

The Fish File

www.asw.ca

November 2010



Companion Newsletter to
**The Aquarium Society
of
Winnipeg**

Mission Statement

The Aquarium Society of Winnipeg (ASW) is an organization of hobbyists dedicated to the maintenance, reproduction, preservation, and distribution of aquatic life, with particular emphasis on the social aspects of the aquarium hobby.

Executive Committee

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Calendar of Events

General Meetings: Theater 100, St. Paul's College, U of M, 70 Dysart Road.

Meetings start at 1pm. Doors are open at 12:15 pm.

21st Nov 2010 - Auction - Speaker: Ken Boorman fr Sarnia(Ontario)

4th Dec 2010 - Christmas Party(see website for details)

16th Jan 2011 - General Meeting/Auction - Speaker TBA

20th Feb 2011 - General Meeting/Auction - Speaker TBA

20th Mar 2011 - General Meeting/Auction - Speaker TBA

17th Apr 2011 - General Meeting/Auction - Speaker TBA

15th May 2011 - General Meeting/Auction - Speaker TBA

12th June 2011 - General Meeting/Auction - Speaker TBA

Please check the ASW website for up-to-date information
www.asw.ca

President's Message*by: Steve Bansee*

At the October meeting we had Udo Rohmann show us how to build the Hamburg Mat Filter, especially the lift tube construction; it was pretty neat to see this in action. So the next week I had to try these things out and all I have to say is - you must build one. The flow from these is truly amazing. I now have seven of my tank switched over to this filtering method and it seems to be working very well. And if you missed Udo's talk, check out his article in this month FishFile. Thank you Udo for an awesome presentation!

The November General meeting we have another Ontarian, Ken Boorman, who will be talking about the New Guinea Rainbowfishes. I remember having a group of *Melanotaenia lacustris* (Turquoise Rainbow) and loved watching the male flash/change colour of the area above his head to its dorsal fin. They looked amazing in a planted tank.

Christmas is almost here (and we don't have any snow yet. Yeah!!!), and what better way to start off the season than the ASW Christmas dinner. It will be held on Saturday December 4th, at Roscoe's Grill. We will again be playing the 'Grinch Game', which has been a blast when we had them in the past. To participate in the game you'll need to bring a wrapped hobby (fish) related item \$10-\$15 in value. We will also be handing out the BAP and HAP major awards at the dinner. If you are interested in attending please contact me, any of the other Execs or send an email to info@asw.ca.

Editor's Note*by: David Kozak*

Welcome to the November Issue of the Fish File! We have a member-submitted article this month from former ASW President Jim Cumming about his pondfish, the Minutes from October's Executive Meeting, and back by popular demand: Tank of the Month. Also we have an article from last month's speaker Udo, describing how to build the Hamburg Mat Filter.

If you have any ideas for things you would like to see in the newsletter, please contact me at editor@asw.ca

Remember the ASW is OUR club and we're only going to get out of it what we put INTO it. Volunteer to help where you can-the Exec can't do it all on their own!

See you at the November Meeting!

Sunday Nov. 21st 2010

General Meeting

Ken Boorman-see Bio below
BAP and HAP certificates
Regular ASW Auction

*Theater 100, St Paul's College, University of Manitoba,
70 Dysart Road. Meeting starts at 1:00 pm(doors open at
12:15*

November Speaker Bio

Ken is originally from Australia, but is now living in Chatham, Ontario with his new wife Lisa and their daughter Kathleen. Ken has kept fish for more than 42 years, since he was 10. He has dedicated a good part of this time exclusively to collecting, keeping and breeding several families of native Australia and New Guinea fishes in his numerous home aquariums. He has been a member of the Australian New Guinea Fishes Association for



many years and is currently the North American co-ordinator for that group. He is also president of the Sarnia Aquarium Society and is active in CAOAC, where he is presently First Vice President. He will be familiar to many people as the person who operates Lisa's Lair Bookstore. He is well-read on most aquarium and terrarium subjects. The title of Ken's current talk is The New Guinea Rainbowfish Aquarium. He is currently developing several other talks, all involved with rainbowfish and related families.

The Hamburg Mat Filter

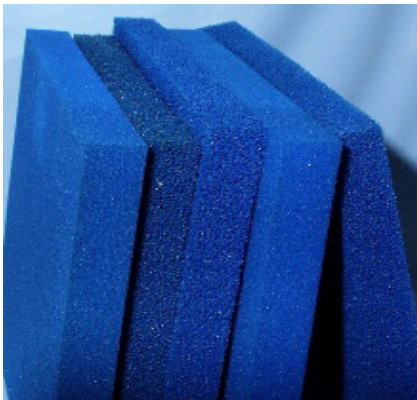
by: Udo Rohmann

The Hamburg Mat Filter, HMF for short, has been in use in the Hamburg area of Germany since the early 1960's.

The Hamburg Mat Filter uses a single section of filter foam as the biological filter medium. In the first designs, these sections were installed on either side of the aquarium, side to side, bottom to top



The filter foam used is reticulated foam specifically made for filtration purposes and without any chemical additives. The density of foam used is usually 10, 20 or 30 PPI (Pores per inch).



<http://www.swisstropicals.com/>

Filter Foam is available thru Swiss Tropicals or a local manufacturer in your area

The thickness of material is usually 3 or 5 centimeters thick.

These choices are influenced by the tank size and type of inhabitants. Fine foam is better suited for shrimp and fry rearing tanks, Course material (10 PPI) is more suitable for large fish.

The thickness is dependant on the size of the tank as the thinner foam will not be stable in a larger section.

Traditionally the foam is installed into a plastic channel which has been siliconed to the tank sides and bottom. I personally have found it to be expectable to friction fit the foam into the tank end side to side, the foam remains in solid contact with the bottom by pushing the top below the plastic trim of the tank.

Many other configurations are possible, corner, semicircle and even hang on the back versions.

The required size of the filter mat can be determined using the following equation:

$V \times T \times A = \text{Filter area}$

V= volume in litres

T= volume turn over per hour (2 is recommended)

A= approach speed in centimeters per minute (5-10 is recommended, I use 7.5)

You will find that the Mat Filter area will be correct for most standard size tank sides.

The calculation is necessary for other shapes and locations.

You may say that this is just another sponge filter, well, you are right and wrong!

The Hamburg Mat Filter has a very large filter area, far larger than any standard sponge filter, this allows for optimum dwell time of water in the filter medium to maximize the biological filtration activity.

In addition to this a build up of beneficial bacteria will occur behind the Mat! Do not remove this bacterial build up.

Many hobbyists, including myself have found that once a Mat Filter is installed, cleaning is not required for very long periods of time (2-3 years or more).

Moving the water thru the mat can be achieved in one of 2 ways, the installation of a power head or an air lifter.

My personal preference is with an air lift (I currently use a central air pump with an output of 80L/min to drive 32 tanks with a total volume of 1100 gallons), This makes the system very economical to operate.

The Air lifters are constructed as follows

Parts list: pipe 1" pipe, 1 1/2" pipe, 2 - 32x4 – O rings, 3/16" rigid air pipe



Drill a series of 1mm holes around one end of the 1" pipe (2 or 3 rows)



Install one o ring above the rows of holes and another below it as follows



Drill a 3/16" hole into the 1 1/2" pipe section and install a short piece of 3/16th rigid pipe (friction fit)



Slide the 1 1/2" pipe over the 2 o rings, this creates the pressure chamber and Attach the 1" electrical PVC elbow and cut the exit side on a 60 degree angle



Now attach your air line and you are ready, The finished lifter should be about 1.5" above the bottom of the tank and the exhaust should be right on the waterline.

You can anticipate an output ratio of 1:2 Air: Water, this will be achieved at 90% capacity for the size of pipe you are using

The following is a list of other pipe sizes I have used

16mm pipe/ 20mm coupling/ 16x2.5 – O

3/4" pipe/ 1" coupling/ 25x4 – O

This is the most efficient air lift design I have been able to find!

Emptying the Pond

by: jim Cumming

Some time ago, I purchased a few species of Uruguayan Earth eaters from Spencer. One of them was *Gymnogeophagus gymnogenys*. It's a gorgeous fish. Only problem is that one male just does not tolerate another male's presence. Only in a large tank with plenty of refuge do the less dominant males survive (in my experience). Also, Uruguayan cichlids do not like heat. They will tolerate it for a time and it certainly stimulates the fish to breed, but it is well documented that they do quite nicely on a continuing basis at cooler (room) temperatures. In fact to keep them vigorous and healthy they should be subjected to a purposeful "cold" period. This brings me to the point of my article.



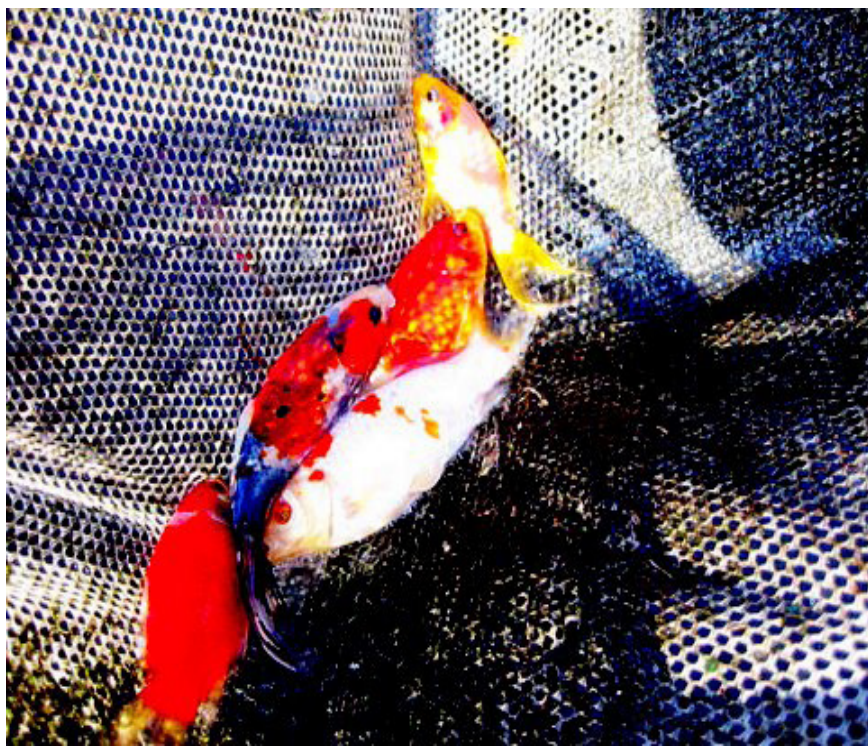
I have a pond in my backyard that is 12' by 5' by 30" deep. It is stocked with eighteen goldfish and about twenty Kansas longear sunfish (in my opinion one of the most beautiful freshwater fish in the world). I thought this year I would put 20 or 25 *G. gymnogenys* out there as well, with several males in the group. Within a day, a good sized male was "trashed" by a more dominant one. Even with all that room to flee, it couldn't escape the wrath of the dominant male. This doesn't entirely surprise me since I had seen a precedent some years ago.

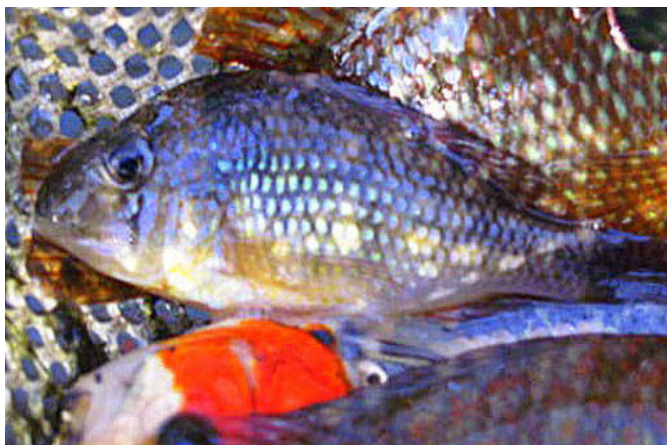
I was in southern Mexico in the Yucatan, trying to collect some cichlids in Laguna Bacalar, a 20 mile long finger lake near the Belize border. I was snorkeling in the shallows just off a campground, observing schools of *Vieja heterospilum*, and *Petenia splendida* (red bay snook). Along the edges were pairs of *Archocentrus spilurum* (Jade Eyed cichlids) tending young (I caught some fry and got them home), *Nandopsis salvini* (a beautiful blue form) along with several *Thorichthys affinis* (Orange Firemouths). I observed a large female that had been stripped of her fins and scales. She had been trying to defend its young (which were still surrounding her) and lost the battle. She could have fled and escaped this fate since she had lots of room. But no, she protected her young to the end. I held her underwater in my net for awhile trying to decide what to do with her, but within minutes, she died. A sad story but that's nature's way.

Anyway, the gymnos had a good summer, rooting around in the mulm, and seemingly enjoying the "pond life". No more losses were observed. At times the water temperatures in the heat of the summer rose upwards of 30 oC. Then when Fall weather arrived (still pretty nice), the water temperatures started plummet - - 25o , 20o , 10o. I was planning to keep all the fish in the pond this winter because of lack of suitable quarters inside. But I was concerned about the gymnos not making it. Uruguay gets cold in winter, but it's of relatively short duration with the odd day temperatures falling below 0o. So I changed my mind, "bit the bullet", and got some "housing" for them inside.



So yesterday (October 28), I finally got to draining the pond and catching the fish. The water temperature was 3 oC, so I knew the fish would not be moving too fast. Incidentally, I hadn't seen the sunfish or the gymnos for a couple of weeks. I was pretty sure the sunfish were still okay since in Kansas and Missouri, they do spend the winter under the ice. But the gymnos??? I had visions of a couple of dozen of them sucked up against the pump's intake (RIP). When I started netting (I had drained the pond down to about 3 cm) it was the goldfish that I snagged first. How could you miss them - -they were just "glowing". Then the net yielded a couple of sunfish. Talk about living jewels - - all orange and turquoise, that would "knock your eyes out". I had pulled the pump up earlier to check for casualties. There were no fish stuck to the pump inlet or bodies floating in the water. Had the gymnos succumbed some time ago and became pond detritus? The next swipe of the net answered the question. Indeed the gymnos were alive and well. Their sides were lined with turquoise blue scales, and their heads a rich golden color flecked with red. The fins were red edged and sparkling blue. Truly a sight to behold. After about thirty minutes I had pulled eighteen goldfish, twenty-three Longears, and eighteen gymnos. I ran out of time so planned to drain the pond a bit more (to a few centimeters) the next day to make sure all the fish were out.





When I went outside the following day, the air temperature was 1.3oC, and there was a thin layer of ice on the pond and the pump impeller was frozen solid. I thawed the pump, and then pumped the water down more. The final netting yielded three smaller female gymnos. Another one was found frozen solid inside the empty basket that I house the pump in. When I pulled it up the previous day, I hadn't noticed that there was a beautiful male gymno in there, resulting in a fish Popsicle. So, the water temperature that the fish had been living in the last few days ranged between 1 and 3 oC. In conclusion, I would say that the *G. gymnogenys* got their "cold period" - - maybe more than they bargained for. Time will tell on that front.

October 5th Executive Meeting Minutes

Present: Steve, Chris, Brenda, Shaun, Darryl, Al, Chelsea
Regrets: Jeff, Vince, Monique

Location: Chelsea's 8:05pm Meeting called to order

1. September exec meeting recap

Previous minutes were not distributed as the secretary's computer has a virus. Once meeting minutes are standardized and accepted, they should be published in the newsletter.

2. October general meeting planning

October 17th; Udo Rohmann from the Durham Regional Club to speak on Hamburg filters. Darryl to bring 5-10 gallon tank for his talk. Steve to check with Vince about raffle prize. Chelsea to tour him around Winnipeg on Saturday and arrange a dinner with the executives/membership on Saturday night.

Auctioneers: Chelsea, Chris Langtree (Al and Scott are unavailable)

There is a need to appoint an Auction Chair to help out at general meetings. Udo suggested a 'fish exchange' between our clubs; this will go ahead on a trial basis with executive members this month and, if it works well, be attempted next month with the membership.

3. November general meeting

Ken Boorman to speak on rainbowfishes.

4. Christmas Party

Sunday, December 5th or 12th at Roscoe's Grill. Steve to contact the venue to book a date.

5. Round Table

President: Jim Cumming (spelling of his last name verified) confirmed as a speaker (Latin) for Feb/Mar 2011.

Shawn Luky is booking a speaker from Fisheries & Oceans.

We are looking for a plant speaker as our survey showed many people interested in aquatic plants – perhaps Karen Randall again.

Membership: Long term members are bored at meetings; discussion followed about ways to make meetings more interesting. Suggestions included: theme days (tacky t-shirts, photos, bowl show – auction bucks as prizes), more socializing. For the March meeting, the executive members will be leading a 'Tales of Fishkeeping' discussion with short (5 min) anecdotes and perhaps a couple of photos. It is hoped that this will open up the floor to members to share their own fishkeeping stories.

A discussion emerged on donating club funds to charity. The executive felt it important to visit each request on a case-by-case basis, but needed to establish some rules. Steve moved that:

As finances allow, no more than 3 times a year the ASW can choose to donate monies (other than our operating funds – for example, specially-designated raffles) to fish or aquatics-related charities, on a case-by-case basis. The motion was seconded by Chelsea and unanimously carried.

Exchange: Nothing new to report; will talk to the Editor about exchange status and ideas.

Communications: The Ronald McDonald House tank is still being maintained. Brenda moved to have the proceeds from the next 2 general meeting raffles put towards the purchase of a new tank setup for RMH. Sean seconded the motion and it was carried, with no dissenters.

Treasurer: Still unable to switch signing authority; Steve to get bank statements for Brenda. Brenda to present finances to the club when funds are sorted out. The financial statements will be published in upcoming newsletters.

HAP: Minor changes are needed to some species, such as moving water lettuce from Class D to A. These will all be presented together at a future date. Chris is trying to create a species database.

BAP: The program is constantly being revamped but it is difficult. Lots of species are missing and need to be updated/added. Al and Steve to meet with Chris Biggs to discuss new BAP ideas.

President (wrap-up): Suggestions from Spencer Jack on how to improve the club were presented and heard. We agreed to try and plan a June BBQ and to hold a giant auction in January instead of in June.

9:25 pm Meeting adjourned

Tank of the Month

Jim Cumming

This month's "Tank of the Month" is Jim Cumming's (Notho2000 on the Fish Forum) River Tank. Very nice job Jim!



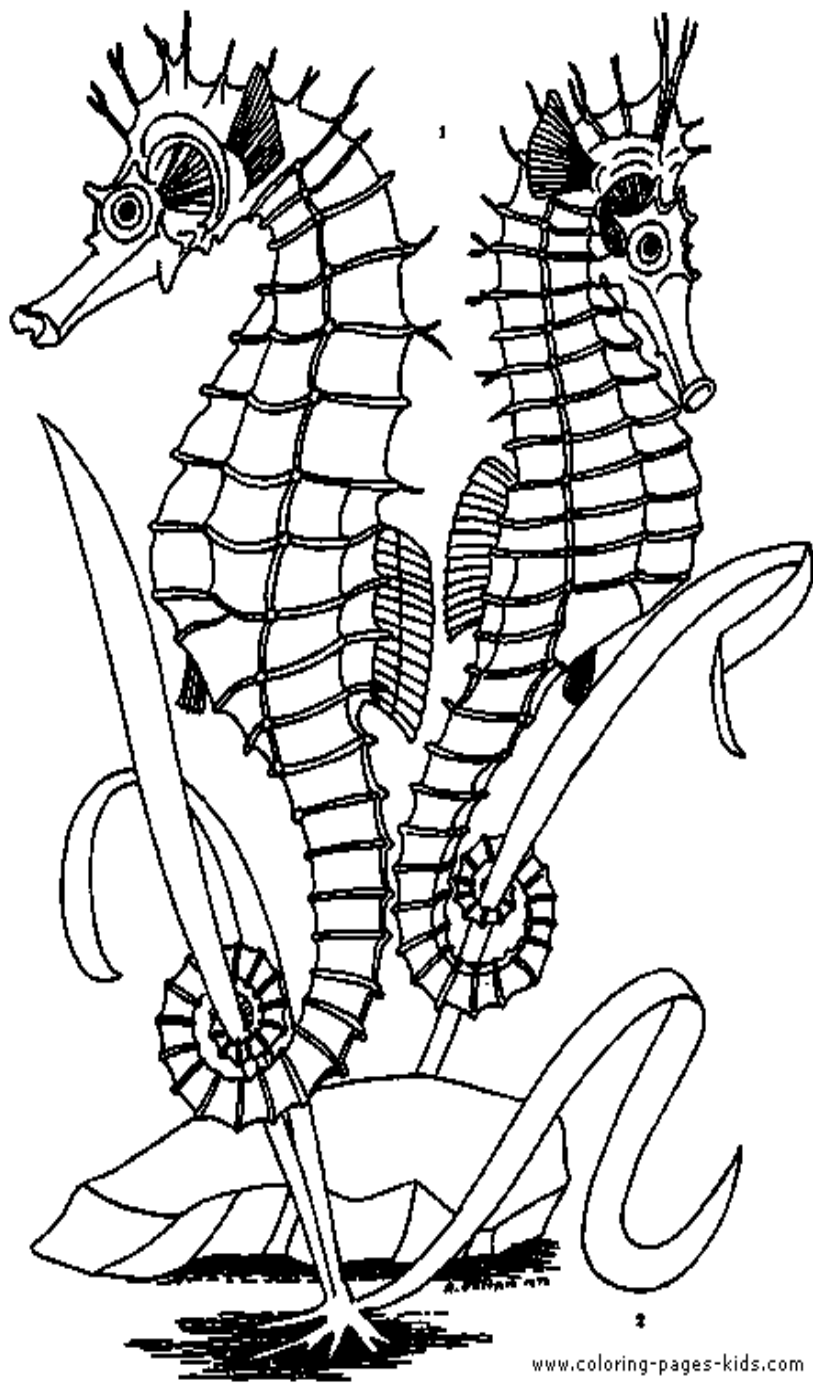
Some years ago, a friend (noted Discus expert Dale Jordan) and I spent three weeks exploring the Rio Negro and the Amazon River systems. In August, the waters are very high, and until we worked our way to the furthest upstream reaches of the tributaries, only then did we observe what typical South American river biotopes were like. The thing that was most conspicuous was the lack of aquatic plants in the main channels. Overhanging vegetation in abundance, yes, but only in quiet backwater shallows were aquatic plants found in any quantity. Most of these were floating plants (*Victoria regia*, water hyacinth and various lily-like plants) with plentiful grassy and reedy marginal plants in the shallows near the shore. In many smaller rivers like the Unini and Pauini, the dominant substrate consisted of fine sand, often in the form of sand bars creating shallows where *Corydoras*, *Geophagus* and *Acarichthys* could be found. And in sheltered back-eddies, deep layers of detritus existed. The larger rivers such as the Madeira and Abacaxi had clay and muddy bottoms. What was everywhere was deadfall, in the form of fallen trees, logs and branches along the edges, as well as further out.

This is prime habitat for Discus, Angels, Festivum, Severum, Uaru, and Chocolate Cichlids, in that the tangle provides protection from open water predatory fishes, such as Cichla and Crenicichla sp. as well as airborne predators. There was really no gravel or rocky substrate in evidence anywhere we went, although in lower water periods, broad flat rocky areas and rocky rubble apparently exist in the larger rivers, creating rapids (ideal Pleco /Crenicichla habitat).

I have set up a 180 g aquarium to approximate a South American river biotope.. Since my main inhabitants are Eartheaters (*G.abalios*, sp. *pindare*, *taeniopirius*, sp. Red Head Tapajos along with *S. leucosticta* and *Acarichthys heckeli*), there was a need for fine sand. I use pool filter sand, and it is ideal. Plentiful amounts of driftwood along the back and sides meet the needs of my *Mesonauta insignis* and *Uaru amphiacanthoides*. The few rocks that I have in there help define territories, and are often chosen by Uaru and some *Geophagus* (delayed mouth-brooders) as a spawning site. Tall plastic plants plus a few shorter ones (many SA cichlids are voracious plant eaters) round out the decor. I keep the water temperature in the range 80-86 oF (27-30 oC) and I use a Marineland C-530 canister filter on it, along with fairly vigorous aeration. I change water (about 1/3) once every couple of weeks using water straight from the tap. I've included a couple of pics to show the tank and its inhabitants. There is a video on the Fish Forum (Members' Videos) titled South American Biotope showing this tank. I hope this information proves to be helpful for those of you trying to provide a suitable environment for successfully maintaining SA riverine fishes.



Kid's Corner



www.coloring-pages-kids.com



“HEY! I was just sleeping!”



Dealers Directory

The following merchants offer a ten percent discount to our members. Members are required to produce their club membership card at the time of purchase. Certain restrictions may apply at the merchant's discretion. We thank these fine stores for their participation and encourage our members to frequent their stores.

Aardvark Pets

#2-1604 Saint Mary's Road

256-7705

10% off fish only

*excluding feeder goldfish

aFISHionados

825 Erin Street, Unit 3

295-5375

www.cichlaholic.com

Best West Pet Foods

#15 - 1530 Regent

3145 Portage Ave

1615 Henderson Hwy

1150 St. James St

492 St. Annes Rd

1-1650 Kenaston Blvd

53 Main St., Selkirk MB

223-18th St. N, Brandon MB

304 Saskatchewan Ave. E.

Portage La Prairie MB

Birdshop & Aquariums

1034 Main St.

582-1370

Fintastics

3008 Portage Ave

889-3658

Fish Gallery

959 Main Street

944-8303

Nestor's Aquarium and Pets

8-794 Sargent Ave

774-9322

Pets 101

2539 Portage Ave

888-0101

Petland

10% off non-sale items

Pembina & Bishop Grandin, 989-7616

Regent Ave, 654-9807

Polo Park Shopping, 989-7625

995-A Main St., 989-7608

Stonewall Pet Junction

317 Main St

Stonewall Mb

467-5924

Pet Peripherals

134 1/2 Regent Ave West

224-4848

No GST & PST on any purchase

Pet Traders

1333 Portage Ave

477-1616

*10% Off new items only

Pet Valu

3-1353 McPhillips

334-8600