

Livebearer News

Official Members Magazine of the
BRITISH LIVEBEARER ASSOCIATION



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Data Protection Act

In order to comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act, we need to inform members that their name, address, email address and telephone number are being maintained on a database, the purpose of which is for the distribution of the Association's magazine and to inform members of forthcoming events. This information will not be provided to any other organisation for any purpose whatsoever without prior consultation. The association agrees to remove any details at a member's request.

Committee

Chairman : Paddy Davies

Treasurer : Don Kenwood

Editor : Greg Roebuck

Events organiser : Nigel Hunter

Webmaster : Alan Dunne

Committee members : Clive Walker; Carl Stewart,

Reminder : Subs were due in January

Subs are still just £6, of which £1 goes to help support the Fish Ark.

Editorial

How do you take good photographs of fish and fish tanks? I wish I knew the answer. I have a decent bridge camera and I am satisfied with the quality when I take photos of people, landscapes and bird but fish? I'm rubbish! Fishtanks? Even worse! I have included some more picture taken by BLA member J. Sara Fulton using her Samsung S6 and am astounded by the high quality. Thanks again Sara for your contribution to the newsletter.

Long-standing BLA member Alan Rothwell send me an intriguing article he had written about the cost of keeping tropical fish when on a state pension. He also sent me some printed photos which were of high quality. The problem : my printer/scanner is not working and I could not scan the photos to include them with Alan's article. Solution : take some photos myself when calling at Alan's house. I can only apologise for the quality of the resulting photos included with Alan's article. Many thanks to Alan for his article and also to Gary Randall for his account of breeding the "Purple devil" *Goodeid*.

Speaking of articles; I am now short of articles for future newsletters and would ask anyone to send me their thoughts and experiences for future issues.

3.

Warwick. The week-end meeting/show/auction at the IBM offices in Warwick went really well. Over one hundred people attended over the two days and there was an excellent, friendly and positive atmosphere. Many thanks are due to Bill Galbally for arranging for us to have the use of the venue and to many others for the time and effort they put in to ensure that the week-end was a success. I am hoping to include a full report in the next newsletter. We are intending to hold at least one more event there this year. Hope to see you there!

Bringing your fish to the auction.

Preparing your fish for sale

It is preferable to starve your fish the day before bagging for the auction, this reduces the possibility of your fish producing waste and ammonia which can contaminate the water within the bag.

Water and treatments

Where possible prepare and use fresh water for your fish to reduce the possibility of contaminants that exist in aquarium water.

It is recommended to add water conditioners to reduce toxins and relieve stress such as "*Ammolock*" or stress coat in the bag. (Please adhere to manufacturer's recommendations). 4

Bagging your fish

To avoid the accidental trapping of fish within the bag, it is recommended that lots are double bagged with the 2nd outer bag inverted so the neck goes into the outer bag first. This 'rounds off' the corners & strengthens the bag. When the lot is not double bagged it is recommended that the bag has a rounded seal at the bottom or tape is used to round the corners off to ensure the corners are rounded off.

The bag needs to be large enough to maintain the fish for at least a 24 hour period and will need enough capacity to hold one third water and 2 thirds air when tied off.

Pairs or more large fish should be bagged individually and joined together securely enough that the bags cannot be accidentally separated.

Large groups of smaller fish should be in bags large enough or split in to smaller and joined together securely enough that the bags cannot be accidentally separated.

Transporting your fish

Please use a suitable polystyrene box and if necessary use a heat pack or other preferred method to keep your fish at the correct temperature.

Labelling your bag

You will be issued a letter prior to the auction. Label all of your bags with this letter and the number of that particular lot for

example A1, also include the name of the fish and a reserve price should you wish to set one.

PAIRS: - fish are normally sold in pairs – so that the purchaser can breed them. Please ensure that if sold as a pair, then the fish are a true pair. If not a pair - this must be stated on the form and bag.

Auctioning of Lots

Your box of fish will be placed below the rack and opened up alongside all other boxes. Bags will be taken at random and placed on the viewing rack for the buyers to inspect, once the auctioneers are ready the fish will be removed from the rack for auctioning.

All bidding will start at the specified reserve value for the lot or £3.00 and will raise in increments of 50p up to £10.00, after the £10.00 value is reached the increments will raise by £1.00.

At the end of the auction the total sales per seller will be calculated. A 15% commission per seller is deducted before the seller is paid.

Judging guppies to IKGH standards – Part 2

Judging to the IKGH Standards By Steve Elliot

The following is the second part of an article which started in the December issue of "Livebearer News".

. Here is a typical example from a German Show results :



Triangelschwanz Gr. Nr. 2-1-9-2
grau metallic blau

1 Denis Barbé EGS / F 91 107,00 Punkte



Triangelschwanz Gr. Nr. 2-1-9-11
grau metallic Snakesin/Filigran

1 Michael Schönefeld CAGD / D 37 117,33 Punkte

2 Klaus Pröhl GGD / D 27 109,67 Punkte



Triangelschwanz Gr. Nr. 2-1-10-2
grau 1/2 schwarz blau

1 Ralf Loch CAGD / D 39 116,67 Punkte



Triangelschwanz Gr. Nr. 2-1-10-5
grau 1/2 schwarz weiß

1 Torsten Rickert CAGD / D 49 127,00 Punkte

2 Alexandra Grimm CAGD / D 28 123,33 Punkte

3 Torsten Rickert CAGD / D 48 120,67 Punkte

4 Bodo Sikora DGF / D 30 106,67 Punkte

Each individual entry shows the code in numbers and words, the place in that group, the breeder, the club and country, the tank number and the points. Every show entry is displayed with this information. The fish are often sold after the show and so the buyer has all the details .

The code is based upon three different numbers. The first number simply represents the tail shape of the guppy :-

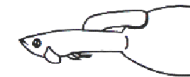
1 Fan Tail



2 Triangle Tail



3 Veil Tail



4 Flag Tail









5 Double Sword Tail



6 Top Sword Tail



- | | | |
|----|-------------------|---|
| 7 | Bottom Sword Tail |  |
| 8 | Lyre Tail |  |
| 9 | Spade Tail |  |
| 10 | Spear Tail |  |
| 11 | Round Tail |  |
| 12 | Pin tail |  |

The above represents the 12 tail shapes of the IKGH standards. The dorsal fins can be easily seen and compared. It can be noted that the ideal length of all the dorsal fins is an overlap of the tail by 1/3, with the exception of one – the round tail for which the dorsal should end where the tail starts.

IKGH shows are announced in November for the following show season. There is a reason for this. We all know that the fins of a guppy do not stop growing. An old fish will not only have a longer tail but the dorsal will grow at a greater rate and show a dorsal that is too long. An 'ideal' guppy may have a

window of perfection of only six weeks. Thus the IKGH states the show schedule at the beginning of the year to allow the breeders to time their broods for each individual show!!

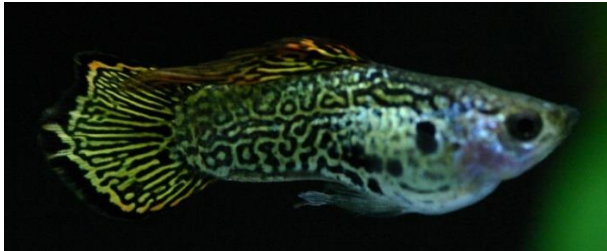
The assessment of the body shape is described as “robust but graceful”. I prefer to consider ‘streamlined’ as a better description. No humps or bumps, especially above the head, and no bulging of the chest. The ‘robust’ part of the description refers to the depth of the body including the peduncle area that should not be too long or thin.

For the tail shapes, you should look to the line drawings, whilst there are written descriptions of the dorsal fins, I prefer to check all the shapes with the line drawings. It is sometimes necessary to help to identify the tail shape of a poor-quality guppy from the dorsal shape. That will be made clear later.

The assessment of the colour is the same for the body, dorsal and tail. We look at the surface covering, ie the proportion of colour and pattern on the surface, the colour quality and the pattern quality, for which we note if there is sufficient saturation and clear separation of the colours. Colour and pattern are valued jointly as a unit.

The assessment of any guppy requires the deduction of points for bad or poor features. However a good judge will not only take points away when the guppy being assessed is obviously good, but when presented with a guppy that is obviously not so good then the judge will be looking for good features for which points can be added.

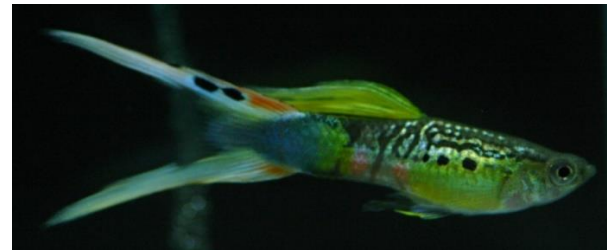
When assessing a guppy with the IKGH rules, the size is assessed by 'estimation'. That means that a ruler is not required! The fins are proportionate to the body size. Colour assessment is discussed elsewhere. The shape is mainly compared to the line drawings. It all seems to be less arduous that it really is. All the rules and example of defects in a guppy are listed and noted individually within the IKGH standard if each tail shape. Many of the defects are actually very repetitive within the standards some of which are as following :



Caudal peduncle too deep making the shape short and stumpy. This fish is also a bit 'chesty' – an indication of too much protein.



Poor shape – not streamlined and with a humpty bumpy forehead – a pet hate of mine.



Dorsal not rising steeply at the beginning.



Good example of dorsal rising steeply at the beginning. However the dorsal is too thick and should taper to a sharper point.



The gonopodium often deforms with spear tails making them sterile. We can make a deduction of up to 3 points from the body score.



This clearly shows the back edge that has been cut to make straight. Cutting of fins is not acceptable in any region for guppy shows. Sometimes the tail will continue to grow but without colour – this is not a reliable indication of cut fins as many have faded colour at the end edges. As per the next picture.



For IKGH shows, the central part between double swords (an oval shape) can be clear or it can be coloured. For IFGA shows the central part MUST be clear. This is in order to prevent cheats from cutting a double sword tails from triangle tails.....

The purple devil, hybrid *Goodeid* by Gary Randall

The two species in question are *Characodon audax* and *Characodon lateralis*. Both species were introduced into the UK fish hobby by the late 1980s and by 1991 I had both species in my possession. When I got the *lateralis* from a friend he said:- “Don't put the two species together as they can hybridise and you will end up with purple Devils”. He went on to tell me that this crossbreed will be so aggressive they will probably kill each other off. After much research I had found a small article about this hybrid; I found it to be a very interesting article. However there was no photos / pictures of what the fish would look like. By 2007 I had gained much experience in keeping and breeding most of the goodeid species; after many years of wondering what a purple devil would look like I decided to create my own experiment.

I first selected a female *Characodon lateralis*. I placed her in a tank by herself for about 3 months; the reason for this is to make sure she's not carrying fry and to get her into good breeding condition by feeding prepared and live foods. On September 28 2007 I placed a female *lateralis* and male *audax* in a 12x8x8 tank, heavily planted in order for the female to take cover as the male *audax* are very aggressive towards female *lateralis* and in most situations the female will be killed. The tank temperature was 24 °C. I checked the female daily for any damage that may have been caused by the male. The female would spend most of her time hiding in the plants. Apart from the stress of being chased there wear no other sign of damage. The only time I got to see her

properly was when she come out for food. After 4 weeks of being together the female showed all signs of carrying young. It was at this stage that I decided to remove the male and after a further 2 weeks the female gave birth to 16 fry. I removed the female at this time as I didn't want to take any chance of her attacking or eating them the fry. I fed prepared and a good variety of live foods and after about 2 or 3 weeks removed the young to a larger tank of 12"12"x24". The ratio of males to females turn out as 5 females and 11 males; the fry grew well on brine shrimp, daphnia, and grindal worm, as part of their diet. As they matured into young adults they got very aggressive among themselves and occasionally leaving damage fins: however there were never any deaths caused by aggression . By February 2008 they were well developed, very robust, with a good body depth. The coloration in the males are somewhat similar to their parents, very beautiful looking fish. However each generation was still aggressive. I kept the purple devils up to 2014 when I let the last of them die out,.

The purpose for recreating this experiment was for my own research and for not any other purposes and none of the hybrids was ever sold or released to any other aquarist.



Photos : Gary Randall



Photo : Gary Randall

The cost of keeping tropical fish by *Alan J. Rothwell*

I have been paying £80 a month for dual fuel. After this last long winter [i.e. the 2017 to 2018 winter] I was expecting to have to pay a bit more, and sure enough, in January 2018 I had an email telling me I was going to have to pay £100, which is a 25% increase. Then in March I had another email telling me I needed to pay £122 or I would end up in dept. This is more than my brother is paying for a three-bedroom house and I have a one-bedroom old-folks bungalow. And this is in spite of having 4 inches of [polystyrene] insulation in my shed. This is also a fifty per cent rise on what I was paying. I don't know whether they are sneaking the prices up to pay for the smart metres they are installing or what. Anyway, after the initial shock I thought "Well that's it; after fifty-five years of keeping and breeding tropical fish it's all over." I can not afford to pay that sort of money on a state pension. I nearly went and just turned all the power off.

After I had calmed down a bit, having fifty tanks of assorted sizes I realised that it would not be fair to the fish and I needed to find new homes for them. A few weeks later I was sitting in my living room and happened to glance at a thermometer and it read 70°F of 21°C. Now, I have to heat my house but not my shed so I went into the shed and made a list of all the sizes of the tanks in there. I came back and measured up the spaces in my living room. There are three alcoves either side of my fireplace which measure 5 feet wide by eight feet to the ceiling so I built two new stands to fit in the gaps. After that I decided to build two more stands to fit on the side wall and over the door. All my lights are now LED and none of them are on for longer than eight hours. I now have

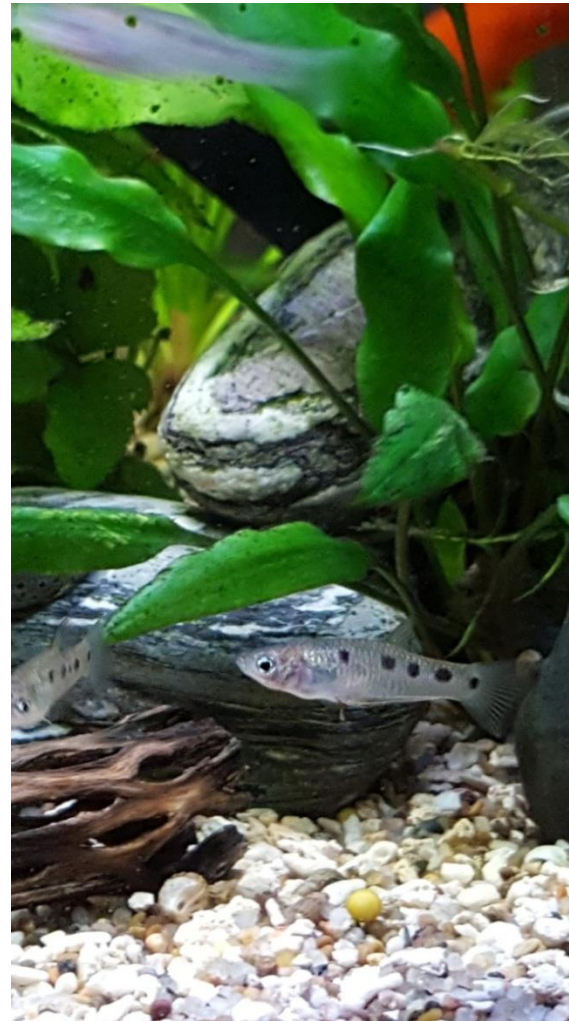
thirty-four tanks in the living room but if the cost does not come down next winter it really will be the end of my fish-keeping.





Many apologies for the standard of the photos, taken by me.

Photos from J. Sara Fulton



Poeciliopsis gracilis Photo: J. Sara Fulton



Neoheterandria elegans Photo :- J Sara Fulton 21



Xiphophorus pygmaeus by J. Sara Fulton 22



Xiphophorus montezumae by J. Sara Fulton



Girardinus metallicus Photo by J. Sara Fulton 23

Diary dates

Friday 15th March 2019 : Sheaf Valley Aquarist Society auction; The Phoenix Pub, Greengate Lane, High Green, Sheffield, S35 3GS. Doors open and lots booked in from 6.00pm. Auction starts 7.00pm prompt.

Sunday 17th March :- Mid-Sussex AS Show and auction, Patcham Community Centre, Ladies Mile Road, Patcham, Brighton, BN1 8TA. Several members of the BLA will be there and are taking fish to the auction.

Tea, coffee, bacon sandwiches etc available. There will be a club shop selling whatever fish plants equipment etc people bring .

If sellers want non livebearers can go in the auction

The venue entrance is shared with the school. There's plenty of parking. It's only half a mile from the A23/A27 junction

Sunday 14th April 2019 : Sheaf Valley Aquarist Society, Spring Open Show & Auction, The Rockingham Centre, Sheffield Road, Hoyland Common, Barnsley, S74 0PY; Doors open 11.00am; Auction starts 1.00pm prompt.

Warwick : We are hoping to hold two more events in Warwick, in August and October. I will email out details closer to the time.

Advance notice :- The Goodeid Working Group are holding their convention in **Chester Zoo, from the 15th to the 17th November**. If you keep *Goodeids*, or you are interested in their conservation, then try to get a place at this event.