The Fish File

www.asw.ca *October 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.

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Table of Contents

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.

17th Oct 2010 - Auction - Speaker: Udo Rohman fr DRC(Ontario)

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

TBD Dec 2010 - Christmas Party

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

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

President's Message

by: Steve Bansee

Let me start off by thanking all who helped out during the September Giant auction. You have made the auction move along very smoothly.

I would like to also thank Volker's Aquarium, Chris Biggs and Ron Brereton for their donations to the club.

Our next meeting, October 17th, we have Udo Rohmann (Ontario). Udo is the Exchange editor of the Durham Region Aquarium Society, and will be giving us a hands on demonstration on the Hamburg Mat Filter. The Hamburg Mat Filter (or Hamburg Mattenfilter) is very popular in Germany and is starting to catch on here as well. From fry and shrimp tanks to species tanks these are very effective filters.

Moving on to November 21st, we have Ken Boorman (Ontario). Ken is the Past President of the Sarnia Aquarium Society, and now serves as the club Librarian (along with Lisa Boorman). He is also the Vice-President of CAOAC of which our club is a member. Ken will be speaking on the New Guinea Rainbowfish. Another talk you don't want to miss.

Editor's Note

by: David Kozak

Welcome to the October Issue of the Fish File! We have a member-submitted article this month courtesy of Allan and Allison's dog Mackenzie, and back by popular demand: Tank of the Month.

Also, reprinted courtesy of www.aquarticles.com and Frank M. Greco: the "Quarantine FAQ".

You will find most of the upcoming meeting schedule posted as far as dates, but the Speakers themselves have yet to be finalized by the Executive. Hopefully we will know more in the next issue, but until then you can check the website at www.asw.ca for updates.

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

See you at the October meeting!

Sunday Oct. 17th 2010

General Meeting

Udo Rohman-see Bio on Page 12
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

BAP/FishFile Articles
We need your Articles!

We are always looking for articles/content for the Fish File

Wouldn't it be nice to read more local content in the newsletter, and share our experiences working with different species?
Did you know that if you submit an article describing your work with a plant/fish species, you will receive an extra 5 BAP/HAP points?

Articles can be sent to **editor@asw.ca and/or bap@asw.ca**

Quarantine FAQ

by: Frank M. Greco

While at first thought quarantining your newly purchased fish or invertebrate may seem to be a royal pain, this simple procedure can, in the long run, save you from a number of problems that could endanger the well-being of the animals already present in your system.

One should assume that all fish, either captive bred or (especially) wild are carriers of one form of nasty pathogen or another. From bacteria to protozoas to viruses... any or all may be waiting to cause you grief. Why take the chance of introducing something like that into an already established system when a simple quarantine can take care of this potential problem. I know...I know... you don't have room to set up another tank. Well, in most cases all you need is about 240 square inches of floor space...which just happens to be the size of a 10 gallon tank. Nor need the tank be left up and running all the time. It can be set up at a moment's notice to hold that one of a kind animal you have had your eye on. And, you don't need all the fancy bells and whistles you would expect to find on a permanent set up.

In fact, all you'll need is listed here:

-10 gallon tank (or larger if need be)

- cover, preferably with light

- 2 or 3 pieces of 6" long 2" PVC for hiding places

- air pump

- heater and thermometer

- biologically active sponge filter

- net

- crushed oyster shell or calcareous gravel

- ammonia test kit (fresh and salt water)

- AmQuel or similar product

- nitrite test kit (freshwater)

- antibacterial medicated food

- anti-parasitic medicated food

- citrated copper (for marine fish)

- copper test kit (for marine fish)

- malachite green (for freshwater fish)

As you can see, not much is needed to get started, In fact the most costly item on the list is the canopy and light. This need not be an expensive fluorescent light. An incandescent fixture will do here.

STARTING OUT

How do you start? Quite simple. You will be setting up your tank the same way you'd set up any tank, with the exception of painting the OUTSIDE bottom of the tank black or in some way blocking the bottom of the tank (note that NO substrate is used in the quarantine tank, hence the need to black out the bottom). This will give the fish the illusion of a solid bottom, and place them more at ease (with fish, as with humans, psychological well-being goes a long way to aiding with physiological well-being).

Next, place the tank on a nice sturdy, level surface (a stand made for this purpose, preferably), and fill it with 10 gallons of water from your already established aquarium. Add the heater, PVC pipe pieces, a small amount (a handful is usually good) of crushed oyster shell or calcareous gravel in a mesh bag (to provide some buffering) and the biologically active sponge filter, and...VOILA!...a quarantine tank is born!

"Hey!", you might say, "Where do I get a biologically active sponge filter?" There are several options here. Perhaps your local dealer can sell you an active sponge filter. (A note to dealers here: since it is a good idea to have auxiliary aeration in your systems, in any event, why not utilize sponge filters? This way, when your customer needs an active sponge filter, you have plenty on hand to sell). Failing this, perhaps a fellow hobbyist can help you out. However, the easiest thing to do, in my opinion, is to always have a sponge filter on hand. This is easily accomplished by placing a working sponge filter (or two) in your sump or directly in your tank (hidden behind some decorations so that it is not visible when viewing the tank). After 4 to 6 weeks you will have an active sponge filter! After the quarantine period is over, all you need do is remove the sponge filter from the quarantine tank, rinse it under hot water, and place it back into your tank/sump for bacterial re-colonization. Really, what could be simpler?

O.K., now the tank is up and running. All environmental parameters check out (so far). What next? You'll want to add the fish, of course. Follow whatever acclimation procedures you normally follow (which, in my case, consists of netting the fish from the bag to the tank while yelling "ACCLIMATE!"). NEVER dump bag water into your quarantine or main tank. Always net the fish from the bag. Allow the fish 24 hours to settle in before starting treatment.

FRESHWATER QUARANTINE PROCEDURE
For those of you quarantining freshwater fish, please read on. For those dealing with marine species, please skip down three paragraphs.

For freshwater fishes, the quarantine procedure is quite simple:

First, you will want to feed your fish an antibacterial medicated food twice a day for 14 days. Feed as much as the fish will eat in 2 minutes or so at each feeding. Bacterial disorders are the most common cause of death in fishes, and it pays to give a preventative treatment here. If you are dealing with wild-caught fishes, you will also want to supplement this with an antiprotozoal medicated food (antibacterial diet at one feeding and antiprotozoal at the other) to rid these fish of whatever intestinal parasites they may be carrying. There are antiparasitic diets that contain both an antiprotozoal and an antibacterial, and this type of food can be substituted in place of the two separate diets.

Next, you will want to treat the fish with malachite green. I know some of you must be shaking your heads, saying that malachite green will kill some freshwater species. NONSENSE! When dosed correctly, malachite green is safe for even the most so-called sensitive species.

The dose I use, and have been successful with, is 0.05 PPM malachite green for three treatments, one every other day. At this level, your fish should not experience malachite sensitivity. Of course, dosing at 0.05 PPM means doing more than adding one drop per gallon. To figure out the correct amount of liquid to add, you take the concentration of malachite green listed on the bottle (in percent), and convert it to milligrams per milliliters (10 percent = 1000 milligrams per 100 milliliters of water). Divide the milligrams per milliliters by the final concentration. This will give you the results in milliliters/liters. To convert to gallons, divide the number of liters by 3.8. For example, we have a 10 gallon tank, want a final concentration of 0.05 PPM (or 0.05 mg/l. It's interchangeable for our purposes), and we are using a 0.75% malachite green solution. So...0.75% = 7.5 mg/milliliter. 7.5 mg/ml divided by 0.05 PPM (or mg/l) = 1 ml per 40 gallons. Since 1 milliliter is about 16 drops, we will need 1/4 of that, or 4 drops per 10 gallons of a 0.75% malachite green solution.

Now for the kicker: most malachite green based medications advise ONE DROP PER GALLON of a 0.75% solution. This works out to 2.5 times the amount actually needed. No wonder some hobbyists lose fish when using malachite green: they have severely overdosed!

Anyway..to continue...

You want to dose at least three times, once every other day for three treatments, all the while feeding the medicated food(s). While the malachite treatment will last only six days, you really want to continue the quarantine for another eight days. If after this time period no obvious signs of disease are present, you may safely add the fish to your established tank.

If obvious signs of another illness show themselves (for example, a lesion caused by an external bacterial infection), you will need to treat that as well, in conjunction with the malachite treatment. Nitrofurazone, or any of the furan-type antibiotics will usually effect a cure.

Please note that malachite green, being an organic dye, will stain clothing, skin, the silicon sealant in your tank...almost anything! If fabrics or silicon have become stained, you will need to live with it since this stain is not removable. Malachite green inadvertently gotten on skin should be rinsed off as soon as possible. The stain left behind will wear off within a few days.

During this 14 day period, you will want to monitor both the ammonia and nitrite levels in the tank, and take appropriate actions if you notice an increase. If the ammonia level is slight, the addition of AmQuel or similar product will take care of it. Just be aware that AmQuel will lower the pH of the system, and constant use can bring about pH readings of 4 or lower! Hence the use of crushed oyster shell or calcareous gravel in the tank: it will help in maintaining an acceptable pH range. If the ammonia level continues to rise, a water change (up to 50%) is in order. Remember to re-dose the appropriate amount of medication after the water change. If the nitrite level begins to climb, the addition of aquarium salt at one teaspoon per gallon will negate its toxic effects.

MARINE FISH QUARANTINE

If you have a marine system, the process is a bit more complex.

First, the acclimation of the new fish is the same, but you want to give the new arrival at least 24 hours to recuperate from bring moved before you begin medicating. If the animal does not begin to eat within 24 hours, hold off treatment until it does begin to take food.

Next, you will want to add enough citrated copper to bring the level up to 0.15 PPM (you can really go as high as 0.20 PPM, but no higher, please). I know many of you use heavily chelated (or bonded) coppers, but I advise against their use. First off, in order for copper to be truly effective, it must be in its ionic state. Heavily chelated coppers, by definition, are not in that state, and so are less than useful. The fact that, in my experience, crabs and shrimp can live in systems treated with heavily chelated copper attests to its ineffectiveness in most cases. (Try that in a system treated with an ionic copper. The inverts do not live very long). Secondly, the level produced by some chelated coppers may be far higher than is actually needed to control the disease organism (which should also tell you something. At as high a dose as some of these chelated coppers produce, the fish should be dead). This higher-than-needed dose is actually detrimental to the fish in the long run in several other ways: gill degeneration, liver shutdown, anemia, compromised immune system..the list goes on. There is absolutely NO need to subject the fish to levels far above what is needed to treat the condition.

How do you know how much citrated copper is in your system? You'll need to get a good test kit in order to measure the level. Personally I advise the powdered reagent kits over tablet or dipstick based kits, as they are far more accurate. (I have checked many a test it against atomic absorption readings, and many are consistently are off, especially when testing marine water).

In the beginning, you may find it difficult to maintain a 0.15 PPM level due to the calcareous material in the system. This is to be expected as the carbonate reacts with the copper, forming copper carbonate. At first, you will need to check the level twice a day, and add copper as needed to maintain the 0.15 PPM level. Once you get two consecutive readings of 0.15 PPM, you can consider that day one, and you can begin monitoring the level once a day, adding copper as needed.
You will want to continue this regime for 14 days. During this treatment period, you will also want to feed the fish an antibacterial medicated food. Doing so does help the fish fight off systemic bacterial problems since the copper treatment does tend to compromise the immune system to a degree. After 14 days, do a 50% water change (to bring the copper level down), and wait 24 hours after that before adding the fish to your established tank.

As with freshwater fishes, if obvious signs of any other diseases show up, treat with the correct proprietary medication for the appropriate period of time. For copper sensitive species, you can use malachite green at 0.10 PPM (which ends up being 8 drops of a 0.75% solution per 10 gallons). Treat every other day for three treatments, wait two days, and repeat. As always, monitor water quality and take appropriate action if it degrades.

Please note that this treatment is NOT as effective as copper, and will not result in the same kill rate of parasites. There are other non-copper based medications that can be used (such as chloroquine phosphate, pyrimethamine,quinacrine and other proprietary medications. In my experiences with them, most are FAR less effective than is copper, and should be used only as a last resort. Also note that I have not mentioned the use of formalin as a viable treatment. There are MANY chemotherapeutic mixtures that contain formalin. However, IMO and IME, formalin should NEVER be used as part of a mixture. If one is to use it (and there is no reason why one should), it should be dosed separately, and at its correct therapeutic dose. The fact that, if dosed incorrectly, you can kill your fish quickly and that it can be injurious if gotten into ones eyes is reason enough to stay away from formalin.

QUARANTINING INVERTEBRATES

As for invertebrates, there really is no set procedure for quarantine. Luckily, few inverts can be considered carriers of pathogens. A simple 14 day quarantine without any chemotherapeutics is your best bet. It is important though, to fully quarantine all new corals, both stony and soft, before introducing them into an established tank. With all the new epizootics occurring on the reef, there is a great chance of introducing these pathogens into your tank, thereby wiping out your coral collection.

NOW WHAT?

O.K., your fish are through quarantine, and there are no new fish on the horizon. Now what? Simply break down the tank. Rinse everything (except the sponge filter) out with warm (NOT HOT OR BOILING) water into which a little bit of bleach has been added. (Please wear eye protection and gloves when using bleach in this manner. Also realize that bleach will eat some fabrics, and cause color loss in fabrics not intended for bleaching). The sponge filter should be rinsed in HOT water, with no exposure to bleach (some sponge material used in sponge filters reacts poorly to bleaching). Allow everything to dry, and put it away until it is needed again.

So you see, setting up and using a quarantine tank is not difficult or complicated. Remember, it is better to control a disease in a smaller tank, treating beforehand, than it is to treat in a large system. A little preventative medicine is your best bet.

reprinted courtesy of Frank M. Greco, and www.aquarticles.com

MacKenzie, Fish Room Dog

by: Allan Moore

My name is MacKenzie. I am a West Highland White Terrier fish room dog. I thought it would be fun to tell you how my doggie life is different from others. Like all dogs, I have a human housekeeping staff that I call "my parents." In the basement they have a room that has almost as many fish tanks as there are Milk Bones in the big red container I got for Christmas! I know, totally crazy huh?

Every day after breakfast at about 9:30 , the lights come on in the fish room and it's time to head down. My duties begin by looking for any jumpers on the carpet. Yes, my parents are weird, they carpeted the fish room floor! Sometimes I get lucky and find a jumper still wet and moving. Those are my favourite because I always get a treat for finding them! The fresh finds are usually not as fuzzy with yucky stuff stuck to them! I also look for any unwelcome water on the floor. I will show the water to my dad by rubbing my face in it! Not sure why he doesn't like me doing that. I think I smell so nice afterwards!

After that, I have some free time so I like to hang out at the big cichlid tanks that have the show fish in them. They always try to bite my nose through the glass! It is fun to bug them but the other day Zeus (Met. lombardoi kenyi) splashed me! I swear he was smiling after he did it! Can fish smile? Oh well, I guess I deserved it. Just in case you missed it, my parents name the show fish! How lame! I then stroll over to the peacock tank and watch them hide.

Peacocks are colourful and BORING, so it is time to jump up on the Lazyboy to watch the rest of the tanks and relax. I like it in the fish room because it is always so nice and warm and I like watching my dad do all the work. One time while I was relaxing, well ok sleeping, a fish jumped right out of the tank and almost hit me! I fell right off the Lazyboy! All was good though because I got a Milk Bone for showing him that one!

In the evening it is time to feed all the fish. My job is to take care of the food that did not make it into the tank. My favourite is the green flake, YUMMY!!!!! I am blessed to have such a sloppy feeder for a Dad! FYI, Duckweed and Java Moss taste awful and they get stuck to the roof of my mouth! They also get stuck in my fur and then I have to get cleaned up. When all is done it is time to head back up stairs to relax on the couch to rest up for the next tough day in the fish room!
Thank you for allowing me to share my day with you!

Signed; MacKenzie, Fish Room Dog Extraordinaire!

October Speaker Bio

Udo Rohmann has been in the hobby for over 33 years. He is a member of Peel Regional Aquarium Club and Durham Regional Aquarium Society. He currently keeps African, Central, and South American Cichlids, Livebearers, various Catfish, Invertebrates, and Plants. Udo has 34 tanks with a total volume of 1450 gallons. Tank sizes range from 2 all the way to 350 gallons. His speaking topics are:

The Hamburg Mat Filter:

powerpoint and hands on demo on how to construct this filter.

European Fish Keeping tips and Tricks:

powerpoint and hands on examples of various items.

September BAP and HAP

Several BAP and HAP certificates were handed out at the September meeting, and are as follows:

BAP

Chad and Heather Howells-Pseudotropheus sp. acei “ngara”-Class B

Steve Bansee-Neolamprologus meeli-Class C

Mike Grahame-Neolamprologus brichardi-Class B

Steven & Candace Preston-Xiphophorous nezahualcoyotl-Class A

Steven & Candace Preston-Jenynsia onca-Class B

Chris Preston-Neolamprologus multifasciatus-Classs C

Judith Dedrick-Williams-Xiphophorus heleri-Class A

Allan Bridges-Aulonocranus dewindti-Class C

Fred Olynyk-Celestichthys margaritatus-Class B

Scott Farrish-Amititlania nigrofasciata-Class A

HAP

Chad & Heather Howells-Aponogeton ulvaceus-Class E

Chris Langtry-Aponogeton ulvaceus-Class E

Christian Lehmann-Cryptocoryne wendtii 'tropica' Class C

Fred Olynyk-Aponogeton ulvaceus-Class D & E

Fred Olynyk-Echinodorus 'ozelot green'-Class E & C

Mark Preston-Nymphoides aquatica-Class B

Rick Taylor-Aponogeton ulvaceus-Class D

Allan Bridges-Cryptocoryne wendtii 'brown'-Class C

Allan Bridges-Cryptocoryne wendtii 'green'-Class C

Allan Bridges-Microsorum pteropus 'windelov'-Class B

Allan Bridges-Taxiphyllum barbieri-Class A

Tank of the Month

Daniel Powell

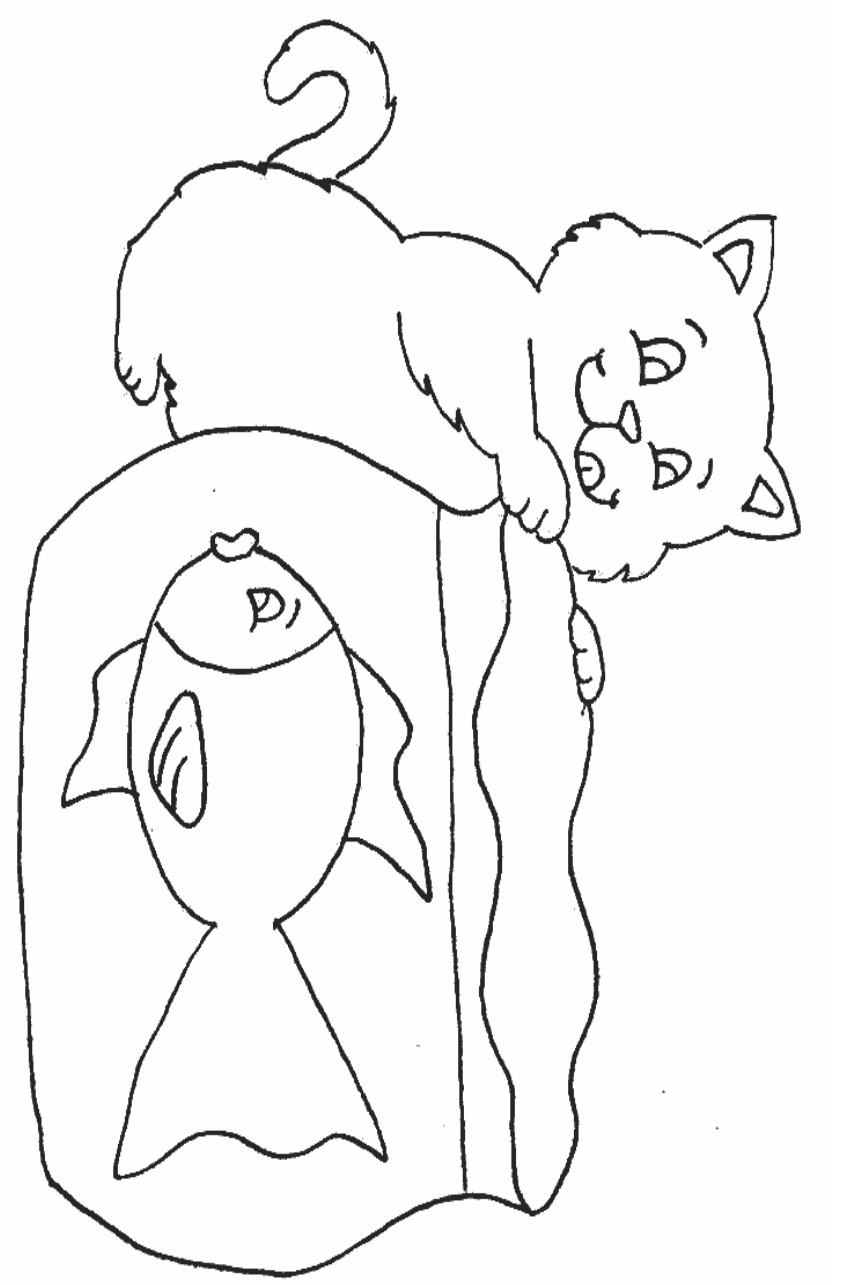
This month's "Tank of the Month" is Daniel Powell's (DaboJones on the Fish Forum) River Tank. Very nice job Daniel!

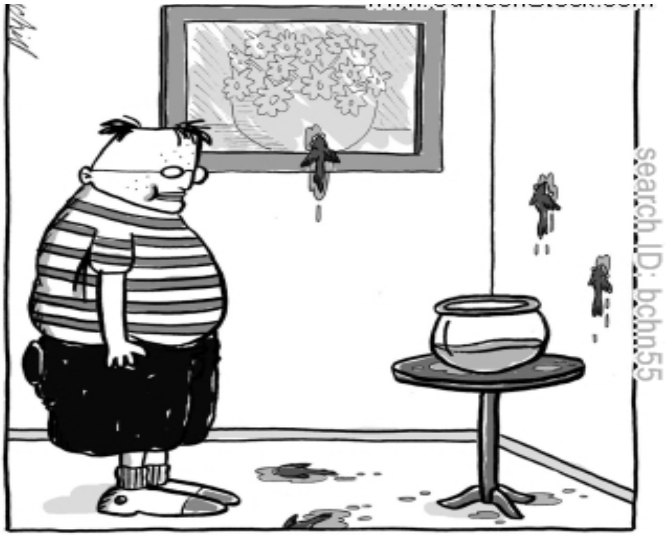
This tank is my 'last for now' tank. I have no room for anymore, and I'm trying to use this as the last purchase for a while, at least until I live in my own house.
This tank was inspired by two discoveries -
Inspiration #1 was the tank style referred to as "a River Runs Through It" on Loaches.com (http://www.loaches.com/articles/a-river-runs-through-it).
The idea is that a PVC pipe manifold runs under the gravel, carrying the water picked up by the Hydor Pro III sponges on the left of the tank to the pumps at the right. I really enjoy the DIY part of the hobby, so I was looking for an excuse to construct the manifold. It also meant I'd have to get a longer tank.
Inspiration #2 was, I think, just seeing the profile pic of PaleoFishGirl on the forum. It took me a while to figure out what that fish was, but I eventually found it was a Boeseman's Rainbowfish (I may have just asked her). Reading up on it I found it liked current, and suddenly I had a reason to put together a nice River Manifold system!
In a single week I found a cheap 4' long tank and also that Spencer Jack was going to be in Australia... Sweet Serendipity!
This tank is nearly two months old now (it's mid-September as I write this) and things are going quite well. I'm not very highly stocked, so keeping it clean is pretty easy.

There's a few clues that I should do more water changes, so that's the next 'lesson' I'm learning.
My most recent (and hopefully last) modification is to add a desk lamp on a timer with a red bulb. I'm trying to get the Mandube catfish to come out a bit more often. He's so pretty, it's just a shame he hides all the time.
The best thing I've found about this has been seeing what happens when a tank is designed for the environment that a fish species likes. The rainbows just love playing in the current, then skipping out for a little bit. The genders flash fins and colours at each other a bit, and that's always good for a laugh. The red light has made the catfish come out a little bit, and the guppies that were there to make sure the water wasn't pure fish poison have grown three times bigger than the guppies that were born about the same time but are still in another tank.
I'm still trying to figure out how to oxygenate enough without just filling the tank with bubbles, while trying not to mess with the tank too much.

Tank Dimensions:
48”Wx19”Hx16”D
1/2” styrofoam on bottom, back and sides for cushioning and insulation
Black bristol board on back and unlit side for background
“Fish”:
10x Melanotaenia Boesemani (Boeseman’s Rainbowfish)
1x Trachelyopterichthys taeniatus (Mandube Catfish)
3x Poecilia reticulata (Guppy)
???x Cherry shrimp, ramshorn snails, pond snails, malaysian trumpet snails
Plants:
Anubias Lanceolata
Cryptocoryne Lutea
Vesicularia dubyana (Java Moss)
Riccia fluitans (Crystalwort)
Lighting:
1x 42” 40w Aqua-glo fluorescent with barely any reflector (14 hour day)
1x 60w red-bulbed desk lamp (dawn/sunset, 1 hour on either end of the 14 hour day)
Filtration:
2x Hydro Pro III Sponge 1x AquaClear 402 Powerhead
1x Fluval 404 Canister filter (Biomax, Carbon (just for now), and pre-filter media)
Heater:
1x 200w Aqua Heat Titanium Heater
Stand:
2x4 DIY 2x4 monstrosity covered by a black cloth

Kid's Corner





Unfortunately, Jerry lacked the mental acuity to have foreseen the obvious problem with pet flying fish.

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