

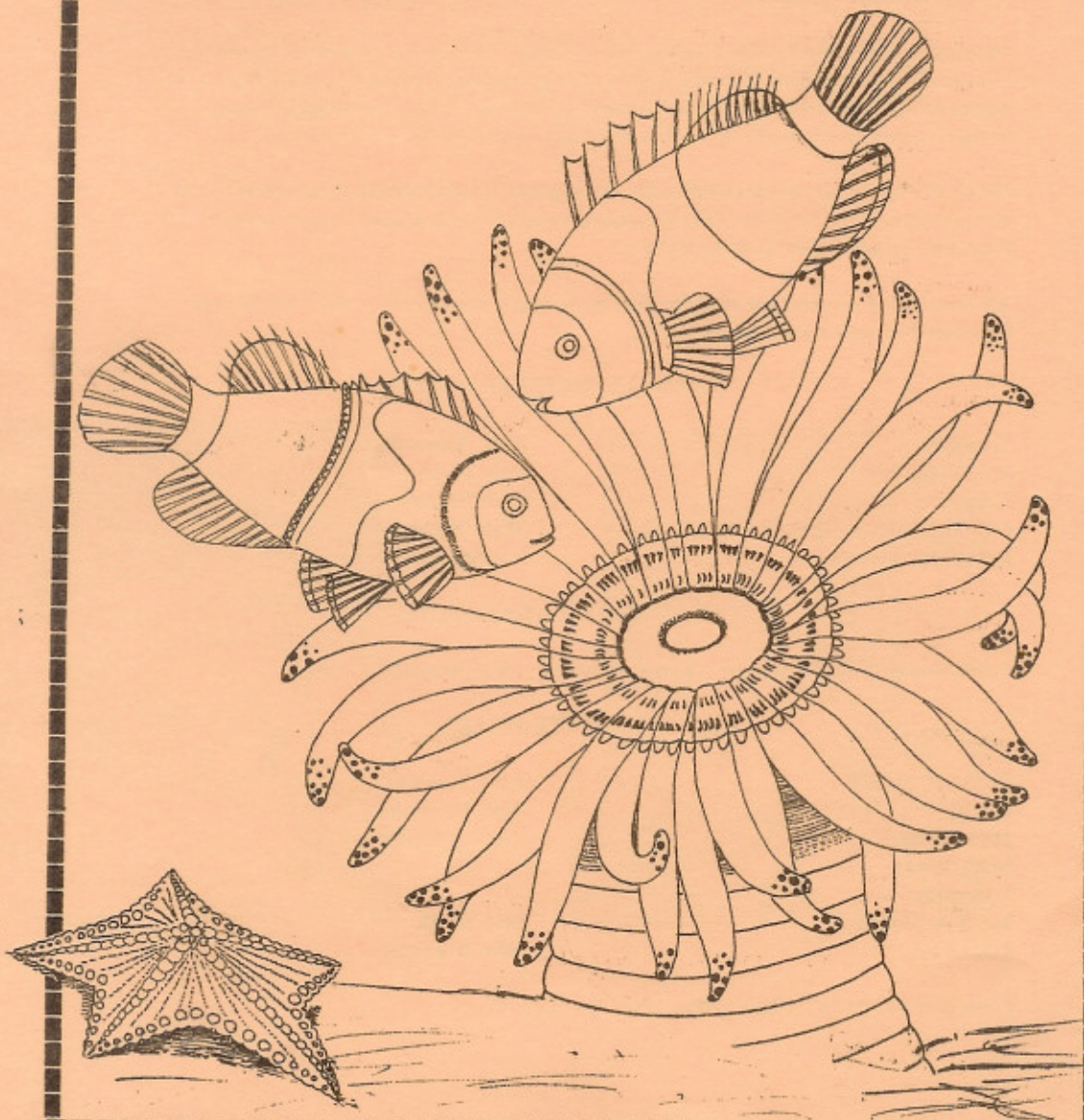
* DELTA TALE *

July/Aug
1995

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF

potomac valley aquarium society



The *Delta Tale* is published bimonthly for the benefit of the membership of the POTOMAC VALLEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY INC. , a non-profit educational and social organization . The society was founded in 1960 for the purposes of furthering the aquarium hobby by the dissemination of information and advice, and the promotion of good fellowship among the membership by organized activities and competitions.

All correspondence to the society and to *Delta Tale* should be directed to P.O. Box 664, Merrifield, VA 22116.

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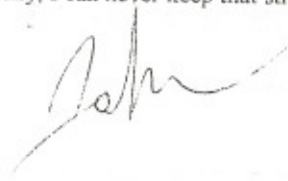
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<u>Delta Tale</u>	John Mangan

Printed by TOP CAT PRINTING, Manassas Park, Va.

From the editor's desk

Here I sit once again, about 18 hours from taking this to the printer, without any idea what to write about. I could rant, rave, or beg, for articles 'n' stuff. But I'm tired of doing that. It doesn't do any good anyway. I just wrote one of these pages about a week ago, so there's nothing new going on since then to tell you about. Oh well. I really need to get this issue finished so I can drop it off at the printer when I pick up the last one (once again I'm hoping to get caught up on the publishing schedule. If I can get yet another issue done to drop off when I pick this one up I'll be real close). So I'm going to take the easy way out and stop here. I'll fill the rest of the page with cartoons to help you laugh off the summer heat, or is it the humidity, I can never keep that straight.

Until next time...



A lucky night for Goldy



WHAT'S HAPPENING!

☎ For up to the minute information on what's happening call the free PVAS hotline anytime. (703) 352-3365.

Aug. 14: PVAS Monthly Meeting. Program (subject not known at press time), door prize, raffles, mini-auction, refreshments, air-conditioning. Don't sit at home in the heat watching repeats on television. Note: the parking lot fills up fast due to the karate classes. If you can't find a space go back to the street, turn right, then right again at the light. You can park in the school parking lot. There is a sidewalk leading from it back to the Wood Center. Doors open at 7:30, meeting starts at 8:00.

Sept. 11: PVAS Monthly Meeting. All of the usual good stuff.

TRADING POST

PVAS members may advertise in the trading post at no charge. Send ads to *Delta Tale*, c/o John Mangan, 12633, Oakwood Dr. Woodbridge, VA 22192.

For Sale: backissue aquarium magazines. Many different titles. Send SASE for catalog. John Mangan, 12633 Oakwood Dr., Woodbridge, VA 22192.

For Sale: Breeding group *Corydoras panda*. Total of 10 fish: 3 females, 3 males, 4 unknown. \$40 or best offer, please contact Jeff Burke, (703) 941-3230.



"Well, I'll be! Eggbeater must have missed that one."

From the PVAS Archives:

← This is why Alex now buys the refreshments for the monthly meeting instead of making them himself.

Breeder's Award Program

BAP Checkers:

Annandale/Falls Church area: Jeff Burke (703) 3230

Montgomery County: Ray Hughes (301) 424- 3531

Mt. Vernon/Olde Town area: Gene Moy (703) 765- 0865

Oakton/Vienna area: Rick McKay (703) 281- 1647

Occoquan/Lake Ridge area: John Mangan (703)491-4980

Springfield/Franconia area: Pete Thrift (703) 971-0594

We still could use some more checkers. There are a number of areas where we don't have anyone. Even if there is someone already listed for your area we could always use someone else to help spread the work around.

I'd like to print the BAP standings but I can't. I still haven't received the records from Tom. Anyone that has copies of your records please photocopy them and get them to me if possible in case I have to recreate everything from scratch.



"Well, for crying out loud! ... It's Uncle Irwin
from the city sewer!"

Don't miss the next P.V.A.S
meeting. You never know who'll
show up.

XIPHOPHERUS INTERMEDIA
RED BRICK SWORDTAIL

By

Jeffrey Burke

I bought five swordtails, one male and four female. After thirty days I realized that two of the females were actually males. I kept the two largest males and the two females and put them in a ten gallon aquarium. Within few weeks both of the females had swollen bellies. I removed the two females and put them in a five gallon tank using water and sponge filter from the ten gallon tank, I also added enough Java Moss in the bottom of the tank to prevent mom from eating the young ones as she gave birth.

All in all there was about sixty babies so I figured both gave birth the same morning even though they both still had large bellies. I moved the females back to the tank with the males but, I put them in there own breeder nets to allow them to get strong before releasing them back in with the males. A few days later one of the females gave birth to fifteen still born fry. The probable cause was the stress that was put on her by the move.

I left the fry in the five gallon tank and removed the Java Moss. I fed them heavy on Micro Worms and Baby L food. Every night I cleaned the bottom of the bare tank with an air line hose with one end cut at an angle to better remove debris from the bottom. The replacement water was obtained from a well established twenty gallon tank, because I find that new water treated from the tap gives me low yields of fry. Up to this point no other fry have been observed dead.

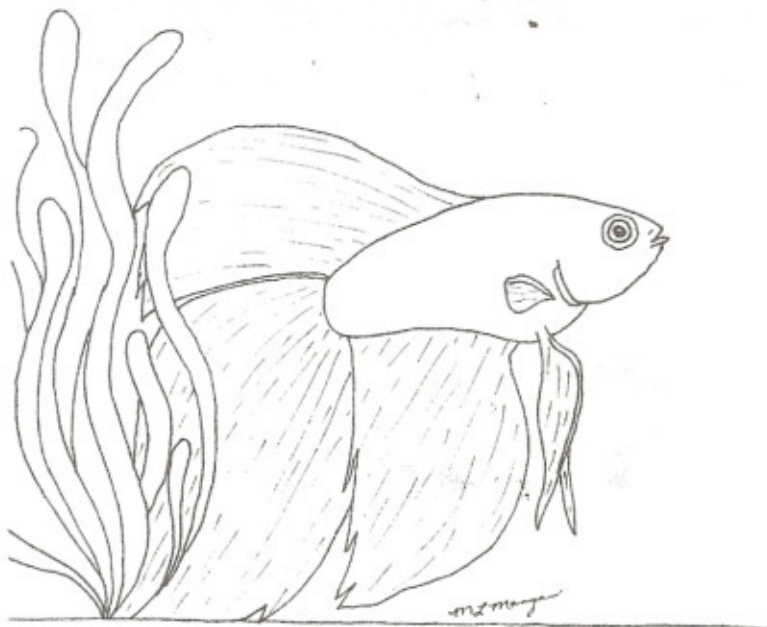
FRY FEEDING TIP
Pete Thrift, PVAS

In the past, when feeding older fry not yet ready for adult foods, I have usually fed frozen daphnia and powdered flake food to supplement baby brine shrimp. Here is a feeding tip which I have used over past year with great success.

Frozen veal and beef heart is my staple food for all my carnivorous fish. I trim and grind the heart myself, and freeze the ground heart in patty form. To feed, I slice a portion from the edge of the patty using a serrated knife and a "sawing" motion. I then "saw" or chop the portion into the appropriate size for the fish being fed. Before feeding, I rinse the results in a coarse fish net to remove excess blood and small particles of heart.

My tip is simply to use these very small particles of heart to feed older carnivorous fry. As you rinse the chopped heart, just hold a brine shrimp net under the coarse net holding the chopped heart. The brine net will then trap the small particles which otherwise would be rinsed away. Dropping a pinch or two from the brine net into a tank will produce a shower of food perfectly sized for older fry. Excess particles can be refrigerated or refrozen.

Give this suggestion a try - I think you will be pleased with the results!



Goodieds – A Tale From Not So Long Ago

By GEORGE WHITE, PVAS

Once upon a time there was an aquarium club magazine editor who kept Goodieds. One day he heard the news that the club members were planning to stage a surprise party in his backyard and give him a nice gift as a token of appreciation for all his years of dedicated service as aquarium club magazine editor. Now this news made him both happy and nervous. This would be almost as nice as winning a Pulitzer prize. However, he worried that the club members might spot the Goodieds he had secreted in his medium-sized backyard pond. Hobgoblins of the deep.

Clever as most aquarium club magazine editors are, the legendary editor decided that he would hide the Goodieds by covering the pond surface with plants. He called Lily Ponds in Lily Pons Maryland, rumored to be the world's largest supplier of outdoor aquatic plants. The plant wizard responded that they had a perfect solution for his problem--a "magic" water lily that doubled the number of its leaves every 24 hours. The wondrous lily would take just 10 days to cover the surface of the pond and hide the embarrassing Goodieds. The legendary editor replied that this was not nearly fast enough. In reply, the plant wizard suggested buying two lilies so the surface would be covered in half as much time. The legendary editor, clever as most aquarium club magazine editors are, sounded skeptical. Why? Would the two lilies cover the pond twice as fast as one would? Or, was there some mysterious factor at play?



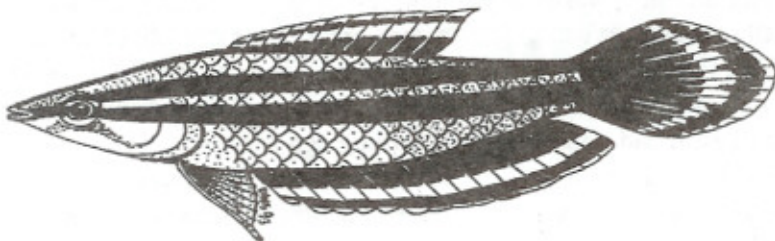
The Licorice Gourami

By Chuck Davis

Only twice in my 30+ years as a tropical fish enthusiast have I had the pleasure to own the 'Licorice Gourami'. This is a small anabantoid, that is sensitive to changes of all types. As with most of the 'gourami groups', they are sexually dimorphic as the males are more brightly colored (particularly noticed in the anal, dorsal and caudal fins). Color patterns in the body of the males varies from solid, medium-dark, reddish colors to a neatty striped pattern starting at the tip of the snout and ending at the caudal peduncle. Rarely seen at all, two inches would be a rather large male specimen. Females are slightly smaller and much less attractive in color with paler stripes in the body and almost clear finnage. The most evident strips in the males finnage is a beautiful iridescent light blue. The fish are bubblenest builders, but not quite the construction conscience engineers as their cousin, 'the siamese fighting fish' (*Betta splendens*). I believe the scientific name of the licorice gourami species that I had was *Parosphromenus nagi*, but that is an after- the -fact identification. They relished a few chopped up tubifex worms. Once in a while, I would see them eat blood worms (frozen) and live brine shrimp. I'm sure they would take live mosquito larve, but I never tried it. None of the 13-14 specimens I had ever ate prepared dry foods.

My P. Nagyi lived in a well planted 30 gallon 'flat' tank, with some corydoras catfish and some cardinal tetras. They swam freely among the plants, but rarely ventured out in the open water, even at feeding time. They seemed to prefer to remain as individual species and not school or pair-up. Soft water and a neutral pH is my recommendation for keeping them happy with a water temperature of at least 75f as they come from the warm climate of Malasia.

I have kept a single pair in a 10 gallon tank that was reasonably bare. The fish were often huddle behind the corner filter, nervous and skidish. If you mix more than one male in a tank, be sure to have plenty of vegetation. Although they are not as aggressive as bettas, I don't think a few males would last long in a barren aquarium. Keep in mind that conditioning is very important for these little gems to reach their colorful potential.



The Stuff That Dreams are Made Of

by Dave Williamson

Every so often something will happen in the fish room that seems to be a turning point from just maintaining a certain fish or plant species to really succeeding with it. Somewhere along the line, however, it never fails that something goes haywire and your great plans for fame and fortune go right down the drain.

My all time favorite case of this deals with that well known, and usually well hated, plant *Lemma minor* (for those not into Latin this pesky little plant is more commonly known as duckweed). For me duckweed was a ray of hope-it was the first live plant to survive and reproduce in my tanks. After multiple bouts with disintegrating *Anachris* and *Cabomba*, I had all but given up on live plants. Then I received a little bit in with a fish and the next thing I knew the top of the tank was covered with the stuff! As time went on it got transferred to other tanks on nets, hands and even intentionally (believe it or not!)

Soon I began to realize that this stuff wasn't as fantastic as I had originally thought; it was clogging up my power filters, sticking to my hands and siphon hoses anytime I even went near the tanks and worst of all it had gotten so thick that flake food was sitting on top of it getting moldy and the fish had no idea it was even there! The time had come to thin it out, but the question arose, what the heck do I do with it? I started out by dumping it in and flushing, but that left a trail of little green things

everywhere I went. I also tried throwing it out in the trash, but after a day or two it smelled like a swamp so that was out! In desperation, I had heard that goldfish would eat the stuff, so I gave them a big glob. Sure enough two days later it was gone and replaced by little green stringy things on the bottom of the tank. This worked fine except for one small drawback, goldfish have a real endearing habit of re-eating things they haven't been able to fully digest the first time. After re-processing the duckweed you are left with a tank full of grey cellulose fluff that really looks wonderful in the living room.

Following my ``success'' with duckweed, I began to branch out into a few other species of plants. First came hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*). I found the trick to this stuff is not to try to plant it. Let it float and shortly you'll have a 3-4" thick baby-saving mat at the surface of the tank. Next came Java Moss (*Vesicularia dubanaya*). This starts out as a stringy little ball of fluff in the corner of the tank and in a few months, under favorable conditions, it becomes a dark green mass capable of engulfing anything in its path (sort of a vegetarian version of the Blob!) It is great for saving baby livebearers or spawning egg scatterers, but power filters absolutely despise it as it tends to get tangled around impellers, strainers and just about anything else that doesn't move faster than it does!

The real fun begins when you have all three in the same tank. What usually happens is the

hornwort gets tangled up in the Java Moss and the duckweed gets stuck to both of them leaving you with an amorphous green thing that takes a machete to get through!

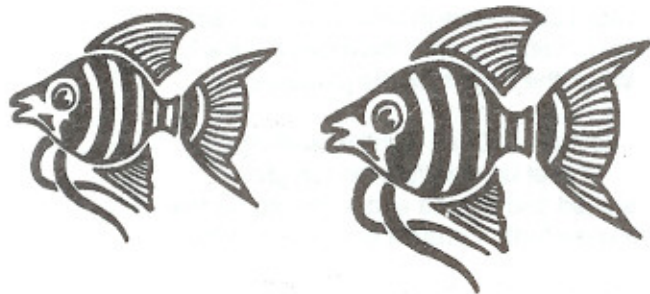
Having developed a few tankfulls of this living vegetable stew, I decided it was time to try ``real'' plants again. After having gotten my hopes up it was back to the dumper again. Swordplants (*Echinodorus* sp.) turn into mushy yellow strings that are easily siphoned out of the tank, leaving behind a dwarf, mutant plant that always has the same number of leaves (one grows, an old one falls off - real growth potential here!)

Aponogeteons don't fare that much better, they usually retire back to their bulb where they then

metamorphise into little brown mush balls (not to be confused with their yellow cousins, since these can't be siphoned out!) I do have some luck with *Cryptocorynes*, at least until I look at them funny! When a crypt is disturbed they have this really remarkable ability to ``melt down''... What happens is after you mess with them the leaves sort of go to mush immediately, leaving you with a ``stump'' and some gray goo-balls that have all the appeal of microwaved lettuce. It is incredible how fast they can do this when you compare it to how slowly they grow!

What all this is leading up to is just a reminder that the next time you think you've become major ``green thumb'' be prepared because it seems that plants have a ``mind'' of their own!

Reprinted from Tank Topics, the publication of The Greater Akron Aquarium Society, Aug.-Sept. 1991.



JUST ONE MORE

by Jo-Anne Rowley

I noticed a spot in the upstairs den
That seemed just right for a nice little ten.
"Oh, Hon," I asked, "Could I set up just one more?"
"No," he yelled, and ran out the door.

"But Dear" said I, as I followed him out
Now wearing my most disarming pout,
"It's not for me, a you might assume,
The fish, you see must have more room."

"Please," he moaned, "When will it stop?
The shelves are full from bottom to top
With fives and tens and twenty-nines,
When will it end - when you spend our last dime?"

I took a deep breath and without hesitation
Tried to explain the sad situation;
"The tanks are full up to the brim -
With so many fish there's no room to swim.
The guppies must have more room to survive,
Their parents are eating them alive.
The zebras are fertile with eggs to lay.
The tetras are crowded with nowhere to play.

The betta is lonely and needs a mate,
Which I can't allow in that crowded place.
To make matters worse there was quite a fuss
When the angels bit the plecostamus.

So please, Dear, won't it be all right
If I set up that little ten tonight?
He sighed and agreed and sank into his fate,
He knew further protest would be too late.

*Reprinted from The Cichlid Evening Post,
the publication of the Lake Erie Cichlid Society, September 1990
Originally from the Colorado Aquarist*

POTOMAC VALLEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY

PO BOX 664, Merrifield, VA 22116

Application for Membership

Date: _____

Name: _____

Street: _____ Apt. _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Optional information:

Occupation: _____

Where did you hear about PVAS/get this application? _____

Number of aquariums: _____ Time in the hobby: _____

Special interests: (e.g., catfish, cichlids, etc.) _____

Reason for joining: _____

Membership dues for PVAS are:

Individual/Family: \$12/yr

Corresponding: \$ 9/yr

Junior (under 18) \$ 5/yr

Please send application and check to the address above.

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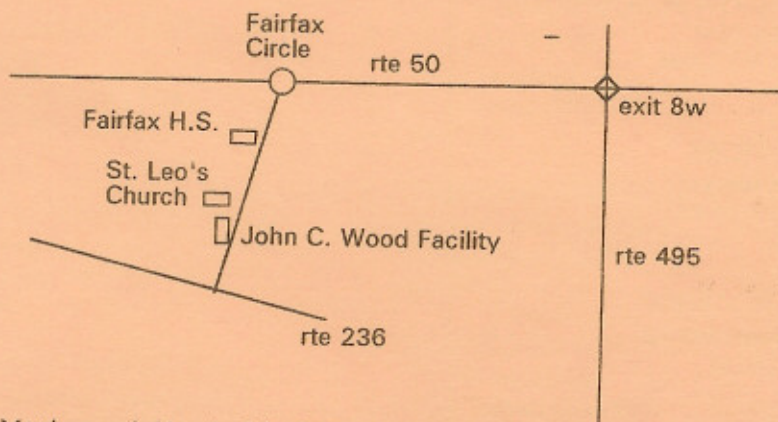
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243-C Harry Flood Byrd Hgwy.
Sterling, VA 22170
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Potomac Valley Aquarium Society
PO Box 664
Merrifield, VA 22116



Meetings are held at the John C. Wood Facility, 3730 Old Lee Hgwy. (rte 237), Fairfax City, VA. Room 7 (in the rear of the building). Doors open at 7:30, meetings start at 8:00. Everyone is welcome.