



Ilford & District Aquarist & Pondkeepers Society

March already...

Next
Meeting
12th March

This is the last month of our financial year so if any of the committee have outstanding expenses now is the time to speak or forever hold your peace.

Last MONTH

Paul Mills, from Wildwoods, did arrive and delivered an interesting evening on **Pond Plants** reminding us of some of the older varieties still available as well as showing us some new cultivars. Plant husbandry and a few slides of his apprenticeship knee deep in mud pools harvesting elodea made for an entertaining evening.



This Month – March

We have **Dick Mills** making one of his regular forays from West London, this time with a talk on ANGELS, which we know from previous visits, are one of his favourite fish.

Next Month – April

Make a note in your diary now because the April meeting will be a week earlier than usual – on the 2nd of April because our usual date falls on Easter Monday. The Speaker will be Gino Dallanegra with the plant talk that was cancelled in January

Visit to Wholesale Tropicals - Tuesday 27th February

I confess that I forgot – very busy at work just now (Gino is not the only one) but I am sure that someone took a picture or two and can provide me with a report for next month....

Quiz Night.

When we suggested a quiz night we knew that it was quite a short notice period and we did not get enough immediate support to go ahead with the proposed date in March. The idea has however not been dropped but merely postponed until later in the year because we do need to hold a fund raising event from time to time.

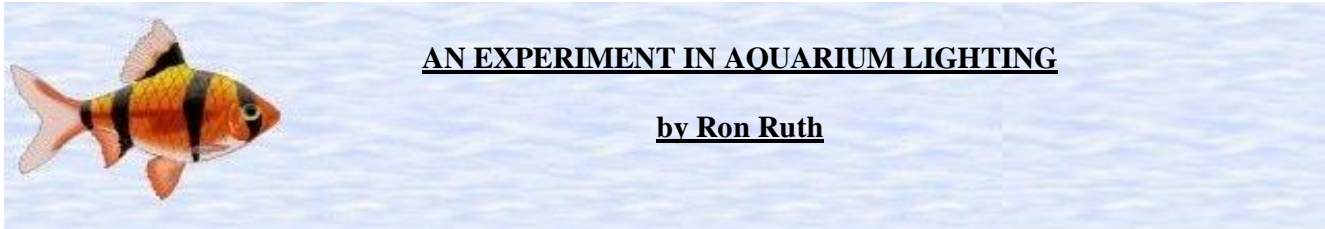


The Pond in March – by Mike Brill

Ponds are the most useful and rewarding areas for conservation. There is water, a variety of habitats and each is relatively undisturbed - these are the three most important aspects needed for conservation.

The pond is just starting to come into life. Plants are growing and animals breeding. All maintenance should have been completed so the new growths and breeding cycles are not disturbed. Remember fish cannot digest food when the temperature is below 5 degrees C.

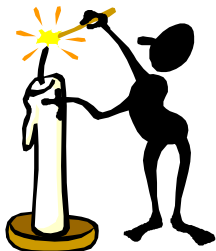
Deaths of fish occur in the spring from disease or poisoning from undigested food. If you must feed make sure it is live food such as Daphnia or a little stale soaked white bread in cold weather - but healthy fish do not need food in cold weather.



AN EXPERIMENT IN AQUARIUM LIGHTING

by Ron Ruth

Part I – The “Old way”



Aquarium lighting has definitely brightened up since the days of the clear tungsten lamp which any old stager will still tell you was the best for plant growth, forgetting it was the *only* artificial lighting available then. The fact that two bare lamps projecting barely an inch above the water and was probably the most lethal piece of equipment in the home meant nothing, and I clearly remember a knockout punch between the shoulder blades when the uncoated wire handle of a net came into contact with a DIY dimmer’s uninsulated connection under the propped up hood. Jumping fish and splashing water frequently blew the lamps creating a further hazard in extracting the shattered pieces of glass from the bottom of the tank and amongst the plants. The effects of condensation in the lamp holder were not even considered worth worrying about. All a sure sign that there was no Euro Big Brother in control (Ah! the good old days).

Then, along came fluorescent tubes and cover glasses and problems with growing plants, until specialist tubes appeared years later. Now you can have light tubes in most ranges of the spectrum and brighter lighting with the latest T5 compacts or even floodlighting if you are happy to throw away your cover hood and have two or three heat exuding, meter turning, ugly looking shades dangling from the ceiling. But perhaps that’s more for the marine enthusiasts.

The problems with fluorescent lighting are the ballast units, usually one for each tube and a minimum of two tubes being required and more if you want to duplicate sunrise and sunset with half a dozen tubes on timers. That’s one hot and heavy unit and two leads per tube to lose somewhere with a reasonable airflow to keep them cool, T5 ballasts run even hotter. Another problem, it is said that tubes lose their intensity within a short period of life so it’s either back to the shop for another expensive tube or another parcel of plants. Yet another, a four foot tube will not fit under the cover of a four foot tank so a three foot tube has to suffice leaving a dark spot each end and this difficulty follows down the line of tank sizes. Depending upon the tanks construction, the only suitable space available will be along the back and the front to leave the centre clear for maintenance. If the lights are built into the hood as on other designs, what happens when you need to perform some unrestricted maintenance on the bottom of the tank, take the hood off and you cannot see the bottom (The ugly floodlights have an advantage here although you probably will need your Ray-Bans on to clean the tank!) Try finding suitable lighting and arranging it above a corner tank that has greater depth than the longest side of a triangular surface area. Three sixteen inch Tri Plus Compacts will just go above my tank but where do I lose three large heat generators required to power them?

Part II next month

The “New way”





Annual Pond and Home Aquarium Competition Dates

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

Your entries for the Home Aquarium Competition are needed THIS MONTH. We will make every effort this year to ensure that photographs are taken of every entry and all will be included in a review evening later in the year – but we need your entries for this to happen. **All entries to Cliff Tayler please.**



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.

Small Ads

This newsletter can be used to advertise items you want to sell, or exchange or, as the two below wish to do, give away.

A Sea-Bray built cabinet aquarium

3'6" x 2' x 2' to 15"

See Ray Downer for more details

Koi for the taking

Laura Nayman from Loughton has some reasonably sized long finned ghost type Koi looking for a new home. Call me for her number



See you all on Monday

Rab