

\$2.00

modern AQUARIUM



August 2025
volume XXXII
number 6

Greater City Aquarium Society - New York

長江水族館

專營各國熱帶觀賞魚和全套優質水族器材



131-08 40th Road, Flushing

Skyview Mall 天景豪苑旁

347.732.0373

monsteraquarium@hotmail.com



歡迎參觀 七天營業

Open 7 Days • 10am-8pm



LIKE AND FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MONSTERAQUARIUMINC

modern AQUARIUM

Series III Vol. XXXII, No. 45 August, 2025

ON THE COVER

Our cover photo this month is from George Welker, one of our GCAS Facebook Fishy Friends. Beautiful photo, George!

GREATER CITY AQUARIUM SOCIETY

BOARD MEMBERS

President.....Warren Feuer
Vice-President.....Edward Vukich
Treasurer.....Leonard Ramroop
Corresponding Secretary.....Open
Secretary.....Open
President Emeritus.....Joseph Ferdenzi

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Pete D'Orio.....Horst Gerber
Al Grusell.....Jason Kerner
Dan Radebaugh.....Marsha Radebaugh

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Bowl Show.....Bill Amely
Breeder Awards.....Harry Faustmann
Early Arrivals.....Al Grusell
Membership.....Marsha Radebaugh
N.E.C. Delegate.....Joseph Ferdenzi
Programs.....Open
Social Media.....Dan Radebaugh
Technical Coordinator.....Jason Kerner

MODERN AQUARIUM

Editor in Chief.....Dan Radebaugh

Copy Editors:

Donna Ansari.....Donna Sica
Thomas Warns

Advertising Manager.....Robert Kolsky
See Us On the Web:



In This Issue

From The Editor.....	2
G.C.A.S. 2025 Program Schedule.....	3
President's Message.....	4
Our Generous Sponsors and Advertisers.....	5
Bowl Show Rules.....	6
Tips from a Fishroom..... by Jules Birnbaum	7
Fishes On The Web..... Cavefish provide new insight into fatty liver disease	8
Fishes In The Ocean..... by Stephen Sica	9
In Defense of Frozen Bloodworms..... by Clifford H. Crain, Jr.	11
Who Are We?..... Meet Donna Ansari by Marsha Radebaugh	12
The Secret of the Underwater Mystery Clock..... by Joseph Ferdenzi	14
The Molly Did It!..... by Stephen Sica	17
Cartoon Caption Contest..... by Denver Lettman	19
The Survey Results Are In!..... by Thomas Warns	20
Pictures From Our Last Meeting..... Photos by Marsha Radebaugh	22
G.C.A.S. Member Discounts.....	24
G.C.A.S. Happenings.....	25
Fishy Friends' Photos.....	26
The Undergravel Reporter..... What Happens When 200 Smuggled Corals Are Seized at JFK?	27
From The Pages Of Yesteryear..... Freshwater And Marine Aquarium Magazine April, 1979 from Joseph Ferdenzi	28

From the Editor

by Dan Radebaugh

You will probably recall that at our meeting last month, GCAS member and frequent **Modern Aquarium** contributor Tom Warns collected opinions from our members for a survey that asked a number of simple questions concerning the fish-keeping habits of the members of the Greater City Aquarium Society.

Well, to see the results of that survey, just turn to page 20 in this issue! Maybe you'll be surprised, and maybe you won't! Check it out!

On page 7 of this issue, Jules Birnbaum gives us some "Tips From A Fishroom." I for one am always on the lookout for things that I might not have already thought of, and this article does not disappoint!

Following this month's "Fishes On The Web," Steve Sica tells us about "Fishes In



The Ocean!" How's that for a segue?! Our exchange article this month is by Clifford Crain, of the March 2025 issue of the Central New York Aquarium Society's **The Reflector**, and is titled "In Defense of Frozen Bloodworms."

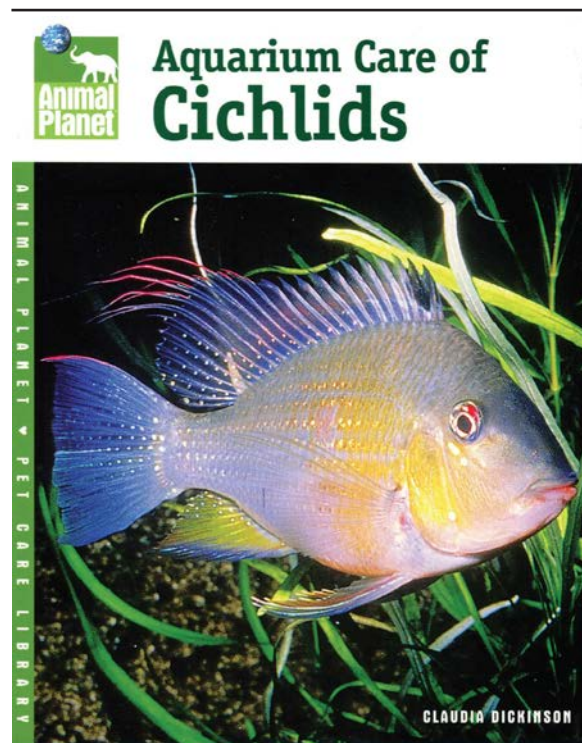
Marsha Radebaugh's series of Greater City member profiles continues, this month featuring Donna Ansari! Donna is a newish member of Greater City, and has certainly been a welcome force on our editorial staff. Thanks, Donna, for all that you do!

Our MA Classics this month is an oldie but goodie—Joseph Ferdenzi's "The Secret of the 'Underwater Mystery' Clock." Definitely a worthwhile read!

Steve Sica steps up with a *second* article in this issue (Way to go, Steve!), this one titled "The Molly Did it!"

The **Modern Aquarium** cartoon caption contest returns in this issue! See Denver Lettman's newest cartoon on page 19! Meanwhile, photos from our July meeting can be found on page 22! Meanwhile, our Fishy Friends Photos can be found on on page 26, the Undergravel Reporer follows on page 27, and this issue closes as usual with Joseph Ferdenzi's "From The Pages of Yesteryear," on page 28!

Happy Reading!



by Greater City member Claudia Dickinson
(Animal Planet® Pet Care Library)

Hardcover – Also available on Amazon Kindle
<https://www.amazon.com/Aquarium-Cichlids-Animal-Planet-Library/dp/0793837774>



GCAS

Meeting Schedule

2025

March 5	Breeder Boxes
April 2	Natural Aquariums, Part 1
May 7	Natural Aquariums, Part 2
June 4	Guppies
July 2	The Balanced Aquarium
August 6	Night At The Auction
September 3	The Blue Gularis
October 8	Cichlids with Livebearers
November 5	TBD
December 3	Holiday Awards Dinner!

Articles submitted for consideration in **Modern Aquarium** (ISSN 2150-0940) must be received no later than the 10th day of the month prior to the month of publication. Please email submissions to gcas@earthlink.net, or fax to (347) 379-4984. Copyright 2025 by the Greater City Aquarium Society Inc., a not-for-profit New York State corporation. All rights reserved. Not-for-profit aquarium societies are hereby granted permission to reproduce articles and illustrations from this publication, **unless the article indicates that the copyrights have been retained by the author**, and provided reprints indicate source, and that two copies of the publication are sent to the Exchange Editor of this magazine (one copy if sent electronically). For online-only publications, copies may be sent via email to gcas@earthlink.net. Any other reproduction or commercial use of the material in this publication is prohibited without prior express written permission.

The Greater City Aquarium Society meets every month except January and February. Members receive notice of meetings in the mail or by email. For more information, contact: Dan Radebaugh at (718) 458-8437, email to gcas@earthlink.net, or fax to (347) 379-4984. For more information about our club or to see previous issues of **Modern Aquarium**, you can also go to our Internet Home Page at <http://www.greatercity.net>, <http://www.greatercity.org>, or <http://www.greatercity.com>.

President's Message

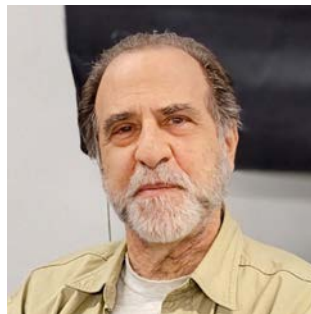
by Warren Feuer

Do you believe everything you see or hear? In my years of keeping fish, I've heard and read lots of "truths" and "facts" about fish. Here are some of my favorites and what, if any degree of credibility they hold:

- Doing a water change involves removing all the water from the tank and refilling it — Well, yes, some folks do perform massive water changes. The then editor-in chief of **Tropical Fish Hobbyist**, David Boruchowitz, speaking at Greater City, stated that he did a complete water change on a daily basis for his 75-gallon Oscar tank. I don't know about you, but I have neither the time nor the in doing this. Though David said that the fish were very happy during this process, I can't imagine my fish acting the same. And change 75 gallons a day? No thanks. I guess if you think about it, doing a complete water change won't hurt your fish, but it's hardly necessary if you follow a reasonable maintenance protocol.
- Catfish are bottom dwelling fish that are good for tank clean up and eat fish poop. Oh really! Please don't tell our resident catfish guru, Mark Soberman this — First off, considering cories as the sole representative of the fantastic variety of catfish will immediately qualify someone as having no knowledge of catfish. I myself am an enthusiastic catfish lover, and I can tell you that there are so many fantastic catfish that it would not be possible to keep all of them. Catfish are a family of varied and fascinating creatures, and so many of them are beautiful beyond description. Finally, they do not eat "fish poop." It's the aquarist's job to take care of removal of detritus as part of maintenance, and to be sure the nutritional needs of any catfish you keep are identified and attended to.
- "Plecos" eat algae — Well, at least they aren't accused of eating fish poop! The fact is there are so many fish that have been grouped into the term pleco, and they have diets as varied as ours. Almost all are omnivorous or strictly carnivorous. While like most fish, they are opportunity feeders, in order for them to survive in our tanks we need to feed them correctly. With the incredible explosion of loricariids (their proper classification) has come an equally large number of targeted foods for them. By the way, "pleco" is a term applied to them for sales purposes. The Royal Pleco and the Zebra pleco have significantly different needs. Many years ago, a store I went into had a "Blue Eyed Pleco" that was slowly wasting away. When I asked the owner what the fish was being fed, the response I got was algae covered pieces of glass were being put into the tank for the fish. I told him that the Blue Eyed Pleco did not eat algae and needed a different diet, more protein and animal matter based. Fortunately, he was able to get the fish eating before it was too late, and the fish was brought back to health. This store was one of many in a pet store chain, which will remain unnamed, that is now out of business. With misinformation like that it's no wonder the chain suffered from tremendous aquatic livestock losses.
- Fish are boring — Sure, it's great to watch them swim back and forth and think that's all they do. I have a 125-gallon Lake Malawi Mbuna tank, and I can tell you that watching what goes on in that tank is far from boring! I was recently gifted with what is thought to be a pair of Pearl Gouramis, and I'm hoping that's true, and that they breed. Imagine them building a bubble nest under the half Styrofoam cup I put in the tank and watching the care they take of the eggs. Certainly not boring. I would bet that every one of you who is reading this has had an experience with their fish that debunks this "fact."
- Fish have no personalities — Wow, who started this one? I've had many fish with unique, singular personalities. Some examples — a *Synodontis angelicus* that I hand fed and would come out of the ceramic tube it lived in whenever I put my hand in the tank. The fish would also rub up against my hand and run its body along my fingers. When a cat does the same thing, does anyone think there is no personality involved? The above mentioned mbunas follow me as move around their tank. Yes, I know they are expecting and looking for food to fall into the tank, but watching them makes me think that there's more than just instinct at play. At least that's what I tell myself.

There are many, many more of these "truths" out there. The point is, most of them are not true, and none of them should keep you from a new aquarium experience. With all the information available, it's your responsibility to find the facts and not let hearsay stop you and, don't be afraid to question what you hear/read. Probably pretty good advice for life itself.

I have had the pleasure and honor of being friends with Jason Kerner pretty much since I started keeping fish back in the late '80's. I first met Jason at the Brooklyn Aquarium Society, and a short time later Jason became a member of GCAS and has become a tremendous asset and a good friend. When the Art Director resigned from the **Modern Aquarium** staff, Jason stepped in and has done a fantastic job in that capacity. He integrated seamlessly with the entire staff of the magazine, and as the Editor, allowed me to breathe a sigh of relief. Through the years Jason has contributed to the creation of many of the Greater City tee shirts. Most recently Jason is



playing a major role in the success of our speakers' presentations, turning pictures into great slide shows at our meetings. Jason also plays "Wizard of Oz," running each presentation slide show from the back of the meeting room during our meetings at the Alley Pond Environmental Center. If that's not enough, Jason also acts as our liaison with the Environmental Center, keeping them apprised of what's going on at our end, and notifying us of any changes at the Center's end. Jason has developed a great relationship with the folks there, which can only be a good thing. Not only does Jason come early to each month's meeting to make sure the "technical" set up is working, but he also schleps ice and water bottles as well! I'm sure I've left out lots of other things Jason does or has done for us, but you get the point; he's a tremendous asset and we are lucky to have him. On a personal note, Jason's a great friend of mine, and although I consider myself fairly technically capable, Jason is my go-to when I have an issue or a question. He keeps himself up to date on all the technical minutiae and always seems to have the answer to my questions. He even survived two separate visits to my late mother's apartment to fix her computer, saving me tremendous grief. Just for that I'm in debt to him forever.

Thanks, Jason for everything you do!

Warren



GCAS Thanks You!

Our Generous Sponsors and Advertisers

The Greater City Aquarium Society extends our heartfelt thanks to the following manufacturers for their generous donations. Thanks also to our advertisers, whose contributions to our success as a Society are deeply appreciated. Please patronize our supporters.

Advanced Marine Aquatics
Al's Aquatic Services, Inc.
Amazonas Magazine
Aqueon
Brine Shrimp Direct
Fluid Dynamics
Florida Aquatic Nurseries
KHC Aquarium
Kissena Aquarium
ModernAquarium.com

Monster Aquarium, Inc.
NorthFin Premium Fish Food
Ocean Nutrition America
Omega Sea
Pacific Aquarium, Inc.
Penn Plax
Pets Warehouse
Rolf C. Hagen
San Francisco Bay Brand
Zoo Med Laboratories Inc.



BOWL SHOW RULES

There is a Bowl Show at every GCAS meeting, except our Night at the Auction/ fleamarket meeting and our Holiday Party and Awards Banquet meeting. Bowl shows are open to all members of GCAS. Rules are as follows:

- Only current GCAS members may enter fish in the Bowl Show.
- There is a limit of 2 entries per member per meeting.
- Unlike some other clubs, every month is an “open” Bowl Show at the GCAS (i.e., there is no “theme,” such as that one month cichlids are judged, the next livebearers, the next anabantoids, etc.).
- Any fish that wins any prize (1st, 2nd, or 3rd) may not be entered again in the same meeting year.
- B.Y.O.B. (Bring Your Own Bowl!) Entrants are responsible for providing suitable containers and suitable water for their fish. These containers must be clear on at least three sides.
- Only one fish per container (i.e., no “pairs”).
- No plants, ornaments, or equipment (filters, airstones, etc.) are allowed in the judging tank (an external mirror, or opaque cards between containers is acceptable, as is a cover that does not obstruct side viewing).
- Points are awarded: 5 points for 1st Place, 3 for 2nd Place, and 1 for 3rd Place.
- Ribbons are awarded: blue for 1st Place, red for 2nd Place, and green for 3rd Place.
- The person with the most points at the end of the meeting season receives the Walter Hubel Bowl Show Champion trophy at the Awards Banquet.
- The decision of the judge(s) is final.
- A running UNOFFICIAL total of the points awarded is printed in **Modern Aquarium**. Only the tally of points maintained by the Bowl Show Coordinator is official.
- **In case of ties:**
 - 1st Tiebreaker – most 1st Places
 - 2nd Tiebreaker – most 2nd Places
 - 3rd Tiebreaker – most entries

TIPS FROM A FISH ROOM

Story and Photo by Jules Birnbaum

Those using sponge and/or box filters and are not cleaning them regularly are causing your air pump and filters to work less efficiently. I just rinsed all of my 30 sponge filters by gently squeezing them in our slop sink. I use both aged and sink water to rinse them. In every case, filters that were squeezed out had black mud in them, which only expelled after several rinses. I remove and replace the floss in my box filters, and in every case the floss was also black with mud! After this cleaning process my central air pump seems to run more efficiently, but the filters both run a little *less* efficiently. This maintenance also resulted in better water quality.

I feed my shell-dwellers, *N. Brichardi* and various other fry, by putting very fine golden pearl fry powdered fish food in a small container, adding water and feeding using a turkey baster. This gets the food to where the fry usually hang out. I do the same with live brine shrimp. It is important to give fry a good head start.

About a year or two ago I replaced my old LED lights with new LEDs with simpler, built-in timers. The timers on my old LEDs were hard for me to program. This upgrade lowered our energy costs and makes for less maintenance for me.

Last year I replaced all my sponge filters with new ones containing simple lift tubes that make for easy maintenance. Plastic air lines tend to get hard over time when in water. This makes it difficult to disconnect and reconnect the air lines when cleaning sponges. My high quality sponge filters come from Angels Plus. The AngelsPlus sponge filters use just a hole in the lift tube for the air hose. It has made filter maintenance *very* easy.

I found that the air flow to my sponge and box filters running at a moderately slow speed worked better. This slower flow allows the filter to trap more of the small particles for notifying bacteria which are working to eliminate ammonia and nitrites from the water. I use two polishing filters from Marineland to get rid of mulm in all my tanks rather than syphoning the mulm out.



Air valves, after years of use, tend to clog, which is why I clean or replace my central air pump filter pad every year. However, if I notice air flow slowing down to one of my sponge or box filters, I remove the air line from the valve, open it all the way and stick something thin deep into the valve. This usually clears the valve of any blockage. Valves in my manifolds are fairly easy to replace if I wanted to go that route.

I have a heat pump for heat, to remove humidity and, in a hot summer, air condition the room. It keeps the room at a steady 78 degrees. I have this unit serviced once a year and it has been going strong for 17 years. Those of you with basements do not need this but our house is built without a basement.

If a fish room is above ground, such as a converted garage, I would consider looking into a heat pump.

Greater City members with fish rooms, or are thinking of starting one large or small, should stay in touch with JEHMCO, the fish room supply house. They have been my source for equipment, parts and technical help from my fish room's very beginning, some 17 years ago!



FISHES ON THE WEB

Overeating and starving both damage the liver: Cavefish provide new insight into fatty liver disease



Photo from Bristol Aquarium

**Overeating and starving both damage the liver:
Cavefish provide new insight into fatty liver disease.**

Stowers scientists' collaboration reveals a genetic basis for starvation-induced fatty liver with a potential therapeutic avenue.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2024/03/240318142242.htm>



Florida
AQUATIC NURSERIES



Fishes In The Ocean

Story and Photos by Stephen Sica

A few issues back in **Modern Aquarium**, I noticed a new feature entitled “Fishes On The Web,” hence my title. It consists of a pretty picture or photo, a brief explanation of the picture and a website where you can conduct further research, if you choose. All of this occupies about one-half page in the magazine. I enjoy brief articles so I find this feature-type news article a good way to introduce additional thoughts or topics using only a few words. It allows a person to decide how far he or she desires to delve into the topic.



The eel family consists of Morays, Conger eels and snake eels. The eel in the photo has a broad, dark band across the top of its head indicating that it is a Spotted snake eel, *Ophichthidae ophis*.



This is how divers usually see eels. A Purplemouth moray, *Gymnothorax vivinus*, pokes its head from its home. They appear ferocious but prefer the safety of a crevice. I have never seen more than a dozen or so free-swimming eels.

The June 2025 issue of **Modern Aquarium** has a lovely picture of the Hades snake moray from Central Indo-Pacific waters. This eel has adapted itself to many ocean conditions, especially muddy river mouths.

This brief article reminded me of an experience several years ago while diving the Caribbean island of Grenada, where I had first-hand experience with a snake eel. Some moray eels burrow for protection or to ambush prey but your “typical” moray just likes to

curl up in a small cave or crevice where it pokes out its head in a menacing manner while opening and closing its mouth to breathe. Flashing those sharp needle teeth while breathing is intimidating for some closeup onlookers. I saw a Grand Cayman divemaster hand feed a green moray that mistook his fingers for the delicious squid that those same fingers held. The wound was fairly deep. When someone bleeds



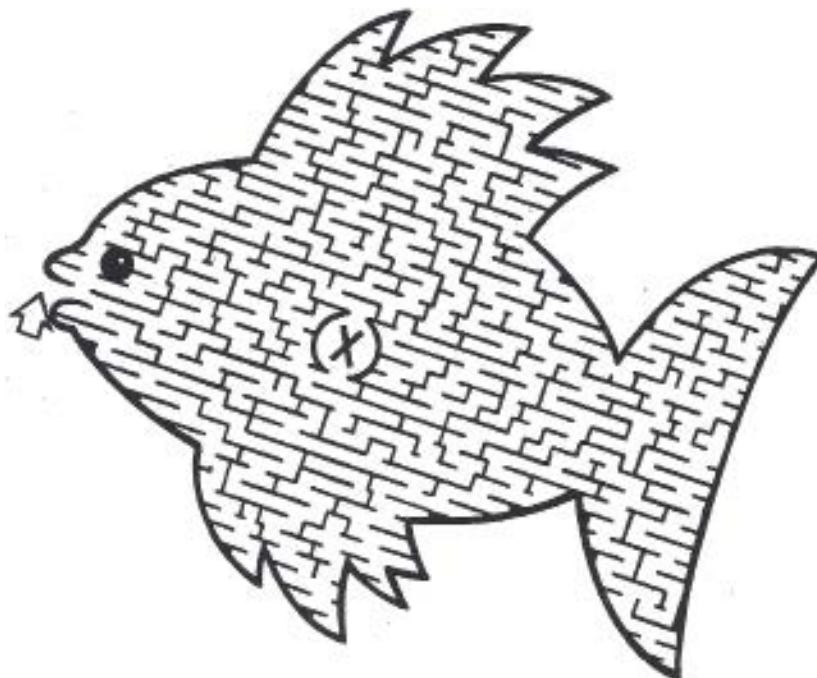
The Spotted snake eel is rare in the waters of Florida, Bahamas and Caribbean. Local divers may know where to look for these eels, but if you are a touring diver, you may never have a second sighting. Not only do they burrow but a Snake eel can move about beneath the sand.

underwater, I always feel that the sharks smell the blood and will come to feed. If you are there, don't forget to look behind you for those sneaky critters!

Finding a burrowing eel is a real treat, but it's difficult to explain. You have to be looking in the right place at the right time, or better yet have a local divemaster who knows where to look for you! The area requires a soft sandy bottom. Some eels will dive down into the sand and some will wriggle up through the sand. If you have a good moon-lit night to dive,

you may be in for good luck. The moon's soft illumination brings out many animals to feed, so there's a very good chance you may see free swimming morays or other eels amidst the corals and sandy seafloor.

But whatever the time, I suggest that you anticipate an eel bursting up through the sand. This is a surprise and a real treat! If it bounds up, remember to duck, or you may get sand in your eyes! The salt water is bad enough.



In Defense of Frozen Bloodworms

by Clifford H. Crain, Jr.

I have come across several people on Facebook and YouTube stating that aquarists should not feed their fish frozen bloodworms (FBW). (See, for example, the youtuber identified as “The Aquarium Project NZ.”) Since my fish, large and small, young and old, chow down on FBW with the greatest gusto, I decided to investigate further to see if there was any merit in what these internet experts were saying.

Although I’ve written about it in previous articles, let me preface this by stating once again that FBW can cause an allergic reaction. I speak from experience, as I suffered a severe reaction that scared the you-know-what out of me. Burning up, covered with rash and suddenly overwhelmed by fatigue, I crawled into bed and felt normal, if exhausted, only after a rest of eight hours. I still feed FBW, but now I always wear an arm’s length heavy glove on my right hand, a standard latex glove on my left hand, a face mask and goggles.

OK, that out of the way, what are the objections to feeding FBW to your fish? I found four on the internet:

1. FBW contains parasites, bacteria or other undesirable organisms
2. FBW are coated by an indigestible “skin”
3. FBW are not nutritious
4. Frozen brine shrimp and frozen mysis shrimp are much more nutritious

Let’s dispose of the parasite objection. I don’t see how an animal such as a parasite would be able to survive the freezing process. Perhaps bacteria could, and none other than Rosario LaCorte, one of the most famous aquarists in America, discovered that FBW from China caused his fish to bloat and die. When he stopped using these bloodworms, the deaths stopped. I believe that the processing of FBW has improved since the days Rosario used them. The package containing Hikari FBW is labeled “Product of Indonesia,” and states the contents are “highly purified” and “free from harmful parasites, unwanted bacteria & foul odor.” I have no reason to doubt that Hikari is ensuring that its FBW will not cause your fish to die. FBW have never caused bloat in my fish.

As far as the claim that FBW are coated by an indigestible “skin,” I don’t know how to test this claim, but some very nutritious foods, such as daphnia, contain indigestible material.

The claim that FBW are not nutritious is false. It seems that what everyone is defining as “nutrition” is the protein content. Protein is of course extremely important in food, but it’s not the only important ingredient. In fact, fish that have evolved to consume a vegetable diet can actually die from eating foods containing too much protein. For the sake of

argument, I’ll assume that the protein content is the defining characteristic of “nutritious.”

I compared the protein in FBW to three very high quality pellet foods. But wait, the haters say, look at the nutrition label on a Hikari FBW package. It says protein is a minimum of only 3.5% and moisture is a maximum of 95%. Protein in a quality pellet food averages about 40%. Because FBW by nature contains a lot of frozen water that melts away and is not consumed, a realistic comparison of the protein percentage stated on the labels is not valid. Freeze-dried bloodworms are 53% protein. There’s no reason to think that, bloodworm to bloodworm, FBW have less protein than freeze-dried bloodworms.

An advantage that frozen fish foods have over pellet foods is the lack of added ingredients that are not found in nature. FBW is just bloodworms plus a small amount of added vitamins. Even the best pellet foods have some grain in their composition. Grain performs the function of a binder, holding the pellet together, but has no nutritional value to a fish.

Finally, the claim that FBW is greatly inferior to frozen brine shrimp and frozen mysis shrimp is just wrong. The chart below shows that FBW has only slightly less protein than the other frozen fish foods.

My conclusion? For my fish that don’t require a vegetable diet, I will continue to feed high quality flake and pellets twice daily and frozen foods once daily. I rotate the frozen foods as follows: FBW followed the next day by spirulina brine shrimp, followed by mysis shrimp, followed by brine shrimp, and then start the cycle over. BTW, the food my fish consider their favorite non-live food, no contest, is FBW!

Food	Protein %	Moisture %
Hikari frozen bloodworms	3.5%	95%
Freeze-dried bloodworms	53.0%	10%
Northfin Cichlid Formula pellets	42.0%	9%
Xtreme Cichlid Peewee pellets	38.0%	12%
New Life Spectrum Cichlid pellets	37.0%	10%
Hikari frozen brine shrimp	4.0%	92%
Hikari frozen spirulina brine shrimp	4.0%	95%
Hikari frozen mysis shrimp	4.2%	97%



This article originally appeared in the March 2025 issue of Central New York Aquarium Society's The Reflector.



Who Are We?

by Marsha Radebaugh

In its 100+ years of existence, Greater City Aquarium Society has had a membership of thousands. Each month, with the exception of those during the Pandemic, our meetings have an average of 40 – 60 members and visitors in attendance. We all know who the “stars” are, the officers, presenters, regular runners, etc. are individuals well known to the rest of us. There are those, however, who quietly and consistently attend most if not all meetings. We sit beside each other, sometimes chatting, sometimes not, without any idea who our neighbors are outside of this room. Well, I think it’s time we found out. As Membership Chair, I have the opportunity to meet and greet each of you, checking you in and handing you your **Modern Aquarium** issue, your door prize ticket and collecting dues. I know who you are! But do you? So, going forward, as often as I can, I’m going to select a loyal member and introduce him or her to the rest of you in this column.

Meet Donna Ansari



Donna is a long-time Forest Hills, Queens resident, who lives with her spouse of 20 years, two children (14 and 11), one dog, one cat, and about a dozen fish. Although that last bit changes almost monthly, as she continues to buy fish at auctions. Donna is me, and I’ll now stop writing about myself in the third person.

I’ve been employed as an editor in some capacity since graduating from college. My first few jobs were for medical journals, but I’ve since transitioned to working in pharmaceuticals. Still, a part of me always longed to go back into journals, and being a proofreader for **Modern Aquarium** helps to scratch that itch. When I walked into my first Greater City Aquarium Society (GCAS) meeting, I immediately introduced myself to Dan and Marsha and asked to be involved. And

I'm so glad I did! Proofreading and fact-checking all the informative articles in this magazine has definitely helped me to learn more about our hobby. And of course the meetings, apart from being a great place to get new fish, plants, and supplies for a bargain, are also a fantastic place to meet like-minded people who have a wealth of fish-keeping knowledge.

Although I have always been interested in the aquarium hobby, I restrained myself from indulging in it due to living in an apartment with little space. In 2012, when my partner and I moved out of an apartment and into our house, I got my first fish tank. It was a 20-gallon tank kit I bought at Petco. The fish I kept in it were also bought from Petco, 24 hours after setting up the tank. There were 10 Zebra Danios, 10 Cardinal Tetras, and 10 Black Skirt Tetras. I remember this specifically because I am scarred from that experience and may never get any of those fish again. Most of them died pretty quickly. A few hung on and I managed to keep the tank going while I was pregnant with my second son Nadim (who often attends meetings). After he was born, I realized I could no longer keep up the tank and gave it (and the remaining fish) to my older son's teacher for their class.

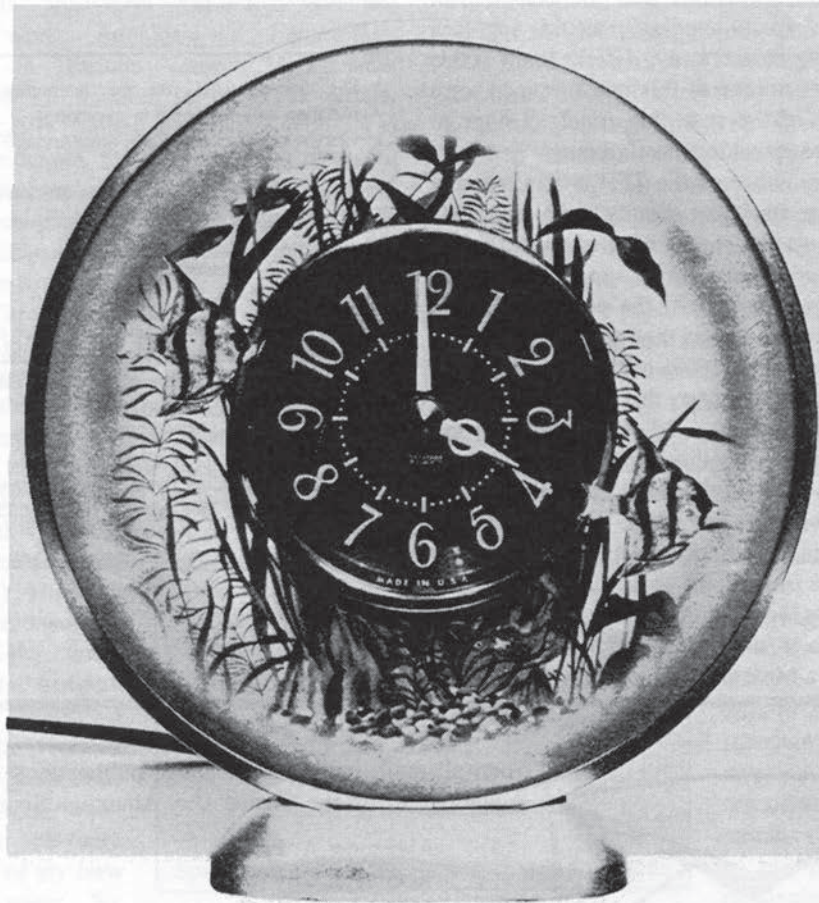
Sometime in 2023, I started having dreams of fish tanks. No, I'm not speaking in metaphors. I began to have dreams, at least once a week, of walking through my house and seeing many beautiful fish tanks. I've always been one to follow my dreams, so I decided to try fishkeeping again, but start slowly this time. Instead of quickly going to Petco, I started with research. One of the first books I bought and absolutely poured over (notes in margins, underlines, highlights) was **Sunken Gardens** by Karen A. Randall. I was determined that my tanks would not have colorful gravel or plastic castles, but look like windows into natural, underwater worlds.

Still nervous about killing fish with my own ignorance of their care, I took a very long time choosing and purchasing a 5-gallon tank. I didn't intend to ever add fish to it, just practice aquascaping and plant care. Eventually, I did add some red cherry shrimp, and to my surprise, they not only survived, but thrived! This was the push I needed to finally get back into fishkeeping. And the first thing, before purchasing a single fish, was to join the GCAS! Today, the aforementioned 5-gallon tank has been taken over by a beautiful female halfmoon betta, which I obtained at a GCAS meeting in May 2024, and I have another 10-gallon tank filled with other fish, all obtained at GCAS meetings.

Other than fish, some of my hobbies include walking my dog Ziggy in Forest Park, making art (watercolor and acrylics are my main media of choice), and traveling as much as possible. My repeated dreams of fish tanks have finally left me, replaced by a few real fish tanks that are just as beautiful. Hopefully, I'll add to them in the coming years!



"UNDERWATER MYSTERY" CLOCK



AMONG THE EDITOR'S most prized Christmas Gifts this season was the original of the above illustration. The "mystery" consists in the constant revolution of the slightly vibrating, apparently unsupported, two Angel Fish. At a dignified pace, characteristic of the species, they make the circuit of the clock face in just a minute.

Behind the lower part of the scene is a small night light that not only enhances the picture, but which makes it easy to read the clock in darkness. The hands themselves are luminous.

The plants and fishes are done in natural, transparent colors, apparently

by hand on a plastic saucer, sunken in the middle, giving a recess for the clock proper, and at the same time adding depth to the scene. Width, 8 inches.

The inside of the front cover (equivalent to the crystal of a watch) is delicately tinted around the edge with what we aquarists know as "algae green". Three smaller stationery fishes in the background are Red Platies, colored to look quite natural.

All our friends have been both charmed and mystified by this Sessions clock. It came from J. E. Caldwell & Company, in Philadelphia.

The Secret of the “Underwater Mystery” Clock

by JOSEPH FERDENZI

Exactly 45 years ago to the month, an interesting one page item appeared in the famous The Aquarium magazine (February 1955). It was entitled “Underwater Mystery’ Clock,” and featured a black and white photo of a clock (see facing page for the entire piece). As you can see from reading the brief article that accompanies the photo, it was a Christmas gift to the Editor. While he is unnamed on that page, the Editor was none other than America’s foremost hobbyist of the day, the venerable William T. Innes. Innes was a Philadelphian, and the clock came from a store in Philadelphia (no doubt given to Innes in the hope of garnering some publicity).

Innes describes the tropical fish motif on the face of the clock, including the colors, which hobbyists had to envision insofar as the photo was not in color. Innes also attempts to intrigue the reader by alluding to its “mystery”: “the constant revolution of the slightly vibrating, apparently unsupported, two Angel Fish.” Well, through a series of fortuitous events, I can now solve the “mystery” that Innes introduced to aquarists almost half-a-century ago.

These events began around 1994, when Stef Zander (who was the original Art Director of this Modern Aquarium Series III) happened to visit an antique store somewhere on Long Island. There, he came across this clock with an unusual

freshwater aquarium scene. At the time, Stef did not know its history, but he liked how it looked, and purchased it (even though the clock motor no longer functioned). He displayed the clock in his fish room, where I happened to see it one day. I, too, was fascinated by this unusual clock, which

appeared to be of ’50s vintage, but was otherwise unaware of its history. Nevertheless, its existence became firmly imprinted in my mind.

Recently, Stef had to move to a new place. This meant dismantling the fish room. When he told me he was only going to keep a few tanks, and was going to sell everything else (a “garage” sale), I said, “Sell it all, but whatever you do, don’t sell that fish clock.” Stef seemed amused at my recollection of the clock (after all, it had been years since I’d

seen it or spoken about it). But, to my utter surprise and delight, he generously offered to give it to me. I eagerly accepted, knowing that it would be a very nice addition to my collection of aquarium hobby memorabilia.

Now, mind you, the clock didn’t work, but I didn’t care. (As Innes tells it, it also has a night light feature, and this was still working.) Just how many aquarium clocks from the ’50s are you ever going to see? Well, incredibly, in the space of one month after I had acquired the clock, two events of serendipity occurred which shed a great deal of light on the clock.



The “Mystery Clock”

Photo by J. Ferdenzi

This article originally appeared in the February, 2000 issue of Modern Aquarium

The first event occurred because I began showing the clock to every hobbyist who visited my fish room. Among these was my very good friend and fellow GCAS member, Mark Soberman. Mark shares my passion for antique aquarium books and magazines. Well, as luck would have it, Mark was perusing the February 1955 issue of The Aquarium because it featured a now famous article on breeding the Neon Tetra by our mutual friend and legendary aquarist, Rosario LaCorte. That's when he came across the article on the clock, and told me about it.

The second event occurred because I showed a friend from work the article about the clock. One evening, he happened to be changing channels on TV, when he saw a cable program about antiques. It was featuring clocks — **not** just any clocks, mind you, but Sessions "novelty" clocks (as you can see by the Innes article, this aquarium clock was, indeed, manufactured by Sessions), and one of these aquarium clocks was on TV. The program was brief, but it went on to say that these clocks are apparently very collectible items (for example, another such novelty clock featured a "Davy Crockett" theme), and can be worth anywhere from \$300 (!) to \$700 (!!) in good working order. As my clock indicates, Sessions

was headquartered in Connecticut. I do not know if the company still exists, or if it still makes clocks. There is a Website for clock collectors that might shed more information on these clocks, but we've been unable to find it.

In any event, thanks to my friends, I now know more about this seemingly obscure clock than I had ever hoped. Here was a real piece of aquarium Americana, with a "pedigree" no less.

Perhaps, one day, I'll have the clock repaired. For the time being, it sits as a beautiful ornament in my fish room. As you can see, accompanying this article is a color photo - the first ever to be published of this clock in an aquarium magazine. Unlike Innes' readers of 45 years ago, you don't have to imagine how its colors looked.

The second "first" is that I am about to reveal the secret of the mysterious moving Angel Fish. Yes, they move. Two little bolts hold the two Angel Fish to a clear plastic disk that works like the "second" hand, making a full rotation in 60 seconds. While the use of a clear plastic disk to make objects seemingly move around a clock face may be commonplace today, I don't doubt that, in 1955, it was quite a novelty — deserving to be described as the "underwater mystery" that it was to aquarists of that era.



THE MOLLY DID IT!

Story and Photos by Stephen Sica

My article entitled “My (Non) Black Mollies” was published in **Modern Aquarium** in late 2024. I had originally purchased gold and silver/white fish which soon began reproducing either two or four offspring every few weeks. I noted in my article that after several months of reproducing similar colored fish I would like to try to breed offspring that were a different color than their parents. I purchased a black speckled male in the now closed Pets Warehouse in Carle Place. My original primary female breeder was showing wear and tear on her body and beginning to show her age so I wanted to attempt to breed a black or blackish molly while the female was still active.

I have no patience or skill at breeding fish unless they can breed themselves. My primary focus has always been to extend the lifespan of fish that I am privileged to have in my care. I like fish but I don't attempt to breed them because it is usually beyond my ability. If a source states that the lifespan of a specific fish is two to five years, mine usually live two years. If I know a fish's precise age because it was born in captivity, it usually lives on the lower side of its probable lifespan. If I purchase an adult fish, I might be able to brag that I kept it alive above and beyond.

Based upon my meager qualifications, I introduced my new speckled male into the fifteen gallon molly tank, and hopefully, awaited the outcome of his endeavors.

It took a few weeks but I soon observed about six “two-tone” molly fry. They were mostly speckled black with some gold coloring. One or two had a dull white or perhaps silvery shading. After another month or two six more appeared. As both groups matured, a few began chasing each

other around the tank. A new generation was taking over the tank that formerly held about seven pet store purchases. Earlier generation fish born in the tank were now adults.

A few weeks after introducing the speckled male, another ten or more tiny two-tone babies appeared. This is the most that were ever born at the same time. It made me conjecture if two or more fish had given birth. With so many babies, I decided to try to photograph them but unless the fish were sleeping with the lights out, as soon as

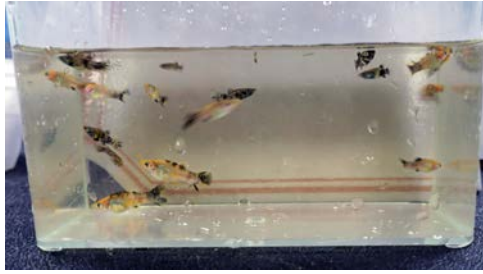


they saw me in the vicinity of their small home, they frantically begin swimming all around wanting to be fed. Most of my attempts to take a decent photograph were unsuccessful.

Fruitless photo attempts always remind me of diving the seas around the island of Cozumel in Mexico. These waters contain some of the biggest and best angelfish and groupers with the ocean running two or three knots. Trying to hold steady to photograph them in these strong currents would leave Donna and myself exhausted and with a low air supply. The last time we were in Cozumel, we floated away from the other four divers in our group. Fortunately, our divemaster and dive guide “rescued” us. I was low on air so he sent us to the surface where we bobbed around in the waves in the middle of nowhere waiting for the dive boat to find and pick us up. The waiting always makes Donna uneasy. “How are they going to see us when we go down with the wave?” This is the reason why I never watched those divers lost at sea movies! Fortunately, we’ve always been found. I always tell Donna that they have to pick up the other divers too and we have to wait our turn. The boat operators do this every day. They find all the divers.

Some divers carry a sausage, that is, an orange or yellow, three to four foot inflatable tube. You blow it up and hold it up to help the boat spot you. Experienced boats know the local weather and currents and know where to find you but sometimes you float up and down for ten minutes or more getting a little extra anxious as the time slowly drifts by.

But as usual, I always seem to digress as I run out of relevant thoughts or opinions. As Gregor Mendel, the “father of genetics” might say to me, “Focus.” Sometimes, it’s difficult to focus. I often find it difficult to think straight.



Anyway, to make a long story even longer, I enjoy watching my mollies mate into various color combinations. Since I was a child, I have had mollies only once with a female giving birth to a few tiny all black babies that were eaten by kuhli loaches. With so many hybrids and color combinations in many pet stores, you can nearly design yourself a custom fish. Better yet, let nature do the work.

The wonder of mollies and other live-bearing fish is that it takes minor effort to breed remarkable animals. Beauty is truly a fish.



An Aquarist's Journey

Rosario La Corte is one of the world's leading authorities on breeding fish and he has written numerous articles and books, contributing greatly to our understanding of fish and their habits.

Now, for the first time, here is a compilation of his travels, adventures, successes (and, very occasional failures) all relating to collecting, keeping, and breeding fish, and in his own words (and edited by **Modern Aquarium's** Editor, Dan Radebaugh).

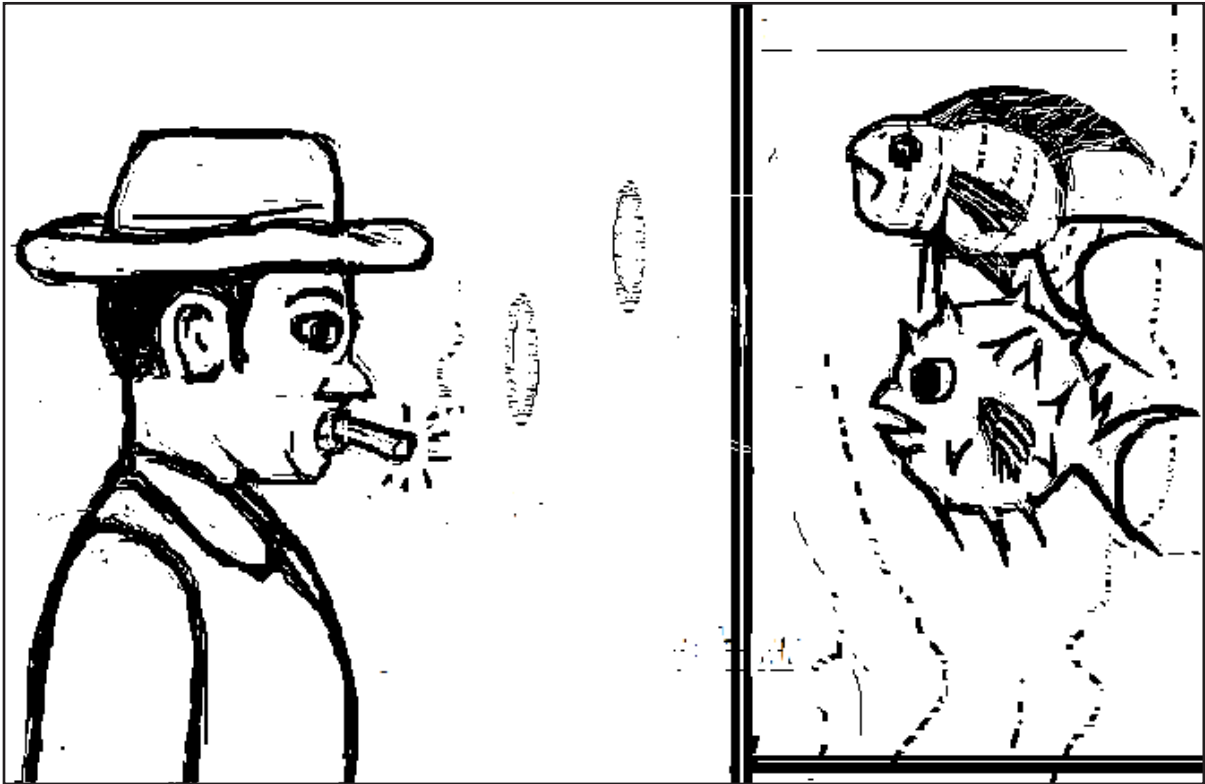
Available in softcover at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)



The Modern Aquarium Cartoon Caption Contest

Modern Aquarium has featured cartoons before, and like we did the last time, you, the members of Greater City, get to choose the caption! Just think of a good caption, then mail, email, or phone the Editor with your caption (phone: 347-866-1107, fax: 877-299-0522, email: gcas@earthlink.net). Your caption needs to reach the Editor by the third Wednesday of this month. We'll also hand out copies of this page at the meeting, which you can turn in to Marsha R. before leaving. Winning captions will earn ten points in our Author Awards program, qualifying you for participation in our special "Authors Only" raffle at our Holiday Party and Banquet. Put on your thinking caps!

cartoon by Denver Lettman



Your Caption:

Your Name:



The Survey Results Are In!

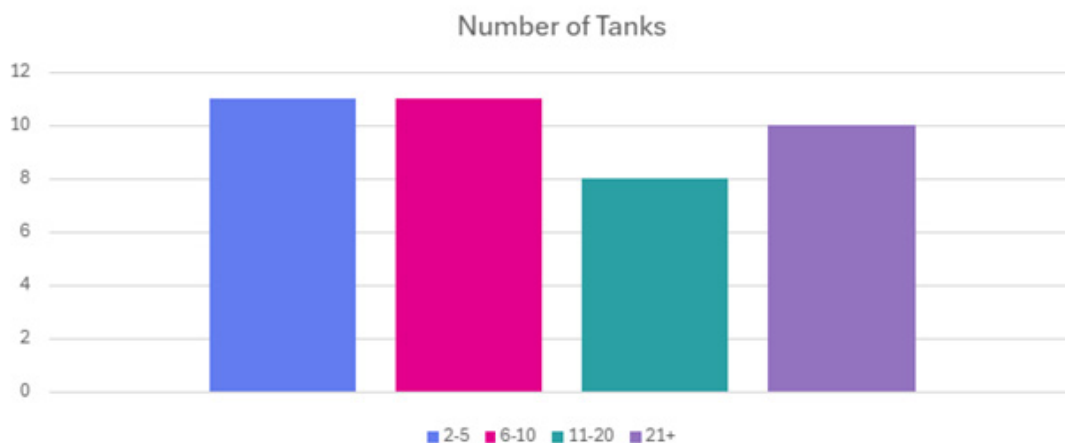
by Thomas Warns

At our July meeting I circulated an eight-question survey which asked a number of simple questions concerning the fish-keeping habits of the members of the Greater City Aquarium Society. I sincerely appreciate and thank the forty members who provided a response. I was motivated to do this because I am always thinking about data. What conclusions can we draw from the data we have? Based on the fish that appear at each auction, what can I deduce about the fish people are keeping at home? About their ability to breed those fish? From the price of each fish, what can I understand about that fish's desirability? About its scarcity?

types of fish, and one lonely member keeps saltwater fish only. You're still welcome in the club!

The second question asked members how many tanks they kept. Precisely zero people answered 0 or 1 tank only. The results were actually quite close amongst the other ranges provided, though what stood out is that a quarter of the respondents keep 21 or more tanks.

Question three asked what kinds of tanks each member keeps (multiple answers were permitted). The results showed the depth of our group's experience—while Tropical Community tank was the most popular response



Rather than make deductions from the limited information at your disposal, you can always ask people to provide you with certain information directly. While I can't guarantee that this survey data constitutes a statistically significant sample of club members, or that the questions were without any confusion (more on that below), surely you will find something interesting in the data—hopefully more than you knew previously. Without further ado, here are the results.

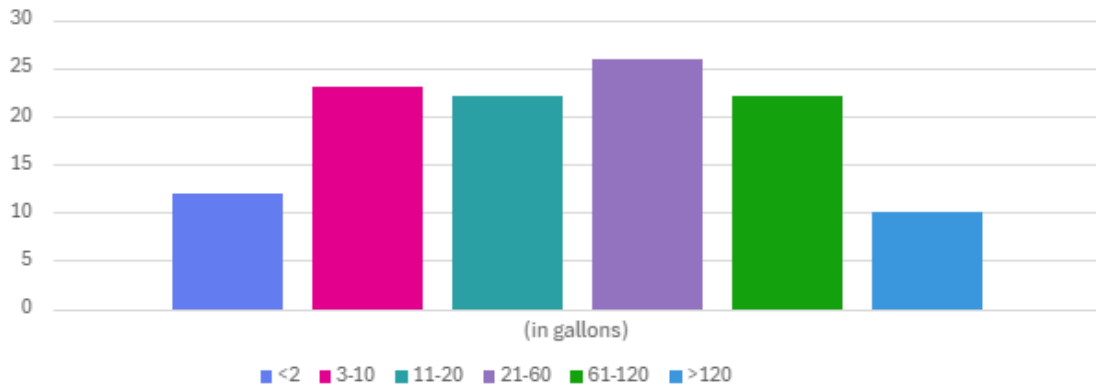
The first question asked members whether they kept freshwater fish, saltwater fish, or both. A whopping 36 members—or 90%—responded that they only kept freshwater fish. Three members responded that they kept both

with 32 affirmative answers, there were 15 different types of tanks listed (including one person with a Newt tank). Other popular tanks included cichlids (19 people), shrimp tanks (10 people), and Betta tanks (9 people). Keep that in mind when considering which fish to bring to the auction!

The fourth question asked members what size tanks they keep. Once again the responses were varied, though the most common size was in the 21-60 gallon range. One person even responded that they keep a 225-gallon tank. Hopefully you have strong floors!

Question five asked members when they most recently bred fish. The results surprised me: while the most common answers were

What Size Tank Do You Keep



“within the last week” (15 responses) and “within the last month” (ten responses), the third most common answer was “never,” with nine responses. What is holding these people back? Perhaps we need more articles about breeding fish, starting with the easy ones. Maybe people need more java ferns and spawning mops to buy at the next auction.

Questions 6 and 7 were both related to plants, and it is obvious that live plants are popular. 36 people—90% of the club—keeps live plants, and just 4 people (or 10% of the club) do not. On the flip side, just two people (and I am one of them) inject CO2 into their planted tank. That’s just 5.5% of people that

survey! Or maybe I just talked myself into writing an article about setting up a planted tank with CO2 injection.

Finally, the survey asked where people “primarily” acquire new fish. While I intended for this question to receive one answer from each respondent, many people provided several answers (meaning it was a bad question, and not one or two people who failed to comprehend the question). The results were illuminating in my opinion because of how unpopular it was to buy fish online (the only thing people don’t like to buy online, apparently).

Where Do You Primarily Get New Fish



keep live plants! It would be interesting to know the reasons why so many people do not inject CO2—does it seem too complicated, too dangerous, too expensive, some combination of all three, or is there some entirely different reason? Perhaps this calls for a follow-up

So there you have it! Hopefully this will be helpful to other members who are thinking about whether to breed another fish for the auction, or to write an article on a topic that appears to interest our members. Information is power!



Pictures From Our Last Meeting

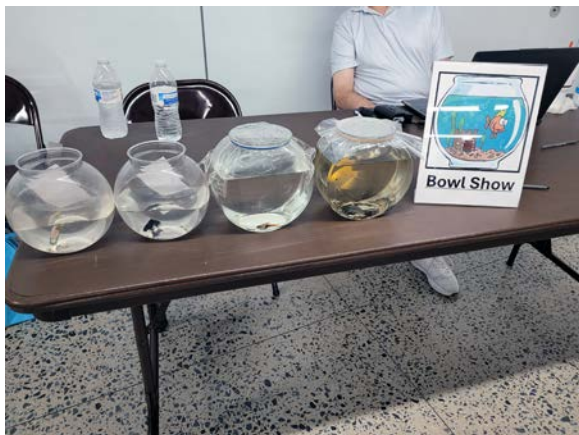
Photos by Marsha Radebaugh



Almost a full house again!



President Warren Feuer presents door prize to Ron Webb.



July Bowl Show Entries



President Warren Feuer explains Tom Warns' survey form.



FIND YOUR ZEN



PALUDARIUM *3 in 1 Habitat*

Zoo Med's innovative Paludarium has 3 sections: a Canopy, a Land Area & an Aquarium. Each can be home to a variety of different plants and animals limited only by your imagination.

Available in 3 convenient sizes:

12"L x 12"W x 24"H (4 gallons of water)
18"L x 18"W x 36"H (10 gallons of water)
36"L x 18"W x 36"H (20 gallons of water)

Build a Terrarium, build an Aquarium, build your own piece of nature and tranquility.

ZOOMED.COM



GCAS Member Discounts at Local Fish Shops



10% Discount on everything.



10% Discount on everything.



10% Discount on everything.



15% Discount on everything in store, or online at:
<http://www.junglebobaquatics.com> Use coupon code gcas15.



10% Discount on fish.



10% Discount on everything.



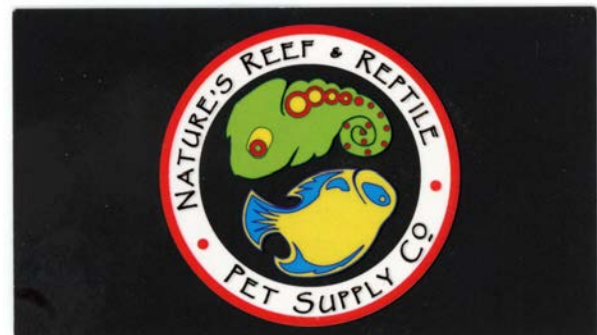
10% Discount on everything except 'on sale' items.

High Quality Exotic Goldfish
 Show Imports from Thailand & China
 Ranchus, Ryukins, Orandas & Telescopes

Rennie Ramnanan
Hobbyist & Breeder

Call/Text: (917) 445-2010
 Email: renapond@yahoo.com

Professional Shipping to anywhere
 in United States!

Established 2011



Fluid Dynamics
NYs Leading Aquarium Company
 832 Grand Blvd, Deer Park, NY 11729
 (631)208-5302

☎ 917-300-2293

📍 124-11 Jamaica Ave
 Richmond Hill, NY 11418

🌐 naturesreefandreptile.com

🕒 Mon-Sun
 10 am - 8 pm

📱 natureefandreprs

📷 nature_reef_reptile



GCAS Happenings

July

A WARM WELCOME BACK TO RENEWING GCAS MEMBERS ARTIE MAYER AND KEN IP!

July's Bowl Show Winners:

1ST PLACE JOE FERDENZI - HARLEQUIN RASBORA
 2ND PLACE HARRY FAUSTMANN - GOURAMI
 3RD PLACE RICHIE WAIZMANN - BETTA SPLENDENS

UNOFFICIAL 2025 BOWL SHOW TOTALS TO DATE:

JOHN BUZZETTI	5	MARK SOBERMAN	5	HARRY FAUSTMANN	9	JOSEPH FERDENZI	9
RICHIE WAIZMANN	17						

Here are some aquarium societies in the Metropolitan New York area:

GREATER CITY AQUARIUM SOCIETY

Next Meeting: September 3, 2025

Speaker Subject: The Blue Gularis

GCAS Usually Meets the first Wednesday of the month
 at 7:30pm, at the Alley Pond Environmental Center
 22465 76th Ave, Oakland Gardens, NY 11364

Contact: Joseph Ferdenzi (516) 484-0944

E-mail: GCAS@Earthlink.net

Website: <http://www.greatercity.net>

BROOKLYN AQUARIUM SOCIETY

Meets the 2nd Friday of the month (except July and August) at
 7:30pm: New York Aquarium - Education Hall, Brooklyn, NY
 11229

Call: BAS Events Hotline: (718) 837-4455

Website: <http://www.brooklynaquariumsociety.org>

LONG ISLAND AQUARIUM SOCIETY

Meets: 2nd Fridays (except July and August) 8:00pm. Meetings
 are held at AMVETS Post 48, 660 Hawkins Avenue,
 Ronkoncoma, NY 11779

Website: <https://ncasweb.thechinesequest.com/>

NASSAU COUNTY AQUARIUM SOCIETY

Meets: 2nd Tuesday of the month (except July and August) at
 7:30 PM. Meetings are held at:

Molloy University - 1000 Hempstead Ave, Rockville Center,
 NY, Barbara H. Hagan Center for Nursing, Room 239

Contact: Mike Foran (516) 798-6766

Website: <https://www.nassaucountyaquariumsociety.org/>

Fishy Friends' Photos

by Greater City Aquarium Society Fishy Friends

Below are photo submissions to our “Fishy Friends” Facebook group. I’ve left the subjects unnamed, but not the photographer. If you see a shot you like, and want more info, ask the photographer about it! I’m sure he or she will be delighted to tell you!



What Happens When 200 Smuggled Corals Are Seized at JFK?

A series by the Undergravel Reporter

In spite of popular demand to the contrary, this humor and information column continues. As usual, it does NOT necessarily represent the opinions of the Editor, or of the Greater City Aquarium Society.

While border security is a major topic of conversation today, many people may not know of the work done by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at our nation's borders to monitor imports of live plants and animals.

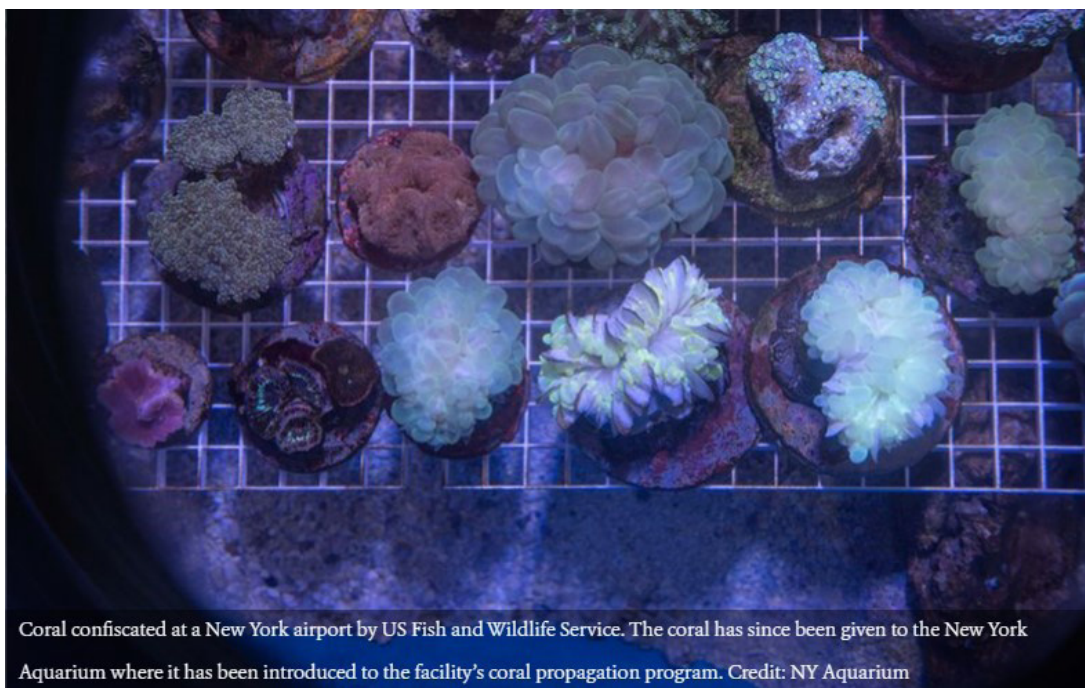
Last week, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service seized a shipment of 200 corals at John F. Kennedy Airport. The corals were smuggled into the country from Indonesia in violation of both an international treaty designed to protect at-risk species as well as the federal Endangered Species Act. The government stated that these 200 corals were likely headed for a pet store before they were seized.

Corals are making up an increasing share of illegal animal seizures, as traffickers from Australia and other locations in Southeast Asia

extract vulnerable wild corals for export to the U.S. In 2023, Moody's Analytics estimated that illegal wildlife trafficking was valued at \$7 billion to as much as \$23 billion per year, making it potentially the third most lucrative illegal trade on the planet, behind only the trades in illegal drugs and in counterfeit goods.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is no stranger to cracking down on illegal coral smuggling. The agency ran a multiyear undercover operation to crack down on smuggling of hard corals from Southeast Asia that culminated in two guilty pleas in 2022. That investigation uncovered a network of traffickers bringing corals from Vietnam to California in violation of federal law, and concealing their activity by submitting false records to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

As for the corals seized at JFK, they were ultimately turned over to the Wildlife Conservation Society's New York Aquarium. After a week in transit and then sitting at JFK, approximately 30 of the corals had died. WCS staff are hard at work nursing the remaining corals back to good health at the New York Aquarium, however. The corals, many of which looked like small colorful baseballs, continue to improve under WCS care, and perhaps will be on display soon.



Coral confiscated at a New York airport by US Fish and Wildlife Service. The coral has since been given to the New York Aquarium where it has been introduced to the facility's coral propagation program. Credit: NY Aquarium

From The Pages of Yesteryear

Freshwater and Marine Aquarium Magazine

November 1979

AquaClear

- Filters in excess of 500 Liters (130 US gallons) per hour with Filter Inserts installed
- Unique reliable motor design contains only one moving part. No maintenance or lubrication of motor
- Convenient and easy maintenance through use of exclusive filter inserts or conventional filter media
- Self priming water flow
- Filter will not stop when media is clogged
- Includes added features of filter cover and levelling device

HAGEN

Best value in its class, ask your dealer.

The AquaClear foam filter insert is designed specifically to remove dirt and debris and is ideal for maintaining biological balance in the aquarium.
Rolf C. Hagen, U.S.A., Mansfield, Ma 02048, Canadian p...

The AquaClear charcoal filter insert allows maximum filtration efficiency for removing organic waste materials and odorous interfering...

THE MASTER

IN PERFORMANCE
IN RELIABILITY
IN DESIGN

AQUOLOGY
POWER MASTER 300

Outperforms all filters in its class ...
Over 300 gallons per hour True flow rate.
Non-corrosive pump and motor housing.
Good for FRESH or SALT WATER.
Dynamically sealed impeller system,
will never burn out EVEN WHEN RUN DRY!

POWER MASTER 300 from **AQUOLOGY** ... THE PERFORMANCE COMPANY

AQUOLOGY CORP., 164 PENNINGTON STREET, NEWARK, N.J. 07105





Koi Organisation International

Can You Be a Better Koi Keeper, and Do It At Your Leisure?

Q: What if there was a source right in your home, available 24/7/365, that could provide the information you want and need about Koi keeping? Wouldn't that be nice, not to mention convenient?

A: Good News! There is just such a source and it's only a click away on your own computer. Water Quality course suitable for ALL fish keepers! Learn something new today!

Current. Accurate. Useful.

www.KoiOrganisationInternational.org



