

In Depth

May 2017

The Blue Gularis

The 80-20 Rule

Calendar of Coming Events

and so much more!



Spatuloricaria caquetae enjoying a feast of black worms.
Photo by Ann Whitman

In Depth

published by The Tropical Fish Club of Burlington

Established February 1989



We meet on the second Thursday of each month, September through June, at 6:30 PM at the VFW Hall, 73 Pearl St, Essex Junction, VT.

Our membership consists of adults, children and teens. Many members are very experienced and have been keeping fish for years, and others are just getting started. People of all ages and experience levels are always welcome. Meet and learn from those who share your interests!

Officers

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Aquascape detail, display tank at AquaSense in Montreal. Photo by Ann Whitman

From the President

by David L Banks, Jr

I hope everyone enjoyed Ryan McAndrew's talk, it was a great mix of relevant current science and the fish hobby. This month our guest speaker will be Kevin Kelly, talking about live plants, how light affects how they grow and how they look to us, and maybe throw in some of his aquascaping experience too. Kevin participated in the aquascaping contest at Aquatic Experience last year and does his own aquascaping and tank setups as Brooklyn Hardscapes.



Kevin will also be speaking at the OVAS meeting and Montreal this month. If anyone would like to go with us to either of those meetings, please let me know.

Also this month the Otter Valley Aquarium Society hold their annual auction in Rutland on May 21. We will talk about this at our May meeting and try to organize car pools for those that want to go and help support them. See the flyer elsewhere in the newsletter for more info.

Our June speaker will be Ted Judy and we will confirm his program shortly. Ted spoke here 5 years ago. At that time he and Mike Hellweg had just completed a breeder competition with monthly updates by TFH with each of them breeding an incredible number of species in a year span. He currently writes the cichlid column for TFH magazine. I look forward to having Ted back this year to share his latest adventures!

David

WARNING WARNING WARNING

Tropical Fish Club of Burlington members are hereby warned of elections to be held at the meeting on June 8th, at the VFW Hall in Essex Junction, 6:30 to 9:00 PM.

Elections will be held for the following positions:

President (currently David Banks)

Vice-president (currently Brian Candib)

Treasurer (currently Janine Banks)

Secretary (currently Ann Whitman)

Board of Directors seat (currently Richard Maxwell)

Board of Directors seat (currently Pam Crossett)

Per the [Constitution](#), we will elect a nominating committee at the May meeting. Members who wish to run for office shall place their name with the committee by Memorial Day, in time for publication in the June newsletter. Nominations may also be placed from the floor at the June meeting prior to the election.

Editorial

The 80-20 Rule Strikes Again

By Ann Whitman



Every club newsletter has a familiar layout: an introduction from the president, recap of past events and coming attractions, an article or two, advertisements and sponsors—and a plea for more help. Here's a sampling from some newsletters I received recently:

- “Share Your Fishy Stories & Pictures! Send in your fishy stories and photos to the editor BY THE 25th of EVERY MONTH.” Granite Fisher, NH Aquarium Society
- “We need some folks who would be willing to help with a few of the really important jobs in the club. Some areas in which you would really be appreciated are [writing] articles, cartoons, etc. for the Buckette and writing speaker reviews (when you can).” Bucks County Aquarium Society
- “NEW! PARTICIPATE IN THE NEWSLETTER FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A REWARD THIS YEAR!” The SCAT, St. Catherine's & Area Aquarium Society
- “Contributions to this newsletter are welcome. This includes news, business/technical articles, items to buy/sell/trade/donate, activity updates, forum posts, trip reports, classes, job openings, etc.” Raleigh Aquarium Society
- “The TropiQuarium is produced by and for the members of Motor City Aquarium Society. This also means that we are always in need of articles. Have over 50 tanks? Been in the hobby since “back in the day”? Working with rare or odd species? Bred supposedly impossible fish? Have a crazy story? We want to hear from you!”

Soliciting contributions to the newsletter is such a common refrain that it tends to fall on members' deaf ears. About a year and a half ago, our club introduced an incentive program to encourage members to submit articles, photos, puzzles and anything else suitable for our member newsletter. Articles and photos are worth points which translate into raffle tickets at the June meeting. We draw 10 tickets and each is worth \$20 in TFCB bucks, which can be used for annual dues, paying for auction purchases or club events.

I've tallied up the points for the current year (Sept 2016-April 2017, so far) and have good news and bad news. The GREAT news is that, so far this year, 15 club members have submitted photos, articles or both! We had articles from several people who have never written for the newsletter before. Unfortunately, I also found truth to the Pareto principle: 80% of the points this year have been earned by 20% of the people who submitted material. Of the 103 points tallied, 85 were earned by just three people.

The submission deadline for the June issue of *In Depth* is Memorial Day. Your editor will be thrilled to hear from you, and you could be a winner—in more ways than one!

Ann

Speaker of the Month

Our speaker for the May 11 meeting is Kevin Kelly and he will present “Light, Color, and Art Theory in Aquascaping”. His talk will be focusing on color and its value, especially the difference between LED and T5’ fluorescent lights, and how light works, complimentary colors, what colors penetrate.

Kevin Andrew Kelly, aka Rossfett, is a Brooklyn-based graphic designer and illustrator who has been keeping planted tanks since 2003. A former skatepunk turned mad scientist, Kevin’s dual curiosities of both left and right brain led to his completion of degrees in Chemistry as well as Art History & Communication Design. Since graduating from the Pratt Institute in 2007, he has spent 10 years providing creative and engaging visual design solutions for clients across the spectrum—from non-profit to high fashion. Aquascape design and installation represents the ultimate mix of Kevin’s obsessions—the perfect balance of art & science. To this end, he created Brooklyn Hardscape as a dedicated aquascaping competition group and small business, and is the recent founder of Aquadesign Alliance, a Tri state regional club focusing on aquascaping design. Aquadesign Alliance’s mission is to further the art and craft of aquascaping and design in planted tanks, and to expand the information available on the subject. When he’s not elbow deep in substrate, you can find him flinging paint at canvas, both digital and physical.



Display tank at AquaSense in Montreal, photo by Ann Whitman

Club Meetings and Events

by Ann Whitman

April was a busy month for club events! We started off with a big snowstorm April Fools' Day, just in time for our second annual Tropical Fish, Frag and Reptile Swap at the Holiday Inn. We lost count of how many people stopped by, but we estimated 150 to 200 folks braved the roads to attend. Many brought their kids, who were especially enthralled with the snakes! Some of our expected vendors couldn't make it due to the weather, but we did have visitors from as far away as Plattsburgh, central and northeastern Vermont. We even gained some new club members that day.

Ryan McAndrews spoke to the OVAS, Montreal and TFCB clubs on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights, April 11-13th. My husband and I drove Ryan up to the Montreal meeting. On the way, we visited AquaSense, a shop specializing in aquascaping supplies, fish and inspiring aquariums. The shop offers a huge selection of wood, rocks and planted tank supplies at great prices.



Ryan spoke to the Montreal club members (left) and to the TFCB (right).



Snakes were the most popular table at the swap meet, by far. Kids especially enjoyed handling them.



Matt from Green Mountain Coral did lots of business selling coral frags and promoting his store.



David and Janine brought plenty of fish, plants and equipment to sell.



Morgan, from Homegrown Scales, educated and entertained the crowd with her home-raised snakes.

Justina didn't find a new home for her snake, but had fun trying.



11 th Annual

Otter Valley Aquarium Society

Tropical Fish Auction & Bowl Show

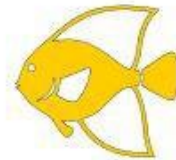
**Sunday May 21, 2017
Noon - 5:00 PM**

NEW LOCATION NEW LOCATION NEW LOCATION NEW LOCATION NEW LOCATION



**The Godnick Center
1 Deer Street
Rutland, VT 05701**

**Free Admission Door Prizes
Viewing Lots 9:30am - 11:30am**



Raffle at Auction

50/50

Silent Auction Plant Tables

Peoples Choice Bowl Show

1st Prize \$100 - 2nd \$75 - 3rd \$50

Please see bowl show rules on our website

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR AUCTION RULES

**Pre-register before May 19th and get a 60/40 split
www.ovasociety.com**

***Aphyosemion sjoestedti*, The Blue Gularis**

by Kevin Hosmer

I remember my first experiences with The Blue Gularis quite well. Even the manner in which that first pair of fish came into my possession was somewhat odd. It was probably 1988 and I was enthralled with rainbowfish. Nothing would deter me from obtaining, raising, and distributing them until everyone was a convert. Prior to any out-of-town excursion I would check with my Rainbowfish Study Group membership list and see if anyone lived in the vicinity of my destination. If only maps and instructions to members' homes were included.

My wife and I were planning a visit to her relatives in a suburb of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I had a lot of rainbowfish fry and juveniles—too many for the four aquariums I was keeping. The membership list provided several phone numbers. Sallie Boggs answered her phone within the allotted number of rings. She seemed genuinely pleased to have an opportunity to obtain several species of rainbowfish—without charge, delivery included. As luck would have it, the Pittsburgh Aquarium Society was meeting the very evening we were arriving and we were to rendezvous there.

We arrived at the Pittsburgh Museum of Science as the meeting was about to begin. It was a pleasant and appropriate venue for meetings. I met Sallie and gave her a box of fish with minimal explanation and instruction. She asked if I would like something in return. I certainly did not understand the name but I understood that it was a killifish. I knew little about killies in general and did not have any extra aquariums at home. Some hobbyists cannot resist something new. I found out then that I was one of them. I hurried out of the meeting much to the surprise of my wife and I departed with an adult pair of *Aphyosemion sjoestedti*—The Blue Gularis.

I recall thinking how beautiful they were, even in the bag. The male and female were both several inches long and the male had long flowing fins. They survived the Pittsburgh weekend in the plastic bag and arrived safely at home in Columbus. I consulted my primary reference, TFH's *Exotic Tropical Fishes*. The first sentence proclaimed, "Here is a fish to try anyone's patience to a breaking point!". I was not encouraged regarding their chances of survival in my care.

Surprisingly, they lasted quite a long time. I remember several things in particular from that first pair of fish:

- they have voracious appetites
- they have tremendous leaping abilities
- they can withstand a lot of abuse

The last two are linked together. The male physically abused his mate. I placed a partition in their aquarium, but the female jumped back over it. I removed her to her side and dropped the water level. I did this several times until I eventually found her dead on the male's side of the tank. The water level had been lowered 4-5 inches. End Act I.

The Upstate New York Killifish Association sponsored a booth at the NY/PENN Niagara Falls Fish Festival held in the autumn of 1994. There were several aquariums of killifish for sale. One held a large number of adult Blue Gularis. Once again, I was smitten. They were offered at bargain prices; I purchased two pairs at \$8/pair .

These four fish were given a 20 gallon 'high' aquarium. Several handfuls of pre-washed peat were placed in the aquarium and a large number of acrylic yarn mops provided sufficient cover for the females and non-dominant male. A sponge filter was the only source of filtration and a portion of the water was changed every four (or so) weeks. The water temperature ranged from 80°F to 85°F which was considerably warmer than any reference recommended that I have read. It was the temperature of the room in which the tank was placed and could not be conveniently lowered. These fish ate anything I gave them in the form of prepared foods; they were not fussy. They would take food from my fingers and allow me to stroke their sides.

I occasionally found eggs in the mops. I attempted to incubate them in typical annual killifish manner, placing the eggs in slightly moist peat with the intentions of leaving them for several months, but the eggs fungused each time. I was resigned to keeping the Blue Gularis for mere decorations.

In early May 1995, I went to remove both males for transport to the local fish show. I disturbed several mops in the aquarium and discovered...fry! I was surprised and pleased. I was aware the Blue Gularis' eggs could be incubated dry or wet. Dry seems to be preferred because the fry tend to be mostly the same size and predation is minimized. However, water incubation is much less labor intensive until the time comes to sort the fry.

The fry seemed to understand the concept of avoiding anything that was larger than they were. Fry, nearly a half inch in length, were often found with the adults. The adults were now over 4" long. I removed hundreds of fry during the next few months to rear in separate aquariums. They grew very rapidly and I grew tired of them. There were so many!

I attempted to raise 100 juveniles to near adult size in a 40 gallon "long" aquarium. During the summer, my fishroom maintenance was perhaps a bit suspect. I suddenly had a tankful of 1 to 2" long Blue Gularis with velvet.(?) I medicated the tank with some commercial preparation and performed major water changes. Nothing seemed to help and they gradually died. But I had many, many more.

Males seem to develop coloration at 3-4 months of age or when they were approximately an inch long. I was never certain of their age due to the continuous hatching of eggs. As males began to develop color, juveniles were given to unsuspecting retailers. I didn't attempt to raise many in large quantities after the 40 gallon fiasco.

One pair of the original adults was sold at the aforementioned auction. The other pair departed this Earth last autumn. I kept two males and five females. Everyone seems to be getting along well in the 20 gallon arrangement as previously described. The pH was measured with a calibrated handheld meter and found to be 4.4. I would estimate these young adults are about six months old. Guess what? I found fry under the mops two weeks ago!

Reference: Axelrod, H.R., et. al., Exotic Tropical Fishes, Expanded Edition, T .F .H. Publication Inc., Ltd., Hong Kong, 1983.



CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

May 11	TFCB meeting , speaker, Kevin Kelly on plants & aquascaping 6:30 PM, VFW Essex Jct, VT
May 12	Brooklyn Aquarium Society , spring auction, Brooklyn, NY
May 21	OVAS , annual auction, Rutland, VT
May 26	American Killifish Association Convention , Northbrook, IL
June 8	TFCB meeting , speaker Ted Judy, 6:30 PM, VFW Essex Jct, VT
June 8 - 13	NANFA. Convention , Meramec State Park, MO
June 22 - 25	International Betta Congress , Orlando, FL
July 13 - 16	American Cichlid Association Convention , Novi, MI
July 15 - 16	New England Fancy Guppy Assoc. , IFGA show and auction, Lancaster, MA
August 25 - 27	Marine Aquarium Conference of North America , New Orleans, LA
Sept 14	TFCB meeting , 6:30 PM, VFW Essex Jct, VT
Sept 24	East Coast Cichlids , fall auction, Union, NJ
Oct 12	TFCB meeting , 6:30 PM, VFW Essex Jct, VT
Nov 3 - 5	Aquatic Experience , Chicago, IL
Nov 9	TFCB meeting , 6:30 PM, VFW Essex Jct, VT
Nov 3 - 5	Aquatic Experience , Chicago, IL



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