel medium as a sealer and put aside to dry. Tear triangular shaped pieces of the Red Unryu to use as fins and tail. Lay these on waxed paper and apply a thin coat of full strength gel medium. Allow the sheets to dry before removing from the wax paper. Turn a few of the dried Unryu sheets over and apply a thin coat of gel medium to the reverse side. You'll want some of these pieces stiffer than others. Attach the stiffened smaller triangular shapes to the fin area using a corner and small pieces of unryu and undiluted gel to hold the fin into place. Arrange a few of these similar sized pieces in a pleasing whimsical way. If necessary, anchor the pieces with pushpins until they dry. To apply the tail, hang the fish by it's hanging ring. Attach large stiffened triangular shapes in the same manner.