



Ilford & District Aquarist & Pondkeepers Society

It was our New Year last month...

... this month sees the start of the Chinese Year of the Pig



The Committee wishes to express its sincere apologies for the poor quality of last month's meeting. It was a long way short of acceptable and we will be making an effort to prepare a much better "stand by" talk for any future meeting where we lose our speaker at short notice. We should have previewed those DVD programmes before placing such reliance on them.

Next
Meeting
12th Feb

THIS MONTH

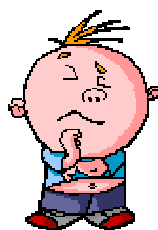
We will have **Paul Mills**, from Wildwoods, speaking on **Pond Plants**.

Visit to Wholesale Tropicals (Members only)

Tuesday 27th February. Meet outside the shop at 7.30 pm
Address: 220 Bethnal Green Road London E2

Quiz Night - Saturday 24th March at Wanstead Cricket Club

At very short notice Ray Downer has arranged a small fundraiser. Tickets will be £7.50, which will include a fish or chicken supper. There is a bar – if we employ a barman at extra cost – so for the moment it's a case of bring your own poison. To make it worthwhile we need a minimum of 50 so names and payment to Ray on Monday please or we will not proceed. Don't worry its not a fishy quiz.



Annual Pond and Home Aquarium Competition Dates

Sunday 22 nd April	Aquarium first round
Sunday 6 th May	Aquarium Final
Sunday 17 th June	Pond Competition

The pond competition is only one round because there have been so few entries in recent years, but will be extended to two rounds if more enter.

The Pond in February – by Mike Brill

If we have a cold winter then usually the ice is worse in February than January. The oxygen supplies in the pond are very low and poisonous gases are building up. If proper maintenance earlier has not been maintained this is when large numbers of fish can die. The bigger, choicer ones needing most oxygen will die first. If there is no dead plant or animal debris then methane gases will not build up. If a reasonable hole has been maintained in the ice then oxygen levels can be good. Dormant fish require only a little oxygen.



In exceedingly bad winters in Southern England ice can reach over one foot thick. Under these circumstances if a hole has been maintained it helps to drain an inch or two of water from the pond (presuming the water is of adequate depth). The ice now acts as insulation and air can circulate easily over the whole surface of the water, which does not usually freeze at its lower level.



In mild winters, late February can see an early spring and plant growth can initiate and amphibians can start to become active. Usually this is delayed till the warmer weather of March, but not always.

This should complete a year's cycle of pond maintenance. I hope it has shown that ponds are easy to maintain and rarely have problems. Although most of the articles are about problems that can arise, they rarely do arise. If a pond is a reasonable size and not overstocked it should be easier to maintain than an equivalent area of a flower bed. A great diversity of wildlife will visit or live in or around the pond. Because of this variety and the beauty of the plants and animals present a great deal of satisfaction can be obtained just sitting and watching as the warmer months pass by.

(Ed's comment. This series of articles started in March when it was first published in the newsletter so you have a few more to enjoy)



Annual Dinner

Last months Club meeting was a disaster but the dinner certainly wasn't. Thanks go to Roger for arranging the venue, Ray for finding the Chef, to Cliff for fetching the plonk and especially to Shirley (Temple) Cirsch for the cabaret.

As you can see all had a very good evening



See you all on Monday

Rab

Apologies if the colour printing is not 100%
The printer is on its way out...

