



Fish Tales

Volume 8 Issue 2

Everyone Likes Turtles

Kribs in my Krib!

Do Some Writing!

*Handling Aquarium
Society History*

*A Small Central Filtration
System for Killifish*



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On the Cover: Turtles Photo by Gerald Griffin

Design and Layout Gerald Griffin



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Fish Tales Submission Guidelines

Articles:

Please submit all articles in electronic form. We can accept most popular software formats and fonts. Email to herpchat@yahoo.com. Photos and graphics are encouraged with your articles! Please remember to include the photo/graphic credits. Graphics and photo files may be submitted in any format, however uncompressed TIFF, JPEG or vector format is preferred, at the highest resolution/file size possible. If you need help with graphics files or your file is too large to email, please contact me for alternative submission info.

Art Submission:

Graphics and photo files may be submitted in any format. However, uncompressed TIFF, JPEG or vector formats are preferred. Please submit the highest resolution possible.

Next deadline.....
September 15th 2018

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Federation of Texas Aquarium Societies

President's Message

Hello FOTAS Family

Many clubs are enjoying the summer with BBQ's and collecting trips. I encourage everyone to get out and enjoy the terrestrial and aquatic world all they can. The natural beauty of our region all should appreciate. Get out there and jump in the water!

All has been quiet in the last few months. We are late organizing the FOTAS convention this year but it will occur in Schertz TX October 12-14th. Stay tune for further details very soon. The largest national cichlid convention is right around the corner. The Houston Cichlid Club and the Houston Aquarium Society are coming together to host the American Cichlid Association's 2018 convention. This is going to be a great time! Many of us have been anxiously awaiting this all year long. I'll see everyone there.

Until next issue, have fun and be safe.

Greg



FOTAS CARES! Second Quarter Report



July FOTAS CARES Report

The most recent CARES update was a little disappointing on a couple of fronts. We had far more CARES species colonies discontinued than we did new entries. In addition, several participants did not return my inquiries for the update. These entries have been marked inactive and can be reactivated if those participants can get back with me. Congratulation to Ethan Grantham and the Greater Austin Aquarium Society for the successful registration of *Xenotoca lyonsi* and *Aulonocara* sp. "Lwanda".

I want to give a huge congratulations to Jim Valenzuela's huge accomplishment of spawning two difficult species from Barombi mbo in Cameroon. These were *Pungu maclareni* and *Stomatepia pindu*. Way to go Jim!

Remember that if you plan on actively working with a CARES species, register your fish and do what you can to ensure the next generation of aquarist's will be able to keep those fish in their tanks!

Do Some Writing!

Article by Greg Steeves



Ask any editor of any aquarium hobby-based publication be it on a club level or a professional printed magazine, and they will all tell you the same thing. We need content! Trying to get an aquarist to pump out a little something for their association's periodical can be like pulling teeth. Here is a summary of the type of people that an editor has to deal with when asking people to write for their journal.

1-I'm not much of a writer but I will do what I can.

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They come through and the editorial team might have to do a little revising but are happy to do it.

2-Certainly, be happy to write for you. I'm a little busy right now but will get you something in a couple weeks.

Forget about it. These people very rarely ever come through.

3-No, I don't write.

Well, this is at least honest but does little to extend the

effort of putting out a publication.

I have been fortunate enough to write a few well received bits over the years and I can tell you from first hand experience, you don't have to be William Shakespeare to make a literary contribution to our hobby. The toughest part of writing is beginning! We live in a busy time but there is NO ONE that can't find a half of an hour here or there to try and pen an article. Instead of watching that episode of Friends that you've seen a dozen times, turn off the TV, put on some music, and open a text editor. Now, some people need total concentration when trying to write and other enjoy relaxing music in the background to clear their thoughts and get into the right mindset. Try a couple different things. You would be surprised how your thoughts can flow when you have created a little "happy place".

So you have set aside a little time to try this out. Now you have to come up with a subject. I hate hearing "I have nothing really interesting to say...". Gimme a break! We are fish geeks, we love hearing from other fish geeks. Some of the common and most interesting subjects can be your experiences with maintaining and perhaps even spawning a fish. These are always popular articles and live in infamy. Years after you have forgotten you even wrote about this subject, someone will be looking for information on the topic you chose and will get something from your material. In the modern days of information distribution, this will occur. Another popular subject is collecting or seeing fish in the wild. People love being able to go on an adventure through your eyes. A trip to a public aquarium, zoo, retail establishment are all great subjects. Coupled with some photography, these articles are a great read. Other topics such as product reviews, show and convention pieces and pretty much anything hobby related make for good fodder.

There are at least two methods to use when writing an article. Firstly, you can flow it out of your mind as if you were having a conversation with another person. Pros of this include relatable and personal experiences which can be an attractive element that some readers enjoy. The cons are that structure suffers and instead of a concise well planned out article with thoughts strung coherently together, it's more like talking with your drunken uncle Eddy about who is the best baseball player of all time. You'll eventually understand what he's trying to say but you might have to wade

through a lot of off topic conversation (and some spittle) to get there.

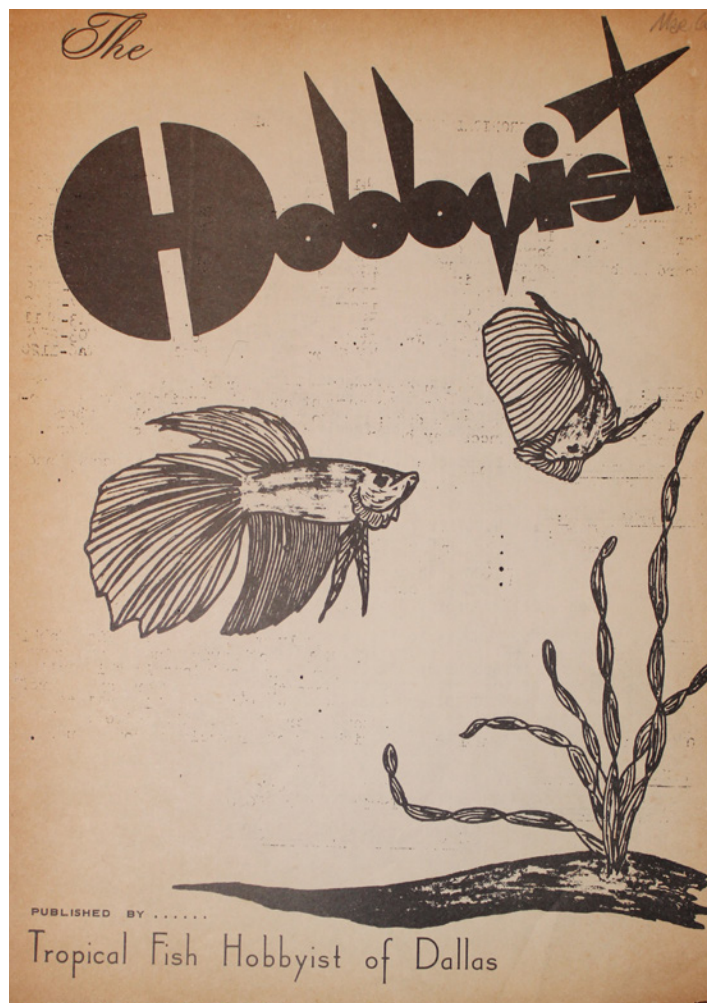
The other method is to have an outline that covers everything from your opening to close with an information flow that makes sense portraying the information you want to present in an orderly manner. Now the good part of this process is that from an informative standpoint, you will hit all topics and provide the reader with a well thought out flow of material. The negative aspect is that this can sometimes be almost robotic or form letter-like.

My preference as a writer and a reader is to have a mixture of the two aforementioned methods. I feel a basic structure is very helpful to ensure you don't miss any of the points you want to touch on when portraying a subject. People like to read your personality in a piece you put together. If you are on a roll and the words are flowing, don't stop writing just because you strayed off the area you were discussing. If it doesn't fit, you can go back and edit it or have it revised later. The important thing is to have a nice flow to your subject. If you are penning a scientific paper, these suggestions might not be what you want to follow, however, for other hobbyists to enjoy your writing, let your personality and emotions into your article.

When writing, write about what you know. If your topic is on a fish species you keep, write about your experiences. It's great to research a subject but really, people want to hear about what YOU know. If you have put together something appealing, it will encourage the reader to do further research for themselves at the same sources that your research had come from. If you use any materials that are not your own, be sure to include that reference at the end of your piece. An example of this would be, "the angelfish is from South America" which would be okay to use as it is common knowledge. If you were to say "this angelfish comes from the Rio Dingo, three kilometers upstream from the town of Tikiwiki", and you did not go to Tikiwiki and catch this fish yourself, you have to provide where you got this information from. You can keep a list of these and include them together in a "References" section at the end of your article. Not only is it the proper thing to do, this also allows for a reader, inspired by your article, to dig further into the subject for themselves using the same sources you did. There are easy formats used to reference material. They can be

found listed here: <https://libguides.murdoch.edu.au/c.php?g=246256&p=1640961>

So, you've written an article. You read it over and change a little, corrected some obvious mistakes and feel pretty good about yourself. It came out fairly descent. Now what? It is always helpful to have maps or photographs to accompany and enhance your efforts. If you can draw your own pictures or maps, or take your own photographs, perfect! This is the best-case scenario. You cannot scan a photo from a book or take a photograph from the internet unless these are common and free use and stated so. Even at that, it would be best to provide the link stating the free use policy of the material. Alternately, you can reach out to the source of the items you might want to ask for permission to use them in your article. Most people will not have a problem with this but still need to be recognized as the source. If you do not have permission, it is not okay to use things that aren't yours to begin with. The same rules that apply to your lawn mower, apply to your photographs. You wouldn't want someone doing that to your stuff so don't do it to theirs. ALWAYS ASK FOR PERMISSION!!!



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So, you've read and reread your article. You've gathered up some pictures to accompany it. Now what? I would suggest asking a friend or family member to give it a read. They might have some suggestions and tell you what they think. After this it is off to your club editor. This person will generally format your article as it will appear in publication and scour it for edits. They may or may not ask for your approval on any alterations and edits. After they have gone through it and have it ready to roll. They may send you the proof for your final review. After this, you will sit back and wait until the publication date to anxiously open it up and see your efforts in print. While you are waiting, I hope you have already begun your next article.

One of the best ways to leave a legacy in the aquarium hobby is to write. When your work is printed, it is immortal. I have read aquarium books and magazines from the 1930's that are still relevant today. Try your hand at writing. It is a wonderful way to contribute to the hobby!



A Small Central Filter System for Killifish

By Susan Robinson

This year in May, I attended the AKA (American Killifish Association) in Detroit. It was a great convention with a number of good speakers.

Two of the speakers talked to some extent on central systems used for keeping and breeding killifish. After coming home and thinking about the idea, I decided to put together a central system.

The components of a central filtration system usually consist of a number of tanks with a way to bring freshwater into the top of each tank. This can be a output flow from a water pump directed to each tank through piping and valves and/or some kind of regulated drip system. There is also, a water return that removes water from the tank through an overflow device or an opening in the side of the tank at water level. This opening can be a plain hole or a more complicated bulkhead type fitting. There must be a method of retaining the water coming from the small tanks on each row and returning the water to a sump. The sump provides a reservoir of freshwater and is also where the output water pump resides. Filtering materials can be added in the sump and also inline with the output water piping. The water pump must be submersible and sized to provide enough lift (head) to lift the water to the top of the system.

Killifish range from easy to keep to very difficult, but for the most part they require species tanks. As most of them are 1 to 3 inches in length, small tanks from 3 to 6 gallons are usually big enough. Many people have had success with keeping killies in shoeboxes (1.5 gallons) as long as they do frequent water changes. In the past I have used kitter keepers at about 4-5 gallons each with biweekly water changes. This can quickly become a hassle if you have a lot of killies. But, shoe-

boxes and kitter keepers have another advantage, in that both have a tight lid. Killies are heroic jumpers!

Another central system advantage in keeping killies is the larger quantity of water in the system is more stable over time and a larger filtration area is possible. The sump should be large enough to hold from a third to a fourth of the total water in the system. Also, changing water is basically draining one tank, the sump, and refilling it. I am on Houston water which is about 7.6 pH and 200 TDS. House temps are around 74-76 F year round. Probably most of the killies are fine with these parameters but the more difficult ones are not. Fortunately most of the killies I keep are fairly easy to maintain and breed. The advantage here is using a central system is that it can be maintained at set parameters through changing and maintaining the water in the sump. Any adjustments to the pH or TDS are made there. If higher temperatures are needed, a heater can also be added to the sump.

Now I am going to talk about the unit I built. This unit basically takes up 3 feet of wall space and requires access to an electrical outlet. I started with a black wire shelving unit 36" wide X 14" deep X 72" high that had 7 shelves. It had originally been part of a book shelving system where I had combined 3 shelving units of 5 shelves each into two units. For small tanks, I found deep shoeboxes with tight fitting lids at a Houston store. The shoeboxes are around 3 gallons each and sell at a hard to beat price of approximately \$4 each. They are fairly clear, not as good as glass but you can see the fish. The pictures in this article were taken through the shoebox.

Each of the black wire shelves are setup with a large

boot tray to catch water flowing from the tanks as part of the system. I copied a detail from one of the AKA talks and the shoeboxes were each drilled with about a 1 inch hole in the back at the water level needed. A square of foam on the inside of the box over the hole keeps fish and fry in and helps with filtration. The foam is held in place with a plastic pick from the beauty store. Anyone who ever put hair up in rollers will know what I am referring to. The 30" x 16" x 2" boot trays were purchased online and the 1/2" ID clear plastic hose from the hardware store. A hole just big enough to accommodate the 1/2" hose was drilled at the right rear bottom of each tray. The plastic hose was threaded through the hole with as little of the hose sticking up past the bottom of the tray as possible and glued in with silicone (GE I clear silicone with no mold/mildew component), again from the hardware store. Each plastic hose was long enough to run from back of the tray on it's shelf to the bottom of the sump.

The water output is the 1/2" hose and it runs from the water pump outlet to the first inline filter on top of the shelving unit. I had an inline filter from a previous central system where I raised bettas and reused it with a larger than micron sized cartridge. This filter is inline with a second that I had gotten from an auction at a good price. The second filter contains a less than 1 micron pleated carbon cartridge. The second filter is then teed off to two DIG 1.1 GPH emitter heads which each contain 12 drip emitters. Each head has 4 of the emitters capped off as the setup only needs 16 total at present. From each emitter a small diameter black

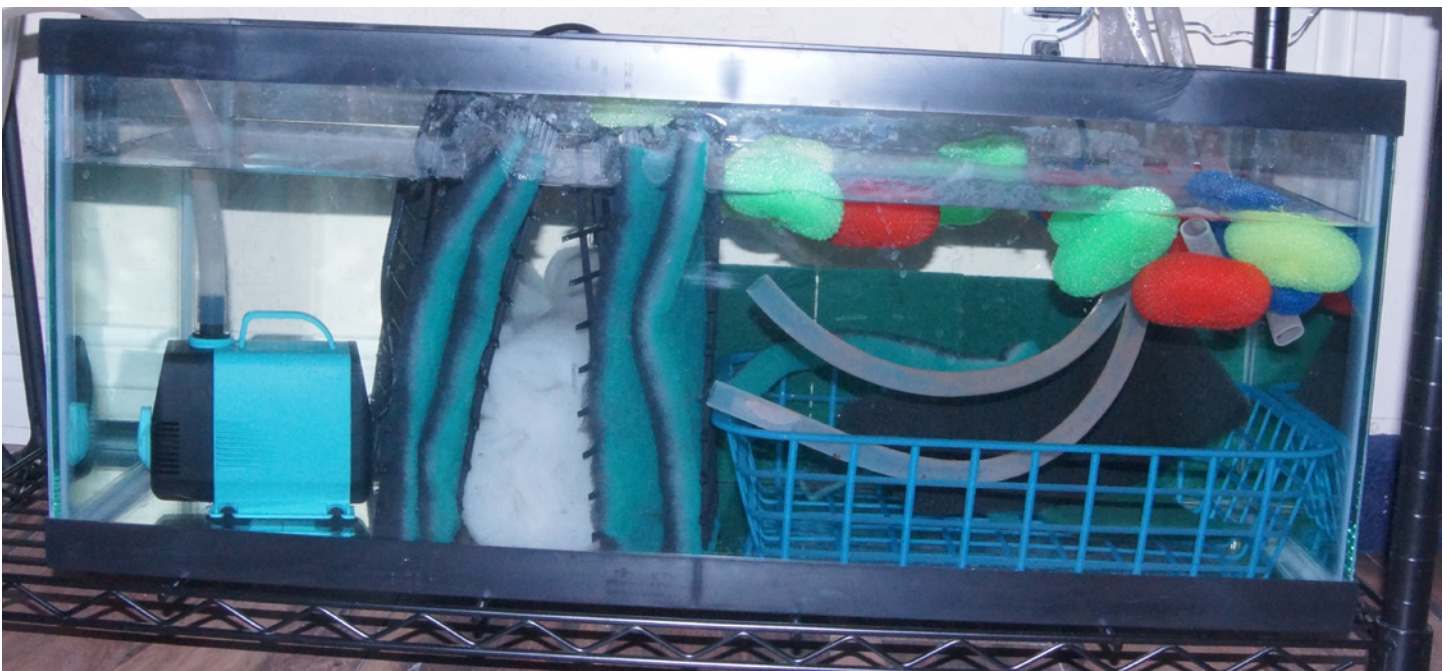
plastic tube runs through a hole in the shoebox top and provides fresh water to each shoebox at a rate of about 1 gallon per hour. The filter cartridges and the emitter heads were purchased online.

The sump was originally a 15 gallon clear plastic container. However, I took advantage of a large pet center dollar per gallon sale and purchased a 20 gallon long glass aquarium for the sump. I am currently using diy materials for the filter in the sump. An AC sizable filter cut into quarters, as well as dollar store kitchen scrubbers for biological filtration. I checked these materials for any soap or other fish harming contaminants before using.

One addition to the system was a 33 foot cool white led rope purchased online that is tie wrapped to the top of each shelf to provide lighting.

One note. The tray plastic return hose setup had to be modified as the silicon did not hold overtime. I found a small 1/2" bulkhead like fitting at the hardware store that provided the needed connection with some modification of the tray. Two have been modified to date.

The killies are doing well in this system. Each shoebox is setup with a floating mop or a small container of peat. There are 16 shoebox containers for killies and an additional shelf used for storing eggs at present. An additional 4 shoeboxes could be setup on this shelf if needed.



Kribs in my Krib!

Article and Pics
by Valaree Baker

03-17-18

Went to NWAAS auction and got a pair of Kribs, among other things. Brought them home and acclimated them into a 15 gallon tank, added a piece of pvc pipe, and a floating log, and two pieces of java tied to stone. The female went straight into hiding behind the rocks, while the male is out and about and exploring. He is skittish, as expected, so I eventually got up and left them alone for the rest of the day.

03-18-18

Both fish are out and about, the female still very skittish and hides at any slight movement I make. The male is a little more brave and curious enough to stay put when I put my face to the glass. I fed them, and watched them both eat since the food brought the female out. I was satisfied they were healthy and left them alone the rest of the evening.

03-20-18

They are mostly hanging out in the back in the rocks, which is fine. (I feel the rocks will be perfect to hold any eggs.) They are taking turns chasing each other. The female is still very plump and brightly colored, but now the male is also showing color in his tail. Several times it looked like the male was shimmying in front of the female. Strange considering from what I've read, it's the female that does the shimmying to attract the male? They really pay no mind to me, but the male will come up and stare at me before swimming off again.

03-21-18

The male is out and about, but the female is staying hidden behind the rocks. I will occasionally see her peeking around before disappearing again. The male is spending more time out front, and is really curious about me. He will stay out for a while, then go behind the rock, and then return to the front.

03-22-18

The female is in the front today, but is staying closer to the rocks than the male was. She seems very disturbed by my presence. She went behind the rock a couple of times, just to be chased out by the male each time. I don't stay too long. I'm hoping he is guarding eggs and don't want to distract him.

03-23-18

Both fish are staying behind the rocks, occasionally darting out to chase each other, just to return to their starting point.

I go ahead and do a water change, using a much slower current than I usually do. The male pops out to see what's going on, seems satisfied, and returns to the rocks.

The fact that I can't tell if there are eggs or not is really starting to stress me out (I don't handle suspense very well.) I'm keeping my fingers crossed, and am hoping that if there are eggs, I didn't just ruin their chances of survival by disturbing their parents. I've never had Kribs before, but they have always been on my "wishlist" of fish. I'm pretty excited about these two especially since they are F2 and are the prettiest Kribs I have ever seen outside of the internet..

03-28-18

No changes in their behavior, but I had a 20 long open up that I just moved an unimaculata pair out of. I'll be getting that tank cleaned and ready for them this next week.

04-15-18

Added them to the 20 long. It has black diamond blasting sand; just enough to mostly cover the bottom of the tank, a small terra cotta pot on its side, and I brought over the pvc pipe and the java fern rocks, and of course, a sponge filter.

04-25-18

I have eggs! They made their home inside the terra cotta pot, that is front and center and right where I can watch everything. I'm so excited!

04-29-18

The eggs have dropped to the bottom of the pot, and I can see wigglers. Mom is taking good care of them, and dad is kinda trying to keep me from looking, but I think he's more interested in getting fed.

04-30-18

Mom and Dad are both watching over the fry, they have taken them out of the pot, and seem to be going on field trips around the tank. The fry are so small it's hard to see them, and there is no way you could count them. I'm guessing they have around 25.

They seem to return back to the pot in the evenings after they are fed. Back to the safe house I suppose.

05-06-18

They have been venturing farther outside the pot and for longer periods of time every day. Today, they made it all the way to the sponge filter, which is in the back corner. I'm happy for this, because while they are up against the black filter, my phone will actually focus on them and I can finally get some semi decent pics. It has been interesting watching them as a family unit. The parents will take turns babysitting while the other takes a break, as well as returning the fry back to the terra cotta pot every night, like it's a house. I've never seen any other fish do this.

05-13-18

The parents are letting their fry venture out without getting followed. Now, the fry must follow them, or they will be left behind. They almost 'point' at places for the fry to find food. Every time they do that motion, the fry go and see what was being shown. I find all of this fascinating.

05-17-18

Woke up this morning, and found dad krib in hiding and pretty beat up. I hate to break up the family, but I don't want to lose him, he's a gorgeous fish. At least he was until he made her mad. Unfortunately, I'm out of tanks (funny how this keeps happening) so I put him in a breeding box with an air pump connected to it.

He is too beat up to care, and I like to think glad for the rest.

05-20-18

The male wasn't adjusting to life in the box very well. I made the decision to add him back with the family while I would be around to address any issues. Much to my surprise, the couple was very glad to be reunited and was ready to get rid of the fry. I collect and save as many fry as I can, even getting my husband to help me keep the fry away from their parents.

Final fry count that made it into the breeding box is 14. Looks like I will be getting another tank. I'll just surprise my husband with it. It's easier that way.

05-27-18

Finally get the fry into their own 20 long, with black diamond blasting sand, sponge filter, two small heaters, and some moss I pulled from my shrimp tank. They seem awfully happy to get out of the breeder box. Now that the panic of needing to get these guys in a proper setup is over, I actually pay a little more attention to the parents, and find more wigglers.



Everyone Likes Turtles!

Article and Pictures
by Denny Rogers

Turtles seem to have almost universal appeal among people. Old and young, male and female, urban and rural, all have fond memories of their interactions with turtles. Almost everywhere I go, when I mention to someone that I raise turtles, they have to tell me about when they had turtles as a child, or that they used to have a pet turtle. I've lost track of how many teachers tell me about the turtles they have in their classrooms. Large crowds are attracted to the ocean shore when it is discovered that turtles are in the process of laying eggs, or turtle eggs are hatching. The success of the Mutant Teenage Ninja Turtles has also add to the mystique of keeping turtles.

I've been interested in living things for as long as I can remember. My first encounter with aquarium fish occurred before I was in grade school. However, my interest in living creatures wasn't restricted to just fish. I was finding tadpoles, frogs, toads, crayfish, turtles, snakes, and lizards all the way through grade school and beyond. I've also had mice, hamsters, guinea pigs and birds at various times throughout my life. While tropical fish have been the most consistent manifestation of this interest, I have remained interested in other living things well.

In 2010 I found out that a friend in Kansas City was was trying to get rid of 2 male albino red eared slider Fish Tales - 12

(RES) turtles he had. I had seen them at his house previously, and was fascinated watching them. He had had a group of 2 males and one female, but because of an unfortunate accident involving a filter intake, his female had drowned. He was upset and discouraged by this turn of events, and decided to sell the 2 males. I called him, and discussed the situation which eventually resulted in my getting these 2 turtles in June of 2010. My intention was to find another female albino RES and eventually breed them to get albino RES babies. This turned out to be much more difficult than I had anticipated. I couldn't find an adult female albino RES anywhere. In addition, everywhere I looked for albino RES hatchlings, they were sold out despite an asking price between \$200-300. It soon became obvious that I also needed a "Plan B".

I decided that I would approach this project from 2 directions. The first path was to keep looking for a female albino RES. I had no reason to believe that the genetics in breeding an albino turtle would be any different than virtually all other species when dealing with a recessive gene. There are a few other animals where albinism is dominant, most notably Kribensis cichlids from West Africa, but typically the gene for albino is recessive. This meant that if I could find another female albino RES, I should get 100% albino progeny.

Plan B involved getting some regularly colored females and breeding them to my albino RES males. All young produced from this pairing would carry one copy of the albino gene, but would look the same as the females (wild type). I would then have to either breed this first generation brother to sister, or breed them back to the original albino RES males. Brother to sister matings should result in 25% albino progeny, but the remaining normal looking turtles would be a mix of both the heterozygous individuals (carrying one copy of the albino gene) and the others not carrying the albino gene at all.

At this point I decided that I would

eventually mate the first generation hatchling females back to the original albino RES males. The one thing I haven't mentioned is the fact that it would take at least 4 to 6 years for the first generation hatchlings to be big enough to determine the sex, and to be mature enough to breed. This was not going to be a short term project. I had to be prepared to wait a long time to see any albino babies.

I found 2 wild type females during the summer of 2010. One was from one of the local big box stores and was just 4 inches shell length, and the other was from



a teacher who was getting rid of a female she had been keeping in her classroom. This one was probably 5-6 inches when we got her. Then the wait began. I eventually housed all our turtles in 300 gallon stock tanks. One stock tank was outdoors for the summer and another was in the garage to house them over the winter. The outdoor tank became very green with algae, and in the fall when we were transferring them inside, I couldn't find one of the females. I wasn't sure if she had escaped or had fallen victim to one of our local predators. The next spring as I was walking past some other stock tanks I had outside, I noticed a head

disappearing under water. It was our lost female. She had over-wintered outside with no ill effects.

My wife, while being very tolerant of my aquarium hobby, had never been interested in actively participating in my fish endeavors. Once I got the turtles, I began to notice she was much more interested in the turtles than she had ever been with the fish. She would actually go down to feed them, and was very interested in the turtle's social interaction with people (mostly with herself).

Each year we kept looking for eggs, but there was no indication they were laying any in the nest boxes we had provided. Finally in 2014, we found one egg which





we removed to incubate. By that time we were aware that the eggs typically incubated for 60-90 days prior to hatching. The sex of the hatchlings is determined by the incubation temperature with temperatures closer to 85 degrees F producing mostly females, and temperatures under 80 degrees F producing mostly males. Since this was our first experience trying to hatch a turtle egg, we probably didn't provide ideal conditions for hatching. After waiting more than 90 days, we finally cut into the egg and found an embryo. It was dead, but it did show us that the albino males were capable of fertilizing the females.

By 2015 we were more knowledgeable of the needed conditions to hatch turtle eggs, and we ended up collecting about 25 eggs. The batches were typically from 4 to 9 eggs from each clutch. Our hatch rate was somewhere around 40-50%. We decided to retain all of these hatchlings to try to get some females to eventually breed back to the albino RES males. In 2016 we were able to collect another 45 eggs, and hatched 23 babies.

We decided in 2017 that we didn't need the 2 wild type females any longer, since we were running out of space to keep all of our turtles. By that time our wild type females were around 10-11 inches across their shells, but fortunately we were able

able to rehome them. We also spent a long time trying to determine whether we could successfully sex the turtles born in 2015. We finally kept 5 for our breeding stock (later discovering that one was a male). We only wanted to keep females from this bunch so there would be no question what the genetic make-up was for any hatchlings born from that time forward. At the present time, all of our turtles are either albino or carry the gene for albino.

Going back to my original plan, we eventually found a female albino RES that was born in 2012. We received her in 2013 at which time she weighed 101 grams. For comparisons sake, our wild females weighed around 1200-1400 grams as adults. We've been raising her ever since getting her in 2013, and she is now bigger than both my albino males. We had hopes that she might start laying eggs this past summer (2018), but in spite of some courting activity in the spring by the males, we didn't end up with any eggs. Needless to say we'll be watching her very closely in 2019. At the same time, at least one of the 2015 females who carries the albino gene is now as big as the males, so hopefully she may be mature enough to start laying eggs in 2019 also. We are really anxious to have albino babies.



Should you ever decide to keep turtles, there are a few things to keep in mind. They live a very long time, need relatively large habitats, and require a lot of filtration. In addition, you will have to provide a docking area for them to get out of the water, as well as a heat bulb and a UVB bulb for basking. If you are going to try to breed your turtles, you will also need to provide nesting boxes on the docking platform where they can lay their eggs. Our turtles often were very good at laying their eggs without leaving any sign that they had dug a hole, and then covering them up. If the turtles are kept outside over the summer, you should also make arrangements to bring them inside over the winter. While they may survive a winter outside, depending on your location, the risk of having problems up to and including death are greatly increased.



Given proper care and feeding, turtles can be an exciting and endearing educational pet for many years to come.



Handling Aquarium Society History

Article by Gerald Griffin

When it comes down to Aquarium Clubs that have been around for any length of time one must imagine that there is some history involved with the club or organization. So the question now becomes, how is the club going to deal with that information? What are our obligations to the future when it comes to this information? Do we keep it? Do we have a responsibility to save this information? Is this just old stuff that we no longer need? What about clubs that have folded? What happens to their information?

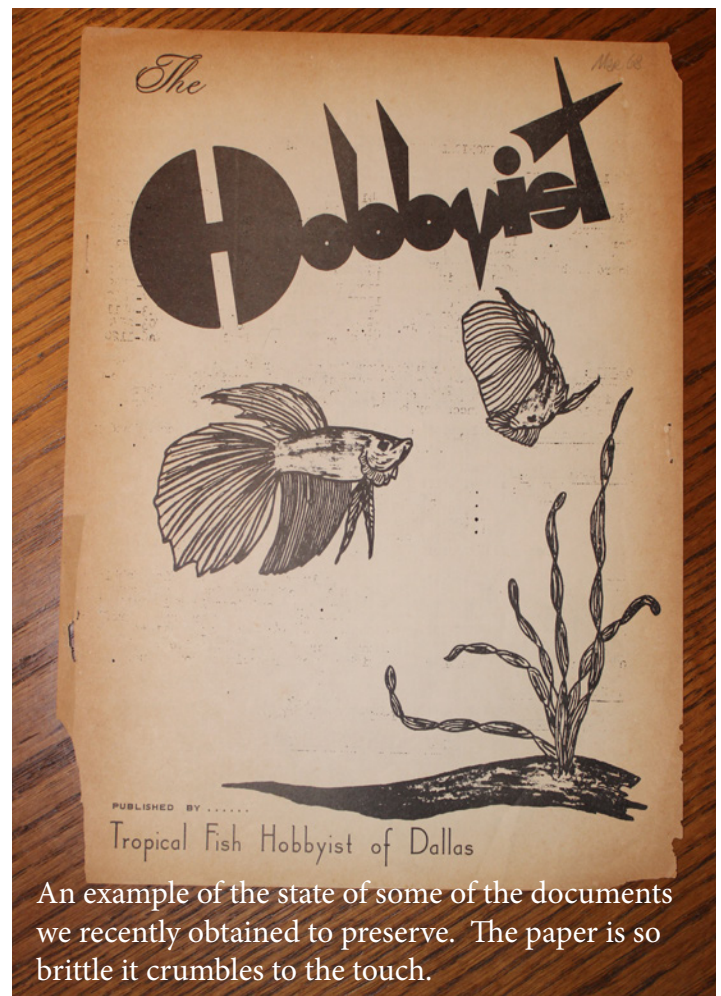
When it comes to FOTAS I can honestly say "Thank God for Marvin England" He has made it his goal to save all of information he has encountered from many of the previous organizations that belonged to FOTAS, many of which no longer exist. At the last FOTAS convention he passed on these publications to Greg Steeves and myself for preservation. I have digitized the first in a long series of articles from the past clubs of FOTAS so that our modern audiences can read about the past articles.

So one might question why? Why do we care about these articles or past artifacts? Well for me and many like me, the past is important, yes even in aquarium keeping. Yes many of the observations are no longer valid as more detailed observations have proven them to be false but it is interesting to know why and how those observations were made and sometimes real "gems of information" can still be found in these historical texts.

So when we examine these texts the next question is how do we preserve them and bring them to our audience? Some of the texts are damaged and to the point of crumbling when touched. So do we photocopy them, convert them to another form? How do we

display them?

The next issue is that when the documents are scanned in PDF form, they suffer from readability issues. Many of these documents were typed on typewriters and through multiple runs through photocopiers, these documents suffer damage to the original source material and in some cases become very difficult to read. So with this we give you the history of the clubs of the Lone Star State.



An example of the state of some of the documents we recently obtained to preserve. The paper is so brittle it crumbles to the touch.

Aquarium Clubs of the Lonestar State

By Jare A Sausaman
1993

Jare A. Sausaman
by Wayne Liebel

In Memorium: I wish to note the recent passing of a true gentleman and contributor to the aquarium hobby. On November 26, 1996 Jare Sausaman lost his battle with cancer at the age of 62. Jare Sausaman was one of the foremost collectors of aquarium literature and a scholar of its history. His book and magazine collection was extensive and legendary and contained complete runs of many of the premier local and regional societies as well as the 'major' slick magazines. (Most of it is for sale to benefit his estate: you may view what's left at: <http://www.mindspring.com/~aquaristics/aquarian.subjects>) He was a student and historian of the hobby and had just begun, near the end of his life, to research and compile information about many of the major aquarium clubs of this nation. He was also an able aquarist, particularly smitten with aquatic gardening; he was a member of the Aquatic Gardeners Association from its inception and was honored as a "Fellow" shortly before his death. In his professional life, Jare was a drama teacher, most recently at Philadelphia's High School for Creative and Performing Arts where he was a powerful and positive influence on the lives of countless high school students for fifteen years. I got to know Jare personally at the various workshops and conventions he attended here our paths would meet: he was a gentle and kind presence. I wrote this column, in part, in memory of Jare, and because like Jare, I am a devoted aquarium history buff. I would therefore like to formally dedicate it to him. The hobby has lost one of its most promising historians and scholars, in his passing.

FORWARD

Back in August of 1988, I attended the annual convention of the FEDERATION OF TEXAS AQUARIUM SOCIETIES, INC., and the AMERICAN LIVEBEARER ASSOCIATION held in College Station, Texas. On that first and only visit to the Lone Star State, I had the great pleasure to meet and talk with numerous aquarium hobbyists from around the State. For many years I have \ recorded notes about the various aquatic clubs of the USA, and on that brief visit I took along a listing of what Texan societies I knew something about at that time. Many individuals were helpful and supportive in my efforts to learn about the history of the hobby in their State.

I promised those most hospitable conventioners that I would one day write about what I had managed to learn. The biggest problem is to decide when to stop collecting data and put it all on paper for one is constantly locating bits and pieces of information. Well, I retired from my full-time job in June, and one of the projects I wanted to accomplish was to fulfill that promise.

Histories loaded with dates and names and long past events are dull and dry at best, and for that I humbly apologize. Many persons have been mentioned in this history in relation to their contributions, but many many others have served tirelessly and without thanks. To those "un-sung" persons I wish to offer my personal thanks for their efforts.

My information is far from complete, and I have made some generalities and assumptions which may very well be incorrect. I am always most anxious to learn more about the clubs in Texas so please feel free to contact me directly if you can fill in some of the gaps or help to correct some of the errors.

Jare A. Sausaman
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AQUARIUM CLUBS OF THE LONE STAR STATE

The organized aquarium hobby in Texas began a little over sixty years ago with the formation of the DALLAS AQUARIUM SOCIETY in the early 1930's. This group was extremely active through the 1930's and managed to stage four successful exhibition/shows which did much to publicize this popular new hobby. Shortly after the DALLAS A. S. appeared in the Northeast, the SAN ANTONIO AQUARIUM SOCIETY was established in the SOUTHEAST also staging an exhibition in the Autumn of 1934. Both of these areas of the great state of Texas have continued to be active centers of club activity to this day. A third organization emerged in Houston around 1937, called the TEXAS AQUARIUM ASSOCIATION. The exact founding dates of these three pioneer societies is still unknown to this author, and apparently, they did not produce a publication to record their activities. Obviously, all three clubs ceased to operate during World War II and so for nearly a decade the organized aquarium hobby disappeared from the Texas landscape.

1948, is the magical year of re-birth for the organized hobby in Texas with the appearance of three new post-war clubs. The FORT WORTH AQUARIUM SOCIETY, INC., organized on February 9, 1948, with John Hollingsworth as their first president. This vital new group held annual shows from 1949, onward and continued to serve aquarists for over 30 years. They published an impressive monthly bulletin, BETTA TALES (1951-1956) and again in (1968-1979). For about ten years (1968-1979) the bulletin title changed to TROPICAL TOPICS, however, this title was used by a group called the GREATER SOUTHWEST AQUARIUM CLUB, INC. also of Fort Worth. I can only assume that the club changed both its name and that of its publication for this period of years, but I have not been able to confirm this assumption as fact.

In this same year, 1948, Southeast Texas saw the reestablishment of the DALLAS AQUARIUM SOCIETY still touting itself as the "Oldest in Texas". They soon staged a show in September, 1948, called the "5th SHOW" to continue the tradition begun in the pre-war years. The DALLAS A. S., or as it was sometimes called, TROPICAL FISH CLUB OF DALLAS, prospered and in December, 1948, began to publish GUPPY GOSSIP edited by John Rosenfield for 13 issues. In January, 1950, the title was changed to the SCALARE and for the next 25 years it was widely distributed across the country. Marie Mccann and others served as editor of this very creditable monthly bulletin. After almost 30 years of operation this club disbanded in 1976, only to be quickly revived again a year later.

Also in 1948, at the extreme southern tip of the state, the BROWNSVILLE AQUARIUM SOCIETY was born with G. W. Burlingame serving as its first president. It apparently did not prosper and was soon dead in infancy. The decade of the 1950s was one of great enthusiasm for the aquarium hobby in Texas with the formation of over 20 new clubs. Regretfully, only three of these societies have stood the test of time and still function today.

In February, 1950, the SAN ANTONIO AQUARIUM SOCIETY was established, or perhaps re-established

formation of over 20 new clubs. Regretfully, only three of these societies have stood the test of time and still function today.

In February, 1950, the SAN ANTONIO AQUARIUM SOCIETY was established, or perhaps re-established since one of the same name had existed in the 1930s. This group grew quickly and soon printed a magazine, THE AQUARIST, which first appeared in January, 1952, with an off-set cover and twelve pages of mimeographed text. All went well until around 1957, when this club either disbanded or was re-organized into the AQUATIC RESEARCHERS OF SAN ANTONIO. More about this second club later in this history.

A few months after the SAN ANTONIO A. S. reappeared, the HOUSTON AQUARIUM SOCIETY, INC., was re-founded on April 24, 1950. Mrs. John R. "Cleo" Logan, Jr. served as the 'first president with over 80 charter members. Four years after its enthusiastic beginning the club ran into some internal problems and nearly collapsed but was quickly re-organized and has continued to function for over 40 years. Their monthly newsletter, THE FISH FANCIER, began in 1950, under the editorship of Arabella Brown. During the decade of the 1960's, it became a bi-monthly under the editorship of Thomas M. "Cricket" Jones who brought it to national attention. Robert Christensen and Douglas Austin have both served long terms as its editor in more recent years. It is worth noting here that the HOUSTON A. S., sponsored yet another group called HOUSTON JUNIOR AQUARIUM SOCIETY which functioned very successfully from 1950, until around 1958.

Evidence reveals that by 1951, the VALLEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY was operating in the Rio Grande Valley which included aquarists from Brownsville to McAllen, Texas. Perhaps this was a revival or an expansion of the older BROWNSVILLE A. S. which had organized in 1948. The VALLEY A. S. met for perhaps six or seven years and then faded away. Also in 1951, the TROPICAL AQUARIUM CLUB of Wichita Falls made itself known. John L. Flournoy was its guiding spirit, but after four or five years it also faded from the scene.

February 2, 1952, brought forth the ALAMO AQUARIUM SOCIETY in San Antonio. This long-lasting club still meets today. Their monthly publication, ANGEL NOTES, began when the club formed and it is still published today under the able editorship of Hazel Hall. She has served the club in this capacity since 1958, which certainly must be an all-time record of service and devotion. Three cheers for Hazel. It is worth noting here that the first six years of this bulletin were edited by Leona v. Bradley before she turned her attention to AQUA FOCUS, the monthly organ of the AQUATIC RESEARCHERS OF SAN ANTONIO which I will discuss later.

Hobbyists in Central Texas organized the AUSTIN AQUARIUM SOCIETY on July 1, 1952, with Frank Fisher as its first elected president. It functioned for six or seven years and then seems to have disappeared. I do not believe that they left a published record of their activities. Also in or around 1952, the EAST TEXAS AQUARIUM SOCIETY of Kilgore, Texas, made itself known but soon disbanded in 1955.

On June 21, 1952, J. L. Baughman, Chief Marine Biologist at the Marine Laboratory in Rockport suggested to some avid aquarists visiting him that the aquarium societies of Texas should group together into a state-wide organization. He also stated that if they could manage to do so he would be happy to host their first annual meeting or convention. A year later on June 28, 1953, at 2:00 p.m. a meeting was called for this purpose since most of the leading enthusiasts in Texas were attending the ALAMO A. S. show that weekend. A second meeting was held in Rockport in September and the FEDERATION OF TEXAS AQUARIUM SOCIETIES (FOTAS) was a reality. This state-wide organization is quite unique in the annals of aquarium history since no other State in the USA has such a confederation. Quarterly meetings are held around the State hosted by its various member clubs and an annual convention is held usually in August or September. An annual DIRECTORY is often published listing the membership rosters of all its participating clubs. They published no newsletter until at the August, 1976, convention in Austin when the president, Rayburn Taylor, suggested a quarterly newsletter be initiated, and he became the first editor of the resulting TAIL FIN REVIEW. After over 40 annual conventions, this fine organization continues to keep the aquarium hobby in Texas a unified group.

The HEART OF TEXAS AQUARIUM SOCIETY brought the aquarists of Waco and Taylor, Texas together in 1953, but this new group soon disbanded. Hobbyists in Corpus Christi organized in around 1954, into the CORPUS CHRISTI AQUARIUM SOCIETY, INC., and published a bulletin entitled THE FINS. They became active in FOTAS and hosted their convention in 1959, but apparently disappeared a few years later.

Around 1954, the TROPICAL FISH HOBBYISTS OF DALLAS was formed and for 25 years staged annual shows and other related activities for its members. They published a widely distributed and popular monthly called THE HOBBYIST. Despite a quarter of a century of success this club finally disbanded in the late 1970's.

The GULF COAST AQUARIUM SOCIETY served the hobbyists of Port Arthur and Port Neches from 1955 until 1957. The TEXOMA AQUARIUM SOCIETY of Dennison operated for approximately five years, 1956-1960. The SHADYLAND AQUARIUM SOCIETY of Mission, Texas existed in 1957 but little is known concerning its activities or longevity. To the best of my knowledge none of these three short-lived clubs produced any printed record.

The ODESSA AQUARIUM SOCIETY appeared circa 1957 and lasted for about seven years under the leadership of Mrs. Elaine Merrick who served as its president continuously. They occasionally published a magazine called the PERMIAN BASIN AQUARIUM NEWS.

Late in 1957, the old re-established SAN ANTONIO A. S. which had begun back in the 1930's and had attempted to revive in 1950, was in real trouble and about to collapse. Mrs. B. W. "Leona V." Bradley and others gathered forces and launched the AQUATIC RESEARCHERS OF SAN ANTONIO. Leona relinquished her editorship of ANGEL NOTES for the ALAMO A. S. and channeled her efforts as editoress of AQUA FOCUS, the new monthly publication of A.R.o.s.A. Through her efforts alone this publication was exchanged or sent throughout the USA and around the World. She gathered authors and contributions of information from Texas, the USA and across the globe. Leona had begun fish keeping back in 1931 with guppies; had opened a retail shop in her home; and eventually had to give that up to devote all her time to AQUA FOCUS. The eye-catching "Archer Fish" cover designed by Gerard T. Rote, Jr. soon became legendary in the hobby. Her labor of love ended very suddenly with her retirement when she printed the 159th issue dated March/April, 1971. She died just four months later on September 10, 1971 of a heart attack at the age of 81 years. The SAN FRANCISCO AQUARIUM SOCIETY publication, ANCHOR, published a "Best of AQUA FOCUS" issue in March, 1972, in her honor. Her devoted efforts brought the "eyes of the World" to focus upon the aquarists of Texas. I regret that this organization without her and AQUA FOCUS soon faded into the sunset.

Also in 1957 another strange phenomenon was sweeping the aquarium hobby of the USA, the AMERICAN GUPPY ASSOCIATION. Mainly through its coverage in the AQUARIUM magazine literally thousands of guppy fans joined this new national specialty group and formed dozens and dozens of local AGA Groups. Texas was no exception with its DALLAS GUPPY CLUB which began in 1958, and published GUPPY GOSSIP. Soon the IRVING AGA GUPPY GROUP was meeting in Irving, Texas, and the TEXARKANA AQUARIUM SOCIETY established an AGA Group within its new club, as did many other already established general clubs. These guppy groups were the first clubs in Texas to follow this new trend toward specialization.

The 1960's, brought forth ten new clubs in Texas, however, none of them survive today. The first of these was yet another of the guppy specialty groups, SOUTH PLAINS GUPPY SOCIETY of Hurlwood, Texas, which probably began as an AGA Group of the SOUTH PLAINS A. S. In 1963/64, the GREATER SOUTHWEST AQUARIUM CLUB, INC. appears in the literature. I mentioned earlier in this paper that it was perhaps a temporary name change of the FORT WORTH A. S. It could also have been a splinter group breaking away from the Fort Worth club. I also previously mentioned their publication, TROPICAL TOPICS.

Aquarium keepers in Port Arthur tried again to organize a club in 1963, the SOUTHEAST TEXAS AQUARIUM Fish Tales - 20

SOCIETY or SOUTHERN TEXAS AQUARIUM SOCIETY. It was formed and drew members from Nederland, Texas as well. Beaumont, Texas, and the surrounding towns founded the GOLDEN TRIANGLE AQUARIUM SOCIETY. Nothing in the literature concerning these two clubs after 1966, so I must assume they died young.

The ARK-LA-TEX AQUARIUM SOCIETY was originated in 1964, and continued for ten years to bring the hobbyists of three states together. Their publication, AQUARIUM HIGHLIGHTS, was edited by R.H. "Bob" Klintzing and Cynthia Kittler. Even though the center of activity for this society was Shreveport, Louisiana, many of their members came over the border from Texas.

Amarillo in the Northwest supported the HIGH PLAINS AQUARIUM SOCIETY for ten years from 1965-1975. Their quarterly bulletin, THE AQUA JOURNAL, was widely distributed across Texas and the USA. They did become active in FOTAS and hosted its convention in 1970. Roscoe and Irene Parkhurst were two of their guiding lights. The MINERAL WELLS AQUARIUM SOCIETY appeared briefly at about this time but soon disappeared. Fred W. Mosher led the NORTH TEXAS AMATEUR AQUARISTS of Gainesville from 1967, until it faded some six years later. The Amarillo aquarists established a second group known as the AQUARIUM HOBBYISTS OF AMARILLO around 1967, and it managed to function until 1975 or 1976. The runaway inflation and sharply rising utility bills of the mid-1970's brought an end to many clubs across the country as it apparently did to both of these Amarillo organizations.

The tenth and last of these new 1960's clubs to appear was the ARLINGTON AQUARIUM SOCIETY circa 1968. Arlington was ideally situated between Dallas and Fort Worth so managed to draw a large and enthusiastic membership. Their monthly bulletin, AQUATIC TOPICS chronicled its many activities: annual shows, field trips and socials. They were active in FOTAS and hosted the convention in 1975 at the Inn of the Six Flags. Despite their ideal location between two major cities the club appears to have disbanded in 1980.

The era of the 1970's was to see over two dozen new clubs begin, but like those from the 1950's, only three survived infancy. As I did mention earlier the economic hardships and energy "crunch" of the middle 70's may have been the cause of these failures.

The far western portion of Texas organized around 1970 into the EL PASO AQUARIUM SOCIETY only to disappear circa 1973. Once again the aquarists of the capitol city, Austin, founded the AUSTIN AQUARIUM SOCIETY which had existed earlier in the 1950's. This effort was more successful, and the club met for ten years at various bank buildings in Austin. Their monthly magazine, JOURNAL OF THE J.A.A.S. or J.A.A.S. for short, was quite creditable and recorded their numerous shows and activities. Also in 1970, a club calling itself alternately THE FISH CLUB or the PALESTINE AQUARIUM SOCIETY in Jacksonville area made a brief appearance. It is reported to have published a periodical entitled THE CATFISH, however, I have never been able to locate a copy of it.

In 1971 a new club emerged on the south plains called THE AQUARIUM SOCIETY OF LUBBOCK, and it seems to have drained off what little steam was still left in the older SOUTH PLAINS A. S. that had begun in 1959. This energetic new group staged its first show in 1972, and in 1974, brought the national convention of the AMERICAN CICHLID ASSOCIATION to Texas. The first national convention to be held in the state to the best of my knowledge. Both of these Lubbock clubs folded in the mid 1970's. Before leaving Lubbock, I should mention the TROPICAL FISH EXPRESS, monthly edited by David Spires of the AQUARIUM SOCIETY OF LUBBOCK.

The influence of national specialty clubs continued to be reflected with the establishment of the GULF COAST GUPPY CLUB in 1971, which soon re-named itself the HOUSTON GUPPY CLUB in 1972. This small band of guppy fans distributed a newsletter called THE GUPPY FORUM in the early 1970's. As far as I can determine this club is still meeting today. Another small band of aquatic fans in Tyler, Texas, formed the EAST TEXAS

ASSOCIATION in 1971, and they produced a periodical titled the AQUARIAN. Unfortunately, the club soon died out in 1973.

The hobbyists of Abilene had better luck with their ABILENE AQUARIUM SOCIETY which appeared in 1971. I have not been able to locate much information about this society, but it apparently met successfully for some 15 year. They printed a bulletin called the AQUARIUS, but I have never been able to secure any copies from which to learn more about their activities. Another group in Abilene calling itself the BIG COUNTRY AQUARIUM HOBBYIST is known to have existed in 1974, and to have published a bulletin (name unknown). After 1985/86 I find no evidence of club activity in Abilene.

The GALVESTON COUNTY AQUARIUS CLUB existed for three or four years early in the 1970's. Again I have been able to learn little about this group. The Bryan/College Station area brought two club names in 1972. The TEXAS A. & M. MARINE BIOLOGY ASSOCIATION in 1972 and the BRAZOS VALLEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY in 1972. Perhaps the first name was a working title and soon gave way to the second name. The BRAZOS VALLEY A. S. flourished, and Keith Arnold soon began to edit their B.V.A.S. NEWSLETTER on a monthly basis. He has continued to perform this task tirelessly for twenty years. Annual shows began in the early 1970's, and they hosted the FOTAS conventions of 1977, 1981, 1984 and 1988. As a matter of fact, it was the 1988 convention that was my first and only visit to Texas; and I was most impressed by this organization and their editor. Perhaps the youthful enthusiasm of the Texas A. & M. student body is the reason it has survived until today.

Following the early success of the ARLINGTON A. S. midway between two cosmopolitan centers, Fort Worth/Dallas, the MID-CITIES TROPICAL FISH HOBBYIST, INC., made its debut in 1973. This vigorous new group organized field trips, a home show and numerous social and money raising activities. Their monthly journal, AQUARIUM WORLD, first appeared in late 1973, and was both attractive and informative; but like its sister club in Arlington, both were gone by the end of the decade.

Once again Waco tried to re-ignite the spark begun by the HEART OF TEXAS A. S. 20 years earlier, the CENTEX AQUATIC SOCIETY. Edward Makowski and Rayburn L. Taylor were two of the guiding lights of this new group and the later served as editor of their periodical, WET PET GAZETTE. Unfortunately, the club dissolved by the end of the decade.

Another attempt as a specialty club, not guppies but bettas this time, came with the formation of the NORTH TEXAS BETTA ASSOCIATION around 1973/74. This first betta club of Texas met regularly through the decade and published the NORTH TEXAS BETTA or BULLETIN OF N.T.B.A. With the death of long-time president, Dale Monk in the late 1980's the club soon disbursed.

The only attempt to establish a national organization in Texas was the CYPRINODON STUDY GROUP in Killeen, Texas, around 1974. It only lasted a couple of years but did manage to print a few issues of the PUFFISH MONTHLY before it disappeared. Mrs. H. H. Flather was its editor and organizer.

I mentioned earlier in this history the HOUSTON JUNIOR A. S. sponsored by the HOUSTON A.Ss. in the 1950's. Surely other societies had a so provided in various ways for the education and development of their junior members and aquarists of the future. In Plano (Texas) Senior High School in the later half of the 1970's. an active society existed and perhaps an adult one as well. Details are sketchy.

Another group shrouded in mystery appeared in the middle 70's calling itself the P.A.A.C. or the P.A.C.C. Apparently it was a council or confederation of societies in the Fort Worth, Arlington, Dallas region. I have never been able to determine what the acronym stood for, Pampas Association of Aquarium Clubs or Prairie Aquarium Club Council, or what have you? Clubs in the area sent delegates to a quarterly meeting in 1975 and 1976. Several social events were enjoyed by those participating, and in October, 1975, a Halloween party was held and

one male delegate attended as a “Damsel Fish” and won the costume competition hands down. Certainly says something for the party spirit of Texans.

Yet another “oddity” arose around 1975, calling itself the FIRST TEXAS FANCY GUPPY CLUB; but as I have already shown, it was far from the first as proclaimed. I have been unable to find any details about this group or even where in the state they were located.

The LONE STAR CICHLID CLUB of Arlington was the first of this genre to appear circa 1976, but certainly interest in cichlids and the “Texas Cichlid” had always been there. Several attempts through the years have been made to name this sole member of the Cichlidae family the official fish of the State of ‘Texas. The LONE STAR CICHLID CLUB only lasted three or four years but was a pioneer of what was to come forth in the 1980s.

On November 11, 1976, the TEXAS AQUARIUM SOCIETY OF GREATER DALLAS, INC. became a reality with Larry Coleman as its first president. The society grew rapidly and sponsored a whole array of activities: field trips, auctions, Halloween and Christmas socials, picnics and a show in March of 1977. The most attractive and informative, JOURNAL OF THE TEXAS AQUARIUM SOCIETY OF GREATER DALLAS began as a monthly in January, 1977, became bi-monthly in 1979 and by 1980 or 1981 both the club and its magazine disappeared.

I have already spoken about FOTAS and its contribution to the hobby in Texas. In 1977/78 a second, closely related group, THE FISH JUDGES REGISTRY OF TEXAS, was established and met quarterly along with the FOTAS gatherings. It is a separate organization designed to bring order and continuity to the skill of judging tropical fish competitions and it still provides that serve at this writing.

As we near the end of the 1970’s, I should mention three more specialty groups which appeared briefly. The NORTH TEXAS KILLIFISH ASSOCIATION of Dallas; the HOUSTON KILLIFISH ASSOCIATION; and the SAN ANTONIO MARINE SOCIETY; all three were short lived but do illustrate the increased interest in specialization and an increasing trend away from general/all purpose clubs. I should also mention the PRIDE OF PAMPA AQUARIUM CLUB which existed in 1978, but I am not sure where it was located. Also at the end of the 1970’s the AUSTIN A. S. which had functioned for some 10 years, collapsed, and some of the devoted members vainly tried to re-organize and revive it as the RIVER CITY AQUARIUM SOCIETY, but it did not succeed.

There had been a great deal of aquarium club activity in the Fort Worth/Dallas complex during the 1970’s, but it pretty much disappeared by 1980. After several quiet years, the METROPLEX AQUARIUM SOCIETY arose in 1983, with its publication, THE SPOUT. The DALLAS AQUARIUM ASSOCIATION was attempted by Janet Benes in 1984, but soon failed. On February 14, 1984, the TEXAS CICHLID ASSOCIATION was born in the Dallas area. With the great increase in interest for cichlids, the Rift-lake introductions of the 1970’s and the nationwide popularity of the AMERICAN CICHLID ASSOCIATION and its well attended annual conventions, Texas became no exception. The T.C.A. was organized by Jim & Sue Webb, and it soon grew to such a size statewide that Dallas could no longer be the center of all activity. A variety of chapters around the State were formed when a sufficient membership warranted it. The T.C.A. HIGH PLAINS CICHLID CHAPTER was proposed by Tony Dowling and Ted Winton; the T.C.A. HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER (HCC) was established on May 2, 1988; the original Dallas group became the T.C.A. NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER; and the Houston area formed the T.C.A. SOUTHEAST TEXAS CHAPTER on Dec. 2-3, 1988, (also called: Houston Chapter or Gulf Coast Chapter); The parent group distributed a bi-monthly publication, CICHLID TAILS, and some of the chapters did the same with BREVIS from the T.C.A. NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER and HAPLOCHROMIS TIMES (1989) and THE CICHLIDKEEPER (1991) from the SOUTHEAST CHAPTER. Somewhere around 1991, things ran into trouble and the whole chapter pyramid seemed to collapse, but the statewide T.C.A. staggered through and survived the trials.

In 1987 a “gentleman” named J. R. Hollingsworth toured around Texas to various shows, conventions and aquarium activities to promote his new club, TEXAS BETTA FANCIERS, and solicited \$10.00 for the annual dues and a copy of the first T.B.F. Bulletin. Unfortunately, he seemed to vanish taking his ill-gotten gains and everyone’s hopes with him. How disappointing for the betta lovers of Texas.

After several ill-fated attempts to organize the aquarists of Austin, the CAPITOL AQUARIUM SOCIETY was established on June 16, 1987 through the efforts of Artie Hebert and Caroline Estes. Their newsletter, THE COMMUNITY TANK, enlarged and improved with each issue. The club is still meeting with success in Austin.

The WEST TEXAS AQUARIUM SOCIETY of Midland emerged circa 1988, and it soon printed a humble bulletin called simply, NEWS which developed into the RIVER & SEAS JOURNAL. I believe this club to be in existence today. Also in or around 1988, two more specialty groups, the DALLAS DISCUS STUDY GROUP (or: North Texas Discus Society) and the FANCY GOLDFISH ASSOCIATION at College Station were founded. 1989 brought several more of the specialty variety clubs: the GULF SHORES MARINE AQUARIUM SOCIETY and the TEXAS AREA KILLIFISH ORGANIZATION (TAKO) to the Houston area.

A completely new and different sort of “fish” club began to appear in Texas in the late 1980’s. The keeping of koi in outdoor ponds had taken the West Coast by storm in the ‘1970’s and slowly the new fascination spread across the USA and Canada. The LONE STAR KOI CLUB of Austin, Houston and the JOY OF KOI in Houston were the first of such organizations to exist in Texas. Both distribute a NEWSLETTER to their members to keep them apprised of meetings, displays, pond tours, seminars and social gatherings. This new style club geared to the keeping of fish strictly out-of-doors is something new to Texas and on the increase. In the present decade of the 1990’s, two more “koi keeping” groups have surfaced: the TEXAS KOI & FANCY GOLDFISH SOCIETY of Marion, Texas, in 1991; and the KOI & WATER GARDEN CLUB OF NORTH TEXAS (or: Tancho Sanke Koi Club) of Allen, Texas in 1992.

In 1991, the Hill Country Chapter of T.C.A. apparently became an independent club calling itself CICHLID AQUARISTS OF SAN ANTONIO. Also the GREATER HOUSTON MARINE AQUARIUM SOCIETY appeared in 1991/92. So even while I am writing this history, new clubs are forming in Texas.

So to conclude this discourse, I want to thank the many Texan aquarists I have met and the collectors from whom I acquired copies of various club bulletins from which much of this information was gleaned. For some years FOTAS has named individuals to be awarded the “Altruism Award” for their service to FOTAS, and they have also named an “Exhibitor of the Year”. I would like to propose that perhaps they should also establish a “TEXAS HALL OF AQUARIUM FAME” through which many of the individuals of the past could be honored for the treads that they contribute to the rich tapestry that has woven over the years to create the aquarium lore of the Lone Star State.



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Events

- Guest Speakers
- Banquet Dinner
- Funny Money Auction
- Large Fish Show
- Vendors
- Huge Auction

Speaker Sessions*

- Bill Allen – Livebearers
- Jon Armbruster – Plecos
- John Hawke – Fish Diseases
- Karen Maruska – Cichlids
- Jeff Senske – Planted Aquariums
- Greg Steeves – History of FOTAS

Visit WWW.SELAS.US for more information.



* Speakers subject to change

Previous Issue of Fish Tales

What would you like to see in the next Fish Tales Magazine?

Contact the Editor if you have story ideas or would like to contribute to Fish Tales!



Fish Tales

Volume 8 Issue 1

A Visit to the Aquarium of the Pacific

CAOAC 2018 Convention

*The Most
Expensive Livebearer*

*Attempting to Artificially
Hatch Betta macrostoma*

*A Visit to the Rocky
Mountain Cichlid Association*

Pungu macclareni

