

FISHKEEPERS AND WATER GARDENERS

BULLETIN

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 12 PRICE £1.95 (UK)



*2003 FBAS Suprema Champion
Cichlasoma robertsoni
Roy Davies, Port Talbot A.S.*



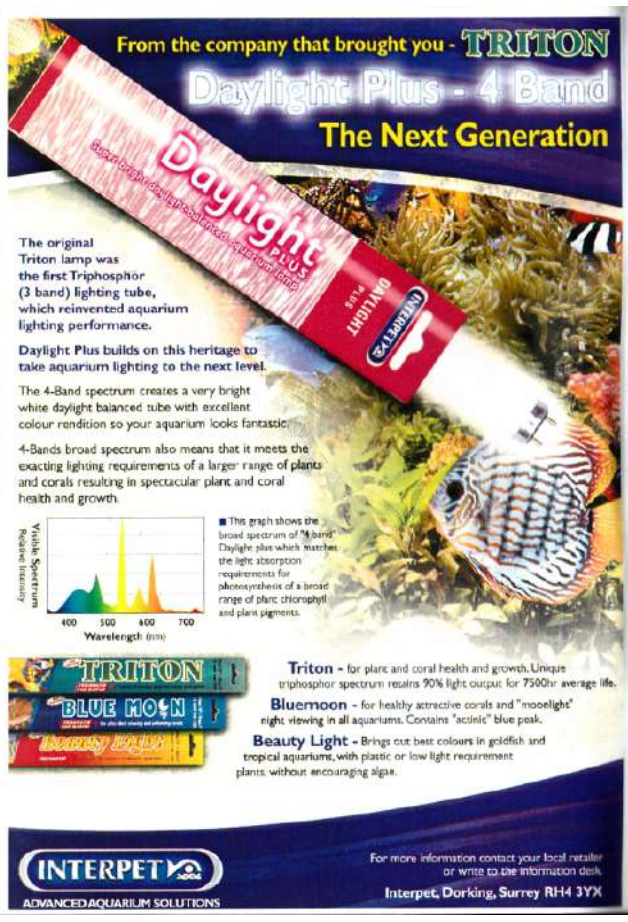
*British Open Champion
& Best Catfish
Scobinancistrus aureatus
Haydn O'Grady, Port Talbot A.S.*



*Best in Show Hagen 'Masters'
Botia sidthimunki
John Egan, Port Talbot A.S.*

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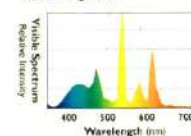


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FROM THE EDITOR

Well was you at the Festival of Fishkeeping? a weekend for aquarists who are keen fishkeepers. The show was billed as the biggest and best you can attend in the country today. Every one I chatted to agreed, it was a fantastic event. With only a week between the show and the Bulletin having to be at the printers I have only brief reports on the events. However there are so many interesting aspects, with this in mind the Bulletin will be serialising some of the features that will be of interest to you.

An award of 12 months subscription to the national aquatic journal "Tropical Fish" for our writer of *Article of the Year*. I do thank all those that sent in articles and hope you will carry on writing articles during next year. Also a big thank you to the magazine editor of Tropical Fish, Simon Woistencroft for their support. The four nominated articles for 2002/3 were:

- John Snow.....Fighters
- Bob Esson.....Genetics
- Les Pearce.....Goldfish
- Alan Benson.....Filtration

The winner being Les Pearce was given his award at the Festival of Fishkeeping. Next year the organisers of the event are further "up grading" this award, as making and writing the winning article during 2004 will be a highly regarded contribution to the Federations journal.

Well with Christmas only a few days away, I along with all my fellow council members wish all our readers and all aquarist a **Happy Christmas**. When we think of Christmas we think of giving, so this Christmas why not give a subscription to the "Bulletin" They will thank you all year and what value for only £5.00

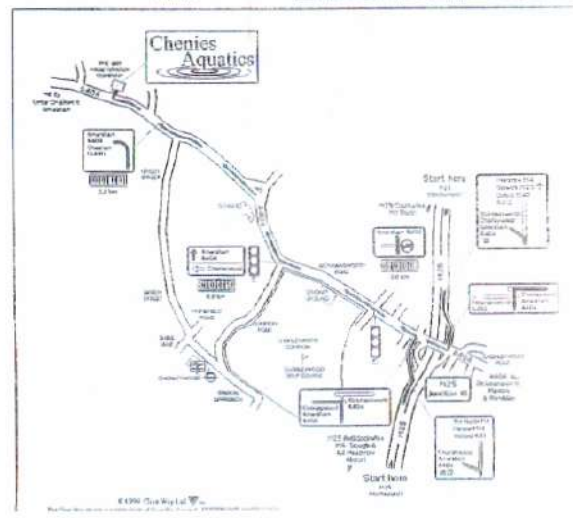
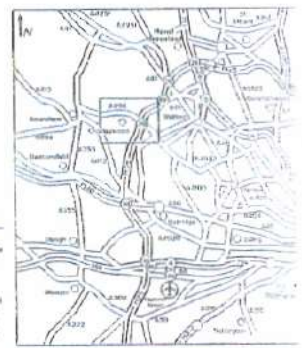
Well we know how times flies when enjoying yourself, and they tell me with two years gone once again the editors post is up for grabs. So by Christmas in stead of getting ready the next issue, I could well be selling "The Big Issue" so look out for me down your high street just in case.

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Fishing Holiday

excerpt from an article

by Tetra Digest 38

photo by J Das

So many of us aquarist dream of a fish collecting trip. To be there and catch fish in your own net, or the chance to just see what their real environment is like and maybe repeat these conditions in our own aquarium. But the thought of a long and expensive trip to locations in South America or Africa seem only a dream away. Even if expense was not a problem, safety in many of the places is.

Many of us did fish collecting trips in our school holidays, with possible our parents being the only danger we could see. I know mine forid me going any were near the canal. However that old flame has never died and given a net and volume of water, we would be off. But the Grand Union Canal is not the same as the Rio Niger or the Nile.

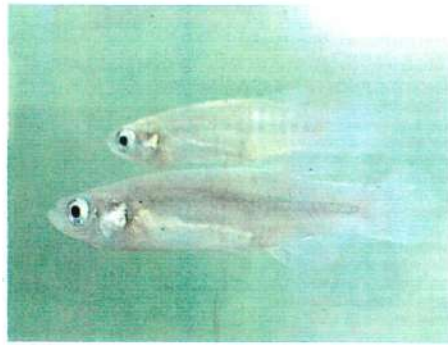
So where could I go and take the family as well? What about going in search of a toothcarp found in northern Greece and Corfu, —YES. This fish commonly known as the Corfu toothcarp *Valencia letourmeuxi* is a close relative of *V. hispanica* found in Spain. This was once a very popular killifish whereas the toothcarp from Corfu was much slower being known by aquarist in this country. *V. hispanica* was the very first egg-laying toothcarp to

reach the German aquarist, but *V. letourmeuxi* was only first imported into Switzerland in 1979. Since it was first described by Sauvage in 1890, this fish which grows up to 60mm, has been virtually lost to aquarist, and indeed to science.

Most ichthyologist did not believe that this species occurred in south-east Europe, however many killifish aquarists over many years operating on their own have found these fish. In fact many of them even succeeded in bringing them back alive.

So I was off to Corfu. After arriving in the north of Corfu and talking to locals, ones that spoke English that is, a week went by spending all my times in small streams, but finding known fish. In the second week we all went over the water and stayed on the main land in the north-west part of Greece. Once again after talking to locals I ended up my travels in freshwater ditches that run through fiat land around the estuary of the Aheron. When trying to locate these fish one finds these fish even in nature are a very shy fish. They spend their time amongst thickets of plants from where they make brief sorties out into open water, even then they are hesitant to take any available live food in the form of mosquito larvae that was plentiful when I was there. From this location I managed to return home with 18 fish, much to the relief of my family who now were able to enjoy the last few days of their holiday.

On my return with all my fish, still alive I went about setting up a tank, for what for me was my prize collection of fish. Corfu toothcarp is



Pair of *Valencia letourmeuxi*

a rather modest individual, even for a killifish. It can tolerate temperatures from 0 / 30c (32 / 86f) what a temperature range! Plus the water conditions which it is found can be very hard and brackish or even soft. My specimens, which I brought back from freshwater ditches were placed in a 2ft tank with local tap water being on the hard side and a temperature of 75f. I really swamped the tank with *Cebomba* so the fish had lots of places to hide. I found just as they where in the wild, they are poor eaters almost to shy to be seen. Over the next few weeks I lost 5 of my prize fish before I found they preferred vegetable flake food pinched between the finger and

thumb to make smaller as you would for baby fish. I have not found any information on their spawning behaviour, possible that is no surprise bearing in mind they are not a mind blowing fish to look at and are strictly for the enthusiast.

Valencia letourmeuxi with its vast temperature range and no strict water requirements this fish would be most suited to the conditions of a pond. One problem, once in your pond you may never see your fish again. This fish well may be suited to our summer days and here there may be a real chance of getting them to spawn. But it would be splendid if we could manage to keep this species of killifish successfully in our aquaria.

Club News

From our Chairman *Peter Furze*

I would like to wish societies and their members a Happy Christmas and a good fishkeeping New Year.

I thank all those that have helped the Federation in so many ways, those supporting shows, such as the mini assembly events, and those taking part in the British Open plus all open shows up and down the country. Many hobbyist give up so much time including their holidays to see all these events do happen and give such a lot of pleasure to those that attend. Finally a BIG thank you to all our sponsors. **Happy Christmas.**



Peter Furze FBAS Chairman

Dunstable A.S held their Fish of the Year show night just recently at the Slip End village hall very close to the M1. The fish on show had to be all class winner during the year. The top awards went to the brothers Vic and Bob Dyer. Vic's fish *Rasboras trilineata* for fish of the year and Bob received the award of Best in Show with a Golden Panchax. Contact: 01582 486649

Viviparous are staging 2 auctions in the new year the first being on the 28th March 2004 at Chesterfield Hotel, Malkin Street Chesterfield. Booking in starts at 11.00 and have your money ready for 1.00pm. for all contacts and info contact Alan Rothwell 01782 317741

The second auction is taking place on 25th July 2004 at Barony College, Parkgate, Dumfries. Starting at 11.00am along with the auction is a Livabearer show with all the classes. Contact John Gowan 01387 750606

Early Bird Auction being staged by Northern Federation Judges on the 6th February 2004 at the St Elizabeth Parish Hall, Bolton Road Aspull Wigan. Bookings from 10.30am. Contact Bill Ward 01928 832320

British Cichlid Association founded in the 1970's is getting back on track with many interesting events around the UK during 2004. plus news sheets and information pamphlets. Check out their Web Site www.britishcichlid.com or contact Colin Spikings Web Site scotspike@aol.com Address 2 Lime Walk, Henlow, Bedfordshire. SG16 6DQ

FBAS help & advice

Q. I am intending to give my pond a "Make Over" this winter, can you help with some advice and what equipment I should purchase to make it "maintenance free"

A. Well you have not given me any information on the size of your pond or what type of fish you are keeping in it at present. However there is no such a thing as a "maintenance free" pond. If you take a closer look at ponds such as village ponds, even rivers, all of these being regarded in nature as natural. However if left unattended would be overgrown with plants and even falling trees blocking streams and rivers alike. Most of the smaller rivers and village ponds are looked after by local helpers and friends. So if in nature we can not see our ponds being "maintenance free" what chance do we have in our garden pond. For once we have some control due to the closed environment we keep our fish in. Although you can not have a "maintenance free" pond with the correct equipment we can reduce the work load for you. So to start with you must have a clear idea of how you expect

your pond to look at the end of the makeover. Purchase every piece of equipment that is top quality. The power of your pump you require is measured by how high you have to raise the water, not by the size (capacity) of your pond. Pump that has more power than recommended is very worth while, this is the same for the filtration. The larger the capacity of the filter the better.

Finally check out the advice of your aquatic centre and if it is possible ask more than one supplier. They may not only differ on advice but very likely on price

Q. I am going on holiday to India early next year, my friends have been to South America and bought back fish and plants.

Some have returned with fish in their hand luggage, while others have packed them in a suit case. However I do not wish to get stopped at the airport and face having my luggage all turned out

A. Both fish and plants introduced from abroad, where ever from, can pose a serious threat to both our agricultural and horticultural industries as well as to our native flora. Because of this, both many types fish and plants imported from outside the European Union subject to strict import controls. Your travels may inspire you to bring back some fish and plants. But if you are tempted, penalties can be two years imprisonment and a fine of up to £5000. So please check import regulations before you travel www.defra.gov.uk or phone the DEFRA helpline on 0845 335577. So take care!

A GREAT HOT AND COLD MIX



Hounslow & SPASS Chairmen, Pate Anderson and Eric Franklin celebrate a most successful event

OR TWO INTO ONE WILL GO!

If it's any Saturday or Sunday between late March and late September, you can practically guarantee that there'll be a Fish Show on somewhere; not only that, but sometimes there are two Shows on the same date. But have you ever heard of having two Shows not just on the same day but at the same place? It sounds like a great piece of mismanagement by all concerned, but this conjunction of events was what actually happened this year.

Way back in what was then the 'New Year', South Park Aquatic Study Society (SPASS) tried unsuccessfully to book their usual June date for their Open Show. End of story, you might think, and this was just an unfortunate state of affairs.

Meanwhile on the other side of London, Hounslow & District A.S were gearing up for their annual Open Show in September and trying to make it a bit special, seeing it would be their 40th Open Show. Fancy, self-produced Award Cards went a little way to make it special but then it occurred to the Show Committee that the mainly-tropical Open Show could be made much more attractive with more fish, especially of the coldwater variety, and where could these fish come from? Yes, you've guessed it - from SPASS. Would they consider sharing the Show Hall to present their Coldwater Open Show?

To their credit, SPASS at first were creditably sensitive and leaned towards declining the invitation so as not to encroach on Hounslow's 'special' Anniversary Show. Then there was the justifiable worry that a 'changed date' is hard to establish in exhibitors' minds, coupled with the fact that it had been the Bristol coldwater Open Show just the week before. Would entries be affected? Then there were all the logistics to be considered.

However, several constructive talks between the two Societies' respective Show Committee members soon showed that there was a possibility of the idea working to both Societies' mutual benefit and the decision was taken to go ahead with the joint venture.

Hounslow had both sufficient space in the Hall and enough staging for all the likely entries. It was decided that the two Shows should be staged independently but with some shared interests.

SPASS would organise their own traditional Coldwater Auction whilst Hounslow would mastermind the Aquatic Shop and the Refreshments. The Raffle would be a joint venture with the profits being shared equally. On the fish entry front, the two Show Secretaries did their own things and there would be two separate (but mailed out together) Show Schedules and two separate prize-givings.

So what happened, come the day?

First of all, the weather was absolutely brilliant. The staging had been set up the night before, the only slow-down of the extra work was due to the time it took for the coldwater tanks to be filled - low pressure water supply and small-bore hosepipe!



Sooty-looking Dick Mills with Pete Cairns and Pete Furze await entries to the Hounslow Show Benches.

Entries soon started arriving and the booking-in procedure gathered paces. It was not long before some 'cross-party' curiosities arose, with the 'trop owners' venturing into the SPASS half of the Hall to see how the other half lived, as it were, and the opposite was occurring with Goldfish fanciers taking a close look at the wide variety of warm-water species on view.



Roy Chapman tops up his Aquascape - at least we hope that's where the water was going!

The upshot of the day was that it was simply a great fishkeeping experience. Whereas it's usually a case of 'bench, go round the local shops, debench' for most exhibitors, this time it seemed that there was much more fishkeeping chat going on with very few people leaving the Show.



Plenty of 'fish & bits' to attract the punters.

One possible reason for this, apart from the obvious of there being a greater fish interest on view and more people to talk to, could have been the fact that the Hounslow part of the Hall had been laid out on an open-plan scheme which meant that people could walk around the outside of the exhibits (whilst judging was still going on) and thus see how things were progressing.



Prospective bidders inspect the Auction lots



Everything is checked over before the Judges are let loose!

Show Statistics: Hounslow - 184 entries; SPASS - 106

Hounslow results:

Best in Show: *Rasbora balliensis*, John Egan, Port Talbot A.S.
FBAS Trophy Classes: Aquascapes - Merion Alun, Hounslow & D.A.S.
Siamese Fighters - Ron Baldock (Strood A.S)
Single-tailed Goldfish -Ron Baldock (Strood A.S)
Highest-pointed Visiting Society: Southend, Leigh & D.A.S.

SPASS results:

Best in Show: Nacreous Fantail, Gary Malpass, AMGK
Best Single-tail: Common Goldfish, Sheridan Moores, NGPS
Best Twin-tail: Nacreous Fantail, Gary Malpass, AMGK
Highest-pointed SPASS Member: Mary Franklin



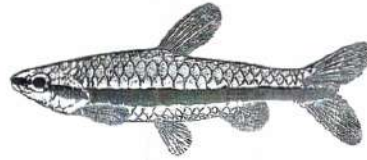
The happy SPASS Show Committee - Margaret, Dave, John and Angie

The final question: "Will it happen again in 2004?" Only time will tell.

Hounslow and SPASS thank everyone for making it a great day!

Know your Fish

Nannostomus beckfordi ariprangensis (Meinken)



Popular name:	Golden Pencil Fish.
Habitat:	Guyana
Characteristics:	Body yellowish, shading grey-green towards the dorsal contour, whitish yellow on the belly, a black lateral band runs from snout across the eye to the caudal peduncle continuing almost to the fork of the caudal, edged above with a golden area and a brilliant red line, a fine red line runs from the pectoral to the anal. The anal and lower lobe of the caudal red, pelvics blood red with blue-white tips at spawning time, the caudal peduncle is blood red.
Remarks:	Adipose absent, caudal lobes equal. This subspecies is considered by some of the authorities to be a regional population of <i>Nannostomus beckfordi</i> .
Show Class:	Sub-division Cb.

FBAS FISH GUIDE



INTERPET LAUNCHES NEW AQUARIUM BIO-MEDIA

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Habitat within the Aquarium

by Frank F. Schmidt

Part 3

There is also an aesthetical side in the choice of the fish population. Here too contrasts are important and that is why we select fish contrasting in shape and colour. Fish that live in shoals in their habitat should be kept in groups in the aquarium, in nature every water layer has its own population. That means, that there are fish at the surface of the water; other fish can only be found in the middle regions and on the substrate you will find the so-called, bottom dwellers. This situation should be imitated in the aquarium. About 25% of the population should be surface fish; about 25% should consist of bottom dwellers and the rest, that is 50% are fish that normally swim in the middle part of the water.

As I said before, fish should contrast in shape and colour. For instance, *Barbus nigrofasciatus* and *Barbus tetrazona* are both softwater fish from Southeast Asia. From a biological point of view they can be combined very well, but since shape, colours and also behaviour of the two species are similar the aesthetical combination is not very good. One of the two species should be replaced, for instance by *Hypseosobrycon erythrozonus* or *Hypseosobrycon ornatus*. Another example is a combination of *Resboras caudimaculata* and

Micralestes interruptus. Biologically speaking not bad, but since both species are silvery and elongate, it is better to replace one of the species by, for instance, *Glossolepis incisus*.

A last question is: How many fish can be kept in the aquarium? There is a very specific answer in a well planted aquarium, one gram of fish can be kept in three litres of water, but since it is rather difficult to weigh your fish and because no lists of weights exist in Great Britain - as far as I know - I think it is better to use the rule of thumb that an average aquarium fish needs 10-15 litres of water.

In all my talks, the remark often comes from the audience that the Dutch planted aquarium is unnatural. Of course it is, but I think, that every aquarium, planted or not, is unnatural. The planted aquarium at least is nice to look at and can be an ornament in your living room.

About 90% of the Dutch aquarists are fans of the furnished aquarium. The remaining 10% however are true fish addicts and they try to do everything to offer their fish the same environment as in nature. They keep so called "specialist aquarium", which not only means that the aquarist considers himself to be a specialist, but far more refers to a certain specialism in the aquarium.

In fact two types of specialist aquarium can be distinguished. One, specializing in keeping plants or fish from specific genera. For instance a *Cryptocoryne* tank, a catfish

aquarium or a Southeast Asian Barb aquarium.

Practice turns out that mostly this type of aquarium is rather dull, since plants or fish from a specific genus mostly have a more or less similar appearance and behaviour. It may be very fascinating to the owner, studying the behaviour of maximally developed fish, to watch them spawning, fighting, courting, or whatever, but the interior decoration of such an aquarium does not make a "thing of beauty" in the drawing room. It is better kept in a separate fish house. Actually most aquaria I have seen in Great Britain are this type and consequently are set up in separate rooms.

Far more attractive is the other type of specialist aquarium, that we could call "the habitat aquarium". It is an imitation of a specific habitat in nature and in it we try to attend to fish and plants in a way similar to nature. If we select an attractive habitat, an aquarium of this type can be beautiful and certainly deserves a place in our home.

It is not easy to set up an aquarium of this type. Much research is required to find out what fish and what plants occur in the selected habitat. The same is valid for water quality and temperature. But it can be done. Nowadays many aquarists travel to tropical countries for the purpose of catching fish, collecting plants. It is only rational to take chemicals or electronic meters to analyse water samples and a

thermometer to measure water temperatures.

Since papers on conditions in tropical habitats nowadays are rather abundant in the hobby - as well as in scientific literature everybody can get the information needed for a habitat aquarium. There is no need, to venture a tropical trip yourself, although I can recommend a such like adventure!

In spite of all the information that is available it always will be impossible to make a perfect imitation of a habitat. That does not concern water quality or temperature. When the tapwater has not the same quality as the water in the selected habitat we can alter it. We can make it softer by means of a iron exchanger or make it harder by adding sodium bicarbonate. We can make it more acid by filtering through peat or make it more alkaline by filtering through marble or limestone. For temperature control the pet shop offers today rather advanced electronic devices that even make it possible to effect a difference between day and night temperature.

However it will be impossible to feed our fish with the same food they find in the original habitat for the simple reason, that such food is not available over here. But there is not so much difference between tropical mosquito larvae and the inland larvae; tropical daphnia and inland ones are very similar.

It is also nearly impossible to imitate the dry season and rain season in the aquarium. Another difference - and a rather important

one - is that we can not keep any predatory fish that may be present in the original habitat.

Within these limits a habitat aquarium certainly is possible and it is a challenge to do it as well as possible.

One of the most popular types of specialist aquarium today is a Discus aquarium. Mostly it is a bare tank only containing water (I hope of the right quality) and one or two earthenware pots to give the animals a substrate to spawn. In an environment like that the animals cannot be happy. Why not try to give an imitation of the real habitat?

Water Quality:

Hardness under 5°G H.
pH 6.0 - 6.5
Temperature 25 - 29° C
Electrical conductivity: 15-30 mS

In a water quality like this we can not use many water plants. For most plants the water will be too soft and too acid. However we could try some *Echinodorus* species like *Echinodorus latifolius* and *Echinodorus cordifolius* and perhaps *Cabomba australis* will stay alive as well. We should use a lot of wood in the decoration, since in the habitat we also find lots of dead branches and stems in the water and the Discus likes to hide under the wood from the sunshine. For the same purpose we use floating plant like *Eichhornia crassipes* or *Pistia stratiotes*.

Discus is not the only occupant of the habitat. We find other attractive fish in the same biotope. Of course it is impossible to keep in the same aquarium a predator like *Cichla ocellaris*, but other fish are certainly suited for our habitat aquarium.

On the substrate we could have bottom-dwellers like *Corydoras* species and *Agmus lyritiformis*. Also some other Cichlids such as *Uaru amphiacanthoides*, *Cichlasoma severum*, *Mesonauta festiva* and *Pterophyllum*. Characins needn't be absent either: *Anostomus trimaculatus*, *Chilodus punctatus* and *Hemiodopsis gracilis* are very attractive fish from the same habitat as the Discus.



To conclude a warning: The Cardinal Tetra, *Chirodon axelrodi* is not found in the Discus habitat. One often sees this fish in a Discus aquarium. It is wrong. Although the Cardinal Tetra has a very similar habitat we should keep it in company of Hatchettfish, *Gasteropelecus sternicla*, *Anostomus anostomus* and *Corydoras* species.

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Tetra
www.tetra-fish.co.uk

The Festival of Fishkeeping 2003

The build up to the Festival of Fishkeeping that was held at Bracklesham Bay, West Sussex on the 17th, 18th and 19th October this year started as soon as last years event was finished. For me and Peter Anderson we joined the working force already there on the previous Monday. Once at the show we met up with not only the usual gang but new friends for the first time from the Koi groups. Peter and myself was set the task of setting up a display of furnished aquaria in different themes. Thankfully the aquariums were in place with both water and gravel in them and all the electric's connected giving us more time to set about our task.

To say this years show was bigger and more adventurous than what had been done before was a fact, that those working on the build up had to come to grips with. However our new friends from the Koi groups and Goldfish societies with us all pulled together and put on what must be the foremost aquatic event being staged in this country.

It certainly was a get together of aquarist from all over the UK. As I was judging the Catfish Show being organised by Southern Catfish Conservation and Rescue Society fellow judge Brian Walsh said "its been a few years since we judged together Malcolm" indeed he was right, about 10 years ago at Northern Catfish Group. A quote typical of many friends who once again had come together for this fishkeeping weekend. However there was no participation from any Marine enthusiast, maybe the organisers are keeping this up their sleeve a trump card for next years event.

All the major manufacturers within the hobby were on hand to answer the many questions not only asked by resident hobbyist at the show but also by the increased number of Day visitors this year. When asked what was the 'Highlight of the Show' all the show was a highlight, a tribute to all those that had worked so hard.

Editor: As this is the only time and space permitted in this issue the Bulletin is covering featured sections of the show in the forth coming year.

BEST OF THE BEST

Hagen Masters Open Show: Best in Show - *Botia sidhimunki*,
John Egan Port Talbot A.S.
FBAS Supreme Champion 2003: *Cichlasoma robertsoni*,
Roy Davies, Port Talbot A.S.

Highest Pointed Exhibitor: Roy Chapman, Southend, Leigh & D.A.S.
Highest Pointed Society: Southend, Leigh & D.A.S.
British Open Champion: *Scobinancistrus aurestus*,
Haydn O'Grady, Port Talbot A.S.

Southern Catfish Conservation Rescue Society Show:
Best in Show: *Scobinancistrus aurestus*,
Haydn O'Grady, Port Talbot A.S.

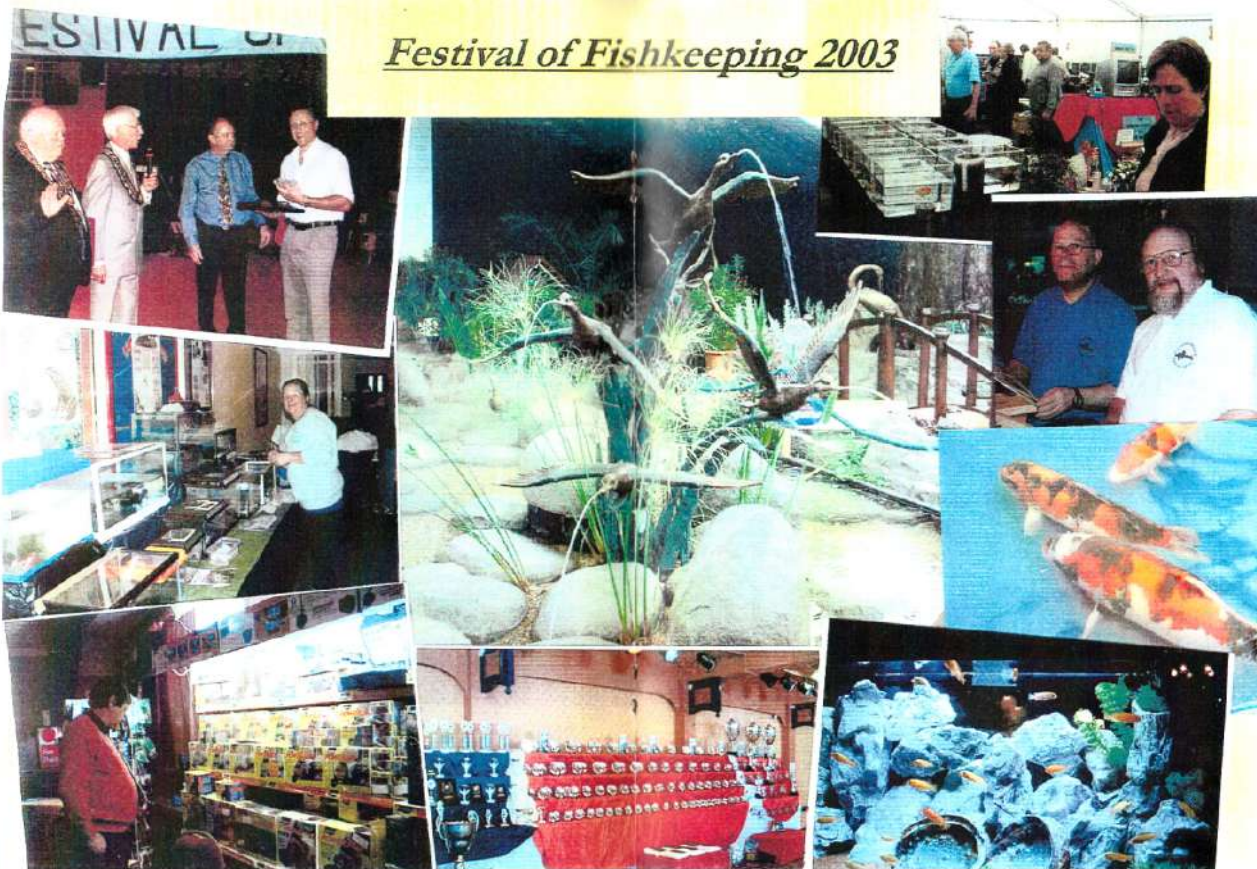
Goldfish Society of Great Britain Show: 18 Classes, total entries 187 fish

Single Entry Breeders Fish:
Common Goldfish and Comet: Ian Mildon
Bristol Shubunkin: Tony Roberts
London Shubunkin: Eric Franklin
Fantails: T Roberts
Oranda: T Roberts
Veiltail: T Roberts
AOV Twintail with dorsal: Ryukin, Don Smith
AOV Twintail without dorsal: Celestial, Michael Pepper
Lionhead/Ranchu: Derek Seymour
Best Home-bred Fish Breeder: Ranchu, Derek Seymour
Best Fish in Show: Ryukin, C O'Sullivan

Laguna Koi Festival:

Southern Koi Group Champion: Size 3 Sanke, Dee Squires
South Hants Champion: Size 4 Kohaku, Annette Adzaway
Worthing Champion: Size 1 Kohaku, Ron Cox
South East Champion: Size 5 Shiro Utsuri, Chris Ball
MSB Champion: Size 1 Shiro Utsuri, Mario Gavozzi
Baby Champion: Size 4 Shiro Utsuri, Terry Hill
Jumbo Champion: Size 5 Sanke, Lynne and Terry Wells
Grand Champion: Size 5 Sanke, Lynne and Terry Wells

FBAS Bulletin Best Article: Les Pearce, Isle of Wight A.S.
FBAS Quiz of the Weekend: Ron Allum, Hounslow A.S.



FBAS SUPREME CHAMPIONSHIP 2003

Once again we are indebted to the FBAS Judges & Standards Committee for their permission to publish the results and Judge's comments on the Supreme Championship Final. The Judge this year was John Edwards.

Entry	Points	Species	Comments
1	77	Siamese Fighter	Ventral fins fins; could have better body shape
2	80	<i>B. multiradiatus</i>	owned by B.Austin
3	78	Siamese Fighter	Poor department. More care needed about label position
4	75	Common Goldfish	Water level. Scale missing
5	80	<i>B. multiradiatus</i>	Poor department of caudal fin
6	82	<i>B. multiradiatus</i>	Department
8	80	<i>Incostomus paradoxus</i>	Department - hid in corner
9	84 5th Place	<i>Sawbwa resplendens</i>	Good department owned by Roy Chapman, Southend Leigh & D.A.S.
10	82	<i>Melanotaenia mcclullochi</i>	Department. Needed more colour
12	82	<i>Neolamprologus multifasciatus</i>	Needs more colour
13	74	Blue Gourami	Department. Poor fish



14	88	<i>Cichlasoma robertsoni</i>	Very good colour refraction owned by Roy Davies, Port Talbot A.S.
16	87 2nd Place	<i>Etheostoma caeruleum</i>	Nice fish, good colour owned by John Egan, Port Talbot A.S.
17	81	<i>Rasbora baliensis</i>	Needs just a bit more in size
22	81	<i>Chaca chaca</i>	
23	79	<i>Iriatherina werneri</i>	More colour required
25	75	Platy	Poor when set against the standard
26	73	Siamese Fighter	Poor when set against the standard
29	81	<i>Ctenopoma fasciatum</i>	Department is a problem with this species
29	81	<i>N. triineatus</i>	Department. Poor tank for Supreme.
30	85 4th Place	<i>Lepomis macrochir</i>	Small nick in pectoral, but made up for it in presentation owned by Paul Whiddett, Mid-Sussex A.S.
31	83 6th Place	<i>Panaque nigrofasciatus</i>	Water clarity made it hard to see fish details owned by Tony Tyson
32	80	<i>Synodontis frontosus</i>	Colour blemish on the pectorals
33	79	Common Goldfish	A good fish in its Class
34	75	Common Goldfish	
35	81	<i>R. reticulata</i>	Good fish; needs to grow
36	78	<i>Poecilia chica</i>	Just not up to the high standard

Tribute to the Late

Jack Stillwell

It was during the month of August that I had been invited by Plymouth Aquarist Society to give them a talk on "Showing Fish" that featured cultivated livebearers of a standard we don't see on the show bench today.



London Pride

For 3 days Gloria and I were guests of Joyce & Bill Rundle and what super hosts they are. It is odd how events turn out as the slides of the cultivated livebearers was given to me by my old friend, Ron Forder. Ron who passed away some years ago gave them to me after Uxbridge A.S. folded. Ron Forder was another great plantsman of both aquatic and non aquatic plants just like Bill. Both

Ron and Bill have the ability to talk passionately about their plants and what is common to both of these personalities, they will give you any plant or cutting you ask for.

For a change Bill received a plant himself from Jack Stillwell, a plant that is a close relative to the rookery plant, "London Pride". Jack's plant having very distinctive leaves with serrated edges. Bill tells me the common name of this plant is known as the "Cog Wheel Plant" and is quite a rare species. Bill has affectionately called it the "Jack Stillwell" plant.



"Jack Stillwell" Plant

How honoured and privileged I felt when Bill gave me a small peace of his "Jack Stillwell Plant".

Malcolm L. Goss 22/08/03

Know your Plant

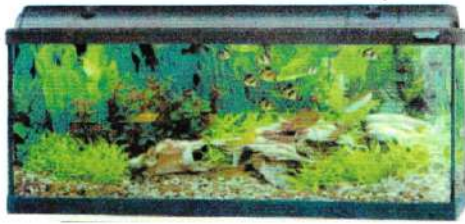
Bacopa amplexicaulis (Pursh)



Distribution: Southern North America

Description: *Bacopa amplexicaulis* one of three species in this family that are all marsh plants. Being bright-green in colour, that includes both leaves and stems, the leaves being oval in shape of 1" long which are opposite and decussate, almost sheathing the stem. Both leaves and stem are thick and fleshy typical of a plant growing out of water.

Remarks: Although this plant, grows in its natural habitat, as a marsh plant, it very easily adapts to fully submerged conditions, however will continue grow straight out of the water. Here it will readily flower being formed at the tips of the emerge shoots in the leaf axils. The flowers are blue to lilac, but rarely white.



TESTING THE WATER

Once set up, most aquariums need the minimum of care and attention to keep fish and plants healthy and the tank looking attractive. It's significant, though, that without this basic maintenance, conditions in the aquarium are soon likely to degenerate into an unhealthy place for your fish to live beset with a series of daily problems.

Water is the main ingredient of the aquarium and just like we depend upon the air in our atmosphere to live and require good air quality, fishes which rely upon the water as their 'atmosphere' also have similar requirements in terms of their watery environment.

The quality of the water we use in our aquariums, however, depends initially on the nature of the water from the tap. This is supplied primarily for human consumption and is filtered, cleaned and treated with prophylactic chemicals before being pumped to our homes. Whilst there are stringent

standards applied to the supply of water for drinking purposes, there is no guarantee that it is suitable for fish keeping. In fact, tap water not only contains chlorine and chloramines that are quite harmful to fish but also often includes equally harmful heavy metals such as cadmium, copper, iron, lead, manganese and mercury. Fortunately there are now very good water conditioners on the market such as Hagen's Nutrafin Aqua Plus Tap Water Conditioner.



which effectively destroy chlorine and chloramines and neutralise all of the heavy metals mentioned and all water used for the aquarium should be first treated with one of these conditioners. Tap water also can include variable amounts of organic pollutants such as nitrates and phosphates in fact phosphates are sometimes added to the supply by water authorities to counter the effects of lead from old lead piping in the system.

These can be removed by running tap water through a Reverse Osmosis (R.O.) system, a vital piece of equipment for serious marine aquarium hobbyists who are required to maintain very high water quality standards to keep delicate corals and marine fish. Generally though as levels of these pollutants are not high enough to adversely affect most cold water and tropical freshwater aquarium subjects, which have a higher level of built in tolerance, and an R.O. unit should not be necessary.

To be at their best fishes that require favoured water conditions like this need to be kept in water approaching their optimum and even the most tolerant of fish species will respond to stable water conditions where pH stays in the range 6.5 - 7.5 with a GH of around 3 - 20°dH and KH of 3 - 10°dH. Full details of the conditions required by over 5000 species of freshwater fishes are obtainable from the Baensch Aquarium Atlas available from the Hagen range of best selling aquarium books.



Water quality, of course, is not limited to ensuring that the water first placed in the tank is of acceptable standards in purity terms. Freshwater fishes, for example, have various needs in the chemical make-up of the water that needs to be met. The pH and hardness of water in natural watercourses varies throughout the world and fish have become acclimated to certain conditions. Fishes such as those originating from the Amazon basin, for example, prefer soft acid conditions and many tetras, cichlids like angelfish and discus and various types of catfishes require water conditions with a pH between 6.0 - 7.0, general hardness (GH) of around 0 - 5°dH and carbonated hardness (KH) between 0 - 3°dH, whilst those fishes from hard water conditions including many livebearers, Rainbow fish (*Bedotia* and *Melanotaenia* sp) and species like the Zebra Danio (*Brachydanio rerio*) prefer a pH of 7.5 - 8.0, a GH between 10 - 18°dH and KH in the range 5 - 10°dH. Lakes Malawi and Tanganyika conditions are even further towards the hard end of the scale and to keep cichlids from these areas successfully pH needs to be maintained much higher, up to 8.0 - 8.5 with a GH of 4°dH and KH of 7°dH for Lake Malawi subjects and pH 8.5 - 9.0



with GH of 17°dH and KH of 9°dH for those from Lake Tanganyika.

Manipulating pH and water hardness to correspond with these requirements is not too difficult. If you need to adjust the pH or hardness of your water consult your aquarium care specialist for advice on a product to use.



Nutrafin pH Adjust Treatments, for example, allow pH to be adjusted up and down and can be used in conjunction with a buffer such as Nutrafin pH Stabiliser to maintain stable pH conditions at the level you require.

Hardness can be increased using other products like Nutrafin African Cichlid Conditioner which safely increases GH and provides beneficial minerals including calcium, potassium and sodium to accurately replicate African Lake conditions.

If on the other hand, the water requires softening, peat fibre granules

or some other softening agent can be used combined with Nutrafin pH Down to safely reduce pH by increasing water acidity.



Organic pollutants as a component of tap water were mentioned earlier but similar wastes also accumulate in the aquarium as organic material decomposes. Ammonia, nitrite and nitrate are the main chemicals produced from decomposition and all are harmful. Fortunately, once the system is established, beneficial bacteria in the aquarium and filter will take care of the ammonia and nitrite and healthy plant growth should help in reducing nitrates to a manageable level. It is circumstances such as the raised pollutant levels that occur in newly set up aquariums before bacterial populations have built up to adequate levels to handle the waste which can cause concern. A build up of pollutants

due to overfeeding also can occur or perhaps as a result of the decomposing remains of a fish that has died unnoticed. Again these problems fortunately can be handled by resisting the temptation of adding new fish too quickly to a newly establishing aquarium and curbing overfeeding. Fish do die unnoticed and can be overlooked and there is no substitute for careful tank hygiene and regular water quality monitoring to enable such problems to be detected and corrected effectively. Water quality monitoring should be a regular feature of aquarium maintenance procedures conducted at the very least, on a continuous two weekly basis and covering a range of parameters depending on the type of aquarium environment.



Potentially toxic pollutants such as ammonia nitrite and nitrate should come top of the list and pH also as this is a good indicator of the general health of the aquarium. Additional tests can then be decided upon depending on the circumstances and might include general hardness and carbonate hardness, phosphate and iron. A good quality range of aquarium test kits are the best investment you can make in terms of the care of your aquarium.


It's possible to buy test kits individually or you may decide to buy a master test kit covering a range of tests:





The Nutrafin Master Test Kit covers 10 tests and includes everything to test for Ammonia, Nitrite, Nitrate, pH (High and Low Range), General Hardness, Carbonate hardness, Phosphate and Iron all housed in a sturdy plastic case. All tests are relevant to general aquarium use and buying in kit form represents quite a large saving over individual test kit prices. A new Nutrafin Master Kit to be introduced shortly combines the big four: Ammonia, Nitrite, Nitrate and pH (Wide Range) again offering savings over individual kit prices for these essential and commonly used tests. Maintaining good water quality really is the key to successful aquarium keeping as it not only ensures proper care of your fishes but avoids the drastic changes in water quality that can occur if action is necessary to correct deteriorating conditions in a long neglected tank. Fish are often injured more by such severe changes in water conditions even if these are an improvement as they respond better to a stable rather than a vastly changing environment.

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DES PENNY

A couple of days ago I received a phone call from Becky Penny, the daughter of Des Penny.

She told me of the sad news that her Dad had died from a heart attack the day before. I was so sad for her as I first knew Des many years ago, when he was a very keen shower of fish. Des and Becky come from Yorkshire and Becky even as a child always accompanied her Dad on his many trips down south. Des was a keen fishkeeper and I always met him at the Yorkshire Aquarist Festival where he was always giving a helping hand. Des specialised in keeping catfish and was one of the last "show secretaries" working for the Catfish Association of Great Britain. The last time I met Des was when he had his head under a rack of tanks on a trade stand at the Yorkshire Aquarist Festival being held at the Doncaster Race Course, he was working to sort out some electrical fault on that stand. Becky, I met quite by accident when visiting a fish shop in Yorkshire last year, as she was working there and introduced herself.

Des with his enthusiasm and dedication to our hobby will be missed, but with installing this enthusiasm to his daughter Becky, the name Penny will be within our hobby for some time to come.



Malcolm Goss.



The Zoological Society of London (Living Conservation)

Dunstable DDAS member "can't wait" for its new Aquarium to open

The ZSL is a charity dedicated to the promotion of world-wide conservation of animals and their habitats.

In 1828 the ZSL opened the world's first scientific zoo, being London Zoo, and 1931 they created the first drive through wildlife park at Whipsnade. In 2006 the ZSL will be opening it's third major animal attraction in the form of the first world-class conservation-led public Aquarium. The Aquarium is to be built in Silvertown Quays in London's Royal Docks, an area recently earmarked for significant expenditure in an effort to regenerate the eastern part of the city.

The new Aquarium aspires to be a leader in conservation, environmental sustainability, public education and scientific research, in a building recognised as a new London landmark.

There are five main exhibits planned that will provide an opportunity to explore and experience the major freshwater and marine biomes of the world.

The first section will be dedicated to the British Isles, with the aim of providing visitors with the knowledge and resources to

explore Britain's aquatic ecosystems.

Section two, the Atlantic Ocean, will immerse visitors into its depths, allowing them to drift with marine life such as sharks, turtles and jellyfish, all these species being to several conservation issues in the marine environment including over-fishing and pollution.

Section three will take visitors to the Amazon where they will be surrounded by the animal and plant life in South America. The fourth section will explore the Indo-Pacific ocean and will be a simulated drive trip through a series of linked habitats from mangroves, through a coral reef, and out into the ocean. Project Seahorse will be a major feature along with developing programs for reef rehabilitation and propagation of living corals.

The final section will be entitled Living Conservation and provide visitors with an insight into the conservation research and programs, conducted both at the Aquarium and around the world.

I am sure everyone will agree that this looks to be a superb project and I for one am looking forward to spending a day exploring it - only three years to wait!

Champion of Champions exhibition

The Champion of Champions took place this year at a new venue, with a new format on the 2nd November 2003 at the Chesterfield Hotel in Chesterfield. Apart from seeing some of the best fish in the country there were many displays plus an auction that included many rare and unusual Anabantoid, Catfish, Killifish, Livebearers and Cichlids. All the fish that were eligible for the Championship class had obtained either 1st, 2nd or 3rd place awards at open shows around the country, so you can guess the standard of fish was very high.



Roy Davies of Port Talbot (*Cichlasoma roberisoni*) receiving the Champion of Champions award from Dr Peter Burgess of the Aquarian advisory service

Apart from the many hobby groups which were involved there was excellent support from British leading aquatic companies. Those taking part included Aquarian, Aquarium Pharmaceuticals, Hagen, Interpet, King British, Rena, Tetra and Waterlife Research. One could see all these companies do really care about the aquatic hobby today and once again like our hobbyist these people give up their time to make our hobby what it is today. This event was organised by ToDay's Fishkeeper

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The following titles were recorded 'live' at the 2003 Festival of Fishkeeping and will be released as soon as possible



If you've been around the Shows, especially in northern areas, you are bound to have come across some of Brian Walsh's marvellous wood sculptures.

Apart from appreciating the final result, you may have wondered how he goes about producing these masterpieces. This video reveals all - but there are one or two secrets that Brian won't divulge!

Running time: 51 minutes. (TSS plus live video)



Fish health is a subject that we all acknowledge is important but hope that we won't have too many problems in this area.

In this video, Dr Peter Burgess, of Aquarian, outlines the problems and their remedies thus enabling you to sit back and enjoy all that's best in fishkeeping.

Running time: minutes. (TSS)



Capturing the needs of a pond throughout the entire year is the task Rupert Bridges, of Tetra, set himself in this video.

Dealing with maintenance and advanced care for the pond, his advice will take much of the worry out of water gardening. Won't it be great to be able to sit pondside, knowing all is well above and below its tranquil surface?

Running time: minutes. (TSS)



The Firemouth has been an aquarium favourite for many years. Juan Miguel Artigas Aziz has studied this fish and members of its genus, *Thorichthys*, in their mutually native home of Mexico for many years.

Mexico is a country of beautiful scenery - with just as attractive fishes.

Running time: minutes. (TSS)



The Family Goodeidae is naturally found in Mexico, so who better to describe the members of this unique group of livebearing fishes than another 'native' - Juan Miguel Artigas Aziz?

Recorded 'live' at the Viviparous Society Convention 2003.

Running time: minutes. (TSS)

Programmes are FREE HIRE to FBAS-affiliated Societies

Available through:
FBAS AquaTalk Officer,
Peter Anderson
(Enquiries: telephone 01753 882873)

FBAS VIDEOS Try these titles at your Society's meetings

Note: 'TSS' indicates a Transcribed Slide Show with little 'moving video' content. These titles were recorded 'live' either at FBAS General Assemblies or other events.



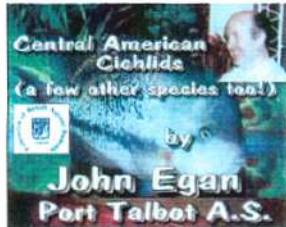
Follow judge Malcolm Goss around as he evaluates Hounslow & D.A.S. members' tanks. Eavesdrop on his thoughts and deliberations as he undertakes this difficult task. See a brief preview (longer, if you use the 'pause' button!) of each tank; make up your own minds in advance, and see if Malcolm agrees.

Running time: approx 55 minutes.



This event, presented jointly by the FBAS and FNAS was a great weekend - even if your memory of it is now slightly dimmed. Tour the Blue Planet Aquarium and relive the excitement of the various competitions, activities and personalities attending the event.

Running time: approx 40 minutes



John Egan, Port Talbot A.S. delivered the lecture at the March FBAS General Assembly 2003. Eminent well-qualified, John has been extremely successful on the Showbench in recent years, having taken many Best in Shows, FBAS Championship Trophies, FBAS Gold Brooches and even a Supreme Championship.

Running time: 51 minutes. (TSS)



If you've ever wanted to visit public aquariums in exotic places abroad, then this video takes you there.

Dick Mills, who 'accidentally' comes across aquariums whilst on holidays, has compiled European, American, Chinese, Malaysian and Australian venues plus an exotic Atlantic Island - there's a surprise 'non-fish' appearance at the conclusion.

Running time : 62 minutes



We asked Alan Stevens to name his favourite twenty fish - a tall order for him, when you consider how many fish he must have seen over forty years as a practising fishkeeper and twenty-four years as a Judge

He revealed his choice to the FBAS September General Assembly 2003, where this 'live' recording was made. Typically, he announced his actual 'favourite' at the very last minute - these Judges, they always keep you waiting!

Running time : 41 minutes (TSS)



An aquarium missing from Dick Mills' previous FBAS video of public aquariums is on another Atlantic Island, well-patronised by British holidaymakers.

Apart from the fish from its waters, this perfect island retreat has other attractions - wonderful flowers that bloom all year round picturesque villages, miles of walks amidst great scenery. Where else can you get a proper cup of tea after a sledge ride?

Running time : 46 minutes

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Where are they Now



Attending aquatic shows up and down the country will always give you the chance of seeing and meeting that face from the past. The larger the event the more chance of you seeing some one you have not seen for years, well a few anyway.

The Festival of Fishkeeping at Bracklesham Bay in October turned up many aquarist I had not seen for years. Some, you had to look at closely as time changes ones looks, less hair for a start. This was not the case as I met that outrageous character Nick Cronin from Bracknell. If I could have avoided him I would! Some people are quite happy hiding behind the odd plant or stare into an aquarium, but not this geezer, "ello Malc" I looked round and he was there, oh --- was my reply.

Nick has been a member of Bracknell A.S. for as long as I have known him and along with his other club mates have been a force to be reckoned with on the club showing seen. Its a long time since I have been to the Bracknell club, but when you are in the company of the Bracknell lads its like an episode of 'aquarist behaving badly'. Nick inspired his club not to be politically motivated and Bracknell A.S. as a club attend all shows, no matter who was running them, great stuff.

Amongst his claims to fame, that he tells me are his good looks, charm and charisma, seriously was his champion winning fish being a *Botia Iachata* at the Sandown Show in 1989.

Will Nick be back? Well he says "I really would like to, but I am so busy with work its hard to get the time", where have we heard that before, lets hope Nick gets the time soon.

Looking through the Keyhole

at the American Flag Fish

The first time I saw the American Flag Fish (*Jordaneia floridae*) was in a small pet shop with about a dozen tanks on the Fulham Road in Fulham. I clearly thought it was a Cichlid and being a collector of fish from this family I purchased a pair. They were a good size, about 55mm (2") so with their beefy body shape I just felt they had to be Cichlids. Sooner rather than later I found out they were from the Killifish family.

I remember entering them at open shows (in the Killifish class) and they never took a card. However with not only lower entries but lower standards these fish would do well if they were seen today.

These fish are seldom mentioned in magazines, so I will give a brief account of my experiences. The

American Flag Fish comes from not only Florida but extends to the Yucatan. After keeping them for some time in a community tank, I set up a 2ft tank that was planted very much to the rear. The temperature of the water was 25°C and the London tap water in those days (late 60s) was around 7dH and the pH was about 6.9. It was one Saturday morning after the fish were placed in the tank I saw them spawning. You could see the eggs being scattered indiscriminately around the tank, more so in the plants. As I observed their behaviour the female started eating the eggs and the male looked on. I managed to remove the female and soon after followed by the male as I had no faith in them looking after the young. I added a few drops of methylene blue to the water, being a safe-guard.

However it seemed the eggs were not going to hatch, the books I

read 'up on' and all agreed these fish are one of the few fish in the Killifish family were the parents look after their young. Maybe I had done the wrong thing removing the parents too early! Well I had no need to worry as they all hatched out after seven days.

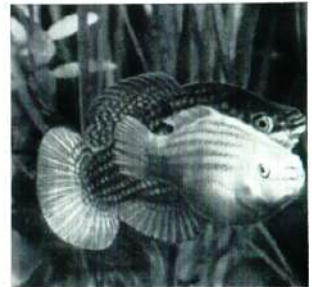
After feeding them on infusoria for the first ten days I then used finely pinched dry food reducing it to a powder. Within two months they were eating small *Daphnia* and they turned into mature fish well before the end of the year.

The males are more robust in their character than the females, and the females often remaining smaller in size. Both males and females take on a body colour forming an emerald green pattern of spangles. With sun-light shining on their flanks they make a most attractive fish. The centre of their body is marked with a blackish blotch, once again a makeup of the Cichlid family. The males can easily be recognised with a much higher colour density and an over colouring of red spangled markings to the dorsal fin and dorsal area.

One of the features with these fish, or mine were, and that is they are peaceful with their other tank mates. ML Goss 5/8/03



Male American Flag Fish,
Jordaneia floridae



Female American Flag Fish,
Jordaneia floridae in front of the male.

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