



**NORTHERN GOLDFISH  
& PONDKEEPERS  
SOCIETY**  
A Nationwide Society  
**NEWSLETTER**



Online Version

October 2015



**The 2<sup>nd</sup> Nationwide Goldfish Open Show...**

...saw the judges choose some of our fishes for First places, but it was Bob Jones of Bristol AS who won nearly all. See the full website pages for all the results.



However, the Best in Show was Alan Ratcliffe's London Shubunkin – congratulations Alan! The Show Manager Andrew Barton (AMGK) stated that the 2016 Nationwide Show will be in a new, larger venue and the Nationwide Committee Chairman

(Sherridan) announced that the Nationwide Goldfish Standards had been almost finally approved and the publication will be available soon. Watch this space....

Some of the Nationwide scenes:



There were 165 entries in the 63 Classes and members of all four Nationwide Societies had someone attending...it is all reported in the Practical Fishkeeping website (under 'Club News').



Andrew Barton announced the auction with 64 entries (and all were sold by Auctioneer Mick Smith of AMGK). We won a few Firsts and Seconds as well as that Best in Show.



Sherridan congratulates Dean and approves Richard's awards.

## Top Tip of the Month

Our president offered this tip for removing excess mucus in Fancies, especially Lionheads, Orandas and Moors. He (years ago) would setup two 4 gallon (18 litres) tanks with new dechlorinated water. In one was added a teaspoon (5mls) of a Terramycin solution, 20 drops of Formalin solution (a standard 35% solution of Formaldehyde) and 6 drops of Copper sulphate solution (there is no standard strengths but 1% CuSO<sub>4</sub> is used to spray crops for fungal disease). The affected fish is added to the aquarium for at least 20, not more than 30 minutes, then transferred (via a net to remove liquids) to the clean water aquarium. This appeared to strip away the mucus as the fish swims around...when clear, return to the main aquarium.

Editor's note: Terramycin (it may have helped where there were bacterial cultures in any fungal growth) was freely available in Bill's time. Now it can only be obtained with veterinarian approval, and they have to see the affected fish...the fees will be high! If you have a modern method, let me know at [drdmford@outlook.com](mailto:drdmford@outlook.com)

If you view the August 2014 Newsletter on the full NGPS website there is a method that Richard uses for his Moors via Hydrogen peroxide solution.

## Members Write

A new feature – articles by NGPS members. First, an insight into the zoology of Fancy Goldfish by Alex Stephenson. He is our member No.22 and, living in Norfolk, cannot attend Tuesday meetings, but takes a keen interest in our publications and shows. He is a Goldfish breeder of many years and so wrote with authority about...

## Goldfish Unlimited

*Part 1 of 4 pieces looking at some of the popular goldfish varieties.*

Most of us are familiar with goldfish, so I will keep the technical stuff brief.

*Carrasius auratus* belongs to the Carp family and is native to China, where the wild form can still be found. In addition there are feral populations in many countries of the world. Most of these are due to 'pets' being released.

The Common Goldfish, so called to identify it from its more exotic relatives is the world's most widely kept pet. There is a myth that goldfish are easier to keep than 'Tropicals'. This idea is quite wrong. In my experience there are many tropical species which are less demanding and easier to maintain. Generally speaking the more developed the variety, the more 'unforgiving' it is. The Common, being closest to its wild ancestor, is normally the hardiest. However, this does not excuse

mistreatment. Yes, they can survive in a bowl – no, they don't like it. Yes, they can endure poor conditions for a time – no, they will not thrive. Goldfish, like any other living thing, deserves respect and the best conditions we can provide.

The Common Goldfish has one caudal, dorsal and anal fin, and two pectoral and pelvic fins. The natural colour of this fish is an olive brown, darker on the top, lighter beneath, as in the wild form. Sometime around 1,000 years ago selective breeding began producing fish which turned gold at an early age.

The way it works is this. Goldfish have three colour pigments, orange/red, yellow and black. They also possess a crystal formation called Guanine, which is silver and gives the fish a metallic appearance. When all these colours are mixed together, as in the wild form, the result is olive or bronze, or whatever you care to call it. The 'gold part' is produced when a gene is present which causes the fish to lose the black pigment, leaving the red and yellow. The shades and intensity of colour being determined by how much of each pigment is left, while silvers have no pigment at all except the Guanine crystals.

It is easy to see how careful selection, and a lot of hard work, can produce various colours and combinations. A couple which have been developed are described as 'blue' and 'chocolate', while a popular two-tone is red and silver. Our knowledge of how all this works is still 'patchy'. We can predict what we should get, but we don't know why. At other times the results are a mystery. Our knowledge of genetics is progressing rapidly and we know enough to realise we know very little.

If your experience of the Common Goldfish is limited to observing commercially bred imports, your impressions of this fish may be poor. Let me explain, there is a big difference between the commercial product and a quality fish bred with the Show Bench in mind. That doesn't mean you can't find a good fish in a pet shop, with experience and a lot of searching, you can. However, for the serious hobbyist a fish from a good stable with a known pedigree is a much better bet, and a lot more expensive.

To pick a good fish, first of all it must be strong and healthy. Remember the best fish in the world is no use unless it lives. This applies just as much to 'Commons' as it does to the more delicate varieties. When I select fish of this type, I firstly look from above to see if both sides are evenly matched. Remember females may be a little fuller on one side during the breeding season. When looking at the side profile, I like to see a smooth top line and a bottom line to match, allowing females to be a bit heavier. The faults often seen are a concave forehead and a sharp angle on what I call the shoulder. This gives the head a 'snouty' appearance, and it never improves with age.

All fins should be short and rounded with no hint of pointing. Most imported 'Commons' have fins which are too long, being intermediate between Common and Comet. This makes them of doubtful use to the breeder of either type. Density of colour is important and, with a self-coloured fish, should extend to the ends of the fins. With fish of more than one colour, it's nice if the fins match.

Most people with garden ponds know that a few fry will survive from time to time. Sometimes these will grow up and change colour but, many don't. If these 'uncoloureds' are allowed to breed unchecked, eventually almost all the future offspring will fail to colour and a thousand years of selective breeding will have been undone.

One final comment – I don't like the name 'Common' applied to this fish because good ones are surprisingly uncommon. A better name, in my view, would be 'Primary Goldfish'. It is, after all, from this fish all other types have been developed.

(next month Alex will look at the 'Calicos')

...and here is a good example of the 'Primary Goldfish'



The 'Best Goldfish' at a Tropical Open Show in Yorkshire (Bradford) in 2014.

(Editor's note - All the Tropical Groups have a Goldfish Class in their OS's...they will soon be using Nationwide standards.)

### **Minutes of the October Meeting**

Several members met to view Tom Bell's DVD of the NGPS OS and the Nationwide OS. They are very good...but silent (except background noise) so a commentary is really needed. We agreed to discuss this at the Social Meeting in Llandudno next week.

Sherridan wants to remind anyone wishing to attend that Llandudno visit (Sat/Sun Oct 24/25) needs to contact him **now** by 'phone (01619697567) to see if rooms are still available at the Broadway Hotel.

Sherridan also revealed that after the Nationwide OS he motored home with the car's boot full of tanks of fish bought in the auction....only to get a puncture. So he changed the wheel after lining up all the aquariums by the roadside, as needed to empty the boot. The fish survived. Next morning he found the tanks of new fish were sloping down after the staging support in his fish-house had collapsed. The fish survived.

Sherridan will replace his supports with metal tubing from Richardson's Tubing. They are 25mm 'speed frame' type square tubes and connector joints. See them on the net at [www.richardsonsuk.co.uk](http://www.richardsonsuk.co.uk).

Comets were the main subject for discussion. No nacreous ones seem to be available nowadays...even Sarassa Comets are blocks of upper red and lower white, not mixed colours anymore.

Alan Ratcliffe reported that he tried to breed nacreous Comets with tails that did not 'scissor' for many years, without success. He found that if the white areas were bred out, the red areas faded too...there seems to be some genetic link.

David Ford showed photos from the Festival of Fishkeeping held by the FBAS over the weekend of October 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> – he reported that the Show was not well attended. Nationwide Societies do not attend and this year neither did any of the other specialist groups. However Joe insists that the venue (the Hounslow Interactive Farm) will remain their preferred venue for next year.

It is certainly the most unusual Fish Show ever...sited next door to the landing runway for Heathrow Airport, jet plans roar overhead every few seconds. The farm has three marquees added to their entrance with the FBAS displays, but includes their exhibition of paludariums by EkoTerra and Vivexotic with Skinks and Snakes, Geckos and Lizards, Chameleons and Tortoises...and Bullfrogs, Dart Frogs, Tree Frogs etc. plus Snails, Scorpions, Tarantulas, Stick Insects and Turtles. Even a micro pig (not very 'micro') wandered through the displays.

Just as with Bob Jones and the Nationwide, the FBAS had one multiple winner – Alan Finnegan (of Leicester AS), who – with his son Jack – not only won the top award but also the second, third and fourth (and fifth & sixth!) in the Supreme Final (there were 51 entries). A success never before known in the 27 years of holding the FBAS Festivals.



Alan & Jack Finnigan with all their FBAS Awards – and some they didn't.

The Show had 40 furnished aquaria, three ponds, several manufacturers and retailers, and displays by many London area Aquarium Societies. It has always been supported by the Hagen group, especially the Laguna brand.



There were some coldwater aquaria with a nice selection of Orandas.



The micro pig made a bee-line for Dr David Pool's stand with its range of FishScience foods....



Another sponsor is Practical Fishkeeping, with yours truly manning their stand, giving away free copies of the magazine (but they were old ones)....

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The meeting closed (after Sherridan won his own room prize!) with his thanks to everyone for the success of both our Open Show and the Nationwide OS...especially to Abby for coping with the catering at our OS.  
Next meeting is November 10<sup>th</sup> at The Church Inn, Prestwich, 8pm, as always.

