



FEDERATION OF BRITISH AQUATIC SOCIETIES

BULLETIN

Summer 2013
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BULLETIN

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*Opinions expressed in any article remain those of the author
and are not necessarily endorsed by this publication*



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EDITORIAL

As I put pen to paper, the sun is actually shining strongly and the Spring flowers in the garden are beginning to take life a little more seriously, drawing confidence as they absorb its warmth and frogs have returned (noisily!) to the pond which is thick with spawn.

Together with other FBAS Council members, I have visited 'The Farm' as it is now referred to in all our discussions and I can report that I can see great potential in it as a venue for fishkeeping events, especially as the 'passing public' will not be able to avoid seeing fish at their best at the Festival and, in the not too distant future, once the Tropical Zoo becomes established at the site, visiting aquatic events so near to the Capital should soon become commonplace and a regular date in the calendar.

I must admit that, after being used to the familiar Festivals, it was fairly hard to look at a new venue with an open mind but the physical set-up, and the added 'animal attractions,' persuaded me not only to look at things from a new viewpoint but also that the event deserves as much support as we can give it, if it is to succeed. The benefits to the hobby of bringing fish to a whole new section of the public cannot be valued too highly.

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OUT AND ABOUT WITH THE BULLETIN



With so many retail outlets, mostly in garden centres, one can thank Maidenhead Aquatics for bringing the aquatic hobby to many who would not have given a thought to the hobby of fishkeeping.

When visiting a garden centre that has a Maidenhead Aquatic outlet on its site, as a hobbyist you cannot help but to go and have a look at the fish. Nearly without exception, even if you did not read the sign over the entrance, you would know what type of shop you were in. "Yes, sorry Maidenhead, all your shops look so much alike, they are on the borders of being boring".



Walking into the Byfleet branch in Surrey, within a Wyevale Garden Centre, one cannot miss a fantastic marine set up that was the setting for a very nice display of marine fish and invertebrates for sale along with all the accessories you would require to keep them.

I only took a quick look at the pond and coldwater fish section as the day I visited it was still very cold outside. However, as you can see, it had a lot for the pond enthusiast with a lot of features to choose from.





Once inside and now looking at the freshwater tropical fish one can see a touch of class by whoever is responsible for the stock that was available.

My eye was caught by a tank full of *Satanoperca jurupari*, a South American Cichlid originally coming from Guyana, Brazil. Although these were not marked up as wild-caught fish with the right light shining on them they looked tempting to buy at about 80mm in length with a price tag of £24.00 per pair.

The more enthusiast fishkeeper that likes to exhibit fish at Open Shows will have their eye on the large bottom tanks close to the floor.



These tanks often house large Cichlids and Catfish but what I did like was some full size Spanner Barbs *Puntius lateristriga* (above, left) but they may have been the "lookalike" False Spanner Barb, *Puntius kuchingensis*, (above, right) that I believe grows a little smaller.

All the tanks I looked in housed fish that looked in perfect condition and a good purchase to those wishing to buy them, but for me the a tank with about half a dozen pairs of Rams *Microgeophagus ramirezi*, a dwarf South American Cichlid that were the best I have seen for a very long time, not only showing super colours but bordering and full size as well. They were priced at £26.00 per pair, wow – but can you put a price on real quality ? .

Last, but not least, I would like to thank the staff for all their help.

Cleaning your Pond



I hope you will have cleaned your pond in Autumn, this being the best time of the year when all the leaves have fallen, dead lily leaves needing removal and those marginal plants now looking half-dead - all potentially decaying foliage that will make its way to the bottom of your pond and turn itself into algae-food. Then comes the lowering of water temperatures and with that ice forms on the water surface, trapping in the poisonous gases given off which is the cause of many of our fish dying through the winter months.

But if this time of the year passed you by, now is the time to put things right, before the summer is here and it all starts growing again and the opportunity is lost.

To start with you need a full day, for this task cannot be taken lightly.

First switch off the pump if you have one installed, then remove all those marginal plants, you may need help if they have grown too large or too wild.



Now remove any water-lilies you have, these can grow right out of their original baskets. These too can be very heavy, so much so you will have to get into the pond and using a wood saw (the coarser the teeth, the better) start cutting the whole plant in half or even quarters, depending on its size.

If the pond is made of concrete, no problem, if it's a lined pond then you have to take great care not to cut or dig into the liner, lift the roots as much out of the water as you possibly can. This can be helped by placing a pole or long metal handle under the plant and raising it upwards even if it does not come clear of the water's surface.

Lastly, if you have a fibreglass pond more than a few years old in winter it may have become brittle and liable to crack under your weight, not a pretty sight, so take care!

Now remove all aquatic plants that are in the pond, not forgetting the pump, any pipe work and fountains, all places for fish to hide when trying to catch them. The pump may be hard to lift out of the pond when it is filled with water; tie a strong cord to its casing and then secure the other end of the cord under a rock near the edge of the pond to use when lifting the pump out next time!

You now need to set up a large container for the fish to be housed in while you are cleaning the pond. You will need a net or cover to put over your container as fish are liable to jump in what for them is a stressful situation. It's a good idea to pump some of the pond water into your container and top up with tap water 50/50. This also helps the fish at this time.

You will find lots of debris in the form of mud, rotted vegetation and rocks, bricks etc. you could be lucky and find that gold ring you lost many years ago!



I must add, don't forget to wear rubber gloves to protect yourself from coming into contact with possibly contaminated water etc. When removing the last of the water, along with the mud, use a plastic dustpan with a rubber edge, these cost about £2.50 from the supermarket.

You may think this is a good time to get rid of that Duckweed once and for all, don't bet on it. Even the tiniest amount that could be lurking behind a fold in the liner or trapped in one of the plant baskets will grow again with the warmth of the summer days.

When catching your fish, the larger net the better, once again it's less stressful for the fish and much easier to catch them. Don't go mad in cleaning the walls of your pond as once again with a liner you could do more harm than good.



Before filling up your pond, put in place any cleaned bricks that may be required to stand, lily basket(s) on and marginal plants. Also place your pump on bricks so it is not on the bottom of the pond, this will help the pump to keep going and save it from getting blocked up with sludge.

When filling with a hose from the tap don't forget to use a water treatment that will make it safe when you return your fish to the pond.

Always use the correct dosage as instructed on the container, although your fish would not suffer if over dosed the pond too much within reason.



If you have a filter remove all the inside elements and wash.

I wash all the components including both sponges and brushes plus the medium. I know one is told leave half of the filters dirty, but for me they are often so dirty I never put them back unwashed.

Instead, I leave any debris that is clinging to the out of the filter casing unwashed to help the bacteria restart that is so necessary to make the filter work well and keep the water clear.

Now replace your water lily(s) that is after you have cut away all the excessive root growth that has grown over the sides of the lily basket and out of its sides, here again a wood saw will do the job. Also, I push a hole about inch in diameter near the root system and roll some clay into a ball and place down the hole before refilling with more earth, this will act as a slow fertilizer. Now wash off with a hose and place in the pond before the water level gets too high, also is the time to wash off any duckweed that is clinging to the plant and basket. The same procedure is to be carried out to the marginal plants, but they will not need any clay being added, only lilies as they are heavy feeders.

If from now through the summer you purchase any water-lilies that may be in full growth with not only leaves but flowers too, place them in your pond so the leaves are floating on the water surface. Lilies breathe through their leaves and placing them below the surface means you are drowning your plant, so place their basket ether on bricks or even a plastic crate that has been well washed. Next season when the lily has died back you can remove any support as when your plant re-grows it will find its own level.

Lastly before returning your fish to the pond, check them really well for disease, torn fins, body damage and underfed bodies. If you have any fish like this place them in a spare aquarium and treat their ailments so you can return them to the pond with the other fish once they're back to full health again.



With your pump running and clear water, your fish have now become exposed to a Heron attack as they can see your fish so much more easily now. So if you did not have a net before, now is the time to get your pond covered or in the case of smaller ponds place bamboo canes across your pond and this will stop Heron landing for their next feed.



So with all that done, and the sun shining, enjoy your time relaxing ether looking or listening to that running water whist sitting on your sun lounger, it can't be better than this.

Mark Goss (Aquatic Services)

SOMETHING'S FISHY IN THIS TANK!



STUDY THE PICTURE AND SEE IF YOU CAN SPOT WHAT'S NOT QUITE RIGHT.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 17



HEROS SEVERUS

Coming across *Heros severus*, for us who have been keeping fish for some time, is like a meeting up with an old friend, a fish we know as the Severum and which for many years was included in the large genus *Cichlasoma*. This was about 160 years when Jacob Heckel described this fish to science from its old generic name, *Heros*.

This was restored in 1983 by Kullander and, translated from the Latin, *Heros severus* means "firm, strong hero". However it has many friends within our hobby and affectingly known as "the Poor Man's Discos".

This Cichlid has a wide area of distribution from the north of South America, down to the Rio Negro as well as Orinoco and in some Venezuelan lakes. In these waters the temperature can be as high as 86°F, an important factor to bear in mind when keeping Severum.

The waters are strongly acidic and extremely soft, with abundant hiding places such as under fallen trees and root growth; these plant-rich waters with lush vegetation are a welcome supplementary food.



When the fish are comfortable with its surroundings it shows a characteristic feature found in all Severums - a black cross bar that extends from the dorsal fin via the caudal peduncle to the anal fin. When the fish are highly excited, it displays six more black bands in addition to the previously- described band showing a distinctive striped pattern reminiscent of those on Discus.

Males indicate their visible sexual maturity at about 4" long by the development of extensions to their pelvic, dorsal and anal fins. The 10" long body of the adult males is about a one third larger than in females.

Many hobbyists keep large Cichlids in tanks that are too small and far too often this is what makes many larger fish so aggressive.

Housing a couple pairs of junior Severum with other junior pairs of Cichlids and a *Hypostomus plecostomus* I noticed fighting erupted constantly. I even tried keeping them with Angel Fish (*Pterophyllum scalare*) but that was a disaster too.

Now my Severum are kept in my new aquarium 72"x28"x28" with *Aequidens metae* that have about as much aggression as the Severum and now they are a real pleasure to watch. The ideal setting is to use about 2" layer of gravel, some waterlogged driftwood and rocks that must be 8" or soft-leaved plants, so use large *Cryptocoryne* and *Anubias* species. A healthy diet not only adds to the well-being of your fish but also encourages successful breeding no matter what fish you are keeping.

I feed a vegetable flake food plus I have Duckweed (floating) in abundance, I just scoop out netfulls from a couple of my other tanks. In addition, a wide range of frozen foods can be given such as Brine Shrimp, Mosquito larvae, small Krill and *Mysis*. I advise against using Beef Heart, since fish are unable to metabolise the fat from warm-blooded animals, and it ends up being stored in their liver that will lead to the demise of your fish.

Once you have a harmonious pair it is not long before they are sorting out a spawning site, often a large smooth flat rock that the pair thoroughly clean. Both partners swim towards each other with their throat sacs inflated, the male trembles, indicating that spawning can commence.

The female deposits about 1000 tan-coloured eggs which are fertilized by the male. Only the female cares for the eggs while the male defends the territory. If the water is too hard and the pH too high the eggs will not develop and will soon be covered by fungus. The water pH should be 6 to 6.5 and a hardness of 5 the eggs along with the young will develop normally.



Once the larvae hatch the young are taken into the mouth of the parents for proper care.



Once the young are out of the care of the parents with no other fish present they can be feed on newly hatched Brine Shrimp. This is best done by using a pipette to siphon up the shrimp and squirted through an air-line hose into the immediate vicinity of the school of young fry.

Adult Severums, generally speaking, are considered reliable parents and great fish for the Cichlid fancier .

By: Gunther Schmelzer Edited: Bulletin
Photo: M. Smith, G. Schmelzer

HOUNSLOW HONOUR FOR JEAN



At their recent Annual Dinner, members of Hounslow & D.A.S. showed their appreciation for the long-time services to the Club by Jean Higgs by unanimously conferring her with an Honorary Life Membership.

Almost coincidentally, Jean's daughter Debbie and her husband Gordon, became grandparents following the birth of Layla to Debbie's daughter Cheryl.

Double cause for celebrations all round!

ANSWERS: There is no water in the tank, the fish are made of paper.

The tank was set up 'dry' as a demonstration by Peter Anderson, Malcolm Goss and Dick Mills at a Mid-Sussex meeting recently.

Ask Us

Q: I have a freshwater tank and have recently changed my substrate to sand. I have two large catfish in the tank and they have always produced a lot of waste, (probably due to the fact that they eat a lot). Anyway, I'm having trouble getting rid of their waste and I'm worried it's going to affect the water quality.

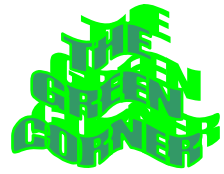
The faeces seem to get buried in the sand and I can't clear it up and the filters aren't able to suck it in. I am keeping a close eye on the water levels for ammonia, nitrite and nitrate, and they have increased slightly. At the moment I have to scoop the sand every day to make sure there is no rotting muck left. Is there an easier way to solve this problem?

Charlotte

A: The choice to use sand in the aquarium can be for several reasons: It may look better or it may be better for some catfishes that root around in the substrate as their barbels won't get so worn away as they might be, had normal gravel been used. On the other hand, sand does have a tendency to pack down, plant roots might not like it quite so much and, of course, with vigorous, active fish its disturbance may be constantly clouding the water (as might the action of an over-powerful filtration system).

The best plan of action here – and you're doing all the right things so far – would be to seriously check the amount of food you give, so that overfeeding does not contribute to more production of ammonia, nitrite and nitrate. Also, make use of a 'gravel washer' when carrying out regular, partial water changes; arrange the water flow through the washer so that it sucks up any waste debris but not too much of the sand. Any visible debris seen on the surface of the sand can also easily be siphoned out before it starts to break down into undesirable compounds.

The area for
aquatic plant-lovers



***NYMPHAEA* 'PINK DAWN' NAMED 2013 COLLECTOR'S AQUATIC PLANT OF THE YEAR**

Greenville, VA – The International Waterlily and Water Gardening Society (IWGS) announces *Nymphaea* 'Pink Dawn' as the 2013 Collector's Aquatic Plant of the Year. This hardy waterlily boasts uniquely variegated blooms of pink and white held above leaves ranging from green to bronze in color. 'Pink Dawn' was introduced by Dustin Machinsky, a waterlily hybridizer and owner of Midway Water Gardens in Columbus, TX. This noteworthy hybrid won First Place in the Hardy Waterlily category of the IWGS 2011 New Waterlily Competition.

The International Waterlily and Water Gardening Society is proud to feature *Nymphaea* 'Pink Dawn' as this year's Collector's Aquatic Plant of the Year. This is an exclusive arrangement which means the IWGS will be the only source for limited supplies of *N.* 'Pink Dawn' in 2013.



The Collector's Aquatic Plant of the Year program provides a limited opportunity to purchase new and/or rare aquatic plants prior to widespread distribution while also serving as a fundraiser for the Society.

The sale price for 'Pink Dawn' will be \$75.95, which will include shipping and handling fees within the continental United States. To purchase, visit the IWGS website at <http://iwgs.org/2013-collectors-aquatic-plant-of-the-year-pink-dawn/>. Shipment dates will be as follows: April 15th, May 13th, and June 10th.

If you have any questions, would like information regarding shipment outside of the United States, or would like to place your order over the phone, please call Tish Folsom at 540-337-4507 or send an email to info@iwgs.org.

The International Waterlily & Water Gardening Society (IWGS) is a non-profit organization of multinational membership dedicated to the furtherance of all aspects of water gardens and their associated plants. The IWGS supports and promotes education, research, and conservation in these areas and serves as the official registrar of Nymphaeaceae and Nelumbonaceae.

CONTACT: Tamara Kilbane, Vice-President,
International Waterlily & Water Gardening Society
Phone: (720) 865-3556

tamara.kilbane@botanicgardens.org

DENVER BOTANIC
GARDENS



Just before we went to Press, we heard that this 'Aquatics Live!' exhibition will not be going ahead.

Organiser Tom Spencer says" I just wanted to give you the heads up in advance of a general announcement that Aquatics Live 2013 won't be taking place in November. We have some very interesting new exhibitors from the US and Europe and commitment from many of our friends in the trade, but sadly not enough companies have signed up in advance to generate an adequate cash flow.

We are planning to organise the event again in 2014 but for now, and with regret, we are putting it on ice. We'll be issuing a formal press release later in the week.

Your support both now and in previous years is of great value to us and I hope that we will still be able to rely on your enthusiasm for the show when we return next year."

KNOW YOUR FISH(ES)



The *Aphanius* Boys

Some of the more spectacular and unfamiliar fishes on view on the Show benches in recent years have been members of the *Aphanius* genus, a member of the family Cyprinodontidae which also includes the endangered Devils's Hole Pupfish, *Cyprinodon diabolis*, which lives in an isolated location in Nevada, USA, and is now reputedly down to 25 individuals.

The genus *Aphanius* is distributed outside of the Americas and comes from northern Africa, south-western Asia and even Southern Europe.

A. danfordi, the Kizilirmak Killie, comes from Turkey. Males have 10-12 vertical stripes whilst the females are uniformly silvery with dark grey spots with the largest spot being on the base of the caudal fin.

Aphanius dispar has a larger distribution throughout the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle Eastern areas down as far as Aden.

Aphanius mento is another Eastern Mediterranean species with other sources such as Jordan, Lebanon, Israel and Syria. Reports also suggest that the main supplies to the hobby come from Turkey.

Like other Killifishes, *Aphanius* can be spawned using mops and Java Moss and any other suitable egg-catching media.

In case you're wondering, the European species is *Aphanius iberus* from Spain.

Tim Edwards asks “*Tubifex* - Fish Viagra, or Trouble with a capital T?



During my first trip to Wholesale Tropicals in London 23 years ago, I happened upon the infamous livefood called *Tubifex* Worms.

These worms were an eye-opener to this blossoming aquarist eager to learn what made them so special and sought after in the world of fish showing and fish breeding. A portion was purchased and so the learning cycle of using this amazing livefood started and continues to this day.

Now some people will tell you that *Tubifex* worms are trouble with a capital T but as long as you follow 4 golden rules then I can guarantee that the experience in using them will be rewarding for your fishes and for your fishkeeping aims. It's true that *Tubifex* worms are found in some rivers where shall we say the conditions are less than savoury but, if you treat them with respect, the rewards far outweigh any other live food around.

So let's see then, here we go –

- 1) Never buy poor *Tubifex*, *Tubifex* when you buy it should be a nice rusty red colour and in a ball formation and should be reacting to shadows/light in their container. If it's grey, pale in colour, looks lifeless or is not forming a ball shape then it's not worth buying as it's not in a fit state. You are throwing your hard-earned money away if you are buying *Tubifex* with any of the above faults and putting your aquarium at risk of pollution if not worse. It's a must to start off with good clean, quality *Tubifex* in the first place.

2) Always keep *Tubifex* under running water, preferably outside if you are married! It needs to be kept under a coldwater flow to keep it clean and fresh, it doesn't need to be a strong flow just a drip every second would be enough to maintain a flow for the *Tubifex* to sit under and to keep it fresh.

The Plastic 6/8 litre containers with lids sold in most supermarkets are perfect for the worms' accommodation.

3) Every day or every other day turn the tap on hard and stir your *Tubifex* worms so that they are loose in the water. Give it 4-5 seconds and then tip off 3/4 of the water in the container. You will see that the dead worms are greyer in colour and you will have tipped these away and will be left with only healthy worms.

4) Now onto the feeding, If feeding *Tubifex* worms to a aquarium where there is gravel on the bottom please don't overfeed as after 5-10 minutes any uneaten worms will be trying to burrow into the substrate and this will cause you a lot of problems regarding pollution of your gravel in the future. Of course, if feeding to aquariums where there is no substrate then it's all systems go and any spare worms will stay alive for as long as they survive your fishes' attentions!, Alternatively you can use one of the popular plastic *Tubifex* feeders to service your fishes with worms.

Now onto the benefits to your fish,



Growth is like nothing you will have seen when using other live foods. When you see a group of *Corydoras* all sat around a ball of *Tubifex* and see the glint in their eye as they enjoy a feast, it's a sight to behold.

Killifish will attack the worms as if it's their last meal and their egg production will shoot through the roof. Young Killifish will eat *Tubifex* till they can't eat anymore. With outstanding growth rate and in some annual species of Killifish the growth rate will be phenomenal.

Loaches, Barbs, Characins and even some Goodeid livebearers such as Characodons will go crazy over these outstanding worms too.

If you are showing fish, and wanting to be being successful, then feeding these worms alongside a quality dry food and freshly-hatched Brine Shrimp will enable your fish to be in better condition and have better colours than your rivals on the show bench, enabling you to come out on top when the big Classes come around.

So have I opened your eyes and convinced you to try these magical worms the next time you see them for sale? Try them and you may never go back to your frozen alternatives...

MID SUSSEX HONOURS

Not to be outdone, Mid-Sussex found their recent Open Show was a great opportunity to present Honours to two of their members.



In recognition of his long service to the Society Ben Sayers (seen here with Clive Walker, Chairman Mid-Sussex) was presented with a signed copy of Pete Cottle's Devarios & Danios book.



FBAS President, Dick Mills, presents Stacey Johnson with her Bronze Brooch. It was Stacey's birthday on the day too!



RIP FBAS AQUA TALKS

FBAS AquaTalks were first produced on small reel-to-reel tapes, and the recorded commentary included (aggravating to some) synchronising 'boings' to indicate when the slides should be changed.

After a few years, these audio-visual programmes were then transferred to the more accessible (and easier to play) standard audio cassettes, although most playbacks suffered through poor quality reproduction equipment - some societies just used portable cassette players without any external loudspeakers or amplification - but they certainly filled the need for societies' meetings' programmes.

It is hoped that these elderly programmes may, through the magic of digitalisation, still be of use using the original photographic slides although their age may have resulted in unavoidable deterioration whilst in storage. We can't actually put a starting date to these programmes, but just let's say that Dick was still at work (over twenty years ago now) and the first programme was probably made twenty years before that!

FBAS-originated videos are available for free hire to member Societies or for individual purchase. Details on the FBAS website: www.fbas.co.uk

Letter

from

Dorset

Bruce McLaren, ex-member of Hounslow & District A.S., moved away to Dorset but still keeps in touch. Here is his latest update:

Here in our new home in Dorset we are settling in nicely, having finished redecorating just before Christmas, and with good progress on the garden in spite of all the rain.



During the year we had a mechanical digger in the back garden for installing a new septic tank (one of the joys of country living) and whilst it was here, we dug a very large hole for a garden pond, which I will be working on further in the Spring, weather permitting.

So far this year, it has filled up about 3 times with rain water flowing off the lawn, even though we don't have a liner installed yet. I'm intending to install a waterfall in it as part of the outflow from a filtration system, together with a water lily and probably some Shubunkins.

I have also dug a smaller wildlife pond in the bottom corner of the garden, to encourage the various newts, frogs, toads, etc which we have down here, and will be installing a liner in it if it ever stops raining. As well as the amphibians, we have had several Slow Worms in the back garden, and last Spring saw a baby Grass Snake swimming across the local stream. I have also glimpsed a few Badgers, but only one Fox so far.



Indoors, I have a new 6 ft aquarium in the lounge, which is stocked with large community fish, including some Blue Acara which surprised me with a shoal of fry, even though they were only about 2" long at the time. The fry have been rescued and are now doing well in a smaller tank in my fish room, converted from the integral garage.

I see a recent Hounslow meeting was about African catfish. One such which I would recommend, having kept one about twenty years ago, obtained from sunny Brixton, is a Dwarf Giraffe Catfish, *Anaspidoglanis macrostoma*. This I kept in my large community tank of the time, successfully living with some Blue Acara (recurring theme here), Angels,



and an oversized Pleco amongst others. I am tempted to get another, though Linda doesn't like them because they look like a raw sausage.

I had been looking into setting up a Discus tank, but decided against it. With very hard water down here I wasn't sure if they would thrive.



Instead, I have bought some young "Xingu Earth-eaters" which are doing very well, sharing their tank, at least for the moment, with some Golden Wonder Panchax, which won't stop breeding.

I'm not sure exactly what species the Earth-eaters are, but will be doing some investigating on the internet. If you know from the picture, perhaps you could let me know. Also in the tank is a Royal Plecostomus named Henry, which is also coming on nicely.

Whilst there are no aquarist societies in the area, there are other groups, such as the Dorset Wildlife Trust, and gardening societies.

At the Wildlife Trust last month, we had an interesting talk on Dorset coastal wildlife, which included a community of Sea Horses, which surprised me. This month's talk is to be on Otters and Water Voles in Dorset rivers. Otter populations are now increasing following conservation efforts since the 1970's, and the Water Voles are apparently receiving attention as well, but have been declining because of predation by American Mink. No doubt I shall learn more at the meeting.

Cheap Air Supply For The Fishroom

When I looked into planning out a small fish room, Chris Downs and Glen Shardlow suggested I use a Neta garden irrigation system for my air supply network. Neta parts are relatively cheap and available from a number of good hardware stores. Based on their advice I was able to deck out the fishroom for about \$80, a small price to pay for a versatile airline system.

The whole system is easy to set up. Use 13 mm tubing and joiners to make a circuit around the wall of your fishroom and secure the connections with Neta clamps. Mount the tubing to the wall with Neta mounting brackets and small screws. If you have more than one level of tanks you might want to consider a second circuit joined to the first in a

couple or more places to make a single air reservoir. Then add your air pump to the circuit with another length of 13 mm tubing. Keep your air pump in a cool ventilated area as this will extend the life of your pump. To run air to your aquariums make up droppers using 4 mm Neta tubing in a similar way to a garden irrigation system, but instead of a spray nozzle at the end use an inline valve to control airflow to control airflow (see photo). Then simply insert the droppers into your system and attach a length of aquarium tubing to each inline valve. If you put a dropper in the wrong place you can purchase small Neta plugs to fill the hole. I've been using this system for over a year and have had no problems. ▲

- Darren Stevens
Kapimana/Upper Hutt Aquarium Clubs



BEST IN SHOWS 2007-2012

ANALYSIS OF BRITISH OPEN ENTRIES AND WINNERS

A few words of explanation for those unfamiliar with the structure of this Competition might not come amiss.

Each year, at every Society Open Show, a fish is chosen to be 'Best in Show'. These fishes are from all over the country, both north and south, east and west, and judged by different Judges. At the end of the year they gather together to contest the British Open (under a single Judge) and the fish that wins does so because that individual Judge has judged it to be the best on that day.

The Supreme Championship (run along similar lines for FBAS Championship Trophy winning fishes) is also judged by an individual Judge each year, not only from the FBAS but also from the YAAS.

The following analysis may certainly bring back happy memories to the winners but it also shows the diversity of fishes qualifying and how the 'fashions' or popularity of species waxes and wanes over the years.

WINNERS

QUALIFIERS FROM SEVERAL DIFFERENT EXHIBITORS

BARBS

Barbus fasciolatus
Puntius manipurensis
Puntius padamya
Barbus titteya

LABYRINTHS

Betta imbellis
Ctenopoma acustirostre
Ctenopoma petherica

CHARACINS

Crenichla lacustris
Crenuchus spilurus
Erythrinus erythrinus
Hemigrammus ulreyi
Moenkhausia colletti

CICHLIDS

Aulonacara baenschii
Aulonacara jacobfreibergi
Aulonacara maylandi
Cichlasoma bocourti
Guinacara owrowefi
Nannacara anomala
Neolamprologus buescheri
Neolamp caudopunctatus
Neolamprologus 'Daffodil'
Paraneetroplus hartwegi
Pterophyllum scalare
Vieja argentae

KILLIES

Aphanius dispar
Aphanius mento
Austolebias churrua
Austolebias toba
Fundulopanchax gardneri
Fundulopanchax gardneri 'Jos Plateau'
Fundulopanchax mamoratum
Nothobranchius eggersi 'Blue'
Nothobranchius eggersi

DANIOS

Devario maetaengensis
Inlecypris aureopurpurea
Yunnanilus cruciatus

LIVEBEARERS

Limia yaguajali
Yasuhikotakia sidthimunki
Phallichthys amates
Poecilia chica
Xiphophorus mayae

COLDWATER

Cyprinella lutrensis

CATFISH

Corydoras pulcher
Corydoras gossei
Corydoras zygatus
Hypostomus margaritifer
L.128 Blue Spot
Leporacanthicus galaxias
Loricaria simillima
Synodontis schoutendeni

LOACHES

Botia histrionica
Serpenticobitis octozona

AOV

Channa bleheri
Channa pulchra
Eleotris vittata
palzeorhynchos bicolor
Mastacembelus erythrotaenia
Melanotaenia trifasciata
Sawbwa resplendens
Sewellia lineolata

Best of Bests



Sewellia lineolata
2007



Aphanius dispar
2008



Nothobranchius eggersi 'Blue'
2009



Aulonacara baenschi
2010



Cichlasoma bocourti
2011



Aulonacara jacobfreibergeri
2012



THE FISHHOUSE DIARIES

Introduction

From when I first started keeping fish, my aquariums had always been set up in the living room. Within a couple of months of purchasing my first aquarium 24"x12"x12" while still at school, I added a second tank of the same size. My parents moved house quite a bit and my tanks moved also. Even when I got married I still had two tanks, not the same ones though.

When we moved to a larger flat in Fulham we had a spare room, this I painted matt black and started a collection of aquariums, all iron-framed tanks as silicone-sealant was not invented then. It was a typical old three storey house and the room that I turned into a fishroom had only one window. This looked out to the house next door and three girls shared the flat opposite ours. These young girls were what one may call 'free-spirited' as, when they knew I was in my fishroom, they would dry themselves while still in front of the window! Well, I had the best kept fishroom till my wife looking out of one other window noticed them (nothing lasts for ever).

Then we moved to Amersham and once again living in a flat, once again with two tanks in the living room. Later we moved into a house and Joe Nethersell helped me erect a shed down the bottom of the garden. This lasted 17 years until the floor collapsed with fish and water all over the remaining floor, plus I forgot to switch the electrics off and had a shock right through my feet. Since then, I have divided 25% of my garage plus a glass extension all on a concrete floor.



10th March.

Sunday morning is free for me to work in the fish-house.

I have 3 tanks near the ceiling that I keep my Siamese Fighters (*Betta splendens*) in, these tanks all being 14"x8"x8" each with a glass divider and a 25w heater thermostat that's adjustable.

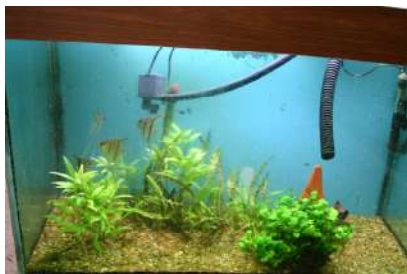
I siphon out the water trying to take most of any debris out at the same time.



Underneath these tanks is my Angel Fish tank with four adult Angels that I purchased when small over 18 months ago.

Also in this aquarium I keep adult Neon Tetras (24).

I have made up a long tube, connected to a small pump with an in-line switch, so I can start or stop the pump easily. I put the pump in the Angel tank and top up all the tanks containing the Fighters from the Angel tank. Clean the glass and that's one job done.



I also siphon more water from the Angel fish tank try to siphon most of the snails up at the same time. I then top up the water, but I leave the external filter for another time.



11th April

I know it's hard to believe but we have had quite a bit of sun and the two tanks under the glass roof area soon get excessive amounts of algae, not only on the glass sides but all over the plants too.

I also have a filter on each of these tanks, a Marina S20 Slim Filter distributed via Hagen. Their only downside is the container is small and would need regular cleaning if you had too many fish in the tank.



On the good side, when running they resemble a small waterfall, plus the pre-filter is easy to clean while the filter is running and because of the low position of the motor in the aquarium you can carry out five water changes without turning off the filter.



With so much algae on the plants, I remove and clean the broad leaf plants like *Aglaonema simplex* and *Cryptocoryne* by hand with my fingers and finger nails that also gives me the chance to remove snail eggs that run amok in many of my tanks. I finish off with a water change and polish the front glasses with wet newspaper.

28th April



Keeping an eye on my Pencil Fish (*Nannostomus beckfordi*) that spawned just about a year ago as I wish to enter them at our Club's Table Show.



I am also entering some WCMM (*Tanichthys albonubes*) as they breed easily in a tub that I also grow some show plants in, if I can keep the snails at bay.

12th May



Now the weather is warmer it's a good time to check on the glass part of the Fish-house to see if the double layer of glass I fitted is still OK.

I also check the small but vital section of guttering so I can save some rain water that I use to top up my plant tank and for fish that like soft water.



While I am doing this I also check the tape I used to reduce cold draughts that were entering the inside. The extra glass and tape sure made a difference as the temperature did hold up. It was a job well worth doing as the cold winter went on and on. Next thing will be will it get too hot on those long summer days?

Well I won't, but I'll be keeping an eye on how warm the tanks are.



The World's Smallest Fish

Schindleria revipinguis

Ref: The Times online.
Ben Hoyle

Australian scientist have discovered what they feel is the world's smallest fish. In fact it's so tiny if it could swim behind a garden pea you would not be able to see it. Thank goodness we have not seen it on the show bench!

Difficult to point it for size, let alone finnage and all the rest of the characters. "Hold on!" It has no fins or scales and lives only for 2 months. Come on, you judges, no time for chit-chat or it may be dead before you have totalled up the points! Full size is 7mm, just 1.6mm shorter than the previous know smallest fish to science and weighing just one milligram. Scientists believe that it is also the smallest vertebrate.

Tom Trnski, of the Australian Museum said "It's given the Museum a bit of wow factor that we have it in our collection." A fish so small has the bare minimum it needs to function and reproduce, apart from a backbone and its comparatively large eyes there is very little to this fish. In Australia, it is known as the Stout Floater or Stout Infantfish.

A researcher at the Museum collected a specimen of the fish from a coral lagoon in North Queensland. However it was not classified until two American researchers, William Watson of the National Marine Fisheries in La Jolla, California, and H. J. Walker, of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California, San Diego, confirmed it was a separate species in its own right.

Little is known about the fishes' biology, the adult retains larval characteristics, until it reaches maturity in about a month. The female, which grows to a relatively monstrous 8.9mm, hatches eggs at between two and four weeks of age and dies not long after.

Until this discovery, the smallest fish was the Dwarf Goby (*Trimmatom nanus*) which is found in the region of the Indo-Pacific growing to an average length of 8.6mm for males and 8.9mm for females.



Festival of Fishkeeping 7- 8th September 2013

**Hounslow Urban Farm, Faggs Road,
Feltham, Middlesex TW14 OLZ
(www.hounslowurbanfarm.co.uk)**

So, what's a fish-orientated event doing on a farm?

The answer is increased exposure for the hobby on one hand and an added attraction for the site on the other.

There are many Fish Shows held around the UK every year, if you know where to find them, and this event is a development of the Federation of British Aquatic Societies' longstanding annual Festival of Fishkeeping.

By moving location to a long-established, already popular 'animal interest' site, fishkeeping can now reach far more potential supporters rather than just preaching to the converted. The new Venue has a lot of scope to make Festival of Fishkeeping a truly family weekend.

The venue is a widely popular attraction specialising in explaining how a farm works to children unfamiliar with country living. As well as the usual farm animals there are both very rare breeds and unusual ones like chipmunks and alpacas. There is also a Petting Zoo, Birds of Prey displays, Feed the Animals and Animal Rides.

At this event, there will be UK's biggest display of Hobbyist Fish, Independent Traders, Japanese Koi Carp and Discus Displays, Pond Display, Furnished Aquariums, Demonstrations on how to set up, furnish and maintain various types of aquariums and advice on all aspects of fishkeeping.

Because of the 'competitive' aspect of some displays, you will be able to see the very best quality of fishes all in full adult size and in prime condition. What better place to go and learn about fish, before you commit time and money at your local aquatic store?

SOME IMPORTANT POINTS

ADMISSION CHARGES

The following conditions will apply with regard to daily Admission Charges at the Hounslow Urban Farm:

Exhibitors who have qualifying fish for the following Competitions:

BRITISH OPEN, PAIRS, BREEDERS, DIAMOND FINALS and the SUPREME CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL

will be issued with a free Admission Pass (collectable at the Ticket Office on arrival).

Exhibitors pre-booking more than 5 entries into the **FESTIVAL OPEN SHOW** (Sunday) will be issued with a free Admission Pass (collectable at the Ticket Office on arrival).

Pre-booked entries must be registered with the Show Secretary (see Show Schedule for address) by **9pm, 4th September 2013**.

NOTE: THESE FREE ADMISSION PASSES ARE VALID FOR THE INDIVIDUALLY-NAMED EXHIBITOR ONLY

THEY ARE NOT TRANSFERABLE FROM DAY TO DAY AND CANNOT BE USED TO ADMIT MEMBERS OF THE SAME FAMILY

The normal daily Admission Charges to the Urban Farm (including access to all areas at the Festival) will apply to all other visitors.

£6.00 per Adult

£4.50 per Child (2yrs and over)

£5.25 for students and OAPs (recycled teenagers)

£19 per Family (2 Adults and up to 2 Children)

This is a full day ticket you can come in and out all day and Children under 2 years enter for free.

RECOMMENDED ACCOMMODATION

As there is no residential accommodation at the Farm, we suggest that visitors intending to visit the Festival over the full weekend reserve accommodation at the

**Travelodge, Sunbury, Hanworth Road, Sunbury On Thames,
Middlesex TW16 5DA**

To obtain reservations, at the most competitive price per room, bookings **MUST BE MADE ONLINE via the Travelodge website –** www.travelodge.co.uk and the hotel has advised us that the sooner your reservations are made the better as, inevitably, prices (**currently at £23.00 per night**) will rise certainly after the end of the month. There is a charge for parking.

SOCIETY INFORMATION STANDS & HOME-BRED FISH SALES

Societies are encouraged to put on information Display Stands. These will be grouped together in one 'Aquatic Village' area. Please let Joe know if you want a FREE Stand Space.

Home-bred fish sales will be accommodated in one area and, in the interest of security, it will be the responsibility of the owner of the fish (or someone from the same Society or nominated by him) to attend the Sales Stand at all times.

Tanks may be hired at £5.00 per tank (payable by cheque, payable to FBAS) on a 'first come, first served' basis. Subject to availability, there is no limit on the number of tanks that may be hired by any one person.

TANKS MUST BE PRE-BOOKED BY THE 26TH AUGUST 2013.

**BOOKING FORM (DOWNLOADABLE FROM FBAS WEBSITE) MUST
BE RECEIVED BY NO LATER THAN MONDAY 26th AUGUST 2013,
earlier if possible please!!!**

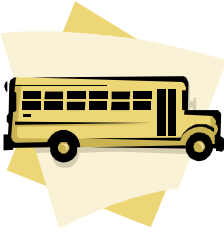
**PAUL CORBETT, THE ORCHARD, RECTORY LANE,
GATCOMBE, ISLE OF WIGHT PO30 3EF
Tel. 01983 721246**

SATURDAY EVENING



In keeping with previous Festivals, there will be entertainment, food and refreshments on the Saturday evening at the Urban Farm.

Admission to the Saturday evening (7pm – 11pm) is £5.00 per head and will include a Raffle ticket and a complimentary snack.



For those with reserved accommodation at the Sunbury Travelodge, and preferring not to drive, there will be return coach travel available to and from the Farm at a cost of £5.00 per head.

FURNISHED AQUARIUMS



The popular Furnished Aquarium Competitions will be simplified into two simple groups – '60 litre' size Furnished Aquariums and Nano Aquariums.



Please let Peter Anderson know if you are interested in entering either of these competitions.

Tel: 01753 882873 or email: peter.anderson@uwclub.net

KILLFISH OPEN SHOW

We regret to announce that there will be no Killifish Open Show at the Festival this year.

We are very grateful to all our sponsors because without them there would be no Festival. We are pleased to welcome back as a sponsor Mars Fish Care (Aquarian).

Over the weekend there will be Aquarian /API Kids' Zone for children of all ages, from Face Painting, Bouncy Castles, Find the Fish Hunt, Colouring Competitions with prizes for 1st 2nd and 3rd place winners. There will be goodie bags for the children and lots more.

Come and spend the whole day with all the family.

For more information, please contact

Joe Nethersell, Festival Organiser on 020 8847 3586
or email joenethersell@gmail.com

A FAMILIAR (BUT SAD) STORY FROM NEW ZEALAND

Our friends in New Zealand have been very supportive of the FBAS over many years, with publications being swapped regularly and they have also made use of our J & S Standards too. It saddens us to hear of the decline of Societies anywhere, but we are particularly disheartened as the Editor of Aquarium World magazine feels it is time to go. We would take this opportunity to say a big 'Thank You, Caryl' for all your support and friendship to us, in addition to all your great work for the FNZAS

You will see, on the next page, that we have reluctantly ceased printing of the NZ Aquarium World magazine. The FBAS (UK equivalent of the FNZAS) has had their magazine, The Bulletin, online only for a few years now.

If you are wondering why, or how, this has come to pass I suggest you look back at your February Aquarium World 2012. The FNZAS Treasurer wrote an enlightening article, on page 30, explaining it all. It has also been mentioned in Treasurer's Reports and Minutes for quite a while now and has been discussed at AGM's.

I, for one, am disappointed to see the end of an era and have been opposed to the magazine going online but

realise we can't continue as we have. This may change, depending on the next exec meeting and/or AGM and input from members.

The May edition, the last before the AGM, will also be my last. I started the job, in 1995, with a lot of enthusiasm and a love of the hobby. This has slowly been eroded over time until I not only have difficulty drumming up the motivation to source articles, since I have given up begging for them, but I have lost all excitement and interest in the hobby itself. What used to be fun has become a chore. I wish the new editor good luck. ▲

- Caryl Simpson, FNZAS Editor



DIAMONDS, DAMSELS AND DUMBO!

The 'London Season' of aquatic events kicked off recently with the London Pet Show at Earls Court Two and, as in previous years, it fell to the FBAS together with its close association with Rolf C Hagen to exclusively represent the hobby for the benefit of visitors to the Show.



'Interaction' was the name of the game this time around, with a much expanded display and a matching much expanded work-force, both characteristics aimed at attracting the attention, and subsequent uptake of practical interest in the hobby, by the general public.

The design of the display featured two main areas – an ‘outdoor’ (albeit inside Earls Court 2!) pond and an ‘inside’ darkened area where the many furnished aquaria –



the range covered small to large - were exhibited to their best advantage.



New this year was the inclusion of a marine element in the Fluval range of aquariums and associated technical support

Here too was a special display of aquaria showing the diverse methods of fish breeding

and an Advice and Information Centre presented by members of Hounslow & District Aquarists Society and the Federation of British Aquatic Societies respectively.





The large Laguna pond area became a happy hunting ground for visiting youngsters as they searched for hidden 'aquatic animals and insects' amongst its planted margins as part of a 'Spot the Wildlife' Competition.

Live presentations, by members of the UK Aquatic Plant Society and the Federation of British Aquatic Societies, covered 'Starting out in Fishkeeping,' 'Introduction to Fish Breeding' and an 'Introduction to Aquascaping.'



These are just a few of the many colourful fishes all happily swimming around in their Fluval aquariums. From the left: Diamond Shiners (coldwater), Yellow-tail Damsel (tropical marine) and a 'Dumbo' Siamese Fighter (tropical freshwater).



All manner of attractions, most of which could be obtained through www.seapets.co.uk

Sadly, even the best things have to come to an end, and guess who's last out of the door?

The Hagen boys of course!



Southern Counties Cichlid Group Inaugural Convention

Staging a first Convention is always a bit of a gamble for any relatively new organisation, and a cold, wet March Sunday might not seem to be the ideal conditions for success either.

However, nothing ventured, nothing gained, and so it was with no little trepidation that the Southern Counties Cichlid Group, in association with the British Cichlid Association, took the plunge and staged its first Convention at the Scout Hall, in St Peter's Road West Molesey on the 17th March. As it turned out, they needn't have worried.



Thanks to many willing hands, that made light work of bringing in masses of Auction lots from the cars, and the very welcoming hot snacks right from the start, the event was a resounding success.

Local 'on-the-spot' organiser, Peter Quested of the Southern Counties Cichlid Group, was delighted with the attendance: aquarists from diverse points as far apart as Kings Lynn and Portsmouth were amongst the audience to hear two presentations from scientist and explorer Dr Wolfgang Staeck, well-known for his expertise in Cichlids.



The first, 'Tanganyika: A Lake and its Fishes' was quite a revelation. Incredibly, the water conditions differ widely from one end of its 700 km length to another; its depth (of 1470m) means that coupled with its length makes it the second largest lake in the world after Lake Baikal.

Whilst it obviously is home to many fishes (and dangerous crocodiles!), Dr Staeck specifically limited his talk to Cichlids and their place in the lake's environment. Intriguing details of social behaviour, breeding patterns, species distribution all made for an enthralling first session.



His second presentation was even more specific, as he narrowed his attention down to the 'Shell-Dwellers.' If you hadn't come across these fishes before you were in for an eye-opening treat.

The video of a female entering a shell to first lay eggs, and then again to make sure the male's sperm (deposited outside the shell) actually reaches the eggs to ensure fertilisation, almost defies description. Then there was the story of 'opportunistic' spawning males who intruded into an otherwise happy spawning pair's shell.

Dr Staeck came up with many practical tips for keeping these species in the home aquarium, including a devious plan to stop excessive sand substrate shifting by these fish as they try to bury their shell prior to spawning.



A conversation-filled lunch-break was followed by another tour-de-force performance, this time by Chris Meachen, BCA Chairman, as he 'conducted' the Auction with its Lots, that reached well over 250 in number.

Congratulations are in order, after a great inaugural Convention to all concerned. The ladies did non-stop sterling work in refreshments, Roger Sleet, of Orinoco Aquatics, make sure there was plenty of equipment to look at and buy, whilst other stalls offered aquatic plants, Cichlids foods, dry goods and a big box of driftwood pieces.

Of course, there was the obligatory Raffle and thanks were duly recorded to the British Cichlid Association for making Dr Staeck's visit possible.

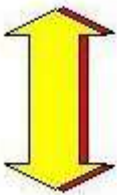
Every visitor received a 'Goodie Bag' to make their happiness even more complete, after a great day out.

Contacts:

Southern Counties Cichlid Group:

Peter Qusted on 0208 224 5574 or email phquested@gmail.com

British Cichlid Association: www.britishcichlid.org.uk



**USE THE FBAS
WEBSITE TO
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EVENT NEWS**



**PUBLICATIONS, BULLETIN
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SHOW SCHEDULE!**

EVENTS DIARY 2013/2014

(full details can be found on FBAS website www.fbas.co.uk)

FBAS ASSEMBLY 2pm (tel: 01424 431016)	1/6/13
Gt MANCHESTER CICHLID GROUP Auction	2/6/13
PORTSMOUTH Open Show	2/6/13
STAMPS Open Show & Auction	2/6/13
BRACKNELL A.S. Open Show	9/6/13
HOUNSLOW & D.A.S. Open Show NEW DATE	15/6/13
DJAY Open Show & <i>Betta</i> Show	23/6/13
PRESTON & D.A.S. Auction	23/6/13
US.A. (Perth) Open Show & Auction	30/6/13
N.W.CICHLID GROUP Auction	7/7/13
Y.A.A.S. Open Show	7/7/13
WEST LOTHIAN A.S. Auction	7/7/13
CASTLEFORD A.S.Catfish, Loach Open Show & Auction	14/7/13
N.E. YORKSHIRE GROUP BKA Killifish Show & Auction	21/7/13
LEICESTER A.S. Open Show NEW EVENT	4/08/13
FRIENDS OF YORKSHIRE Open Show & Auction	11/8/13
ASAS Open Show	11/8/13
PERTH A.S. Open Show & Auction	18/8/13
CASTLEFORD A.S. Auction	21/8/13
DERWENTSIDE A.S. Open Show	25/8/13
FBAS ASSEMBLY 2pm (tel: 01424 431016)	7/9/13
FESTIVAL OF FISHKEEPING NEW VENUE	7-8/09/13
F.S.A.S. Auction	8/9/13
RYEDALE A.S. 'Fun Day' Mini-Open Show	8/9//13
FAIR CITY A.S. Open Show & Auction	29/9/13
Gt MANCHESTER CICHLID GROUP Auction	29/9/13
PRESTON & D.A.S. Auction	6/10/13
TTAA Open Show & THREE RIVERS CHAMPIONSHIP	6/10/13
KIRKALDY A.S. Auction only	13/10/13
SCOTTISH AQUARIST FESTIVAL	20/10/13
STAMPS Auction (details to follow)	27/10/13
BIRTLEY AS Auction (details to follow)	3/11/13
N.W.CICHLID GROUP Auction	3/11/13
CASTLEFORD A.S. Auction	20/11/13
FBAS ASSEMBLY 2pm (tel: 01424 431016)	7/12/13

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