



NORTHERN GOLDFISH & PONDKEEPERS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



A Nationwide Society

October 2014

The NGPS Open Show 2014



Nationwide Judges busy judging the NGPS 2014 Open Show at St Matthews Hall, Stretford on Saturday 13th September. The 175 tanks contained most Goldfish varieties in 64 Classes with members of all four Nationwide Societies attending. These were NEGS, Bristol and AMGK as well as ourselves. It was our 37th – the very first NGPS Open Show was in Bolton and there were 21 Classes with 10p entry cost (visitors 15p, children 5p). Visitors are now free and there was all day hot & cold food, video displays, large raffle and prizes with an auction with 24 home bred Goldfish. (A copy of the very first OS advert is on the front of our September Newsletter.)

Minutes of the October Meeting



There was a good turnout for the October meeting including our President and a special visit by member Craig Clinton – who brought these Ranchus.

The Black Ranchus were particularly interesting, being intensely black all over. These varieties and many other Fancy Goldfish are now being imported by 'Ranchu.london' from Thailand. Orders for specific varieties can be placed with them via Craig. **Ring him for details on 07954178895.**

Prices are good – these show quality Ranchus were bought for £25 each – half the usual value.

VP David Ford gave a slide show about the Festival of Fishkeeping held in London over the weekend of 4th & 5th October. This annual show is by the FBAS and includes their finals for the British Open, Supreme Champions and Diamond Championship – full details are on their 'fbas.co.uk' website.

Unlike last year, there was no Goldfish Competition, the only entry being the Bob Esson Memorial Award for the best Common Goldfish. GSGB had a small stand. Members agreed that we would like to attend in 2015, but only if the

social content is included, something that was present in the Holiday Camp venues, but now absent in the Urban Farm venue in Hounslow

Notes from a Chairman's Fish House

What an amazing year this has been! After last year's disastrous lack of any inclination to spawn in most members stock, we have had freely spawning fish all year, Craig has managed to spawn several of the Ranchu he recently bought and brought into the October meeting to show us and its now the fourth week of October. My own fish spawned probably more frequently than ever before and presented me with some of the best youngsters I have ever had, just beautiful scaled and calico Lionheads and Veiltails and calico Pom-pons and Fantails. Please note that all the surplus to requirements fish have now been sold, but there will be more next year, at present I am planning calico Bubble-eyes, red and calico Veiltails and possibly calico Lionheads.

I will be taking my fish through the winter in line with my experimental practice of last year as it seemed so successful. They will be kept in very gently heated tanks, 50w heaters in the six footers - which along with the solar heating effect of the greenhouse fish-house - should mean around 5 - 10 degrees F. above ambient, water flow turned right down but not off and two or three very light feedings each week.

In the Show world we have had another excellent year and another fantastic NGPS Open Show, congratulations to Ian Mildon for winning 'Best in Show' with his lovely Wakin. Again thanks to everyone who attended and helped in any way - it would not have been possible without you.

Earlier in the year I personally achieved another of my ambitions by winning 'Best in Show' at the AMGK Open Show with one of my very red Common females, that meant I had won 'Best in Show' at least once at all the major Goldfish Shows. Then along came the excellent new Nationwide Open Show giving me another target to aim for. Pat Davies won the first 'Best in Show' at the Nationwide Show with his magnificent team of four Moors, well done Pat!



I came across something interesting on eBay the other day. During the first decades of the 1900's many cars sported ornate bonnet mascot ornaments, usually of metal but sometimes of glass. It seems that a company has started using the original moulds to reproduce some of the original art deco mascots and one of them is a Goldfish!

It is listed as a 'Bohemian Automobile Hood Ornament Fantastic Glass Car Mascot Design by H.Hoffmann' (in the latest bids at \$112 plus £35 shipping – from USA). It will be sold by the time you read this, so no use bidding!

Next is the final Part of the Top Tips Series

See our Online March issue for the 10 Springtime Tips and Online July issue for the 10 Summertime Tips. Here is the Autumn one, reproduced from the (now defunct) Water Gardener magazine. However, the advice has details no longer valid, so the 10 listed here have been updated as follows.....

Ten Top Tips for the Autumn Pond by VP David Ford (The original article is shown left)



1. Remove the Autumn Leaves

For ponds it is the Autumn clean-up that is important, not a Spring-clean. The reason is that rotting debris is dangerous to the fish when Winter brings cold waters and the fish sink to the bottom in hibernation. The biggest cause of pollution is the fall of Autumn leaves, so do remove them from the surface before they can sink to that bottom. As soon as the trees are bare, so no more leaves are expected, any that have sunk should be removed too.



A snow shovel is ideal for scooping pond sludge.

2. Use a Snow Scoop

It is not easy to remove sludge from a pond base, but if the water is lowered or even emptied, a good tool for

scooping out the debris is to use a plastic snow scoop. For the pond that is full, a fishing net can be lined with a fine cloth (such as muslin) to lift out the sludge. Koi keepers with their swimming pool type ponds have powered suction tubes that keep the base super clean. This system is not really suitable for the natural pond, but some debris, especially rotting leaves, can be sucked out with such mechanical units – perhaps borrowed from the Koi-keepers.

3. Rapid Repairs

If the concrete pond is drained for cleaning, check the sides for cracks that may enlarge with Winter frosts (especially along the water line). Make the fine cracks bigger with a hammer and chisel and use a rapid setting cement to reseal the gaps. After 24 hours make the area water tight by painting with a waterproofing compound (most DIY centres sell these products) and again leave 24 hours before refilling the pond.



Use rapid setting cement to fill cracks and seal with pond varnish



scrap of oily fish and commercial diets that claim to be high in fish oils. No kitchen scraps based on beef, sheep or pigs, nor processed foods such as hams, burgers or sausages. The commercial fish foods that are advertised as 'complete' i.e. they contain added vitamins and minerals, are needed too. Feed daily until the fish lose interest (usually when the water temperature falls below 8°C).

4. Good Nutrition

The fishes' appetite will fall away as the water cools, so Autumn feeding is important to build up a good reserve of fats and vitamins within the fish. The essential fat for fish is oils, not solid fat (as found in mammals like us) so feed



5. Bring in any Fancy Fish

One of the earlier tips was to add any Fancy Goldfish (or even coolwater exotics such as Paradise Fish or Livebearers) in the Summertime. These must be returned to the indoor ponds or aquaria as soon as the cool nights start affecting the water temperature. Goldfish such as Veiltails, Moors, Orandas and Pearlscales are only happy down to 10°C. The more streamlined Fancy Goldfish, including Shubunkins and Comets, can be left overwinter, especially if they are pond rather than aquarium-bred.

6. A Water Change

The Summer pond will have built-up a high concentration of dissolved solids, especially if there has been a drought. It is evaporation loss that concentrates these solids and even rainwater is not so pure it will dilute the pond again. Therefore a substantial water change is always good for the fish before the rigours of Winter are faced. Use a pump or siphon, even bucket, to remove up to a quarter of the total volume and replace with tapwater. At one quarter level the change in chemistry is not so dramatic that it will stress the fish and the dilution factor means the chlorine in the water will not affect the fish...but note Tip No. 7 below.....

7. A Dechlorinator Device

When adding tapwater the hosepipe can be strapped to a broom head with the handle rammed into the soil near the pond edge. The water then cascades down and the turbulence ejects up to 50% of the added chlorine. Note that Water Authorities rely on automatic injections at the weekends when fewer staff are on



duty, so it is better to take tapwater in the weekdays when monitoring is more effective and chlorine levels are lower. If the pond is small (because of the cost) the Dechlorinators sold for aquarium use can be used.

8. Clean the Filters

The Summer will have brought much biological material into the filter system. This will have been converted by bacteria into a sludge called mulm. It is best removed ready for the Winter, but do not also remove the bacteria. Rinse away the mulm by back flushing or sluicing or dowsing, according to what type of filter is used. But keep the filter material *in situ* where possible. The mulm can be used on the garden plants as a valuable fertiliser, rich in nitrates.



9. Late Night Viewing

You can still enjoy your watergarden as the evenings draw in. Use submersible lights that illuminate a fountain or waterfall. Make sure it is a low voltage system for economy and safety. The surrounds can be lit with photoelectric controlled solar-powered lighting...even the 'Pound Shops' sell them these days.

10. Furniture Storage

Move that garden furniture when it gets too cold to sit by the pond, pack the garden furniture into a shed or store in a loft. Even if made from plastic (or plastic coated metal), the Winter frosts will discolour the plastic and make it brittle, even crack. Only treated wooden furniture can be left in place by the pond. Winter means little or no activity, so the series is a trilogy rather than a tetralogy. The only tip for wintertime is to keep an area free of ice so the water can 'breathe'. Leaving a broom floating on the surface that can be twisted to break the ice is best (never by striking the ice, the sound waves within the ice box can kill fish).

Turn off power filters, fountains and waterfalls in icy weather. They can still be used in the heated pond...the Koi-keepers often use pond heaters all Winter – possible for Goldfish, but very expensive! A small floating heater is available to just keep a circle of water free of ice – still expensive though, a broom is much cheaper.



The Winter pond is still attractive.....the fish should be asleep.

This is the online version of our Newsletter. For members without computers a printed version is posted every two months. That copy has only four pages of A4 size and so may contain less information than this online version. Back copies of all the year's online Newsletters are listed on both NGPS websites as downloadable PDFs.

