



The Living Reef October 2003

Editorial....

MASWA meetings are a great way to see and learn new things. They are not only educational but are also entertaining. Entertaining you may ask? Well they are when Tony comes to a meeting! Tony is our very own uncle Arthur. He has a funny story for every season! For that very reason Tony is our Social Coordinator. His aquarium stories and funny anecdotes are the perfect way to make new members and visitors feel comfortable when they walk into a room full of strange fish people! And lets face it, most of us would be considered strange for the huge amounts of money and time we spend staring at these glass boxes full of marine life!

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MASWA Meeting Calendar....

October 29th – Tony Fiorentino
13 Andrews Court, Padbury

November 26th – Glenn Fletcher
FRAGFEST

December 17th – Nathan Cope
*CHRISTMAS MEETING – Trophies, Presentations
and Special Raffle*

January 28th 2004 – **Need a venue????**
AGM

February 25th 2004 – David Bloch
FRAGFEST

March 31st 2004 – **Need a venue????**
Special Raffle

Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm!

MASWA Contact Information....

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Membership Payments

Make cheques payable to:

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Newsletter Contributions

If you would like to make a contribution to the newsletter please don't hesitate to contact the Newsletter Editor, David Bloch on the phone number or email address listed above. Contributions to the newsletter need to be received no later than 7 days prior to the next meeting date.

AQUARIUM ANTICS

*With long awaited anticipation
Winter is over and Spring has
sprung. With Spring comes warmth
and with warmth comes heat and
with heat comes cooked aquariums!
Well not always but it can happen!
Before summer is upon us now is
the time to make sure all your
aquarium cooling apparatus's are in
full working order. For some this
may mean the chiller, air
conditioners, frozen top up water or
cooling fans. Preventative
maintenance can save the tank crash
of a lifetime so now is the time to
get out the tools and check
everything over.*

September Meeting Rundown....

To Tom's house we flocked in the droves! It was like a feeding lot for a heard of sheep last month at Tom's place. The turnout was great with both members and new visitors turning up for the meeting.

As usual Tom's aquariums were spotless and packed with interesting and colourful fish. Unfortunately he did not have much in the breeding department to show us however his brood stock clownfish more than made up for the lack of baby fish.

Our bumper raffle went off really well with the two books and coral frags bringing lots of attention to our "raffle boy", Tony.

Nathan performed a stony coral fragmenting demonstration on the night that was very interesting and entertaining. He showed us how to break up and attach dead corals to dead rocks! At one point we all got a little scared as he decided to put on a pair of rubber gloves however luckily for

us they were to protect his hands from the epoxy putty he was using to glue the corals.

Thankyou to our hosts Mr and Mrs Tom Devilee for letting us all into their home. Look forward to seeing you all next month.

October Meeting Information....

Be prepared to laugh, be prepared to cry, it's October and guess what that means? Tony's meeting! What would a year be without a meeting at Tony's place?

Tony has an aquarium that has been going for many years now. It's 5ft long, 2ft wide and 2ft high. The tank is filled with live rock, live sand, coral and fish. It has a downdraft skimmer sitting in a sump, a calcium reactor and is lit by a 400W 10000K metal halide and some actinic fluorescent lamps. Inside the aquarium are a few powerheads for extra water circulation.

Of particular interest new and old members alike is Tony's laid back approach to caring and maintaining his aquarium. He stresses the "hands out" approach with as little fiddling and disturbing the animals and aquarium as possible.

Tony is many talented guy. Not only is he an entertainer but he is a talented handyman. He can build literally anything. He has built his own skimmer and calcium reactor and even built his own filtration/aquarium room!

Tony's home can be found at **13 Andrews Court, Padbury**. The meeting starts at 7.30pm. Sit at home bored and watching TV or come to the meeting and hear a yarn or two from Uncle Tony!

Complaint from a MASWA Member?....

By Nathan Cope (President)

I received a call this month from the proprietor of one of Perth's aquarium stores. He advised me that he had been inspected by Fisheries WA as they had received a complaint (from a so-called MASWA Member) stating that his store was being "cruel to corals".

I spoke to David Bloch about the issue and we agreed that in our personal opinions, this shop

would have to be one of the best in Perth when it comes to animal husbandry. Consequently, we believe that the real reason this complaint was made had nothing to do with the treatment of corals and everything to do with the vindictiveness of an industry competitor or disgruntled customer.

We also believe that the person who made the complaint was not a MASWA Member!

Please be aware that while Members have every right to make personal complaints to government authorities or businesses on their own behalf they MAY NOT make similar complaints as a MASWA Member. Any complaints made for and on behalf of MASWA Members must come from the MASWA Committee.

If any MASWA Member does have a complaint that they feel warrants legitimate action by MASWA, they must make a formal complaint to one of the MASWA Committee Members. Complaints made to the Committee are thoroughly investigated for their veracity and objective accuracy. If the complaint is subsequently considered to be legitimate, appropriate action is then taken by the Committee.

MASWA has a very good working relationship with Fisheries WA which we do not want made sour by petty and baseless complaints. Accordingly, I will be following up on this issue and informing Fisheries that this was not an official complaint from MASWA and therefore does not carry any of MASWA's authority. I will also be telling them to ignore the MASWA Member "angle" of any future complaints unless the complaint comes personally from myself.

NB: Apart from David Bloch, I have not sought the opinions of the other Committee Members, so our opinions of this store do not necessarily reflect theirs. However, I am told that following their investigation, Fisheries were apparently satisfied with the health of the animals at the store and accordingly did not lay any charges.

MASWA Message Board....

GET READY FOR THE AGM IN JANUARY!

Time is getting closer to the most important event in the MASWA calendar, the AGM. The AGM will be run in January at the first general meeting of the 2004. This year we have run MASWA without a full committee. Missing were the positions of Secretary and Vice President. Next year we want

to fill all the positions so that we can do a better job at organising and running MASWA.

The Positions in the MASWA committee are:

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Newsletter Editor
Webmaster
Social Coordinator
Science Officer

What does it mean to be a MASWA committee member? For six days a year (every second month) you get to take an active role in the running of MASWA. You also get to sample the delights of Marilyn's cooking (Paul Taylor's wife). The pay is crap - \$0.0 however the social interaction and "stories" you hear are very entertaining!

To be in the committee you need to be nominated either by yourself or someone else, and if no one else is nominated for that position you are elected to that position. If there are other nominees then a vote is taken by the members for the successful candidate for the position.

If you think you have what it takes and are keen to help out then please talk to a committee member at the upcoming meeting and make your intentions known

MEETING VENUES WANTED!

The thought of hosting a MASWA meeting for some is quite daunting. It is nothing to be nervous or worried about. You don't need to have the biggest or best aquarium either. In fact the whole idea behind hosting a meeting is to get helpful advice and ideas to improve or solve any problems you may have.

If you have an algae problem, fish disease problem, your corals keep dying, you can't get your protein skimmer to foam then this is your chance to get some good wholesome advice! We are all here to help, not to criticize or condemn.

Come and put your name down for a meeting, next year is wide open. It's a great experience and it's great at forcing you to clean your glass and give the old aquarium a good going over!

If you would like to host a meeting please contact our Social Coordinator, Tony to book your spot.

MASWA FRAGFEST IN NOVEMBER!

By Nathan Cope (President)

Next month (November) is MASWA's inaugural Frag Fest meeting. The focus of the meeting will be on exchanging, giving away or raffling off any propagated invertebrate or fish. We expect that most of the animals brought to the meeting will be coral fragments, but Darren and Raqual Collins surprised most members last month when they brought along some Percula Clown Fish they had bred for the raffle.

The purpose of the Frag Fest meetings (which will be held every 3 months) is to encourage Members to get active in breeding or propagating marine animals. This helps reduce pressure on wild caught species and advance knowledge in this area. It also fosters more of a community attitude amongst members which makes MASWA Meetings even more of a fun place to be.

Tony Fiorentino and David Bloch will be making a purpose-built aquarium to bring along to Frag Fest meetings so that the animals brought by members can be properly displayed for exchanging/raffling/giving away.

Remember, ANY animal brought to MASWA Meetings for raffling, exchanging or simply giving away, accrues points for the member who brought it. These points will be awarded appropriately to the categories of Invert Propagation and Fish Breeding. At our Christmas Meeting, the "Fecund Fishy" trophy (plus a prize) will be awarded to the member with the highest number of points in the Fish Breeding category and the "Slice and Dice" trophy (plus a prize) will be awarded to the member with the highest number of points in the Invert Propagation category.

Please be aware, frags made on the day of the meeting will already be stressed and moving them to a new aquarium will only stress them more, potentially killing the frag. This may give people the indication that fragging corals is not very reliable or successful. As we are trying to encourage propagation, it is preferable that frags are made a week or two prior to the meeting you intend to bring them to in order to ensure that they have stabilised. Likewise, if you would like to trade or raffle fish you have bred, please ensure they are old enough to no longer require a special diet before bringing them to a meeting.

WANT FRAG POINTS WITHOUT FRAGS?

By Nathan Cope (President)

A few of our newer MASWA members are setting up aquariums for the first time. They are at the

stage of adding their sand beds and need some live sand to get their live sand bed started. A cup of sand from an existing, healthy live sand bed is all it takes to inoculate a sterile sand bed and get it off to a flying start. The more sources of live sand inoculants that can be added to a sterile sand bed, the higher the chance of success of the live sand bed and the diversity of species living in it.

So, if you have a thriving live sand bed now, it can help you can earn points towards the Invert Propagation register for the Slice and Dice trophy (plus prize) at the end of the year. All you have to do is bring along a cup of your live sand to a MASWA meeting and give it away to a Member who needs it (preferably the newer Members). Each cup of sand brought along, will accrue 1 point on the Invert Propagation register. Yes, yes, I know there will be (or should be) far more than 1 animal in a cup of sand, but it is impractical to count all the animals in it and you don't have to go to the trouble of fragging a coral or intentionally breeding some other invert.

Warning: Please don't go overboard in taking cups of sand from your aquarium in order to accrue points as, potentially, you could end up destroying your live sand bed.

Fishy Links and News....

TROPICAL FISH TRADE UNDER SPOTLIGHT AS SALES BOOM - PARIS (Reuters)

The capture and trade in more than 20 million tropical fish for aquariums each year earns cash for poor fishing communities but too often sends the fish to their deaths, a U.N. report said Tuesday.

The trade in aquarium creatures is worth up to \$330 million a year, the U.N. Environment Program's World Conservation Monitoring Center's report "From Ocean to Aquarium" said.

"Some fish are completely unsuitable to aquariums," said Ed Green, one of the report's authors, adding mishandling of the rare fish often started very early in the supply chain.

"Some fish are just treated as disposable commodities, exposed to the sunlight for hours after being caught and stored in plastic bags on their long journey from Southeast Asian reefs to aquariums in North America and Europe," he told Reuters.

He said there was no indication that the aquarium trade was threatening any species with extinction,

although some harvesting methods, like stunning the fish with a near-lethal dose of sodium cyanide, could harm both fish and coral reefs.

About 50,000 people in Sri Lanka are directly involved in the export of marine life, a business which also provides a strong incentive to preserve fish stocks and reef environments.

The report recommends the wider application of certification schemes by the Marine Aquarium Council (MAC), an international not-for-profit organization. Green said parents buying fish for their children should also pay more attention to their origin.

The sale of clown fish shot up this year because of the movie "Finding Nemo," a computer-animated tale of a clown fish who ends up in a dentist's aquarium.

"Nemo has created interest but also led to problems," said Green, adding many children had flushed fish down the toilet in an effort to send them back to the sea and parents had placed clown fish in fresh water boxes.

http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/nm/20030930/sc_nm/environment_fish_dc

OCEANS BECOMING MORE ACIDIC

By Richard Black, BBC science correspondent

The researchers from California say the change is taking place in response to higher levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

The lowering of the waters' pH value is not great at the moment but could pose a serious threat to current marine life if it continues, they warn.

Ken Caldeira and Michael Wickett, from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, report their concerns in the journal Nature.

Future prospects? Increasing use of fossil fuels means more carbon dioxide is going into the air, and most of it will eventually be absorbed by seawater. Once in the water, it reacts to form carbonic acid.

Scientists believe that the oceans have already become slightly more acidic over the last century.

But these researchers have tried to predict what will happen in the future by combining what we know about the history of the oceans with computer models of climate change.

"This level of acidity will get much more extreme in the future if we continue releasing CO2 into the atmosphere," said Dr Caldeira.

"And we predicted amounts of future acidity that exceed anything we saw over the last several hundred million years, apart from perhaps after rare catastrophic events such as asteroid impacts."

If carbon dioxide release continues unabated, ocean pH could be reduced by as much as 0.77 units, the authors warn.

Good and bad? It is not absolutely clear what that means for marine life, however.

Most organisms live near the surface, where the greatest pH change would be expected to occur, but deep-ocean life forms may be more sensitive to pH changes.

Coral reefs and other organisms whose skeletons or shells contain calcium carbonate may be particularly affected, the team speculate. They could find it much more difficult to build these structures in water with a lower pH.

In recent years some people have suggested deliberately storing carbon dioxide from power stations in the deep ocean as a way of curbing global warming.

But Dr Caldeira said that such a strategy should now be re-considered.

"Previously, most experts had looked at ocean absorption of carbon dioxide as a good thing - because in releasing CO2 into the atmosphere we warm the planet; and when CO2 is absorbed by the ocean, it reduces the amount of greenhouse warming.

"Now, we're understanding that ocean uptake of CO2 may at best be a mixed blessing."

IT'S OFFICIAL, NO SEQUEL TO FINDING NEMO WILL BE PRODUCED

Early this week in an unfortunate course of events, the little clownfish that everyone has grown to love, Nemo, was found 'sushified' - neatly rolled in seaweed and chopped up in a Japanese restaurant.

Early rumours led us to believe that it was a terrorist plot funded by the Sydney dentist who originally caught Nemo however this rumour was shelved once the ugly truth came out.

Sources close to the little fish say that Nemo was fed up being the "bitch" to his once father Marlin,

but now wife Marlene. The constant bullying and abuse by Marlene and taunts from his classmates were too much for the handicapped little clownfish. Spurred on by constant feelings of depression Nemo made the decision to end his own life.

In a crazy twist of events Nemo swam up the ocean drain of a Japanese restaurant and landing up in a live seafood holding tank. From here he leapt out of the tank landing on a sushi cutting board. We will leave the rest up to your imagination!

Nemo's best friend Dory was devastated and when asked for a comment she replied, "Who is Nemo? Lets go and play!"

When our news crew interviewed Marlene (formally Marlin) she was breaking in her new man and only had one comment to say, "Nemo was my son, then my hubby, now he is sushi, what is this world coming to?"



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