

## tideline aquatics Newsletter

### **Tideline Aquatics Store Hours**

Monday – Friday 11am-7pm Saturday 10am-6pm Sundays 1pm-5pm

## NOT SALTWATER – NOT FRESHWATER SETTING UP A BRACKISH WATER AQUARIUM

Often overlooked in our hobby, brackish water aquariums can house an interesting group of fish, many of which resemble fish available for saltwater aquariums. Setting up a brackish water tank is quite simple. Like any other aquarium, it will need an adequate biological (biowheel, biofoam, etc) for keeping ammonia and nitrite levels stable. A brackish water aquarium will also require a good mechanical filter to remove fish waste and provide strong circulation in the tank (a large power filter, canister filter, etc). Housed within the mechanical filter will be your chemical filtration media (activated carbon, chemipure, etc). For substrate, the use of a coral-based sand or gravel is suggested. This will help to maintain the pH, KH and GH of the water within the range preferred by most of the brackish water species available. Use a submersible aquarium heater for maintaining a constant temperature. We suggest a temperature range of 76-80 degrees - keep the temperature from fluctuating as with tropical freshwater and marine species. As for the addition of salt,

it can vary greatly. Brackish water fish are easily able to transition from lower to higher salt levels as long as they occur gradually. In the mangrove swamps where many of the brackish water fish are collected, the salt levels change daily. Maintaining a salinity (salt level) from 1.005 - 1.010 will suit your brackish water fish well. Purchase a low range hydrometer (such as the ones used in koi ponds) to monitor the salt levels in your aquarium. The tap water will need the usual dechlorinator solution (amquel, aqua safe, etc) to neutralize the chlorine and chloramine from the water.



FIGURE EIGHT PUFFER (TETRAODON PALEMBANGENSIS)

You will want to cycle your aquarium with something inexpensive and salt tolerant like perhaps some common guppies or mollies for the first 3-4 weeks of setting up the aquarium. These fish can either be removed after the aquarium cycles or offered as a food item for some of your new brackish water additions.

When decorating the brackish water aquarium, use low, grassy artificial plants incorporated around driftwood roots and low rock piles. Leave the upper portion of the aquarium open for the fish. Speaking of the fish, check out some of these interesting brackish water fish!



THE ARCHERFISH (TOXOTES JACULATRIX)

The archerfish really lives up to its name. With some training, your archerfish will begin to exhibit its natural habits from the wild – their ability to spit beads of water above the surface to knock prey items such as small insects into the water where they can be captured for dinner! I (Chris) personally was able to experience this cool instinct from my very own archerfish that lived in my bedroom aquarium when I was a child. In the mornings, this fish would spit beads of water through an opening on the lid. These beads of water would hit me in the face and wake me up - my archerfish was telling me it was hungry! These fish will accept regular meaty food items as well if you are not into fish interactions.

An interesting schooling fish for a brackish water tank would be a group of Monos. There are two types of Monos available in the trade, the Mono argenteus and the Mono sebae. Looking like some sort of marine angelfish or butterfly, monos are active and nervous fish that dart about the aquarium continuously. We

suggest keeping this fish in groups of three or more. Never keep just two as one will nearly always begin to badger the other.



MONO ARGENTEUS

Adult monos are difficult to transport so purchasing smaller specimens is recommended. Monos will accept anything from flake foods to frozen foods.



BUMBLE BEE GOBY (BRACHYGOBIUS SP.)

Reaching only about 1" in length, the bumble bee goby is best kept with smaller more peaceful brackish water fish such as halfbeaks and sailfin mollies. One species of bumble bee goby will even thrive in pure freshwater aquariums! Bouncing about the rocks of the tank decor, these interesting little gobies are easy to maintain once they become acclimated to prepared foods. Choose foods like live black worms, brine shrimp and tiny grass shrimp if your bumble bee goby is a picky eater. It will not be long before they are eating all types of frozen fish foods.



GREEN SPOTTED SCAT (SCATOPHAGUS ARGUS) Being labeled a dung eater can be quite a stigma to overcome - the bright color of this fish helps. In the aquarium, scats do best with being fed a vegetable based diet with mixes of meaty food offered as treats. Dried seaweed, hair algae, tender live plant leaves and spirulina are all readily accepted by scats. These fish arrive from the wild in terrible condition. It takes about two weeks for these fish to be fattened back up from their long journey. Scats are prone to Lymphocystis, a viral disease when first imported. With good conditioning, we are able to get these fish to excellent health mainly through a good diet. Never purchase thin scats! The body of the fish should be filled out - avoid specimens where the body of the fish is not even with the thickness of the head. Scats are territorial with one another. If you decide to keep more than one scat, we suggest keeping three or more to divide the aggression among the group. These fish can grow to the size of a dinner plate so a larger aquarium will eventually be needed. Scats do well with Monos, Archerfish, larger Gobies and even Anableps.



ANABLEPS CAN SEE ABOVE AND BELOW WATER!

Talk about a strange brackish water fish – anableps fit the bill! When watching these fish try and swim below the surface, it reminds you of a chicken trying to take flight. Anableps live on the surface and have eyes that have evolved to allow them to see both above AND below the water at the same time! Not only can this help them to avoid predators but it also makes them good hunters for food. This is another one of the brackish water fish that arrives from the wild in terrible condition. We take care in medicating them for about seven days after they arrive. During this period we offer then large quantities of live foods like black worms and baby livebearers. Once fattened up, these fish are extremely hardy. Though not colorful,



Anableps often become a favorite of their owners. Who could hate a fish that has a frog face and a fish body?

If you have an extra aquarium lying about or are thinking of doing something new with your current aquarium, give a brackish water aquarium a try. The aquarium maintenance is that of a standard marine aquarium yet the fish are quite hardy and colorful. Even setting up a half-filled aquarium with mangrove plants growing above the surface with groups of archerfish and anableps makes an incredible and interesting tank.



LOOKING CUTE YET READY TO BITE THE FINS FROM ANYTHING IT CAN GET ITS 'BEAK' ON!

Did I forget to mention the so-called freshwater puffers? Give them their own tank and remember that these fish need salt in the aquarium to thrive. Though cute in the face, we have found them to be just little butchers! Keep these fish in groups or singly as they will ambush and kill other fish if given a chance. Drop them a chew toy every now and then. By this I mean a large snail, crayfish and/or fiddler crab. Be ready for the gruesome eating habits of this sweet looking but really quite hateful group of fish.

## THE TIDELINE AQUATICS WEBSITE FORUM

Ask questions, share ideas or just chat with fellow aquarists using the Tideline Aquatics forum. We are also posting 'Helpful Hints' for you to reference concerning different aspects of aquarium husbandry. We will also be using the forum to announce the arrival of livestock that may be seasonal or rare to see in the aquarium.

## COME SEE OUR NEWLY DESIGNED POND SECTION!

New larger holding vats, racks of new pond supplies and tons of pond fish and plants are now ready in our newly designed pond department located behind the store. Just enter the store through the front door and go straight through the

back door to reach our pond area. We also have a display pond with a bench for your pleasure during your visit to tideline aquatics.

POND FISH DISEASES IN THE SPRING



During the winter months, the water temperature of the pond seldom reaches 50 degrees. Water birds, water snakes and even frogs can bring in unwanted pests from waters outside your pond. In the cold water, these pests do not cause too much trouble but in the spring when water temperature get into the 70's, these pests will begin to reproduce and cause problems for your pond fish. Watch your fish for signs parasites. This can include scratching or rubbing against the bottom of the pond and/or decorations, cloudy and/or slimy skin, sitting clamped up on the bottom of the pond and gasping at the surface of the water. Common pests in the spring can include Argulus (fish lice), gill flukes, skin flukes and even Ich to name a few. If you are suspect that your fish have a problem, bring in one of two live fish from your pond. We will perform a free skin scraping and look at the results under the microscope to identify the problem if needed. Parasites like Argulus and Anchor Worms are easily diagnosed with the naked eye but other parasites may

require a closer view to get you the correct treatment for your pond fish.

#### **LOCAL CLUBS / ORGANIZATIONS**

Have a reef aquarium? Check out our local reef club at: www.charlestonreefers.org

Love water gardens and koi? Visit the Charleston Showa Koi Club website at: www.charlestonshowakoiclub.org.

Saltwater fish aquarium club – CMAC www.columbiamac.org

Question and Answer Forum – www.wetwebmedia.com

Question and Answer Forum – www.tidelineaquatics.net

### Fish of the Week



CLOWN TRIGGERFISH (BALISTOIDES CONSPICILLUM) Want a super hardy marine fish that is actually colorful? The Clown Triggerfish may be right up your alley. We currently have numerous 4"-5" Clown Triggers that are fat and fully acclimated. These are not a fish for every aquarium though. Clown triggerfish should be housed with more aggressive species like dogface puffers, large wrasses, eels, larger lionfish and squirrelfish. For play and an eventual meal, toss in a few larger hermit crabs. These fish are notorious for picking up the crab shells and dragging them about the

tank. At night, the hermits make good scavengers but they must survive the daylight hours with their abuser, the Clown Triggerfish. These triggerfish were collected from Sumatra and arrived last week in excellent condition. They are brightly marked and exceptionally fat from terrorizing our hermit crab population. Clown triggerfish will eat all types of meaty frozen foods. Also include some dried marine algae on occasion as these fish will try and eat nearly anything offered. Print off the coupon at: <a href="https://www.tidelineaquatics.net">www.tidelineaquatics.net</a>

#### AT TIDELINE THIS WEEK:

#### **FEEDERS: (NOW IN STOCK)**

Live Black Worms, Crayfish, Fiddler Crabs, Feeder Guppies and Feeder Ghost Shrimp. We are out of Feeder Rosey Reds and Feeder Goldfish until the middle of next week.

### FRESHWATER FISH (NOW IN STOCK):

Screaming Red Velvet Swordtails, M/L Koi Angelfish, M/L Blushing Angelfish, Large Altum Angelfish (full conditioned), Galaxy Plecostomus, Flat Body Loricaria Catfish, Flower Freshwater Stingray, Large Pairs of Electric Blue Ahli Cichlids, Large Pairs of Red Empress Cichlids, a Nice Mix of Tanganyika Cichlids, Red Serpae Tetras, Black and White Skirt Tetras, XL Emperor Tetras, Dalmation Mollies, Assorted Sailfin Mollie Pairs, Male Bettas (excellent color selection), Geophagus altifrons Eartheaters, Assorted Mbuna African Cichlids (an excellent mix of affordable cichlids), Red Cherry Barbs, Otocinclus Algae Eaters, Albino Chocolate Plecostomus, M/L Tiretrack Eels (very nice markings on these), Australian Gold Desert Gobies (unusual), Figure Eight Pufferfish, Green Spotted Pufferfish, South American Freshwater Stingrays, Red Belly X-Ray Tetras (New!). Look through our extensive freshwater fish aquariums. We have the best selection of freshwater fish in town!

# NEW SHIPMENT OF LIVE AQUATIC AQUARIUM PLANTS ARRIVING ON FRIDAY!!

# POND – KOI, GOLDFISH AND WATER GARDEN PLANTS (NOW IN STOCK!):

Small Assorted Color Domestic Koi, Medium Assorted Domestic Koi, Large Assorted Domestic Koi, Large Assorted Butterfly Koi, Pearlscale Goldfish, Blue Orandas, Calico Orandas, Red and White Orandas, Ryukins, Butterfly Telescope Goldfish, Black Moors. Colorful hardy water lilies, blooming tropical water lilies, tons of bog plants and floating island plants as well as oxygenator plants are now available.

JAPANESE KOI SHIPMENT ARRIVES ON THURSDAY OF THIS WEEK!! DON'T MISS OUT – PICK OUT YOUR FISH NOW AND PICK THEM UP AFTER THEIR 21 DAY QUARANTINE PERIOD!

## SALTWATER FISH (NOW IN STOCK):

Large Juvenile Color Indian Ocean Koran Angelfish, Indian Ocean Flagfin Angelfish, Red Sea Asfer Angelfish, Bali Annularis Angelfish, Small Indian Ocean Snowflake Moray Eels, Mystery Orange Tail Triggerfish, Hawaiian Yellow Tangs, Christmas Island Goldflake Angelfish, Bali Blue Regal Tangs, Indian Ocean Dogface Pufferfish, Indian Ocean Niger Triggerfish, Bali Spotted Hawkfish, African Sixline Wrasses, Tonga and Fiji Coral Beauty Angelfish, Baby Hawaiian Flame Angelfish, Sea of Cortez Blue Spot Jawfish, Tank Bred Clownfish, Indian Ocean Orange Skunk Clownfish Pairs, Sumatra Gold Bar Clownfish. Sri Lanka Bicolor Blennies, Indian Ocean Firefish Gobies, Indian Ocean Black Volitan Lionfish, Sumatra Clown Triggerfish, Indian Ocean Desjardini Sailfin Tangs, Indian Ocean Powder Brown Tangs, Bali Yellow Mimic Tangs, Indian Ocean Powder Blue Tangs, Indian Ocean McCoster's Fairy Wrasses, Tank Bred Kellogii Seahorses, Bumble Bee Weaver Gobies, Orange Banded Gobies, Indian Ocean Algae Blennies, Sri Lanka Diamond Sifter Gobies and

so much more. Our saltwater aquariums are loaded with fish at this time.

## SALTWATER INVERTEBRATES (NOW IN STOCK):

Golden Banded Shrimp, A Huge Selection of Zooanthid Rocks, Indo Assorted Mushroom Rocks, Blasstomussa merletti corals, Super Color Cultured Montipora Corals, Bright Yellow Turbinaria Corals, Super Cultured Acropora Corals, Incredible Frogspawn (Octopus) Corals, Mega Sized Hammer Corals, Christmas Tree Worm Rocks, Candy Caulestrea Corals, Mycedium Corals, Ultra Favia and Favites Corals, Rasta Green Leather Corals, Sri Lanka Cleaner Shrimp, Hawaiian Feather Dusters, Sri Lanka Fire Shrimp, Cortez Red Tip Reef Hermits, Green Daisy Polyp Rocks, Super Green Star Polyp Rocks, Fiji Yellow Devil Hand Leather Corals, Fiji Green Mumps Leather Corals, Indo Umbrella Toadstool Leather Corals, Spiny Cup Pectinia Corals, Indo Bubble Corals, Cynarina Meat Corals, Bright Green Wellsophylia Corals, Premium Fiji Live Rock.

#### From Our Customer Photo Gallery:



MICHAEL O'LEARY'S RED PISTOL SHRIMP

Please keep our customer photo gallery fresh by sending me your photos for posting. Share your aquarium inhabitants by including your photos in our website photo gallery! Send your photos to: chris@tidelineaquatics.net