

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings fellow MAAS-Tards and MAAS Tee potentials,

I hope that this note finds you at peace before your tank, and your fish frantically vying for your attention when feeding. It has been an interesting month and several things seem to be percolating that will take MAAST to the next level as is fitting for the new decade.

One item that changed is the Frag Exchange program. No longer will this program be hidden from Web Members. Everyone will have visible access to all three levels to see what kinds of corals are actively being traded and even how the program runs. But this alone isn't what makes this change such a welcome one. In a truly bold move the BOD has decided to open level one up to Web Members! Yes, you too can post your level one corals and adopt like-level items in the Program. Having participated in both level one and level two exchanges I can tell you that it's truly an awesome project and goes a long way in doing our part to protect and propagate corals that otherwise may be removed unnecessarily from nature's reefs. As always, I hope that each of you enjoy the newsletter as much as we enjoyed putting it together. May your coral always be bright and growing.

In the event that you would like to submit information for upcoming newsletters, please feel free to contact any member of the newsletter committee via PM on the MAAST website.

Allan R. LaViers



Geclipse02 January POTM Winner

this issue

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The President's Pen:

In this, the beginning of a new decade, MAAST stands poised to spur education and interest in marine habitats around the world. By establishing and maintaining closed marine ecosystems of our own, aquarists develop knowledge and skills necessary to become stewards of the reef. Many aspects of MAAST encourage this ecological awareness in its members and in the community.

One of these is the Captive Breeding Forum. It provides a place for members to share techniques and discuss successes and failures in breeding marine organisms in captivity. By encouraging captive breeding and propagation, our organization helps further procedures needed to move away from wild collection of many marine organisms. In the coming year, this will be a focal area for our organization.

Another area of MAAST that is just beginning to expand is the library and equipment bank. This growing collection of resources not only benefits MAAST members in times of emergency, but also provides critical resources for furthering our understanding of establishing the best care possible for our marine family members. Expansion of this program is another top priority for the coming year.

The MAAST frag exchange program has become a way for members to share the products of their success with other members. It encourages good husbandry and propagation techniques that not only benefit the members but also the organisms we keep. Hopefully this program will continue to expand as more and more members learn and practice these successful methods of propagation.

Each monthly meeting will continue to have an educational piece. These presentations will be made by members and other experts in the field. Also, building on last year's TMAC, A goal for this year's TMAC is to expand the number of topics and presentations.

I feel that this year's Board of Directors share a common goal. This goal is to shift the direction of MAAST back toward education. With your help MAAST will continue to grow and provide a platform to continue that education in the years to come.

Ace Shedd- (Hobogato)
President

2010 Appointed Secretary & Treasurer

The Board of Directors would like to announce its newly appointed Secretary & Treasurer for the 2010 MAAST Calendar year. Congrats go out to the Secretary: Allan A. LaViers and the Treasurer: Sherri Ancira.

We thank you for accepting your positions as officers and look forward in working with you towards a successful year ahead.

Sincerely,

The MAAST BOD.

January Birthday's

January 2
Erebus

January 3
Corydrysdale

January 4
BigMc

January 12th
Chris

January 17th
joker78148

January 27th
Medi

January 29th
earthduzt



Water Quality Part 2.

The Importance of Water Changes

Peter Kordelski

Having looked at source water and making synthetic seawater for our Marine Aquariums in Water Quality Part 1, it is now time to study the benefits and types of water changes. It is the exception in our hobby to come across an experienced Aquarist who does not advocate or practice the adage, "Dilution is the Solution to Pollution" (Gary P). Unfortunately, and for a variety of reasons, many of us do not practice what we preach. From the person without a water filtration system, to the old timer that no longer has the time or is burnt out on water changes and rationalizes the necessity for them with a rudimentary knowledge of seawater chemistry and an effective filtration system. While most of us who have been around the hobby for a while understand the ammonia / nitrogen gas cycle, it is what we the aquarium community don't know about seawater chemistry that will get us into trouble. It is this lack of a thorough understanding of seawater chemistry in a closed system that drives home the theory that the single best method to maintain water quality is through water changes.

We need to remember how it is not just the "Big Three" (calcium, sodium carbonate, and magnesium) that need replacing, but many trace elements need to be replaced as well. One can dose these trace elements and many of our sponsors sell products that profess to be a balanced, correct ratio of trace elements for our systems; but as we know, no two systems are chemically alike. How does a chemist working for a supplement company know what your system needs when you yourself have not tested for these trace elements? These products are aimed at the ignorant or know it all customers.

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If you're not testing for it, don't dose it. We also need to realize how the calcium chloride and sodium carbonate being dosed to reef systems leads to an ionic imbalance. From a chemistry standpoint it is not this simple, but add the chloride and sodium ions and what do we get, a greater concentration of sodium chloride (NaCl, a salt ion). The solution: regularly check the systems water with a refractometer and perform regular water changes.

The most common water change recommendation of 10% per month comes from the days before South Pacific live rock and high efficiency skimmers (skimmers also remove trace elements) became prevalent. This quantity of water was aimed at lowering the amount of dissolved organic carbon (DOC) and metabolites in the water and thereby lowering the nitrates and is still good advice today. Systems having nuisance algae problems and those containing live rock of which most has been cured for less than six months should consider 10% per week. If a system has a long established means of nitrate and phosphate reduction, it is still important to conduct water changes for ionic balance and this balance is best achieved with smaller (5%) bi-weekly water changes. While this is not as effective for the dilution of pollution, it has shown to produce better growth and coloration in corals in long established systems as well as lessening the need for dosing the big three.

Which of these three water change schedules is for you? This should not be a budgetary decision but one based on the age and condition of your system. Is the need to lower the pollution being produced from the rock or excessive bio-load the objective or is ionic balance the only objective? While not an absolute, a rule of thumb can be 10% per week for six months, then 10% a month or 5% bi-weekly for life.

Peter Kordelski
(Ping)

We need writers!

Now, a lot of you think you can't write an article -but we're not only looking for advanced topics here, we need beginner's stories, tips, product reviews, and more!

Send us your thoughts any and all are welcome. We Look forward to working with you.

Sincerely
The Newsletter
Committee.

New Committee Members.

As we begin the new year, I would like to welcome two (2) new members to the newsletter committee.

A special thank you goes out to Eurromom (Karin) & Corruption (Justin) for volunteering their time in helping make the newsletter a big success. We look forward to working with you on future editions of the newsletter.

Eve....

Picture of the Month Winner



Geclipse02

Hello, everyone,

First, I would like to say thank you to all who voted in favor of my picture. Here is a small bio on my POTM winning picture. Enjoy!

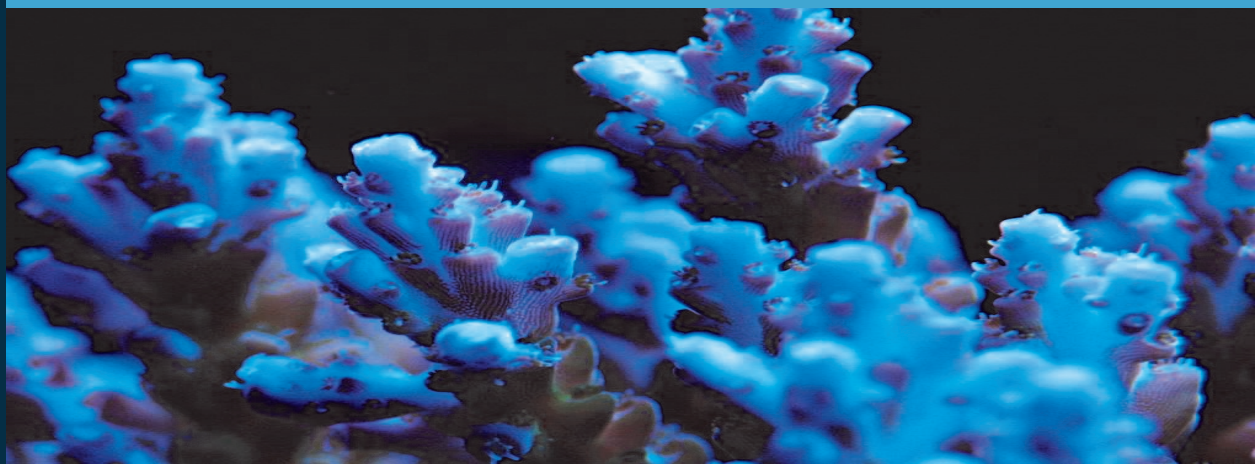
The two schooling fish you see are clownfish that I picked up off of Craigslist. The anemone is a Long Tentacle Anemone that was bought at Petco for \$5.99.

The picture was taken with a Cannon 20D inside of my 100g with 2 MH 250w SE 12k reflux.

The clown fish are still alive, and living healthy lives, Although, reproduction has yet to occur the pair seem to be liking each other and are now resting in a RBTA that I got from. Eve (Pennies2Cents) and are doing well.

Thanks again, for your support.

-JT & Vic-





Upcoming Events

February , 2010

Open House Tank Show
Location: TBA
Date: TBA
Time: TBA

March 2010

2010 Annual Frag Swap
Location: TBA
Date: TBA
Time: TBA

April 2010

San Antonio Zoo Trip
Location: San Antonio
Zoo
Date: TBA

The Matted Filefish is also known as the Bristle-tail Filefish, Matted Leather-jacket, Tomentosus Filefish, or Aiptasia Eating Filefish. The body is a mottled green, brown, and tan coloration.

It is a shy fish, and rarely aggressive towards other fish except those of its own genus. It is best suited for aquariums 30 gallons or larger that does not contain small invertebrates.



The Matted Filefish is known to eat Aiptasia anemone in the home aquarium, but normally nips at soft and stony corals as well. The diet should include shaved shrimp, squid, scallop, mysis shrimp, freeze-dried krill soaked in a vitamin supplement, and frozen marine algae. The Matted Filefish should be fed small quantities of food several times per day.

These fish have been known to spawn in captivity, and males are normally larger than the females, having fine bristle-like hairs on each side of their body down the caudal peduncle or base of the tail.

This Month's Aquaria Q&A ...

Question: I'm having major plumbing issues, and I have to shut down my filtration temporarily! How long can my tank last?

Answer: Assuming you have wisely built your aquarium, you likely have a decent amount of live rock and other sources of circulation within your display tank. Simply keep the water moving, and keep an eye here -- chances are this can be maintained indefinitely without great deleterious effects. If you are concerned about waste buildup, step up the frequency of water changes during the time your filtration is down: 2-3 small (5 gallon or less, depending on water volume) water changes per week will be a huge benefit. Water disturbing the surface will also help to allow gas exchange to continue to occur effectively.

Submitted by Justin Norman (Corruption)



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

BECOME A CHARTER MEMBER TODAY

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!



PHOTO CREDITS

P1 - POTM Winner- Geclipse02

P2- Suncoral- Ace Shedd

P4- Ora Pearlberry- Offroadodge

P4-POTM Winner Geclipse02

P5-Dr. Mark's Mystery Wrasse-
Photo by Pennies2Cents

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 |