NORTHERN GOLDFISH
& PONDKEEPERS
SOCIETY
A Nationwide Society
NEWSLETTER

September 2020

No Open Show in 2020! So here are the last four years of our Open Shows…..

September 2019

September 2018

September 2017
(our 40th anniversary Show)

September 2016

Always at St Matthews Church Hall in Stretford, Manchester – let's hope we will be there in 2021. In lieu of our Show we have had the postal Photographic Competition – there are only a few to judge, so you can still send a digital still of your favourite Goldfish to Sherridan (moores_s@sky.com) and the results

will be in the October Newsletter (be in it to win it).

Goldfish News

In Ontario, Canada there is a town called Scugog and it has a very large freshwater lake. It even has a Lakeside Beach area. As winter snows melt it can become too large so there are storm ponds to take the excess water and in May of this year one of these ponds was invaded by thousands of Goldfish.

Investigating this story uncovered the fact that, after years of Canadian aquarists releasing pet Goldfish into their waters, there are now between 40 and 50 million Goldfish in the Great Lakes!

In Western Canada, cities like St. Albert, Alta., near Edmonton, are facing their own goldfish invasions. Crews have been spraying the city's tiny Lacombe Lake recently with poison, killing everything in the water in the hopes of wiping out a massive population of invasive Goldfish and Koi.

Their environment officer quoted on Canadian TV News "There's a real threat to the city's ecosystem if these species are able to enter our natural waterways. They are prolific breeders; they will breed a couple of times a year". [*sic* !]

The last cull was in 2017 when more than 45,000 Goldfish and Koi -- equalling two tonnes of fish -- were removed from storm water facilities.

A photo from CTV News of "Invasive Goldfish are seen in a bucket after being captured near St. Albert, Alta."

Goldfish have become a real problem for the Canadians!

More Goldfish News (well, Brown Goldfish)

The Brown Goldfish – an article by permission of Peter Rolfe, see him at: https://crucians.org/

There have been goldfish swimming in our rivers, lakes and ponds since at least 1728, so it's hardly surprising that many of us have caught them and perhaps called them "crucians" because superficially they do look like their very close relative. Goldfish are *Carassius auratus*; crucians are *Carassius carassius* - same genus, different species.

If you keep goldfish in your garden pond, you'll be familiar with the dark fish that keep company with your gold, red and white ones. Those are "brown goldfish". These late developers can turn colour at any age or may just remain brown. In the wild, any that "turn" are probably more vulnerable to predators and do not often survive, but they can be found. Look at

these two Danish fish, both goldfish (though the brown one is just possibly a hybrid) though you could mistake only one for a crucian! There, they are described as "gold crucians"!

In practice, once you've handled both crucians and goldfish the differences between them quickly become clear: they are really quite dissimilar fish. Until then, though, these guidelines should help you recognize a brown goldfish:

- **colouring** hovers between brown, olive green and grey on the flanks, darker towards the back. It lacks the

brassy/golden overlay of the crucian carp. Unexpectedly, the crucian carp usually looks more golden than the brown goldfish, which has confused the angling press in the past!

- like the crucian, but unlike the carp and carp hybrids, there are **no barbules** around the mouth
- the **feel** of the fish in the hand is different: the crucian is soft to the touch; the goldfish is scalier, tougher. Usually, the body is rounder than that of the crucian carp, more carp-like than bream-like, though bigger specimens can be quite deep in the body
- the goldfish's **scales** are larger than the crucian carp's. The **lateral line count** will usually be 27-29, most commonly the latter. The slots along the lateral line are usually bold and complete, but not always - so beware

- the oblique scale count from front of dorsal fin to the lateral line, ignoring the slotted scale actually on the lateral line, is usually 6, as opposed to the crucian's 7(or 8)
- the **dorsal fin** is concave and lower, more carp-like
- the **tail fin** is noticeable forked, even when extended, and quite often elongated
- the **paired fins** on the underside of the brown goldfish are sometimes pale and not orange or dark-tipped as in the crucian. They, too, may be longer than looks right
- the main **front spine in both dorsal and anal fins** is noticeably saw-toothed in the goldfish, hardly detectable in the crucian carp. Goldfish, like common carp, will often hang up in the landing net because of these spiny rays. These little teeth on

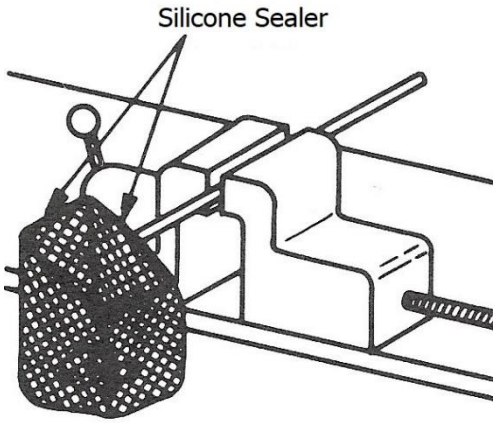
the posterior margin of the spine-like dorsal ray are smaller and more numerous in crucian carp (28-29) than in goldfish (10-11)

- internally, the **peritoneum** is darkly pigmented in the goldfish and the **gill rakers** number 38-43, far more than the crucian's.

Here's an example of an English brown goldfish. Since "gold" goldfish vary in shape, even the common ones, so it would seem logical for "brown" goldfish to do the same. Note the colour, more olive than brown, as is so often the case. Count 29 lateral line scales and 6-ish oblique from dorsal fin to lateral line. Note also the pale lower fins.

This illustration from that famous book, *British Fresh-Water Fishes* by the Rev. W. Houghton 1879, clearly shows that the Victorians knew what many of us have apparently forgotten, that not all goldfish are gold. Note the dorsal fin shape and the clearly forked tail.

This month's Top Tip



To make your nets last longer, clamp in a vice and add a weight to pull the netting taut.

Smear Silicone Sealer along the supporting frame and allow to set, then apply a second coat, again leave to set, a full day is best.

Rinse and use, probably forever.

Members write (well, phone!)
Alan Ratcliffe responded to last month's article about my 'missing' Moor. A similar thing happened to him with his famous London Shubunkins. He lost a female who was so harassed by males wanting to spawn that it wedged itself behind the filter and the damage led to its demise.

He suggested that the Moor was a female, driven to hide by the male, rather than being just curious. They are a potential breeding pair and there has been some buffeting, usually after a feed. Nowhere to hide now! Will keep an eye on their behaviour – perhaps a late spawning.

Your Chairman's 'Minutes'

Well September is here and we should all be choosing our show entries and matching our breeders' teams for the shows prior to the cold weather and preparing our fish for the winter. Though there are no shows this year we still need to do an end-of-season sorting to decide which fish to keep and we still need to prepare for the winter; treat any little injuries, now, not when it gets colder. Pimafix is wonderful for this; feed well to

build up reserves and if you are moving your fish to winter quarters make sure these are ready and move the fish before it gets really cold - they don't like being moved later on at all.

I will be doing all this preparation but it will be made more difficult this year as everything has happened so much later than normal, if it were possible to hop into a time machine I would and have everything happen three months earlier, then all the fry would be that much bigger and better able to deal with the falling autumn temperatures. As it is the calico Lionheads, presently baked bean size and the calico Veiltails presently half-matchstick size will all have to be kept on heat - probably throughout the winter. However I can't moan because all the fry are actually looking very promising.

As I mentioned previously there is a particular problem with sorting for split tails in Lionheads (this occurs in all double tail varieties but has been intensified in Lionheads as there has been so much emphasis over the centuries on the backs and heads). I have often tried to keep track of fry that are good in every other respect but have joined tails to see if they 'unzip' as they get older.

I had two very interesting phone calls recently on this subject with Ian Mildon and Alan Ratcliffe. Alan suggested that it may not be a case of 'unzipping' but that the ends of the fins may grow beyond the join as the fish grow bigger, effectively leaving it behind and forming a split tail in the older fish. I think Alan could well have put his finger on the mechanism in action, though it is certainly the case that not all

fry do this, in fact only a small percentage unzip. Ian never sorts for splits in their tails, of any variety, until the fish are well grown, which avoids the problem of identifying them too early. When I sorted the fry for split tails the rejects had many different sorts of joined tails; one thickened central ray; smooth Tosakin type completely joined and those with notches. I can't see the first two growing differently but the notched ones certainly could grow away. The rejects have been kept in a vat and will be looked at again before they go for sale. Will there be more split tails or just larger notched tails? Any members have any opinions?

This year I have done something I have long thought of trying. I have kept a big 5 gallon bucket in the fish house and put all the used brine and spent eggs from the

brine shrimp hatchings in to grow some of them on to adults to feed to the bigger babies, this has worked quite well and needed no maintenance. The larger fry eat the larger shrimps eagerly. But really they just provided a snack, not really enough food value to make much of a difference and certainly not enough to rely on. Also, the adults need a much stronger salt solution to grow on, no problem this year as I had a big bag of old marine salt which I have been using but this is expensive to buy specially. The shrimp grew OK at ambient temperature and feeding, presumably on bacteria feeding on the decaying eggshells, supplementary feeding of infusoria (easily cultured) or powdered spirulina would no doubt help and make them more nutritious.

Following an initiative by David Roberts I have been trying to organize a meeting on the date of our (now cancelled) Annual Show. However I am afraid that this has not proven possible, there are too many Covid restrictions we would need to obey. Hopefully by next year we will be able to have our shows and meetings as normal. The monthly Tuesday meetings are still cancelled but will be reinstated as soon as we can meet in the pub again.

Stay well.