

MASWA Newsletter

ATTENTION: This month's MASWA meeting is **THURSDAY 27th January** (the day after Australia Day)!

The meeting is to be held at David Bloch's house. David has a 4' L x 2' H x 2.5' D reef tank filtered via the Berlin method. David has a pair of Banggai Cardinal fish; the male is regularly carrying a mouthful of fry. The tank has quite a variety of coral species in it and is well worth a look.

David's address is **15 Ramsay Close, Noranda**. The meeting will begin at **7.30pm**.

Previous Meetings

November's MASWA meeting was the last for 1999 and was held at Nathan and Niloufar Cope's house in South Perth. Nathan showed us how he feeds his animals, how much he feeds and what he feeds. A lot of members were surprised by the amount of food that was being fed. This tank has been running for 9 months now and according to Nathan, is doing so well because of the amount of food being fed to it.

There was a pretty good turn-out of 16 people as it was a special meeting intended to highlight future issues and get input in regard to the societies direction and member involvement...in that regard it was very successful.

The following is a summary of what was decided/discovered at the meeting:

Newsletter

The majority of members liked the articles that have been appearing in the newsletter and are happy with whatever format the newsletter is presented in. Future article topics that were suggested were:

Updated articles from past newsletters; Marine filtration: how and why it has changed over the years; Fish food recipes; Proper usage of lighting and other equipment; Coral propagation; Handyman articles (gluing, cutting, screwing of perspex); Fish and coral care; Reef-safe fish; Catching pest animals; Ridding tanks of cyanobacteria, hair algae and aiptasia; WA law and personal collection of animals; Locally collectable species suitable for tropical setups; Animal of the month; Tip of the month

We have decided to put into action the suggestion that a prize be awarded to every contributor that writes an article suitable for publishing in the newsletter. We know you will all be incredibly enthusiastic about this, so to avoid the society going bankrupt, prizes will be awarded only after an article has been published. So, start writing those articles! You can choose any of the above topics or write on a topic of your choosing. The only stipulation is that it must be related to marine aquarium keeping.

Meeting Events

Members were also asked what sort of events they would like to have at the meetings. Responses were varied and included:

Watching marine-related videos; Guest speakers giving talks (on corals, shrimp, corallimorphs, molluscs, etc); Perth Scientific Supplies demonstrating technical equipment related to the hobby; Demonstrations on coral propagation; Testing of water samples for host's aquariums; Tour of Fremantle Maritime Centre; Underwater World tour; Snorkel trips (to Penguin Island, for example); Marmion branch of Fisheries Dept to see crayfish propagation; Fremantle Ocean Farm to see mariculture operation; Perth Museum to see collection of marine animals and how to ID them.

Raffles

Members were asked how they felt about the cost and number of prizes used in the raffles and the majority didn't seem to mind one way or the other, so long as the prizes offered are actually suitable for the hobby. Some members said that they would donate coral cuttings, etc for raffles. We very much appreciate this and will be happy to use any prizes donated by members.

We intend to provide around 3 prizes each month with a total value similar to that offered at the November 1999 raffle. If the raffles are supported as well as the last one, this will be quite easy to do and won't put too much of a burden on MASWA's finances at all. We will have to monitor the raffles throughout the year and depending on how well they do, maybe alter the prize values if necessary.

Trading

Up until now, there has been no formal advertising of second-hand items or animals to trade through the society's newsletter. From now on, if you have something related to the hobby that you would like to trade, let the editor, Nathan Cope, know about it and it will be included in the next newsletter. Nathan's contact details can be found at the end of every newsletter.

Trading of propagated animals helps take some of the stress off wild populations. The more trading there is, the better it is for the reefs. It is of great importance if we want to maintain the health of the world's reefs and to provide a future for this hobby.

Incorporation

For a number of reasons it has been proposed that the society be officially incorporated. One of the reasons is simply to avoid the default committee being held legally liable for any problems that arise in regards to the society. Another is that the group gets benefits from certain businesses and organisations (for example, The Australian Museum) for being a legally recognised society.

A more important reason, though, is that as a group of like-minded individuals devoted to the appropriate maintenance and husbandry of marine organisms and aquariums, we should be attempting to promote a level of competency in the hobby. Hopefully this will then propagate to related businesses and non-member hobbyists. Performed correctly, the society would be recognised as a local authority on maintaining marine fish and invertebrates in a captive environment.

U.S.A. authorities are continually striving to limit the hobby in their country (this is mainly done as a political stunt as the general public sees it as a positive action, but in reality, while limitations and regulations on the hobby are probably a good thing, little scientific reasoning is behind the creation of their laws). When decisions are made in the US on high profile issues such as these, Australia typically follows suit in making similar legislation. Occasionally, scientific research is incorporated into the creation of our legislation and for this reason, it is all the more important that we are seen as an official body and recognised as an authority. If this is the case, we may be able to have some positive input in the regulation of the hobby, ie, such that it allows the hobby to continue, but in an ecologically sustainable way.

The decision to incorporate the society is not fait accompli. Members will be given an opportunity to vote in a secret ballot on this issue later in the year, but the current unofficial committee strongly urges you to consider going ahead with incorporation so that we as a society may take advantage of the positive issues associated with it.

Raffle Time

Last meeting

The last raffle was quite a big one for 1999 as it was the end of the year "Christmas Party" raffle. Three prizes were up for grabs; an AquaClear 201 powerhead (valued at \$53.80), a 1kg jar of InstaKalk calcium hydroxide (\$33.00) and a 250mL bottle of SeaChem Matrix Carbon (\$11.24). All prizes were supplied to the society by Reefs Downunder at cost price.

22 tickets were sold at \$2 each before it was decided to draw the night's raffle. Steve Tofts ticket was the first pulled out and he chose the AquaClear powerhead. Darren Collins was second and he chose the InstaKalk. The third ticket pulled also belonged to Steve Tofts and he generously decided to give somebody else a chance, which allowed Nathan Cope to take the 250mL SeaChem carbon.

This meeting

This month's prizes will be another 1kg jar of InstaKalk calcium hydroxide (valued at \$33.00), an UltraLife X-Terminator Mantis Shrimp Trap (\$30.71) and a 100mL bottle of SeaChem Reef Plus food supplement (\$10.41). There may be some propagated corals included as part of the prize draw (see ***This Month's Demonstration***, below). Also, as was mentioned above, if anyone is willing to donate propagated animals, they will be most welcome as inclusions in the list of prizes for the raffle.

This Month's Demonstration

As mentioned above in regards to trading, it is becoming more and more important that hobbyists are able to help take the burden off the natural reefs by propagating their own corals, fish, crustaceans,

molluscs, etc. and distributing them via societies and related organisations. Some members have been relatively successful with a few species of fish and even some molluscs, but at the moment, corals are the easiest to propagate.

To help those of us unfamiliar with coral propagation techniques get started, David Bloch will be giving a demonstration this month of the "art of fragging" (fragmentation or propagation of corals). This demonstration will be very valuable to most members so do your **UTMOST** to come along and learn. Both a soft coral and a hard coral will be fragmented during the demonstration. One of these corals will be purchased specifically for the demonstration and if all goes well, these fragments will probably be included in the raffle.

Nathan's Reef-Feed Recipe

A few members wanted to know the recipe for the food that Nathan was using to feed his tank inhabitants at the last meeting, so after much prompting, here it is:

250g of whole fish (I used one Trevally fillet, because what I was really after, white bait, wasn't available at the time. Yes, the whole fish should be used including head, fins and guts.)

5 whole prawns (including heads and shells)

250g of whole mussels (remove the shells)

200g of scallop flesh

200g of octopus (again, the whole animal should be used and in this case, I used baby octopus)

100g each of frozen Hikari

Brine Shrimp

Ocean Plankton (a type of krill)

Krill (surprisingly, another species of krill)

Daphnia

Bloodworms

MegaMarine

1 sheet of chopped Nori

1 leaf of chopped Wakame

1 tablespoon of Tetra Marin Flake

1 tablespoon of JBL Maris Flake

1 tablespoon of Tetra Doro Marin Pellets

2 tablespoons of powdered spirulina

This is all put into a blender and pureed as much as possible. Once pureed, it is spooned into plastic bags and flattened out (no more than 5mm thick if you intend to just break it off and crumble it into the tank, or if you intend to grate it with a grater, then it can be a lot thicker). It is then put into the freezer and once frozen solid, it can be easily snapped off or grated.

Upcoming Meetings

January 27th: David Bloch's house,
15 Ramsay Close, **NORANDA**

February 23rd: Grant Magill's house

March 29th: Your house?

April 26th: Your house?

MASWA's World Wide Web address

<http://www.wantree.com.au/~conquest/andy/maswa/>

Newsletter and General Inquiries

to Nathan Cope E-mail address: copen@one.net.au
or phone on (08) 9367 9251 a/h or 0416 09 2000 b/h

Membership and Treasury Inquiries

to David Bloch E-mail address:

aguattech@opera.iinet.net.au

or phone on (08) 9375 2438 a/h

MASWA Membership

Currently MASWA requests an annual \$20 donation from members, \$10 for Junior members. This covers the cost of newsletters, drinks, nibbles and other costs associated with the society. Members will receive information sheets and discounts on some products.

Friends in Common

Jan Anderson, David Bloch, Dennis Bozil, Darren Collins, Nathan Cope, Andy Dolphin, Tony Fiorentino, Jim & Gloria Fletcher, Paul Groves, Peter Harris, Mike Hudson, Frank Krause, Craig Lawrence, Grant Magill, Phil and Caron Melvin, Peter and Marina Olive, Steve Tofts, Greg Weryk, Rick White.

If you've paid your money and your name is not on this list, tell David! Members on the web should check they are on the web site members list.

If you've paid your money and your name is not on this list, tell Andy! Members on the web should check they are on the web site members list.

If there is anything you would like to know more about or anything you would like to add to the newsletter, call or send comments to the current editor, Nathan Cope. Remember, this is your newsletter.

DISCLAIMER

The Marine Aquarists Society of WA is a name that we, as a group of friends with like interests have applied to ourselves for the purpose of information exchange. No one person, nor the group as a whole, can be held responsible for liabilities, injuries or other that may result either directly or indirectly as a result of our gatherings or the information exchange therein. The same applies to the information contained in this newsletter.