



FEDERATION OF BRITISH AQUATIC SOCIETIES

BULLETIN

Winter 2011
www.fbas.co.uk

**SEASON'S GREETINGS
TO
FISHKEEPERS EVERYWHERE**

***NEWS, VIEWS & ARTICLES
BY FISHKEEPERS
FOR FISHKEEPERS***



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

Produced for FBAS website by Dick Mills



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EDITORIAL

It is with regret that I have to tell you that this will be my last Bulletin as editor.

A number of contributory factors over the past year have combined to make me feel that I cannot produce the Bulletin to the standards that you rightly expect, and those that I wish to provide.

I have been very fortunate in having excellent support from those around me on the FBAS Council and our friends in the aquatic Trade who have provided much material for the Bulletin's pages during the period I have been editor.

I am realistic enough to know the task that awaits our new editor, Les Pearce, as he awaits contributions for his first, and subsequent, issues. To this end, I will still submit articles as, and when, I come across suitable page-filling subjects.

A heartfelt 'Thank You' to all who have sent in articles, photos and items of news over the years – please help us to keep our pages full of news and views.

A Happy New Year to everyone,

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Fish Breeding

Now that the Show season is over, many aquarists that exhibit fish now have the time to breed some of their fish.

I have set up what I call my rainforest tank. This is like a large aquascape complete with running water that flows to form a small waterfall. This aquaria is 48 x 18 x 24 inches high.



I know that with the tank only half full (using tap water) soon creates a water line marks by the chlorine in the water.

So, a couple of winters ago after setting the tank up with gravel and rocks (I actually used slate), I collected lots of snow and let it melt naturally. I made sure it was not packed in tight as melting snow will expand and could easily burst the tank. On top of the slate I laid some wood, to once again give that rainforest look and feel. I place a small pump under the water and now I had a waterfall.

As I could not wait for marginal plants to grow I used all plastic plants thanks to John at Hagen as they had been used during the London Pet Show. These are very effective and under the water I used some small growing *Cryptocoryne* (*C.parva*) plus *Echinodorus tenellus* - all well suited to growing in soft water.

I placed about 10 Colombian Tetras (*Hyphessobrycon ecuadoriensis*) in the tank and within weeks young fry were seen swimming alongside the adults. My only answer was in the soft water my fish were living in.

It was some time ago, when the outer part of my fish-house was colder than the rest in winter, I decided to use the tub I had used previously for growing species of *Aponogeton*, to house some White Cloud Maintain Minnows (*Tanichthys albonubes*).

The tub was filled with tap water, with water conditioner added, with an internal filter and a heater set at its lowest setting, I placed a lot of *Cabomba* into the tub and let it float on the water surface. I used good-looking standard White Clouds being six from one shop and then added six more from a supplier not connected to the first shop.

I just fed them on flake food and within a few weeks I could see plenty of young fry. These fish used to be called the Poor Man's Neon (that was when Neon's were new to aquarists and cost a lot of money!)



However if you look at newly-born White Clouds their colours are so vivid they just look like a Neon, that is till they get older. Just one word of warning if you manage to get these fish to spawn on a regular basis keep adding new stock, even if it's only three or four adults as with too much inbreeding they take on bent backs etc.



Danio choprae is a small Danio, FBAS show size at 35mm. Whilst smaller than the more common Zebra and Pearl Danio's that we know so well, its similar in shape and has lightning speed it swims around their tank, especially when you're trying to catch it!

The adult fish came to me by accident, in fact I still don't actually don't know how.

I placed them in a small tank 12 x 6 x 8 inches then added some *Vallisneria* and filled with very aged tap water. The tank is placed "end on" in the fish-house and it was so thickly planted I could not see through to the back. From what I could see the fish were darting about their small tank at great speed. It was then I introduced a spawning mop and when I feed them some days later there were these tiny fry swimming about. I feed them on a growth food and they gained in size very quickly.



Well, I have recently purchased some great Fighters, one male appears very keen on the female next to him, so I hope I will have some news for the next issue.

Malcolm Goss

MEET THE NEW EDITOR



Les Pearce has taken over as Bulletin Editor and he will only too delighted to receive news, views and Society information from you, especially for the next issue.

You can email him at les_the_fish@sky.com telephone him on 01983 613575, or send him articles at 44 Weeks Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight PO33 2TL

**Wheat Germ Foods for Koi -
a new look at an old tradition**



The use of foods rich in wheat germ to feed to Koi during the colder months has always been popular amongst Koi enthusiasts. Japanese Koi Keepers have routinely used such foods and hobbyists around the world have followed suit, in many cases without questioning why. But have you ever paused to question why you should feed a wheat germ rich food in winter – and what benefits it can provide to your fish?

The aim of this article is to take a closer look at wheat germ, its benefits and the whole question of winter Koi feeding. This will hopefully allow you to decide whether the wheat germ 'tradition' makes sense.

What is wheat germ?

Wheat germ is the name given to a small part of the wheat seed. It is the part of the seed that germinates (hence the name) and allows the wheat plant to start growing. The wheat germ is surrounded by the rest of the seed, which provides the initial food source for the growing seedling. To use this food source, the wheat germ has to be rich in certain vitamins, minerals and essential fatty acids and proteins.

The benefits of wheat germ to Koi

The rich and concentrated nutrients contained within wheat germ have a number of benefits if consumed by Koi. For example wheat germ is rich in:

Vitamin E - a vitamin important for protecting cell membranes, allowing the effective use of fats and improving the overall health and vigour of Koi. In addition it is important for the development of the reproductive organs and therefore benefits the fertility of the fish.

Vitamin C - essential for the efficient use of other nutrients and for skeletal formation. In combination with vitamin E it helps Koi overcome problems associated with stress.

Fatty acids – the important fatty acids contained within wheat germ are used to form the cell walls, to improve the digestion of other nutrients and as a storable energy source. Wheat germ is particularly rich in linoleic acid, which is essential to Koi for tissue repair.

Amino acids – wheat germ contains Lysine, an important component of the diet to allow tissue repair and formation as well as promoting the immune system.

Wheat germ as an ingredient in a balanced nutritional food will have some important benefits to you as well as to your Koi. Health food stores have recognized these benefits to humans and sell large amounts of wheat germ in a variety of different forms.

Koi foods vary considerably in the amount of wheat germ that they contain. It is an expensive component of the food – after all only 5% of the wheat seed is the germ, the rest has to be discarded. As a result some of the less expensive 'wheat germ' foods contain less than 2 or 3% wheat germ, whereas high quality wheat germ foods may contain six times this quantity. European pet food regulations help us to understand the ingredients of a fish food from its description on the label.

- 'With Wheat germ' means there is at least 4% wheat germ in the food
- 'Rich (or High) in Wheat germ' means there is at least 14% wheat germ in the food
- 'Wheat Germ food' means at least 26% wheat germ in the food

Winter feeding for Koi

The nutritional requirements of a Koi vary considerably throughout the year, hence the need for different diets. To pick one of many examples, protein is necessary for growth, but can only be used at warm water temperatures (over 15°C. Therefore in summer we feed a high protein food because the Koi can use the protein to grow etc, whereas in winter a lower protein food is sufficient because the Koi are less active and not increasing in size.

Feeding protein rich foods at low temperatures can actually ham Koi. Below approximately 10°C few if any of the proteins will be used for growth. Some may be used inefficiently to produce energy for movement etc, but the majority will pass straight through the fish. The resultant protein rich waste can have adverse effects on the water quality as it decomposes.

In addition, the digestion of proteins into amino acids starts at the front of the intestine where the enzyme Pepsin gets to work. Pepsin works best in acidic conditions where the pH is 1.5 to 2. If a Koi consumes a diet rich in protein, and then the water temperature drops, the acidic stomach conditions together with raised levels of Pepsin can remain in the early intestine for a prolonged period of time – exposing the Koi to the risk of stomach ulceration and future infection.

To avoid these two problems, many Koi keepers simply stop feeding their fish when the water temperature falls below 10°C, the theory being that the fish can obtain what little nutrition they require from within the pond and from their stored food reserves.

Whilst this may be a possibility in a natural, planted pond, there is unlikely to be sufficient food in a Koi pond. The fish would therefore have to rely on stored reserves in the form of fat and muscle tissue. Not feeding over a 3 – 4 month winter period would lead to the Koi being thinner and weaker in the spring, and consequently more susceptible to disease attack in the spring.

Do Koi feed at low temperatures?

The behavior of Koi is greatly affected by the temperature of the water they are swimming in. The colder the water the less active they are and the less inclined they will be to feed. However they are able to acclimate to low temperatures, and even at temperatures of 5 – 6°C Koi can be seen to rise to the water surface to feed. However their activities are greatly influenced by changes in the water temperature. If the water temperature quickly falls from 12°C to 10°C the Koi will stop feeding for a while whilst their bodies get used to the lower temperature. By contrast, if the water temperature rises from 5°C to 7°C the Koi may feed quite actively.

In the winter, and particularly in shallower ponds, the temperature changes described can occur every day, with an increase during the day and a fall at night. It makes sense, therefore, not to feed your Koi too late in the day as it is likely that the water temperature will start to fall before the fish have had chance to digest the food.

Good quality wheat germ foods are formed largely from plant ingredients and are characterised by a higher roughage content. The digestible component of the food is quickly absorbed by the fish, but importantly, the remaining ingredients pass more quickly through the intestine. The higher plant content will also reduce the amount of Pepsin produced in the front of the intestine and result in less acidic conditions.

Feeding such a diet to your Koi throughout the winter will promote the condition of the fish, but will have no impact on their growth. The carbohydrates contained within the food are an important energy source for the fish and prevent them from having to use their reserves. And the wheat germ – it will allow better utilization of the other ingredients in the food as well as being a valuable food source in itself.

Benefits of winter-feeding on Spring health

By providing Koi with a suitable food when they are showing signs of wanting to feed during the winter will definitely have a beneficial effect on the health of the fish in the spring.

Obviously if the fish have not had to use up their stored food reserves they will be in a better physical condition. However there is also evidence that the amino acids in wheat germ can strengthen the immune system of the fish and ensure it is able to counter disease organisms which can cause problems as the water temperatures rise in spring.

In extreme cases not feeding Koi through a long winter can lead to vitamin and mineral deficiencies, which can manifest itself in many different ways, including lethargy, lack of condition, susceptibility to disease etc. Here again, providing a suitable food in small quantities can be a major benefit.

The important fact with winter feeding is that you should feed very sparingly. As much as they will eat in 2 – 3 minutes is sufficient. Remember you are not feeding to encourage growth or enhance colouration, simply to maintain the health of the Koi.

Floating vs sinking food

There is much debate over the use of sinking or floating wheat germ foods during the winter. Original wheat germ foods were largely sinking, with the idea being that the fish were lethargic and would not be interested in rising to the water surface to feed. Certainly feeding a sinking food will get to the bottom of the pond and the fish will feed on it, however any uneaten food is very difficult to remove without disturbing the fish – something we should avoid if at all possible in cold weather conditions. I prefer the argument that you should feed a floating wheat germ food in winter. If the fish are not active enough to rise to the water surface to feed, it is a good indication that they should not be fed. In addition removing any uneaten food is much easier and less intrusive when it is at the surface.

Summary

The evidence is quite conclusive. Feeding your Koi during the winter is important and can help to keep them healthy and allow them to overcome the dangers of spring. The food should be a vegetable food with a good wheat germ content. This will ensure the fish are able to utilize it as effectively as possible. And as with all feeding, it is essential that you don't overfeed – a few sticks or pellets per fish is sufficient.



Reprinted with permission from an article by Dr David Pool.

Please visit www.FishScience.co.uk

Ask Us

Q. I'm a bit confused when it comes to 'proper' names for fish.

I can accept that many popular fishes can have several 'commercial names' depending on dealers' variations but I find that the official names quoted by museums and most aquatic publications seem perplexing, especially where some fish have identical part names.

A. Let's do the easy bit first. Fishes (and other animals and plants too) don't have a 'Latin' name as such – it is usually a mixture of Latin and Greek. The best thing is to refer to the fish as having a Scientific name.

This name is in two parts – the so-called binomial system created by Linnaeus, or Carl von Linné, the Swedish botanist and zoologist.

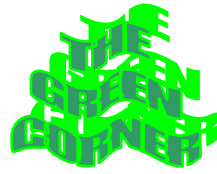
The **generic** name (the first name) which obviously names the genus and the **specific** name (the second) which isolates the fish within the genus as an individual. It is the combination of these two names which gives any fish its own identity. The generic name might be comparable to our surname, with the specific name being the given name.

It is the specific name which generally describes the fish according to one of several characteristics – its geographical point of habitation (usually an 'ensis' ending): named after an individual ('herbertaxelrodi' for instance) or a physical characteristic ('punctatus' spotted).

It gets complicated when you realise that some enterprising collector can have several different fish named after him or her and there is certainly a few hundred fish that could be described (and are!) as spotted!. In such cases, you have to learn the generic names as well.

Finally, it is generally accepted that it's the earliest name that takes precedent in scientific taxonomic listings.

The area for aquatic plant-lovers



Euryalae ferox (Water-Lily)

This rare water-lily, often not known even to the most keen water gardener, is found growing in Eastern Asia and surrounding areas including Russia.

This could be due to it growing into a large plant with leaves 3ft. in diameter, too big for most ponds.



But it well may be because not only are the leaves very prickly but also the stems and most of all the seed that is left when the flower has gone.

Back in the mid-1860s, naturalist Charles Darwin was looking for a solution to a problem. A specimen of this prickly water-lily at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, being the subject of his pollination experiments, had died. Darwin had been approached by a young botanist named Robinson who contacted Darwin to offer any sort of assistance being only 20 and very ambitious and living in London for just 3 years. Darwin, whose health was deteriorating to a point that he had become something of a recluse, wrote to Robinson to ask if he had access to a specimen of the plant, Darwin also added his own instructions for carrying out experiments for the pollination of the plant.

The plant was first described 1805 however it is only in recent years that the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has found the technique for cultivation. Here the plant is grown for its starchy white seeds that are within the prickly seed head and when ripe and opened the seeds are ready for eating raw or cooked. The plant is found also in China and used there for Chinese medicine.



Building a Natural Swimming Pool (Part 1)

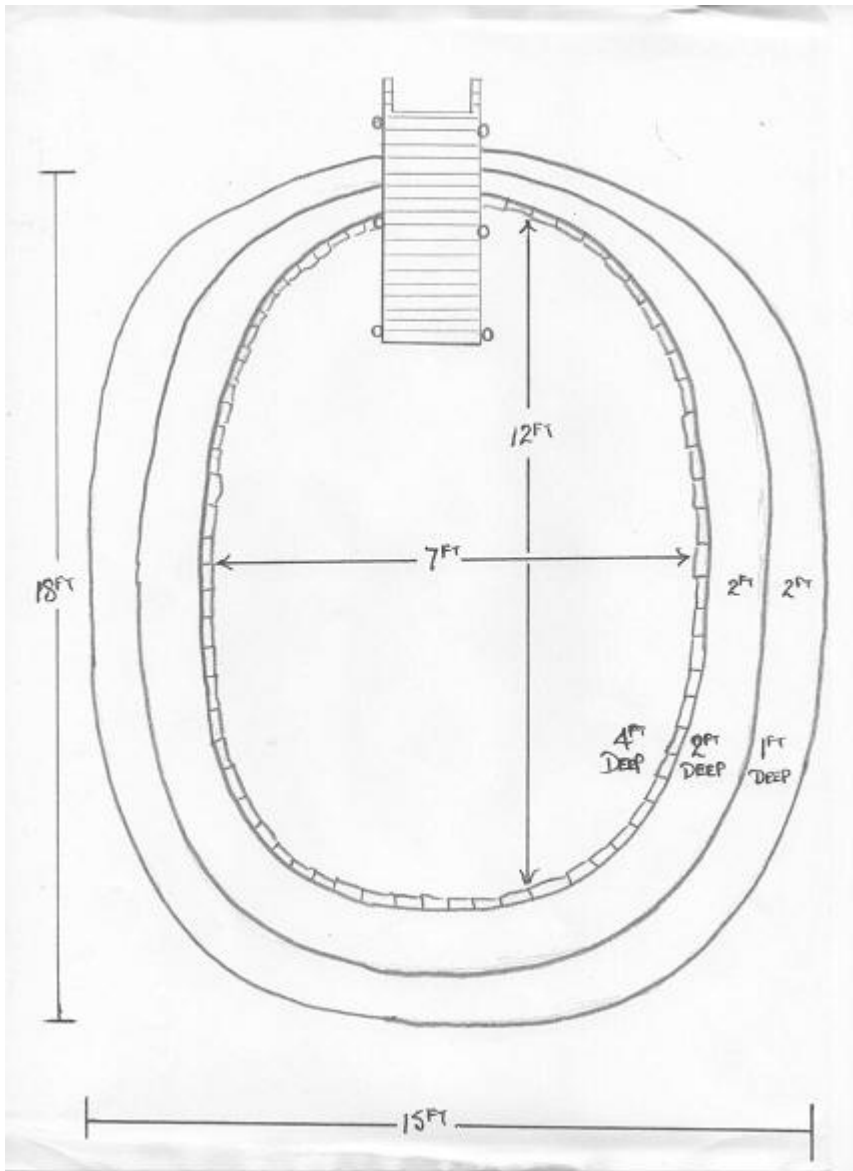
How would you like to swim in a natural swimming pool ?

Natural swimming pools: give you inspiration for a harmony with nature.
Blend into the surroundings with plants and rocks.
Reflect the changing seasons and enhance the environment naturally.

You may say who would wish to build any form of pool or pond in winter?
Well, this is not a project for the fainthearted whatever the weather. But many months may pass before you can swim alongside water-lilies and pass beautiful flowering marginal plants.

But before you put your spade into the ground you must work out how much it will all cost. Materials: can I get them cheaply? Can I do all the work myself? Maybe some professional help will be needed. Hiring a digger and skips all add to the cost, don't forget unless you are a qualified electrician and have the necessary certificates you cannot legally carry out any electrical work yourself. Well, if none of these points have put you off the reward will be fantastic. So start by talking with whoever uses the garden other than yourself; don't hide the fact it needs a lot of space. Then start to make a plan.

I have gone with a modest size pool taking up an area of 18ft by 15ft with an inner swimming space of 7ft by 12ft, not very large I hear you say, true, but in keeping with many budgets for this project.



This sample drawing shows the inner swimming space of 12ft by 7ft and 4ft deep. Then an outer area of 2ft wide and 2ft deep that circles the swimming area for placing water-lilies. This is then circled finally by an area also 2ft wide but only 1ft deep a dedicated area for marginal plants.

At the end of the pool is a decking area, reaching out over the surface of the pool by approximately 1 foot. This is also ideal for placing the filter and pump under and not spoiling the natural look of the pool.

Marginal plants and water-lilies are not only for their looks but act as a second source of natural filtration for the area used for swimming. The water level in these plant areas is only some 6" above the dividing wall into the swimming area.

With such a large area to be dug out it may well be an investment to either hire a digger or better still a digger with a professional operator that will in the end save both time and money. A word of warning: don't do what I did some years ago and cut through an electric cable. Lucky for me it was an electric supply to the garage so not much harm done, but it was still money out of my pocket to get it put right. However water and drainage pipes also come expensive to get put right, even worse if they go into the next doors premises.

There will be a lot of earth to get rid and you will require plenty of space to put it, your man on the digger can advise you on who could take it away and how much it will cost you.

While this work is being carried out take the measurements of the pond including the final depth and order your liner. It will not be a size they have in stock and it will have to be made up specially. This may take up to a week.

While you are visiting the water garden centre bring back brochures of pumps and filters, these may have to be ordered too. Don't skimp on either pump or filter, you can never have too much filtration or too much power in your pump, after all you can turn it down, but you can't turn it up.

When you return you will be shocked to find your garden has turned into a "Building Site" good job it's winter and nobody wants to sit outside.

I hear you say what can I do now? Why not sit down and enjoy Christmas now it's here?

Michael Littlewood
Photos: Alan Lambourne



KNOW YOUR FISH

NEON DWARF RAINBOWFISH - Melanotaenia praecox

This one of those fishes that, once seen, remains in your mind. Like its namesake, the Neon, it is instantly recognisable thanks to its stunning coloration.

A native to New Guinea, it stands out for two reasons from the sometimes equally attractive members of its Family, the Melanotaeniidae: Firstly, it is perfectly sized for the smaller community or species tank (the FBAS Size book has it at 60mm) and, unlike its bigger relatives, it doesn't take on such a 'snouty' appearance with increasing age.

All the usual recommendations as to its care apply, a well-planted tank with some open swimming spaces, maybe some floating plants to diffuse the tank lighting and, of course impeccable water conditions. Having some natural light falling on to the front glass of the tank will illuminate the very iridescent flanks of this fish.

Fortunately, too, this species is not too fussy about what it eats although it does appreciate the finer things in aquatic life such as live/frozen foods.

A species tank set up with a dozen fish will probably provide a spawning opportunity given a slight raise in temperature above the standard 25°C and the provision of suitable bushy receptacles (plants or mops) for eggs scattered.

Henry White

My old friend died at the age of 97. Henry will have been forgotten by most aquarist or even worse they will have not had the pleasure of ever meeting him.

Henry was the face of Hendon & District AS. As Chairman he had the grace and style of a true gentleman. He not only loved the fish keeping hobby but also loved swimming and that he did regularly until his health forced him to give it up.

Also Henry was a keen photographer and he belonged to a local photographic club.



He once told me it did not matter how many slides a speaker would show on his chosen subject, if he saw two or even one fantastic picture it would be all the pleasure he needed.

This photo of *Diodon hystrix* was taken by Henry

Hendon Aquarist Society all ways did things to perfection, those Dinner and Dances, those conventions (they called them Congresses) all so well put on.

I never knew Hendon Club to have any one else but Henry as their Chairman over all the years I have been a friend and member of Hendon.

For me and other members it was sad when the Club finally gave up through lack of support, but for the “die-hard” periodically Bernie Mould and Celia held a get together with half a dozen of us, including Henry, that made a wonderful evening, talking on fish, plants, photography and of course those good old days.

“Henry White - a gentleman’s gentleman“.

Malcolm & Gloria



Do you have an **ASSASSIN** in your Tank?

You may be thinking I mean a Jack Dempsey, an aggressive Cichlid from South America or a *Clarias* catfish from Africa. But it's a snail from South East Asia called the Assassin Snail, *Clea helena*. Bernie Mould, a fellow aquarist from Hendon A.S. (now disbanded) gave me four from his own fish tank and told me they eat other snails.

They are quite easy to distinguish from other snails you may have with their striped pattern on their shells, their common name being Bumblebee Snail.



This all seemed too good to be true and I placed them in a tank with catfish (*Brochis splendens*) and Emperor Tetras (*Nematobrycon palmeri*). Normally, when I went into the fish-house each morning - before switching on the tank light - snails were all over the tank and both the Malayan and Ramshorn snails slowly disappeared after the lights were put on.

After a couple of weeks placing four 'Assassins' in the tank all the other snails disappeared - "fantastic". You may think wow, but how big are these snails? They must be giant snails to eat all the other snails. No in fact they are about the same size as others snails you may have in your tank.

In their natural habitat – Thailand - they are found in clean, fast-flowing streams, but also in lakes and rivers. They live on a sandy or muddy substrate but fine aquarium gravel is also OK for them.

When their work is done you can move them to another tank that has snails or feed them on Bloodworms, Catfish Pellets or Algae Pellets.

They can grow up to 1.5 to 2cm and a temperature of 22 to 27C is perfect.

Both males or females can lay one single egg on a solid object and will hatch within a few weeks, however they take up to six months to become active and seen on the surface. I have not seen them for a few days now, but no other snails either, it seems like a dream come true.

Whilst Assassin snails may appear to be the answer to any infestation of snails (especially those burrowing Malayan Snails!), it may aquarists to know that just as taxonomic 'renamings' are irritating in our hobby, scientists are currently wrangling over classification of this very species in order to place it into its correct Class. Apparently, it all depends on the configuration (for want of a better term) of its stomach, when compared to other genera in its group!

You can see details of this highly-technical discussion (complete with electron-microscope photographic details) from an extract from the Journal of Molluscan Studies at <http://mollus.oxfordjournals.org/content/69/3/203.full.pdf>

Malcolm Goss.

Photos: Eric Gillingham



Presidential Farewell

As you will have heard from the Secretary's list of apologies, I was not able to be at the Federation's AGM which means, technically-speaking, I failed to complete my full term as FBAS President.

Over the past six years (well, almost!), I have shared in some of the best experiences that fishkeeping can offer – opportunities to meet fishkeepers from all over the UK and beyond, witness our splendid Festivals go from strength to strength maintaining their interest whilst others have faded away.

However, you can't remain at the top without very strong support from beneath and I have had the luxury of having had just that.

From the Chairman, Officers and general members of the FBAS Council I have had nothing – but encouragement and assistance whenever it was needed.

Add to this, the immense feeling of friendship from Societies – even those I never quite got round to visiting – and you'll see that being President was both an honour and a pleasure.

Sadly, we lost one or two longstanding stalwarts along the way who also consolidated the FBAS's position as the Number One fishkeeping organisation, but that is the nature of life.

By giving my successor, Joan Pannell, the same support as you generously gave to me, I can see the Federation has a well-founded future to look forward to.

As Douglas Adams, once said, "Thanks for all the fish."

Dick Mills, President FBAS



PIRANHA by George S. Myres, *Stanford University*

A fish only a foot long with teeth so sharp and jaws so strong that it can chop out a piece of flesh from a man or alligator as neatly as a razor, or chip off a finger or toe, bone and all, with the dispatch of a meat-cleaver!

This fish is afraid of nothing, which never attacks singly, but always in schools of a hundred or a thousand. These fish are attracted by splashing or commotion in the water and when it smells blood, turns into a raging demon. This is the PIRANHA, feared as no other animal is feared throughout the whole of South America.

In spite of the many references to the Piranha in both popular and scientific literature, no one has ever attempted to give a really adequate account of both its habits and its classification. For those who have written on classification have written little on the habits, and those who write up on this species habits have been woefully uninformed about classification! In early readings many of these types of fish were described as Piranhas when they were not. In fact many of these so called Piranhas turned out to have strict vegetarian diets.

One of the first accounts of the Piranha were given by Marcgrave, in his great work on Brazilian natural history, printed at Amsterdam in 1648. He first called the fish *piraya* or *piranha*, at that time parts of Brazil colonised by the Dutch was taken over by the Portuguese. This together with his drawings, which was excellent for those days, places his fish as *Serrasalmus piraya*, so named in 1820 by Cuvier who utilized the common name given by Marcgrave as the specific scientific name of the species. However there are half a dozen what I describe as sub-species but the common species we recognise, being the Red Belled Piranha (*Serrasalmus nattereri*) found in the Amazon Basin. The earliest account on the Piranha in Brazil but not published till 1825 is that of Gabriel Soares de Soures, in his *Descriptive Treatise on Brazil in 1587*. 'These are very palatable and is taken easy on line and hock that if it is not cut at the hock with its sharp teeth. Indians do not trust themselves as they bite and attack their genitals so cruelly.'

Many stories abound of persons who have lost fingers and toes by carelessly trailing them over the side of canoes.

Fred Orsinger who was in charge of the Department of Commerce Aquarium in Washington acquired two half grown Piranha, that he wanted to show me, being kept in a small aquaria. For some reason he flicked his finger on the surface of the water. "You'd better watch out, Fred" I warned him. "Those fish may take off your finger" Fred looked down at the fish and replied, "Oh, I am careful". A couple of weeks later I heard that Fred lost the top of his finger while flicking the surface of the water.

Piranhas are among several species belonging to the Characin family, technically known as Characidae or Characiniidae, a large group of fresh-water fishes native to tropical America and Africa. The largest members of the family are the Tigerfish (*Hydrocynus goliath*) of the Belgian Congo, that can attain a weight of 83 pounds. These fish are the only fish to eat catfish species *Synodontis*, who must be taken head first by the Tigerfish so being able to swallow them whole, if taken the wrong way round the dorsal of the catfish locks up and both fish die.



Many species on *Serrasalminae* are vegetarian consisting of nine or ten genera and 50 and 60 species.

The largest species, Pacu, are food fishes reaching a limit of 44lbs that run upstream during high water often passing impassable rapids and waterfalls.

They rest in waters with overhanging trees, to eat fruit, the local Indians know this and shoot the Pacu with arrows after attracting them to the surface by dropping fruit into the water. With cutting down of these trees along the river banks has caused the extinction of the Pacu in many areas.

However the carnivorous *Serrasalminae* Piranha is still an attraction within public aquariums, but for those wishing to keep piranhas in their home aquariums, remember they require live foods at all times to be healthy and human fingers are on their menu list.

Edited: M. Goss



MEET OUR NEW PRESIDENT

The FBAS is proud to introduce its new President, Joan Pannell, who was duly elected at the recent Annual General meeting.

Joan, of Hastings A.S., has a long pedigree of service with the Federation, having filled several of its most important posts over the years - she was actually a specialised '*Betta*' Judge at one time.

Joan says she is looking forward to meeting up with Societies in the coming year, not only as she accompanies Colin around the Open Shows but also at Society evening meetings too.

Time to Retire



I was 14 when I joined my first fish club after being fascinated by a large set up aquarium at my school. I joined West London Aquarist who held their meetings at Ealing Town Hall in West London, this was well before a club known as Ealing & District A.S. was formed. Within a few months I was asked to join the committee as a junior member.

Ever since then I have been on one committee or another for the last 60 years. I was honoured to judge at Bell Vue (Manchester), Motherwell, Perth, Northern Area Catfish, Catfish Association GB and was asked to judge in the only year Yorkshire A.A.S. invited outside judges to their Festival.

For many years I was Show Secretary at Riverside A.S. and after that I became Secretary of the Catfish Association GB. when it bordered on 1,000 members.

My love for furnished aquaria is no secret, after seeing what my old friend Ron Forder achieved. I always felt this was the best way of promoting the hobby by giving the general public a taste of a true seen of what's life like underwater.

In recent years I have, with the help of Dick Mills, been putting together the Federation's Bulletin that started with the printed version and later is now updated by being available on-line and can be read by aquarist anywhere in the world.

For a time I was at the other end of the phone answering calls as part of the Hagen Help Line for whom I also set up aquariums at their trade shows. In more recent years I helped out with both Dick Mills and Peter Anderson at Aquatics Live and the London Pet Shows at Earls Court and Olympia in London.

After sixty years in the hobby I feel I would like to spend more time in my Fish-house looking after my fish and aquatic plants. My pond (unchanged for 40 years) is in need of a revamp so there's still plenty to keep me busy!

I am sure I have a few articles left to write – even if they are only to keep you up to date with my future plans. To the Bulletin's reader, yes that is right I thank you, "You keep reading, and I will keep taking the tablets."

See you at the next Show.

Malcolm Goss.

A BETTA WEEKEND FOR THE FESTIVAL

As seen by Dr David Ford

For the second year, FBAS Chairman Joe Nethersell organised the annual Festival of Fishkeeping at the Urban Farm in Hounslow, London. Sited just to the Southeast of London Airport, this family farm often has special events - the fishkeeping one was advertised for the weekend of October 3rd and 4th.



The adverts could be seen from the busy Fagg's Road as jumbo jets make their landing (literally) every minute.

Four huge marquees were erected on the entrance area to the farm and hundreds of aquaria were installed housing thousands of fish. These were in the final competition for winning fish of the year 2014, judged to FBAS rules. Called the Supreme Championship and the Diamond Class, the ultimate winner was chosen.

There was also an Open Show and specialist groups were invited to attend such as the Goldfish, Discus, Killiefish, Koi and Betta keepers. Sponsored by Hagen, Amwell Aquatics, Practical Fishkeeping magazine, AquaOne aquariums and FishScience Foods, each had a stand or advertising at the Show.



There were display tanks of coldwater, tropical and marine aquaria....



Commercial stands selling aquatic items at special show prices....



From Remedies to fish foods too....



Some were free!

London Societies had stands that resembled the Tableaux of past years.



Books on fishkeeping (and more) were selling at mere pence each.....



The show dates included a Dog Show arranged by the Urban Farm, but that was held in a separate area. The Saturday was spoiled by a downpour but Sunday was sunny and lots of families visited the Farm and then toured the Fish Show.

Rain or shine, all the aquarists who qualified for the Supreme and Diamond Finals benched their fish and took advantage of the many items on sale in the four marquees - and dined in the food tent where cooked meals were available all day. Part of Urban Farm is Bug World so they and Exo-Terra had a large display of everything from invertebrates to tortoises and staff allowed visitors to handle animals such as snakes and hedgehogs.



The usual Tombola and knick-knack stands attended...the Cup-cake stall had 'fish cakes' specially made for the occasion!



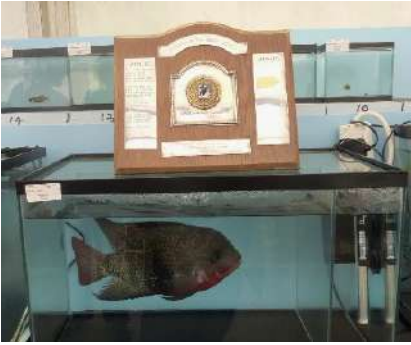
There were even dozens of species of snails for sale, including rare ones such as Nerites and Rabbit Snails.

At the finale on Sunday all the FBAS Committee who made all this possible posed for a photograph and appreciation by the visitors.



The Winners of the major awards also had a photograph opportunity....





These were Steve & Debbie Edwards (Independent) who won the Supreme Championship with a Black Belt Cichlid, *Vieja maculicauda*.



...and Alan Finnigan (Leicester AS) who won the Diamond Class Championship with a Lep. Galaxias L007a.

...and Sarah & Stuart Brown of Stafford Area Society won many Firsts in many Classes.



One First winner is of interest - it won the Supreme Pairs with a male and female *Phalloceros caudimaculatus reticulatus`auratus`*. These are owned by `Tim's Fish Room' who explained that he collected them from a freshwater pond in Norway. Apparently they are so rare there are only two pairs in this country - and this pair won the top award. Known as the Speckled Mosquitofish, the golden variety was discovered in Southeast Brazil and named only in 1995. It is a coolwater fish (18-24°C) hence its survival in Norway.



In addition to the FBAS competitions there are guest groups such as the Koi Keepers. This year they could not attend, but there was still a Koi Competition by the Middlesex & Surrey Borders Koi Section, won by Ken Taylor with a magnificent (and huge) GoSanke.

There was also a Discus Display by Mark Evenden's Devotedly Discus and whilst the Killifish Show was way down on entries the *Betta* Open Show - organised by YAAS and Jamie Horne of Sheaf Valley A.S managed to attract well over 150 entries...a magnificent sight...



The judges were Trish Jones, Steve Grant and Ben Nichols with Steve Jones (of course) doing the *Betta* Auction after the judging.



The winning male with 84 points (by Jason Gobon, Independent).



The Champion was a female with 85 points (by Lisa Bradshaw, independent).

Here are a few more Fighters ...



Where will the Festival of Fishkeeping be in 2015? That is now under discussion, but wherever it will be, it remains the biggest UK Fish Show - so far!

A FRESH LOOK AT DEALING WITH LATE ENTRIES

Late (on the day) entries can be a curse or a blessing to Open Shows (usually depending what mood the Show Secretary is in!).

Everyone wants to see as many entries on the bench as possible, but not at the physical effort of having to re-arrange some Class layouts in the process. Also, late entries usually delay the start of judging which then 'knocks on' to delay prize-giving and de-benching.

The following proposal for dealing with the several problems includes some radical actions, as well as totally new procedures which, just might, benefit the Show scene. Please try and consider them objectively.

1. All late entries will be placed in ONE CLASS – effectively an 'Overspill Class.'
2. Entries will not be considered for any Awards in the Open Show.
3. There must be a minimum of four different entries (ie, from four different exhibitors) to constitute an Overspill Class.
4. Judging will be undertaken BY THE EXHIBITORS owning the fishes, who will rate the fish into their preferred first four positions, awarding a maximum of 100 points to each entry; the total points awarded for each entry in the Class would be totalled and divided by the number of exhibitors to arrive at the final score. Whilst it would seem prudent to disallow owners judging their own fish, closer consideration of the 'number crunching' shows that this wouldn't really be necessary.
5. The four winning fish from each Overspill Class would be eligible for entry into 'The Best of the Rest' or 'Exhibitors' Choice' at the Festival of Fishkeeping' at the end of the season.

That's the bare bones of the idea, now for some explanations.

- (1) Obviously makes the need for shifting fish unnecessary as a separate bench space can be reserved for this Class. It is suggested there is no discrimination made between Egglayers/Livebearers or Coldwater species.
- (2) may be is harsh but consideration for inclusion in, say, Championship Classes, would hinder not help the main process of judging elsewhere in the Show.
- (3) This is pretty well self-explanatory. Alternatively, it is up to the Show Secretary's discretion as to how many 'on the day' entries he may well Integrate into the Open Show as per normal!
- (4) This is the radical one. The aim of this new Class is two-fold at least. The first is to not increase the work-load of the Judges on the day-hence the 'one category' limitation – who are then completely free to concentrate on the Open Show.

The second aim is to give experience to those exhibitors who have professed an interest in judging. There are probably at least ten exhibitors currently with enough knowledge (and let's hope, integrity) who could spot the best four fish in most Classes. Judging such a Class will engage their skills and keep them at the Show too.

Note that there has been no mention of judging to the Standard system. We certainly recognise the practicability (or not) of asking ten or so people to collectively judge one Class simultaneously. It is not our intention to enquire how they arrive at their collective result, just as long as they do.

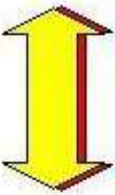
- (5) The judging of the 'Final' should be done by an FBAS Judge. Running this Overspill Class as a special Class, within the official Open Show, may not only solve some of the late entry problems but also add a bit more interest and participation at Shows.

As the first Open Show is likely be towards the end of March, please give this new idea some thought

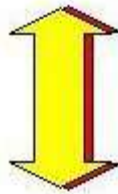
EVENTS DIARY 2015

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

Castleford A.S Night Auction	18/02/15
OASIS Auction	22/02/15
Derwentside AS Open Show & Auction	22/03/15
A.S.A.S. Open Show	22/03/15
Greater Manchester Cichlid Group Auction 1.15pm	29/03/15
Ryedale A.S. 30th Anniversary Day	29/03/15
Castleford Open Show and Auction 1.00pm	19/04/15
North East Tropical Society Show and Auction	26/04/15
MID-SUSSEX A.S. Open Show	26/04/15
West London and Kent B.K.A Auction	26/04/15
North East Tropical Society (NETS) Open Show & Auction	26/04/15
EASTLEIGH & SOTON A.S.Open Show	09/05/15
Bradford Spring Open Show Auction	10/05/15
CORBYS & D A S Open Show	17/05/15
Derwentside AS Auction	17/05/15
SOUTHEND, L & D A S Open Show	30/05/15
Greater Manchester Cichlid Group Auction 11.15pm	31/05/15
STAMPS Open Show & Auction	31/05/15
BRACKNELL A.S. Open Show.	13/06/15
Ryedale A.S. Open Show and Auction	14/06/15
HOUNSLOW & D.A.S	20/06/15
OASIS Auction	21/06/15
Y.A.A.S Open Show	05/07/15
Castleford A.S. Catfish and Loach Show/Auction	12/07/15
N. E. Goldfish Society Open Show	19/07/15
TTAA Fish Only Auction	26/07/15
Friends of Yorkshire A.S. Open Show and Auction	16/08/15
North East Tropical Society (NETS) Auction	16/08/15
Castleford A.S.Night Auction	19/08/15
BCA Convention	06/09/15
West London and Kent B.K.A Auction	20/09/15
FESTIVAL OF FISHKEEPING	3-4/10/15
Bradford A.S. Open Show and Auction	08/11/15
Castleford A.S. Night Auction	18/11/15



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