

A Note from the Editor:

Reefers,

In this April issue of The Maastard Newsletter, you will read about Starfish, Mandarins, Question & Answers. And have the option to use a coupon from one of our sponsors— Aquarium Master's in Corpus Christi, TX.

In the event that you want to submit information in regards to upcoming newsletters please feel free to contact (Pennies2cents) via PM on the Maast website.

- Eve -

NEW BOARD SECRETARY ELECTED

We would like to congratulate Anthony Pedroza (apedroza) for filling this position on the board. Anthony has been an intricate part of the board in the past and will do a superb job in his new position. We the BOD of MAAST are looking forward to a prosperous year. as well as to bring you some pretty awesome events in 2009.



Greenmako— March Photo Contest Winner

this issue

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TMAC: Texas Marine Aquarist Conference- A Success!

The President's Pen

My Fellow Members,

There were many exciting events that have happened in the last few weeks, and I just wanted to say how proud I am of the attendance that supported each event.

I hope everyone enjoyed the Tank Tour as much as I did. For those of you who did not participate, I believe that this was the first MAAST convoy. I can honestly say, each tank was in superb form. We also started the Monthly Group Buy and that was a blast. I hope that everyone's Zoas are doing well, and can't wait to see what is in store for the next Group Buy. (I am secretly hoping for SPS.)

TMAC , first and foremost, I cannot say enough how much I appreciate everyone's help. TMAC was a great success and I hope that everyone left with a take away. I am deeply

appreciative to the TMAC Committee, the BOD, the sponsors who donated, and to all the vendors/speakers who attended, and last but not least, the attendees, this was created for you. Plans are already in place for next year.

Future events to look forward to include, April's Meeting on DIY Marine Fish Food, an Austin meeting in May, and also the Zoo Event, and last but not least, the Frag Swap in June. Hope to see you there.

My family and I would like to personally wish everyone a safe and Happy Easter, and pray that everyone is able to spend their day with family.

Happy Reefing,

Steve Byrd
(BigBird123)
MAAST President



Do It Yourself: FOOD RECIPE

There are many basic recipes available for creating your own foods for your fish and invertebrates, even the filter-feeding ones. Some are more practical than others.

In general, a good recipe should provide a well-rounded diet for various life-forms in the aquarium. Most filter-feeding invertebrates are omnivorous (they require both meat and plant-matter to survive) as are many fishes. Here is a good example for a fish/invertebrate ration. Feel free to modify it as you see fit.

- 5 oz shrimp, peeled
- 3 oz shellfish (shelled)
- 5 oz Artemia (frozen/packed)
- 3 oz spinach, canned (or dried seaweed)
- 1 oz Liquid Vitamin (Selco or equivalent)

Optional:

- 2 oz Various Mollusk types (fresh or frozen)
- 1 oz Flake/Powdered fish food
- 2-3 oz Rotifer cultures, fresh or frozen
- 2 oz Sea urchin, frozen

Finely Chop shrimp, shellfish and spinach (or seaweed). Thoroughly mix in thawed Artemia and liquid vitamin. Either utilize small ice-cube tray to re-freeze or freeze in small, flat blocks that can be shaved with a cheese grater or broken into smaller pieces for feeding time. A good idea is to use egg crate.

For invertebrates, use a blender to puree ingredients. Feed about 1 tsp per 100 gallons of aquarium water depending on bio-load of system 2 - 3 times a week. (one cube from small egg crate is about 1 tsp.

DID YOU KNOW



“The Mandarin”

Family:
Callionymidae

Genus:
Synchiropus splendidus (Blue)
Synchiropus picturatus (Green)

Common Name:
Mandarin, Psychedelic Goby, Dragonet

In selecting a specimen fullness of the body and activity level is a must! Mandarins should not be skinny. Make sure they are eating. Mandarins should be kept either one to a tank or as a single male with more than one female or a male/female pair. They will fight vigorously if tank is not large enough (as in 100+ gallons).

Their compatibility is very docile when competing for food. It must be kept with other easygoing fish species. They are a great reef aquarium specimen, but can be consumed by anemones and large crustaceans. They are always investigating their environment and it would appreciate lots of live rock for hiding places.

The characteristics of the Mandarin at adulthood would be the maximum size of 6cm - 7cm (Male) Males have elongated 1st dorsal spine and may show brighter color.

“The Mandarin” By: Sherri Ancira

I asked Sherri to give us her thoughts of an animal with the most dismal survival records of captive marines. Here is what she had to say.

The habitat of a Mandarin is almost always found in coral rubble/live rock. They only venture out to feed and interact with their own kind.

The Mandarin if a real finicky eater, feeding or mostly a “lack of,” is the most common loss of the Mandarin. They spend many hours seeking out “live” invertebrates (copepods, mysis shrimp) in/on live rock and substrates.

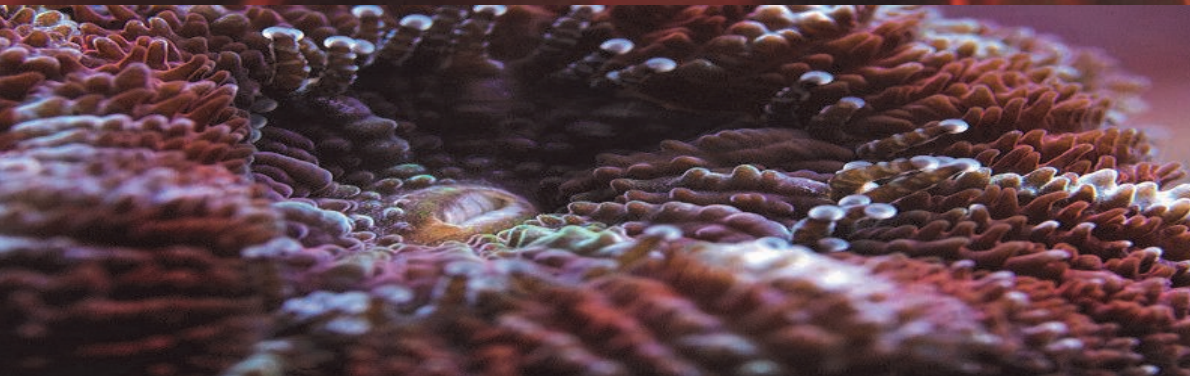
In most cases, they will not accept enough of anything other than live food. To successfully keep Mandarins, you need a very peaceful, large reef system with lots of live rock and deep sand bed and/or a system with a vibrant fishless refugium which is highly recommended.

In Conclusion, unfortunately, both the Green and Blue Mandarins have the most dismal survival records of captive marines. Almost all perish within a month of wild capture and most often lead to simple starvation. It is recommended that If you do not have an established tank and or refugium with the appropriate conditions, etc...for this wonderful specimen please resist the temptation of adding it to your tank - leave them in the ocean!

Written By Sherri Ancira
(Sherri-Treasurer)

Upcoming Events

EYE ON IT Species Spotlight



April 26

Marine Food Preparation
John w/Kingfish
1pm-4pm
Bass Pro Shop
San Antonio, TX

May 17th

Jennifer Prince
(aka Princer7)
Reef Photography
2pm-4pm
11113 Maelin Drive
Austin, TX 78739

May 30

May Meeting
San Antonio Zoo
Event
San Antonio, Tx

June 2nd

David Villarreal
Presentation on
Bigbird P.A. Trip
1pm-4pm
Bass Pro Shop
San Antonio, Tx

The Serpent Sea Star of the genus *Ophioderma* has a central, 5-sided disc with five banded, scaly arms. Depending upon the species and locale, the color can range from maroon, to orange, to green. The central disc can also have variable markings.

It does well in an aquarium if provided with ample hiding places and plenty of room to roam. Even though it is a nocturnal animal, it will eventually learn to come out during the day to eat.

The Serpent Sea Star is very intolerant of sudden changes in oxygen levels, salinity and pH of the water, and cannot tolerate copper-based medications. The drip acclimation method is highly recommended for all Sea Stars due to their intolerance to changes in water chemistry. It should never be exposed to air while handling. It is extremely difficult to breed in an aquarium with no distinguishing characteristics to help differentiate it from its mate.

In the aquarium, it can be fed small pieces of chopped meat, shrimp, mussel, or fish.

Corpus Store Hours



Newsletter Special

10% Off Coupon

Edinburg Store Hours

Monday-Saturday
12pm-8pm

Wednesday
12pm-6:30

Phone:
1- 361-343-AQUA

Storewide sale with exception of already reduced priced items

Aquarium Masters
3833 Saratoga #103
Corpus Christi, TX
78415

Aquarium Masters
323 E. Owassa #23
Edinburg, TX
78539

Valid Until April 30, 2009

Monday-Saturday
12pm-6pm

Phone:
1-956-207-6464

Charter Members— 20%
plus additional 10%
Web Members 10%

This Month's Aquaria Q&A ...

Q: How is the age of a fish determined?

A: Mainly by two methods: Growth "rings" on scales, and/or ring like structures found in otoliths (small bones of the inner ear), are examined and counted. The rings correspond to seasonal

changes in the environment and can be compared to the annual rings of tree trunks. A series of fine rings are laid down in scales for each year of life in summer, the rings grow faster and have relatively wide separations; in winter, slower growth is indicated by

narrow separations between rings. Each pair of rings indicates one year. Because scale rings are sometimes influenced by other factors, scientists often use otoliths, whose ring like structures also indicate years of life.

Information/Photos were compiled with permission from www.liveaquaria.com.

www.nefsc.noaa.gov/faq/

Become a Charter Member Today



PHOTO CREDITS

P1 - March Contest Winner

Greenmako— Super Male Pink
margin

P2 - Sherri-Maast Treasurer

Green Mandarin

P3 - Princer 7

High Voltage Micromussa

P3 - Live Aquaria

Red Serpent Starfish

P4 - It1z28

Green Zoas

Helpful Tips:

Optimum Levels

pH 8.1 - 8.3

Specific Gravity 1.026

Alkalinity 8 dKH

Calcium 450 ppm

Magnesium 1350 ppm

Nitrate 0

Phosphate 0 - .01 ppm

Membership

Dues are \$25 for the calendar year. These dues quickly pay for themselves by the discounts given that many local stores honor to MAAST members.

We are trying to make our club better, bringing more educational topics, more door prizes and raffle items, and guest speakers. We also have the routine maintenance items like the website, food for meetings, membership dues to national marine organizations, and print/publication fee's. Membership dues allow our club to keep afloat, and make all of this possible. As always, the website portion of the club will remain free.

Why collect dues?

1. Keeps MAAST' afloat.
2. Funds club meetings so host does not have to pay for all out of pocket.
3. Allows for an image gallery on MAAST' website.
4. Extra funds go into pool for "expert" speakers at the meetings.
5. Higher quality raffles, higher quality meetings, higher quality club!
6. Eligibility to run for a club office or be appointed to a committee.
7. Eligibility to VOTE!
8. Discounts at participating LFS's and online vendors.
9. A membership card
10. A voice to represent aquarists' interest.

For more information concerning Charter status, please read our By-Laws.

The membership dues are \$25.00. Payment can be made either at the meetings, online via PayPal, or with a check mailed to our PO Box below.

PayPal fee's can be sent to treasurer@maast.org

or via snail mail to:

MAAST

P. O. Box 780582

San Antonio, TX 78278

Please include name, sign-in name, e-mail, home address, and phone!

Thanks for everyones help and support with this great organization!

