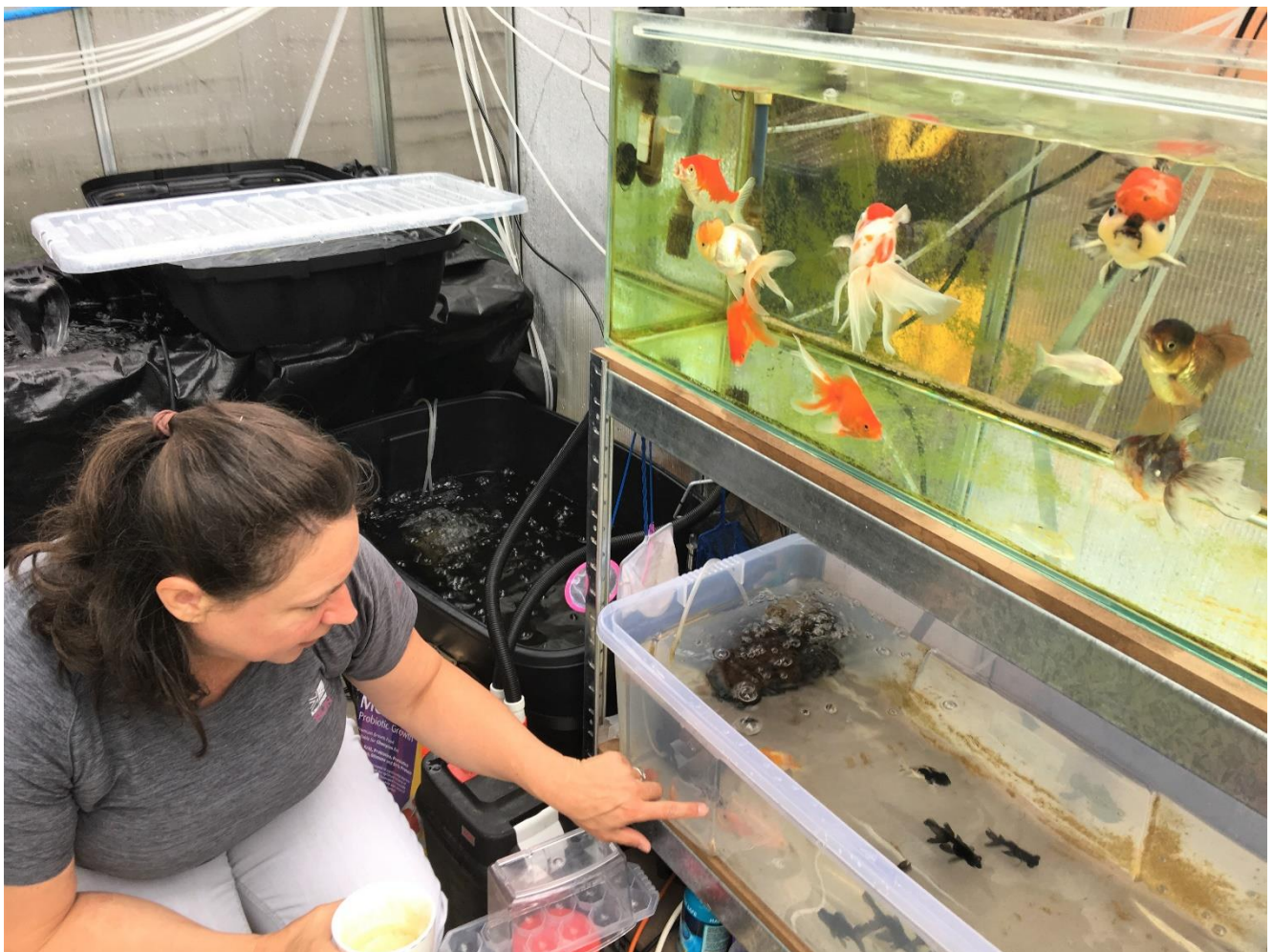




**NORTHERN GOLDFISH  
& PONDKEEPERS  
SOCIETY**  
A Nationwide Society  
**NEWSLETTER**



JUNE 2019



**Our Treasurer (Louise) in her new Fish House**

In a tank on the other side of the fish house are Pearlscales from Craig Clinton's breeds and a collection of **Hama Nishiki** – these are a cross-breed between Pearlscales and Orandas. When developed they will have

a small When Hood from the Oranda, but longer fins than a Pearlscale. Perhaps future entries for AOV.



Louise also recommends a book on Goldfish Breeding she has just read – here is her review:

Goldfish Breeding - How to successfully raise Goldfish Fry by Grant Lord

This is a lovely short (76 page) book on how to breed goldfish and raise goldfish fry and is aimed at the amateur breeder. It aims to help you choose your best quality fish and takes you through the process from spawning right through to selecting the best juveniles.

The first chapters delves into a detailed description of how to select fish with minimum deformities and why choosing fish with deep bodies; strong colours and excellent shaped eyes are all important factors in producing good quality fry. It also arms the reader with tips and advice on how to prepare for spawning and come with a very handy chapter on what to do when it doesn't go to plan. There are even a couple of pages put in here which go into brief detail about how to hand spawn which the

author takes very good care to explain how gentle you need to be and how not to follow the advice shown on YouTube!

The following chapters cover feeding fry in some detail and also culling fry. One of the most interesting short chapters is the one about fry growth rates and the rates of growth that you can expect to see each week and how these rates can be affected by water; food; filtration; space etc.

I would thoroughly recommend this little book to anyone new to the hobby and wanting to breed their own goldfish. It's nice and short, taking only an hour and half to read, and provides a nice clear reference guide on how the fry should be developing after hatching. There is also a bonus chapter at the back that comes with a breeding calendar and checklist.

### **NGPS Storage**

You may recall that we had a problem with storage of our 150+ aquaria for the annual OS. These were temporarily moved to the garage of our Treasurer (above!) but are now in the Stadium Self Storage unit in Huddersfield. The £250 fee has been paid for a year but we do hope that may not be necessary for 2020. If you have garage or garden-hut space available next year *please, please* let us know ([drdmford@outlook.com](mailto:drdmford@outlook.com)). They are clean & dry, in about 20 x 5feet high stacks, so take up only a small space (about three square metres).

### **NGPS OS & Auction 2019**

We have created a reputation for having a really special Raffle – in fact it has proved an attraction for extra visitors to the Show. Hence we are looking for items for our September OS, now we have that storage space to house them. Do not throw anything of value away (or give it the Charity Shop) *please, please* bring it to any monthly meeting. Or let me know ([drdmford@outlook.com](mailto:drdmford@outlook.com)) for collection.

### **NGPS Newsletter Archives**

As mentioned last month, digitizing old Newsletters is underway. There are many excellent articles therein which will become available when

placed Online. Here is a good example from the June issue of 2001. Does not say who wrote it – but it is still relevant today ....

### **How can I Tell What Sex My Goldfish Are?**

Everyone wants to know what sex their goldfish are. Some people are just curious ("did I give them the right names?") while others think they might like to breed their fish. I'll try to offer a collection of methods I have read about here. However, I'm never totally sure about my own fish until I see them in breeding condition. Until then, they all have names - Pat, Sandy, Terry and Dana ....

The classic way to sex goldfish is based on the sexually dimorphic traits they develop when they are in spawning condition. At this time, females become heavier bodied in the abdomen (and purportedly a bit asymmetric). But the big change is in the males; they develop white pimples, called "breeding tubercles", on the gill operculum and along the front rays of their pectoral fins.

I've noticed that males that have been through a few spawning seasons seem to retain roughness on their front pectoral rays. Usually, when someone shows me a proven pair of goldfish it is pretty obvious which is the male and which is the female. But when I try to judge the sex of my fish, I often have little confidence in the decision. I think there is a gestalt to it. I will list some of the indicators I have heard of or read about for goldfish sexing outside of the breeding season.

Incidentally, I would not expect any of the methods discussed here to work reliably for fish prior to sexual maturity ... say a year.

1. Midline ridge: Males develop a ridge on their undersides that starts in back of their pelvic fins and ends at their vent opening. The ridge is absent or much smaller on females. (N.B. I have observed females with impressive ridges. Hmmm)

2. Firmness of Abdomen: For my heavy-bodied goldfish, the area between pelvic fins and the anal fins is fairly pliable on the females. For the males, this area is usually very firm.

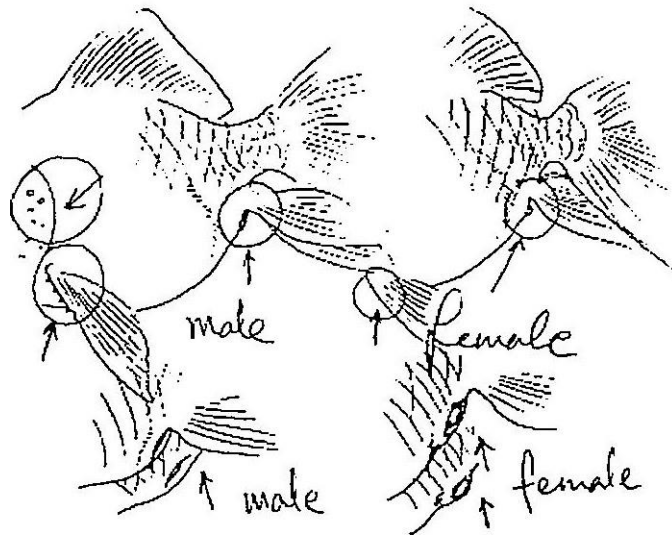
3. Vent shape: According-to several books, you can sex goldfish based on vent shape. I haven't been able to figure this out yet, so I won't confuse with an attempt at explaining what I have read. However, another hobbyist, Red Arthur, has used it and he supplied the following sketch to illustrate the method. The sketch also shows the location of the breeding tubercles on the males. Thank you, Red!

4. Pectoral fin shapes: For short-finned varieties, males have longer, more pointed pectorals with a stiffer leading ray. Females have more rounded pectorals and shorter, finer front fin rays. For long-finned breeds, the fin shape is hard to judge. But the first ray length and thickness should still be somewhat different. This works pretty well.

5. Using a known? female: Al Foster suggested introducing a fish known to be a female into a tank of goldfish of unknown sex. He says that the males will all "check out" the new female, while the females will show no interest.

Other features: Some other characteristics that I think would be very hard for beginners to make use of: males are allegedly brighter coloured, more active, and have longer fins.

Probably the best way to learn to sex goldfish is to try to get opportunities to look at adult fish of known sex. The next best is probably to try to find some place (petshop?) that has an assortment of goldfish with bodies longer than three inches. And then just try to guess their sexes, based on the indicators above, to get experience looking at goldfish.



### **Possible differences**

#### **Pond News**

ITV reported last month that two Piranha were discovered in one of their Council-owned ponds, in Edlington, a village near Doncaster. The locals claimed that ducks on the pond, called Martinwells Lake, were disappearing. Council staff investigated and discovered the Piranha, taking them away for 'investigation'.



The fish were dead (not surprised) but they recommended that locals do not swim in the pond. (Nor ducks?).

#### **Bill's Goldfish**

Our President's YouTube video about his Goldfish Breeding has had over 680 hits – the latest comment left by a visitor called Charlotte Falconer was: "I wish I had a mentor like Bill, you can learn so much more from

their decades of experience than you ever would online. Absolutely gorgeous fish, the dedication and commitment is obvious in these stunning fish". It is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cW-IDYcQroo>

## **Chester Zoo Aquarium**

Our honorary member Hanna Thomas of Chester Zoo Aquarium has been featured in the TV series "The Secret Life of the Zoo" on Channel 4. It was a special one-off called "Underwater Special". An hour-long look at breeding in the Aquarium. Amazing TV, where a 30 year old endangered Omani Blind Cavefish is made to spawn via hormonal injection.

Unfortunately, it is no longer available, but I have downloaded a version to my Laptop – this was shown during the June Meeting (see later).

## **This Month's Top Tip**

It is a good idea to have black glass on the rear of a show (or breeding) aquarium for the best view of Calico or Metallic Goldfish (but not Moors!). The alternative is to paint the standard glass sheet with Matt Black paint, but that is a drastic step if you find it is not your preferred choice. You can try the idea first by fixing black card to the rear (with Sellotape). Most hobby shops (such as Range) sell sheets that can be cut to size. You can then see if the effect is OK before committing to black paint (which is more permanent than card).

## **Minutes of the June Meeting**

Apologies were sent from Bill Ramsden, Alan Ratcliffe, Craig Clinton and Richard Rizzotti (but he hopes to visit AMGK OS – see you there!).

The new Chairman for Nationwide was voted to be Pat Davies (AMGK) and we send him congratulations. David Padfield proposed a thank you to retiring chairman Sherridan for all he has done for Nationwide over the last 5 years – carried unanimously.

Sherridan also reported that the once famous Gay-Lyfe aquatic shop has closed down.



## The original shop in 1982

You can read all its history by logging on to the Manchester Evening News website – here is the Link for those with a smart phone ....

<https://www.google.co.uk/amp/s/www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/goodbye-gay-lyfe-levenshulmes-legendary-16360993.amp>

There were no reports of spawnings except Stephen Whalley's Lionheads. The unseasonal cool weather must be a factor.

Dave Easingwood (once a member) now lives in Canada and sent a request to obtain some Bristol Shubunkins for his Fish House – something unavailable in Canada. It was decided that Bristol AS would be the best source, but it could be discussed at the AMGK OS, which will be on Saturday June 29<sup>th</sup> in Coventry. Sherridan said there are seats in his car if required – contact him for details.

The meeting ended with David Ford's Laptop showing the Chester Zoo Aquarium Special TV programme, ex Channel 4. Thanks Hannah.

**Hope to see you at 8pm at The Church Inn,  
Prestwich M25 1AN on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July.**

**Bring any Raffle things!**

