



# Ilford & District Aquarist & Pondkeepers Society

December Meeting – Monday 11<sup>th</sup>

# MERRY XMAS

ILFORD  
AQUARIST  
SOCIETY  
2006

**Last month** Paul Mills avoided the subject of Pond Plants for the second time by not turning up so we had to quickly put something together and fortunately the evening was saved Cliff by Cliff Tayler with his video on CD of the Festival of Fishkeeping at Hayling Island and by Gino Dallanegra who had brought along a CD of slides for his own forthcoming talk on Aquarium plants. Thank you both.

### This month – A Christmas Special

What's that you ask? Well... we've discussed so much in committee about this meeting that I'm blown if I can remember just what we've got to entertain you. I do know however that the tea break will be enhanced by traditional Christmas fare in the form of sausage rolls and mince pies and possibly other than tea or coffee to wash them down, courtesy of your President and committee.



### Social events

**The Annual Dinner** is on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 2007 in Stoneleigh Court (off Herent Drive, Ilford). This is your last chance to book a few seats. Ray Downer needs your names AND payment at the December meeting The cost remains as £20 per head. There will be a bottle or two of wine on the table but if you want any other beverages then bring your own.



### Europe 2007/08

The Rhine Cruise may not now go ahead as planned. Unfortunately the only dates in 2007 that the firm could offer us clashed with the 2007 Festival of Fishkeeping that is attended by a fair number of those who would be interested in the holiday.

We may have more news at the meeting.

### Breeders Book and Fry Rearing

Ken is again chasing for note of your breeding successes. He knows of quite a few that have not been entered into his log. One that is in his book is a spawning of Bristlenose cats by Cliff Tayler who will bring them along in January for the first fry rearing of 2007. Numbers are limited so it will be two fish per entry, first come first served. These are excellent community fish so no one should have any worries.





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## The Pond in December – by Mike Brill



In December all growth will have ceased. Plants should be trimmed if not already done. Fish no longer need feeding. Keep an eye on pollution from plant debris rotting in the water. Remove all dead and dying parts of plants. If you are pumping water for circulation in fountains or filters or waterfalls make sure the inlet to the pump is NOT removing water from the bottom of the pond. The water at the surface freezes. The lower levels should not be circulated as these remain at 4 degrees C and protect

the fish. If you circulate the water from the bottom, then the water will cool lower than 4 degrees, which is safe for fish. You could even cause freezing of the lower levels and death of all the occupants.

When ice forms on the pond you must not break the ice by hitting it. Water can not be compressed and when confined by the pond walls and ice at the surface, it acts like a solid. Therefore when the ice is hit the shock wave travels through the water and will kill the fish as if you had hammered them directly. Ideas abound to solve this problem. Floating a ball on the surface leaves a gap in the ice only when the ice is thin. Ice over the pond for a long time prevents oxygen getting to the water and traps poisonous gases under the ice that kills fish. Hot water poured on the ice or a kettle full of hot water stood on the ice will create a hole to allow change of gases. Air bubbled into the water will keep a constant hole in the ice 3-4 feet across. This should be done continuously throughout the winter. Moving water rarely freezes in this country, so circulating the water keeps a clear space, but remember do not circulate the water from the bottom of the pond - only water from about one foot below the surface.

Fish smaller than one inch in length will only survive in mild winters. So if you wish to save them they will have to be caught and kept in an aquarium until the water is warm in June.

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That's it for this month. I did plan to include a few other things but had a couple of small problems with my pond this weekend. Problem 1 was the filter / waterfall system failing because of a split pipe. As it means lifting the waterfall to lay new pipe work I've switched them off till the spring when I intended fitting a new filter anyway. Problem 2 was just a thirty-year-old pear tree threatening to go for a swim when battered by the recent high winds.

Programme for 2008 and an updated members directory next month

See you on Monday

Rab

