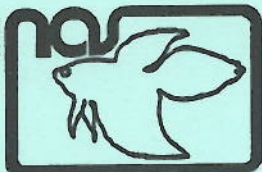


THE WET PET GAZETTE

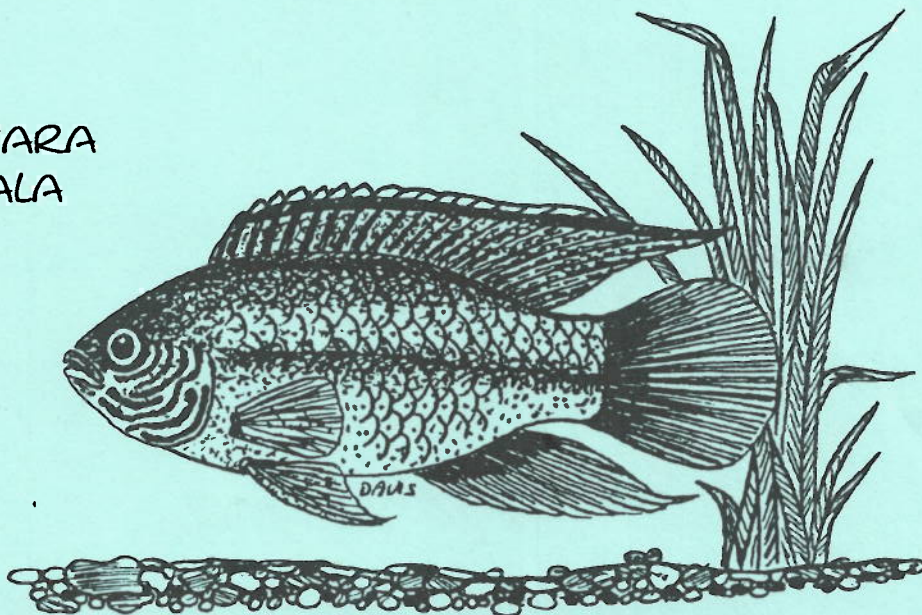
May 1997

Volume 2 Issue 4



MEMBER

NANNACARA
ANOMALA



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BY CHUCK DAVIS

*TEMPERATURE REGULATION
OF YOUR AQUARIUM MADE EASY*
BY MICHAEL KRASILOVSKY

FRESHWATER ANGELFISH
BY GENE HARRIS

AND MORE

The Journal of
The Norwalk Aquarium Society



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REGULAR MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

There are regular meetings on the third Thursday of each month except July and December. Meetings are held at The Nature Center for Environmental Activities, 10 Woodside Lane, Westport, CT. Meetings start at 8:00 PM. Each meeting includes a short business meeting, program or event, door prizes, raffles, auction, and refreshments. All regular meetings are open to the public.

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We reserve the right to reject any article which are in our opinion is offensive, and/or does not promote the hobby.

WET PET GAZETTE

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Norwalk Aquarium Society is a not for profit, all volunteer organization, dedicated to the advancement, and promotion of the Aquarium hobby.

WET PET GAZETTE EXCHANGES

Norwalk Aquarium Society gladly exchanges its publication with other societies that send their publication to us. We publish nine issues a year. We send our exchange copies as bulk mail in March, June, and November

Requests and publications should be sent to:

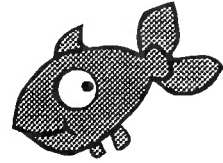
Exchange Editor

Norwalk Aquarium Society

P.O. Box 84

Norwalk, CT 06856

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AUGUST 7	BOB PELIKAN
SEPT 4	BASIL HOLUBIS
OCT 9*	BROADMEYER'S
NOV 6	SAL SILVESTRI
DEC 4	ED KATUSKA

* DENOTES 2nd THURSDAY OF
MONTH

**COMING NEXT MONTH
IN THE WET PET GAZETTE**

DISCUS DIARY PART 1
by GENE HARRIS

REEF PROPAGATION
by MICHAEL KRASILOVSKY

HEMIRHAMPHODON
POGONOGNATHUS
(The Long Snout Halfbeak)
by CHUCK DAVIS



A VIEW FROM UPFRONT

ED KATUSKA
NAS PRESIDENT

I must say I am looking forward to this month's meeting program on building water gardens. This program will be presented by our junior member Michael Krasilovsky. There are multiple small patio ponds floating around my yard filled with fish every year. I am sure we will all learn some fresh new ideas and interesting tid-bits.

I would like to remind everyone that the raffle for the 25" color television set, which will be drawn in October at the Annual Show & Auction, are available. As time goes on it takes more revenue to make this organization stay above water financially, and fundraisers such as this one are needed. Your cooperation in selling these raffle tickets would be greatly appreciated. Tickets are available at the general meeting from Charlie Grandel.

Speaking of fundraisers, the Norwalk Aquarium Society will be holding a tag sale on Friday June 27th & 28th at the home of Don Barbour in Norwalk. Donations of tag sale items will be needed. Volunteers are also in need to help with the work load. Look for more information in next month's Wet Pet Gazette.

Taking a look at the calendar you will notice there are many fishy events taking place in the near future. Some of them are close to our area. Let's help make our sister society's functions a success.

The show committee will be holding their next meeting on Thursday May 29th, 1997 at the Broadmeyer home. The committee is always looking for fresh ideas, and helping hands. Being involved with this committee is a great way to be part of the inner workings of this organization. Show committee meetings are held one night every other month. Anyone interested should contact Anne Broadmeyer, or Basil Holubis.



FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR

MARK BROADMEYER
WET PET GAZETTE EDITOR

Those of you who missed the Boston Aquarium Societies annual auction in Weymouth, Ma. missed most unusual auctions that I have attended.

As I approached the building with some fish to be auctioned, I was attacked by people to see what I had. This is a bit unusual. I was then informed that there were hardly any fish. I took this to mean they did not have many vendors bring items to sell. After entering the auction room I realized that was not the case. I have never seen so many aquatic plants in my life. The Boston Aquarium Society has apparently become a club with a heavy plant influence. I wonder if having Karen Randall as a member has anything to do with that. What was lacking was African Cichlids. Numerous exotic, and newly imported South American Corydoras Catfish, Dwarf Cichlids, and Tetras were there. Its refreshing to see Live plants make a comeback. Of course, generally speaking, African Cichlids and plants are mutually exclusive of each other.

I have included a short, but I believe important, article this month by Curt Smith of The Youngstown Area Tropical Fish Society. The main point of his article is that because it is at your local pet shop does not mean you should have it, and knowledge is everything.

I hope you all are enjoying The Wet Pet Gazette as much as I am producing it. We are fortunate to have a number of members who submit articles regularly. I would like to see articles from other members. Remember the articles don't have to be long. Articles on breeding, book reviews, reports on other functions you have attended, technical articles on home made devices, plant information, or just plain human interest stories are just a few ideas. The classifieds are for you to use. This is a great way to get rid of unused equipment, excess fish, or to find things you have to have. Your ideas are always welcome.



PROGRAMS, PROGRAMS, PROGRAMS

ANNE BROADMEYER - PROGRAMS CHAIRPERSON

First of all, thank you to everyone who participated in last month's program, Fishy Bingo. We actually made money on this program, and saw a lot of old friends. It also gave me any opportunity to know who the real pros are, so I can get some pointers for next year! Yes, due to popular demand the bingo balls will bounce again in June of 1998. This way more family members can attend.

Now, on a serious note. It was my intention to have a CPR expert come in June, however, Charlie and I ran into some interesting problems. One, these people are Union bound, which opens a whole can of worms. Another is that there aren't enough people available this time of year to get us certified. And last, but certainly not least, we are getting quotes between \$10 to \$35 a head. So, the long and the short of it is I've got to get y'all a program for June, and we'll work on a CPR class for Fall. (Any feedback would be greatly appreciated - (203) 834-2228. Sorry 'bout that.

- May 15** **Michael Krasilovsky, our very active Junior Member, will be giving us a program all about ponds. Our illustrious Jr. member will be giving a concert on his Cello and then racing over to us to give him program. Thanks in advance Michael!**
- June 19** **I have a few things in the works, but nothing I can put to print yet!**
- July** **Happy Summer- No meeting**
- August 21** **Fish Nutrition by Shemya Bryant of Wardleys. Shem is one of the speakers at the ACA convention this year, so we should be in for a real treat.**
- September 18** **Home Show Program and Results presented by Basil Holubis. Video by Ed Peters, Video Reflections.**
- October 16** **Discus, by Ellen Halligan of Long Island Discus. Ellen has some new slides and always brings a few of her lovely fish**



WHAT'S ON THE CALENDAR

1997

- | | | |
|------------------|-----|--|
| MAY | 17- | GREATER CITY AQUARIUM SOCIETY TROPICAL FISH SHOW, |
| | 18 | LAGUARDIA MARRIOT |
| | 18 | NORTH JERSEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL AUCTION
RAMADA INN, RT3, CLIFTON, NJ 1:00 PM |
| | 16- | AQUALAND AQUARIUM SOCIETY 24th ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION, |
| | 18 | BONNIE ACRES, BRISTOL, CT |
| JUNE | 1 | NORTHEAST COUNCIL OF AQUARIUM SOCIETIES QUARTERLY GENERAL
MEETING HARTFORD FARMINGTON MARRIOT |
| | 6-8 | JERSEY SHORE AQUARIUM SOCIETY 1st ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION |
| AUGUST | 24 | BLACK RIVER AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL AUCTION |
| SEPTEMBER | 19- | TROPICAL FISH SOCIETY OF RHODE ISLAND ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION |
| | 21 | |
| | 21 | DANBURY AREA AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL AUCTION,
HATTER BANQUET HALL, DANBURY, CT 1:00PM |
| OCTOBER | 3-5 | NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION |
| | 26 | LONG ISLAND AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL AUCTION |

1998

- | | | |
|-----------------|----|---|
| FEBRUARY | 15 | PIONEER VALLEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY AUCTION |
| MARCH | 8 | EXOTIC FISH SOCIETY OF HARTFORD AUCTION |

AUCTIONEER CERTIFICATION SCHOOL



The NEC is looking for all parties who are interested in attending an NEC certification school for Tropical fish auctioneers. Any one interested should contact Mark Broadmeyer or Jack Adinolfi for further details.

NOTICE TO ALL BAP CHAIRPERSONS NEC MEMBER CLUBS

The NEC is requesting that a copy of all member aquarium societies Breeder Award Program criteria and pointing guidelines be forwarded to TOM NEAL, P.O. Box 694, Somersworth, NH 03878-0694

NOW IN OUR 47TH YEAR

FRESHWATER ANGELFISH

BY GENE HARRIS

NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY

One of my all time favorite fish since boyhood is the freshwater angel - *Pterophyllum scalare*. There are many genetic morphs of this species; marble, blacks, German blushing blue, zebra, veil and 'super veil' tails, albinos, etc. I'm partial to the natural silvers with natural finnage but lately my interest has focused upon solid black angels and the other extreme - albinos.

I was fortunate enough to find a breeding pair of albinos recently from a Connecticut breeder. They were in a group of about 15 angels, had reproductive tubes showing and were fending off a territory. Body size was slightly larger than silver dollar. They had a sickly pale color with pink eyes, which I guess is to be expected of albinos. He tells me they have a genetic heritage of Cleveland, Ohio and were approximately 18 months old. The pair were placed into a 55 gallon tank at neutral pH and 77 degrees F in late February 1997. They are the only fish in the tank with some plastic plants and 2 sponge filters. There is enough gravel to just cover the bottom. I don't think fish like flat glass bottoms - it's unnatural, they see themselves as reflections. The tank is in a low traffic zone of the basement with the only side getting any activity covered with black paper to avoid spooking the courtship. They were fed a mixture of flake, frozen blood worms, live brine and live black worms. After a week the temp was raised to 81 degrees F and diet more concentrated with live black worms. The 'tubes' began to be apparent and they pecked at the slates frequently.

"THERE ARE MANY GENETIC COLOR MORPHS OF THIS SPECIES..."

On the afternoon of March 2 the first eggs were seen. I decided to let nature takes its course and leave mom & pop with the eggs. No chemicals were added to the water. As might be feared, several eggs became fungus by morning. Another 24 hours later most were either fungus or completely missing.

Perhaps the parents had been pecking out the fungus eggs? Perhaps snails had gotten them? Perhaps pop had a snack of some of them? These were young fish so I figured many more spawns would come.

The temperature was lowered to 77 degrees F and the pair put back into the honeymoon suite - the 55 gallon tank. Temperature was raised after a few days. One week to the day after the first spawn, in the afternoon again, she began to lay eggs. The next day I moved the pair to another tank to protect the eggs from the parents. I've heard that fungus needs light to grow so I decided not to keep a light on in the tank. The tank gets some secondary indirect light from a northern basement window so the cycle of time is natural. I've been told that the main purpose of methylene blue is protecting the eggs from light, so I decided not to use it. There are also ideas that the methylene blue is not good for the eggs anyway, especially albinos. Most of these eggs lasted about 2 days and some actually began to wiggle with life. I now knew for sure that both mom & pop were fertile. Unfortunately, none

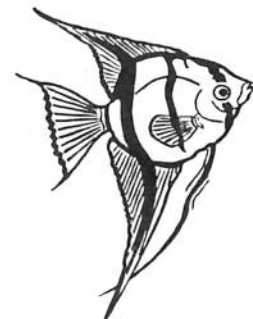
"I THINK THE LIVE BLACKWORMS CAUSED AN INTERNAL INFECTION..."

of the fish lived beyond the embryo stage, either because of fungus or snail attacks. I'm working on eradicating the snails, if there are any, they are not much bigger than the eggs themselves.

On March 16 the parents were back in the 55 for a third run at spawning. Current plans are to remove the eggs, put them in a baby tank with zero snails and methylene blue. I'm going to add aeration and a heater. I have wine eels available for food should they make it that far.

Several days after writing the above the pair of albino angels went to fish heaven. I think live black worms caused an internal infection eventually resulting in a fungal outbreak on the edges of some fins. They had been fed live brine recently that came from a local shop. The brine had been strained in a fine net and washed but they in fact may have been the cause

? Water quality testing for ammonia, nitrite, and nitrates showed everything in the safe zone. The pH and temperature were normal. When oh when will I ever learn that live foods are a two edged sword?





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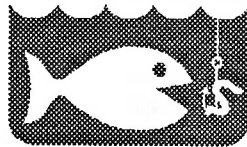
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IT'S GREENER ON THE FAR SIDE (YOU JUST GOTTA KNOW!)

BY CURT SMITH

YOUNGSTOWN AREA TROPICAL FISH SOCIETY
REPRINTED FROM THE YOUNGSTOWN AQUARIST JANUARY 1997

Over and over I've stressed the importance of knowing your plants and only buying true aquatics, but I still see and hear of hobbyists buying "house plants" and wondering what they are doing wrong. Let me state once again: Nobody can grow non-aquatic plants in an aquarium! Absolutely NOBODY !! Plants such as 'princess pine, red crinkle, dracaena, etc. are not aquatic plants. Growers produce them in profusion hydroponically (only the roots in nutrition-rich water). They probably were never completely submerged until they hit your dealer's tanks. And they will NEVER look better than they did the day you bought them. Yes they are inexpensive and attractive but they just won't grow! They may hold on for a month, two or three but, over this time, they will start to decompose and eventually die.

How do you know which plants to

select? Once again I iterate; get a good aquatic plant book, read it, and use it in planning your plant acquisitions. Good books aren't necessarily expensive. The "Aquarium Plant" book by Barry James is more than sufficient for the average hobbyist. This small book has excellent identifying pictures, adequate instructions and covers most popular aquatic plant species.

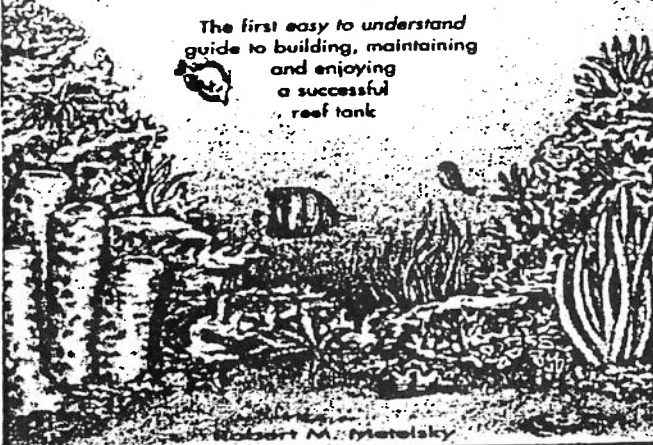
However if you are too cheap to spend \$8 or \$10, there is another way - your local HAP listing. Yes I know, many HAP lists include pond plants and some even pond perimeter plants. I personally dislike this inclusion as you might as well turn in your house plants for HAP points. But any good HAP setup differentiates between aquatic plants and pond and bog ones. It would be nice to see the common plant name in parenthesis after the scientific name in these lists.

If you can't take time to learn a little, then by all means buy those ugly plastic replicas! They don't break down the detritus like real plants, or give your fish the same sense of security, or are used as often as a spawning medium, but you won't kill them - at least most hobbyists can't kill them! They do almost always have a dirt coating or algae on the leaves, catch and tangle long-finned varieties of fish. And, plastic plants ARE NOT cheap and DON'T propagate. The easiest way is to get a book or two and read! The only difference between your knowledge and mine is the number of books I've read and learned from. Remember, "Green Thumb" is not a talent - it's DESIRE !!

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NANNACARA ANOMALA

THE NUMBER ONE DWARF CICHLID NANNACARA ANOMALA (THE GOLDEN EYED DWARF CICHLID) BY CHUCK DAVIS - NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY

Although there are many dwarf cichlids that I think are attractive, if I had to pick just one of the smaller cichlids, it wouldn't be too difficult. I would go back to the very first dwarf cichlid I ever had, the Golden-eyed

"...they are not picky eaters..."

dwarf - Nannacara anomala. Common to the Orinoco drainage from the East, this small cichlid is a real gem. It has many great attributes, not the least of which is the fact that it is a truly peaceful cichlid. It is, therefore, a good community tank fish. Golden-eyes are also very easy on aquarium plants, they neither eat or up-root them, since they

are not gravel disrupters. They grow to about three inches at most, but are a rounder, more robust built cichlid than their Apistogramma counterparts.

Their name comes from the golden ring around the large eyes, which are a prominent feature of this fish. The males are larger than the females, and have more color. Their body has tints of a wide variety of hues. Basically, yellow/gold, blue and green are common body shades.

Males are identified by size, more solid body colors and sharper, more pointed finnage (dorsal and anal). They spawn like many neotropical dwarf cichlids, choosing sites that are protected, like caves, pots, rock formations, etc. The female will usually tend the brood,

during which time she can become a little aggressive. They are not picky eaters, nor do they require any special water conditions, avoiding extremes as always.

"...these are inexpensive and fairly common..."

These are inexpensive and fairly common dwarf cichlids that are easy to identify; why not pick-up a pair or two for your small community set-up.



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45 Virginia Dr., Southington, CT 06489

Tel: (860) 276-9475 or WBush27@aol.com

TEMPERATURE REGULATION IN YOUR AQUARIUM MADE EASY

BY MICHAEL KRASILOVSKY

JUNIOR MEMBER - NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY

All tropical fish need somewhat warm temperatures to survive. If they didn't they wouldn't be called tropical fish. Heating the water is very easy to do. No matter what type of heater you will use, it will need to be thermostatically controlled. Almost all heaters have a thermostat built in to them, so all you have to do is set it to the right temperature. The normal tropical community aquarium will need to maintain a constant temperature of 75 to 78 degrees Fahrenheit. This range is for a freshwater tropical aquarium, not a goldfish aquarium, which requires no heating. A saltwater aquarium would require a temperature of approximately 82 degrees Fahrenheit.

Heaters come in many different wattages. To heat your aquarium, you will need 5 watts per gallon of water so that the heater can raise the water temperature one degree Celsius per hour. This means that a ten gallon aquarium would need 50 watts, and a twenty gallon aquarium would need 100 watts. If your aquarium is over twenty gallons, buy two or even three heaters for each aquarium and instead of having one heater with all of the watts, the total amount from your multiple heaters should equal the total wattage. The main reason for this backup system is because many heaters will fail. A heater can either fail "On" or "Off". If a heater fails "On", it means that the thermostat didn't turn the heater off, so it will keep heating until you turn it off by unplugging it. If a heater fails "Off", it means that the thermostat didn't turn the heater on after the water started cooling, so the water will become cold. If you have more than one heater and one of them fails "On", the good heater will shut off and because the heater that stayed on is only half the wattage for

that aquarium so it will take it twice as long to raise the water temperature to deadly levels, giving you much more time to notice the problem and get it fixed. If one of the heaters fails "Off", the good heater will stay on, making the water temperature drop much slower, giving you more time to notice the problem. These are also good reasons for having a thermometer in your aquarium. Thermometers will be fully discussed at the end of this chapter.

Heaters come in many styles. Most heaters consist of a hollow glass tube, with a heating coil, a thermostat device, and a small pilot light inside. The dial that you must use to set the temperature is on the cap to the glass tube. On some heaters, there are numbers around the dial so that you can simply turn the dial to the appropriate temperature, and the thermostat will keep it there. However, some heaters do not have numbers around the dial, so you must constantly adjust it over a period of a few days to determine the correct setting. A pilot light is a small light that goes on when the heating coils are being warmed. Some of these heaters have the cap with the dial sealed onto the glass tube, making the whole heater water tight so that it is fully submersible. If your heater is the type that is submersible, then make sure that the water level is always above the minimum water level line. The reason that it must be above the minimum line is so that the heater will be in total contact with water, otherwise it can short out or explode. The types that are not water tight are supported on the side of the aquarium with either brackets or suction cups. If your heater is non-submersible, make sure that the water level in the aquarium is not above the water line on the heater, otherwise the water will enter the heater

and break it. As a rule, the submersible type heaters are far better than the non submersibles. They have much more accurate thermostats and are much less prone to malfunction. The two best brands are definitely the Ebo-Jager heaters and the Aquarium Systems Visitherm heaters, with the visitherm being the best of the two because there is a direct reading adjustment scale for setting the temperature, where with the Ebo-Jager there is not. So the Visitherm heaters are basically the best for a home aquarium and are also very inexpensive.

Aside from these types of heaters, there is also the cable heater. This is a long cable that is pre-bent to loop around so that it fits on your aquarium floor. There are small suction cups to keep the cable in place. This heater has both good and bad aspects. Some good aspects are that it can not be seen and the heat coming up through the gravel bed will cause a minute current through the gravel bed that will help nutrient rich water get to the roots of any live plants. Unfortunately, the draw backs are extreme enough that they cancel out the good aspects. They do not come in to contact with rapidly moving water due to the fact that they are in the gravel bed where there is not a strong current compared to the rest of the aquarium making them slightly inefficient. The only real draw back that these heaters carry is their price, often costing many hundred dollars, and do not always have a thermostat. The thermostats to hook up to a cable heater could be up to 150 dollars extra.

Aside from the heaters, there is another important tool that is necessary. This is a simple thermometer. Having a thermometer is essential because you

(Continued on page 12)



(Continued from page 11)

will need it to possibly set your heater, and to constantly monitor the water so that you will know if one of your heaters is malfunctioning [by noticing a drastic rise or fall in temperature].

Note: once a heater is set to a temperature, for example 78 degrees Fahrenheit, it will raise the temperature to 78 degrees, and then shut off until the temperature falls two or three degrees, then raise it back up to 78 degrees, and continue this cycle.

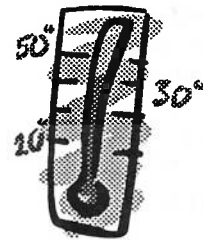
There are a few different forms that thermometers come in. There are the LCD ones that stick on the side of the glass and turn colors to indicate the temperature. There are also the ones that have mercury in them that either get suction cupped to the inside of the glass or rest on the gravel bed. It should be mentioned that there are also thermometers that consist of a small LCD display that rests on the top of the aquarium that is attached to a small probe. The probe goes inside the aquarium and sends the temperature readings to the display screen where you can view them.

Note: You may want to put one thermometer on each side of the aquarium if it is larger than 30 gallons just to make sure that the whole aquarium is receiving even distribution and circulation.

I do not recommend the use of the LCD thermometers that stick on the glass and use colors to show the temperature. Because they are directly on the glass on the outside of the aquarium, they will give you a temperature reading of mainly the air and the glass, not the aquarium water. Even if they were *inside* the aquarium, they do not show the temperature as accurately as another thermometer because the colors represent a small temperature range, not specific temperature. I do recommend the use of the small mercury thermometers. They are submersed in the aquarium

water, they show the exact temperature, and they are very inexpensive-never more than two dollars. Out of the sinking mercury thermometer or the mercury thermometer that is attached to the inside of the glass with a suction cup, the type with the suction cup is better simply because it is easier to view. The thermometer that is a LCD screen with a submersed probe is extremely accurate. These thermometers cost from 10 to 15 dollars. In my opinion, the mercury thermometers that stick to the inside of the glass with a suction cup are accurate enough and it is not worth spending 10 to 15 dollars on a LCD thermometer when a two dollar mercury thermometer is accurate enough. It should be mentioned that some mercury type thermometers have, next to the numbers, a bar of green that is supposed to show you the safe range for the temperature of your aquarium. Do not follow this bar! Use the numbers [degrees] to go by. A normal tropical fish aquarium will need the range of 75 to 78 degrees Fahrenheit. Of course,

there are some exceptions, like some aquarium minnows which do not need heating, or some fish that need a temperature slightly higher than 78 degrees Fahrenheit. As a closing remark for this chapter, all I can say is to remember to check the temperature every time that you look at your aquarium, hopefully more than once a day. After a while this will become a habit. Remember, catch any heating problems early and fix them before they are a total disaster. Losing a tank full of your favorite fish because of a heating problem is one of the most easily avoidable problems you can have.



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NEW PRODUCTS UPDATE

Pond season approaches and Wardley's has introduced a new line of pond products. Look for them at your local dealer.

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	40 breeder	\$40.00	4
	55 gallon	\$55.00	2
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	Ebo-Jager or Visitherm
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