



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



MAY 2021



A Goldfish Aquarium Plus

What can you add to your Goldfish Show tank?

There is only one fish recommended in aquatic literature - the Weather Loach
Misgurnus anguillicaudatus.

The ideal is the 'albino' form called a Dojo, but these are rare and expensive. Not a true albino because it has black eyes but selective breeding has enhanced the background gold colour of the wild variety.



Tried but failed to find this Dojo variety so I had to settle for a common *Misgurnus anguillicaudatus* – it was £5.

It was installed in my Black Moors aquarium with a barometer to check if the claim that it would predict the weather is true.

You can view the Loach swimming (if you have Vimeo App – but may play anyway) at:

<https://vimeo.com/506763592>

Click arrow to start video.



The fish established itself immediately and showed its fearless disposition by ignoring the Black Moors, except at feeding time. Then it would steal any food from the Goldfish even as they tried to eat a morsel.



Between feeding times the Weather Loach lay stretched out on, or even in, the soft sand. Occasionally it would swim back and forth along the aquarium length for 5 or 10 minutes with a twisting turn like an Olympic Swimmer.

These were quite random – no correlation with a change in the barometric pressure was found. Perhaps the benign weather of the British Isles does not bring the dramatic changes of tropical storms where it behaves as a weather reactor.

But a fascinating fish and a safe addition to the Goldfish collection if you want to have a 'Goldfish Aquarium Plus'.

Top Tip of the Month

Usual tip from Bristol AS Zoom meeting – Bob Jones said that pond owners should let frogs spawn in their water. The spawn is eaten by Goldfish, even the tadpoles are taken with relish and there is usually so many that the frogs can develop and hop away eventually. However, do not let Newts into your pond, they will devour every egg and tadpole – and your Goldfish eggs or fry too.

Editor: *I checked the above with Bob who added these comments:* For over 15 years I grew water lilies on a semi commercial basis and had 4 large ponds (17 x 13) set aside for growing them in, this of course made a wonderful home for frogs/newts to lay their eggs in. Every year I would get up to 100 frogs spawning in these ponds, they laid some 10,000-20,000 eggs. I spread the spawn out over these 4 ponds, and anywhere else I could find. When they hatched, along would come the newts, maybe 200-300 or so and would eat at least 50% of the tadpoles. I would feed a thousand or so to the fish during conditioning and I looked after the rest as best as I could, I even fed them. Every year maybe 1000 would develop and hop away and some 20-50 made it and would return a couple of years later to spawn in the place of their birth.

Pond News

<https://pondinformer.com/shrubs-for-pond-edges/> will take you to an updated (2021) list of shrubs suitable for planting around a pond edge (ignore all the adverts of course!). Your pond could look like this



Also online was a warning from OATA for pond keepers....



We are concerned that retailers may be turning to aquarium plants, such as *Egeria densa* (which can sometimes be sold under the incorrect name *Elodea densa*), as an alternative to *Lagarosiphon*. Aquarium plants should never be sold for use in ponds because of their potential to become invasive.

These plants should only be sold for aquariums.



Want to be a Judge?

Ian Mildon of Bristol AS has been appointed by Nationwide as the trainer for Goldfish Judges. He is hoping that the BAS Open Show will actually take place (in September) and training Judges can take part. If you want to be a Judge let Ian know and he will show you how. Contact him at: mm150@btinternet.com

Zoom Meeting

The BAS May meeting will be on Monday May 10th at 7.45pm – I will be talking about the problems of being a “Professional Aquarist” from 8pm. To join the meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82669281028?pwd=dHhhcG1kTnZvL3pzRXZzK0QvNDNMQT09>

Or if you have the Zoom App

Meeting ID: 826 6928 1028

Passcode: 127914

Chairman's Notes

Further to David's fascinating article about his weather loach, if you do keep a weather loach please ensure that the tank has a securely fitting lid as these fish are expert escapers and the majority end their fishy lives dried up on the carpet. This is probably a reflection of their habit, in the wild, of leaving their pond and crawling to a new one. Several species of fish do this, probably the most remarkable being the Clarius or walking catfish of south east Asia, which through aquarium escapes has

become established in the wild in the southern U.S. where it is often encountered as 'road kill'.

There are several other commonly seen 'tropical fish' that are quite comfortable at room temperature and are safe to keep with goldfish, zebra danios, white cloud mountain minnows, bronze and peppered Corydoras catfish, rosy barbs (Alex Stephenson actually used to breed these in outdoor ponds) being amongst them. Probably my favourite is the beautiful white cloud, these fish are one of the few fish that will spawn with no special preparation and do not hunt down and eat their own fry. If kept with goldfish it is common for their number to gradually increase.

Several members have reported difficulty in spawning this spring. I am sure this is due to the extremely cold night-time temperatures we have been having (the weather report yesterday stated that this was the coldest April for 100 years, though, of course, we will be told at the end of the year that 2021 was one of the hottest years ever). I have one 200 watt heater in one of the six foot tanks in the fish house but some mornings the temperature in this tank has fallen to below 50 degrees F, 10 degrees C.

Though I had intended to spawn early this year, the combination of very cold weather and the number of fry from the very late spawnings last year I brought through the winter filling the fish house has caused me to adjust my plans. I have separated a pair of Veiltails for when it warms up a bit and in the meantime I am delighted with the progress last year's babies are making.

Things are getting back to normal a bit now; I have just returned from a very welcome and needed week in Anglesey and have my second jab booked in for this weekend. It's still really too early to make plans for shows this year.

Stay safe, back soon.

(Ed. comment: good advice from the Chair – especially as the Weather Loach is causing me problems – read all about it in June's Newsletter)

