

# Fish 'N' Chips

A Monthly Marine Newsletter  
April 2000 Issue

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## From Liz

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 4/14/00

***New Email Addresses*** - ONElist, the service that lets me send out this newsletter, has merged with eGroups. As a result, the subscribe and unsubscribe email addresses have changed. Effective immediately, to subscribe to Fish 'N' Chips, send a blank email to [FishNChips-subscribe@egroups.com](mailto:FishNChips-subscribe@egroups.com) or go to <http://www.egroups.com/subscribe/FishNChips>. To unsubscribe, send an email to [FishNChips-unsubscribe@egroups.com](mailto:FishNChips-unsubscribe@egroups.com). The old ONElist addresses will still work, but they'll be redirected to eGroups anyway, so let's just save a step! ***To Subscribe or Unsubscribe, visit <http://www.marinefiends.com/> - updated 10/05/05.***

My email address ([fishnchips@mail.com](mailto:fishnchips@mail.com)) has not changed and neither has the Fish 'N' Chips Web Site URL (<http://www.marinefiends.com/>) (*updated 8/24/04*).

***International Sites Wanted*** - I'd really like to increase the number of international sites on the Fish 'N' Chips' Fishy Links List. I only have a few personal, informational and educational sites and even less online vendors. Now, I have subscribers all over the world - the UK, Canada, South Africa, Australia, and plenty more. So, please submit your site to my list or ask your favorite site/vendor to submit themselves. I use the sites on my list as references for my articles and pricing products and livestock and obtaining images. Being

on my Site List is a great way to get some free advertising when your site shows up as a reference! To submit your site, go directly to the Site Submission Page at <http://www.marinefiends.com/sitesub.html> (updated 8/24/04).

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## Critter Corner

### Banded Snake Eel

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 4/14/00

#### ***General Information:***

Snake Eels burrow into soft substrate, remaining hidden during the day and then come out at night to hunt. They will bury themselves into the substrate with just their heads sticking out. They can burrow very fast and do it with the tips of their tails.



The Banded Snake Eel is yellowish white to white with 25 to 32 narrow black rings. Black spots may appear between the rings as the eel ages.

#### ***Scientific/Common Names & Information:***

The scientific name for the Banded Snake Eel is *Myrichthys colubrinus*. Banded Snake Eels are a member of the Ophichthidae Family, the Snake Eels. There are more than 500 species of eels (fresh and saltwater) belonging to 20 families. The moray eels (Family Muraenidae) are the most common and the ones usually found in the home aquaria trade. They are in the Order Anguilliformes (eels and morays) and the Class Actinopterygii (ray-finned fishes).

Other common names for the *Myrichthys colubrinus* are:

- Banded snake eel, Limwaremwarebuul (Micronesia)
- Broadnose worm eel (US)
- Gatamea (Samoa)
- Geringde-slangpaling, Ringed snake-eel (South Africa)
- Hagman-lisadso (Marshall Island)
- Harlequin snake eel (Australia and Papua N. Guin)
- Korallankerias (Finland)
- Murène serpent annelée (Maldives)
- Puhi popooru (Tahiti)
- Shima-umihebi (Japan)

### ***In The Wild:***

The Banded Snake Eel is native to the Indo-Pacific region. They are found from the Red Sea south to Delagoa Bay of Mozambique and east to the Society Islands of French Polynesia.

In nature, they are found in shallow sandy flats and seagrass beds and are considered reef-associated. They feed on small fishes and sometimes invertebrates.

### ***Home Aquaria:***

These eels will usually stay near the bottom of your tank, burying themselves into your tank's substrate (make sure you've got a thick substrate!). Remember, the eel will bury itself with only its head sticking out so make sure you know where the eel is before going into your tank and make sure you remember to feed your buried friend!

Food is found mostly through their sense of smell. Their eyesight is poor (but they are not blind) so watch your fingers! You must give them plenty of room, a place to hide and plenty of food. The Banded Snake Eel will get along with other tankmates as long as they aren't small enough for it to eat.

This eel doesn't require anything special as far as lighting, water movement, and temperature - normal saltwater tank parameters should be maintained. Adult Banded Snake Eels can grow to 30 inches (75 cm). Because of their potential size, a 60 gallon tank is the minimum size recommended.

In the April 1999 issue of Fish 'N' Chips (<http://www.marinefiends.com/issues/1999/fnc0499.htm> (*updated 8/24/04*)), I published an article called Unsuitable Marine Fish For Captivity by Mark T. Taber. This article contained a list composed by Frank M. Greco, Aquarium System Operator of a marine fish forum on the Microsoft Network. The Banded

Snake Eel is listed as unsuitable by Mr. Greco. I have emailed Mr. Greco requesting information on why the Banded Snake Eel is listed as unsuitable. If I receive a response from Mr. Greco, I will let everyone know via an update in a future issue. Taking an educated guess, based on the research I've done for this article, the only reason this fish would be listed as unsuitable would be it's potential size. But, I could be wrong, and only Mr. Greco knows why he listed the fish as unsuitable.

### ***Foods & Feeding:***

An easy critter to keep, most eels are hardy and will eat all kinds of live and meat foods (shrimp, squid, and chopped fish). Offer your eel squid as a treat, in the wild, squid is a delicacy.

It may be necessary to offer foods to your eel with a poker. Place the food right in front of the eel's mouth. It is possible for the eel to go for several weeks without food. I found research that says they often do.

### ***Reproduction:***

I found nothing in my research on sexing or breeding the Banded Snake Eel.

Moray Eels are not usually bred in captivity. They do not breed until they have grown very large, by then, they've outgrown most aquariums. Female morays will spawn with one male or several smaller ones. The eggs are released at dusk and are **pelagic**. The larval stage of the eel lasts for six to ten months. Remember, the Moray Eel and the Banded Snake Eel are from the same Order, but not the same Family and the reproduction information here may or may not provide similarities to the Banded Snake Eels' breeding behavior.

### ***Cost:***

**Store:** My local fish store (Queens, NY, USA) doesn't have any eels for sale so I could not get a pet store price for you.

### ***Online:***

*US Dollars:* From \$22.00 to \$50.00. Prices mostly depend on the size of the eel.

*Canadian Dollars:* I found no Canadian sites selling this eel.

This fish is only sometimes available for purchase.

A word of caution for those considering purchasing this fish (online or otherwise), I found that most sites listed this eel with varying common and scientific names. The true Banded Snake Eel is *Myrichthys colubrinus* and it should not be listed as a Moray. There is a Banded Moray (also called Ringed Moray or Girdled Moray), but it's scientific name is *Echidna polyzona* (another reference says *Echidna pozyzona*). Most of the sites selling a "Banded Eel" listed it with a scientific name of *Echidna polyzona* or *pozyzona*, so buyer

beware!



***Special Thanks:***

I would never have been able to complete this article if not for the help of Dave Brough at Exotic Tropicals (<http://www.exotictropicals.com/>). I was so confused by all the different scientific and common names I was finding in my research that I couldn't be sure what I was writing was accurate. Dave came through after a frantic email cry for help, pulling out his reference books (Fishes of the Great Barrier Reef and Dr. Burgess's Atlas of Marine Aquarium Fishes) and settling the matter. Thanks BIG time Dave!

***Photo Credits:***

Professional photographer John Fields granted permission for the use of the first photo of the Banded Eel. John's work can be found at M.E. & Me Photography (<http://www.meandmephotography.com/>). The second photo is from the Exotic Tropicals Web Site (<http://www.exotictropicals.com/>). Permission for it's use was granted by Dave Brough.

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**What's Up @ ReefsUK**  
**- <http://www.reefsuk.org> -**

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 4/11/00

**3/19/00** - Martyn Hulyer, author of the article "How to Keep and Propagate Acropora and SPS corals", has written some additional notes on Buying, Lighting and Bleaching Acropora. Follow the "Coral Propagation" and then "Articles" links and then find Martyn's article. The additional notes can be found via a link with the article introduction and at the end of the article.

**3/23/00** - Julian Sprung signed the ReefsUK Guest Book recently with a very interesting post. I recommend stopping by the site and reading it. Julian's Guest Book entry resulted in some changes to the ReefsUK Mission Statement. Definitely worth visiting the site to read.

**3/23/00** - Mark Taber is planning a new reef tank for his office. Current proposed dimensions are 10 feet long by 30 inches wide and about 2 feet high. Mark is looking for a respectable company to supply all the equipment and he would like to hear from anyone who can recommend a quality reef aquarium store to undertake the installation of the tank. Mark will need everything from the tank to lighting. Mark would like to hear from anyone who has had good experience with any stores within Essex or stores that would be willing to come over to Essex to install the tank. Email Mark directly at [mttaber@msn.com](mailto:mttaber@msn.com).

**3/29/00** - Eric Borneman's report of the NCRI Conference has been added to the ReefsUK web site. The link to the report is on the main page.

**3/30/00** - The ReefsUK Propagation of Soft Corals FAQ is now on the web site. This FAQ was written to encourage hobbyists to propagate corals and answer their questions. Readers should feel free to let ReefsUK know about anything that should be included in the FAQ.

**4/4/00** - A Percula Clownfish Diary by Chaz Stevens has been added to the web site. The diary covers the spawning behavior of Chaz's clowns and his ups and downs raising the fry. Follow the picture link on the home page or from the "Articles" list of the "Captive Breeding" section.

**4/5/00** - A "Pictorial Guide to Coral Propagation" has been added to the web site. The article currently contains photos originally published in Practical Fish Keeping in December 1998. The photos have been re-published with Les Holliday's permission and show Mark Taber taking a Cladiella cutting. This article will grow as more photographs are added including cuttings being taken from Finger Corals and some examples of natural budding. More photos are wanted so if you have any that you feel will be of benefit and could be used on their site please email ReefsUK. A Picture Gallery of photographs is planned to cover as many species as possible.

To join the ReefsUK Mailing List, send an email to [post@reefsuk.org](mailto:post@reefsuk.org).

### ***Editor's Comments:***

Information in this section covers the latest happenings at Mark T. Taber's ReefsUK Web Site. Mark has given me permission to publish any information from his mailing list that I feel would be of interest to Fish 'N' Chips subscribers. So, the above, although reworded by me, should be credited to Mark or to Derek Scales who works closely with Mark on the running of ReefsUK. The dates in bold coincide with Mark or Derek's mailings and are provided as a reference.

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## **Caught In The Net**

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 4/11/00

### [AquaBook Aquarium Maintenance Toolkit For Windows](#)

Only Aquatics (<http://www.onlyaquatics.com>) offers a free software application for tracking your tanks and more. The current version is 1.5, dated 3/3/00. It's a hefty download at 7.07mb. According to the site, AquaBook contains everything you need to monitor and maintain fresh or saltwater aquariums. The software has separate sections for: information for each of your tanks, tracking and monitoring water conditions for each tank, tracking livestock, diagnostic and treatment for diseases, terminology glossary, calculators for heat, light and livestock, and charting capabilities for water parameters. I haven't used the AquaBook personally. I found out about it in the LockerGnome Newsletter (<http://www.lockergnome.com>). If anybody downloads it and tries it out, I'd love to know your thoughts on it.

### [Web Marine Aquarist Survey](#)

Todd Hillson has created a poll to allow you to compare yourself to other marine aquarist. The Web Marine Aquarist Survey can be found at <http://www.teleport.com/~hillson/htbin/pollstart.html> (*url dead 10/03/05*). There are four surveys in all: General Questions For All Marine Aquarists, General Reef Tank Questions, Reef Tank Filtration Questions, and General Marine Fish Only Tank Questions.

### [OceanView Screensaver](#)

Lightcube Technologies is offering a free screensaver for us fish heads. "OceanView is a realistic shoal simulation, featuring several kinds of different fish including a living shark." OceanView is a 1.4mb zip file and the requirements to run the screensaver are: "Pentium II or equivalent PC, 3D accelerator card (3Dfx/GLIDE, Direct3D and OpenGL compatible cards supported), MS Windows 95/98." For more information and to download the screensaver go to [http://www.light-cube.com/pages\\_xhtml/download-oceanview.html](http://www.light-cube.com/pages_xhtml/download-oceanview.html) (*url dead 10/03/05*). I haven't tried OceanView personally. I found out about it in the LockerGnome Newsletter (<http://www.lockergnome.com>). If anybody downloads it and tries it out, I'd love to know your thoughts on it.

### [This Month's Selection From The Fish 'N' Chips Fishy List](#)

## Informational & Educational Sites

### Chat Area

- [About Saltwater Aquariums](http://saltaquarium.about.com) - <http://saltaquarium.about.com> (11/1/99)  
*"Our Site has been in existence since 1997, formerly known as Miningco.com. It is a FREE informational and NetLinks saltwater aquariums site for marine aquarists of ALL Levels."*
- [Fish To The Nth](http://home.earthlink.net/~fish2nth/) - <http://home.earthlink.net/~fish2nth/> (9/20/99)  
*"I specialize in getting in what people are looking for, even if it is harder to find. Live food, such as ghost shrimps, aren't updated to the site, but I am selling them. And, ALL fish sold are in good health, and parasite treated before they leave here. I have sold to Public Aquariums, but I love selling to the individuals and provide after sales support for the fish they get from me. Sincerely, Carol E. Keen/Fish To The Nth"*
- <http://www.fishroom.com> (*url dead 8/24/04*) (7/29/99)  
*"We are a community. Always looking for people to help."*
- ~~Monolith Marine Monsters (m3)~~ - <http://www.marine-monsters.com> (*url dead 8/24/04*) (6/25/99)
- [Only Aquatics](http://www.onlyaquatics.com/) - <http://www.onlyaquatics.com/> (3/30/00)
- [PetsForum Group](http://www.petsforum.com/) - <http://www.petsforum.com/> (3/31/00) (Listed by ELukan, Fish 'N' Chips)
- **Reefers** - <http://www.acropora.com> (1/12/99) (*url dead 10/03/05*) (Listed by ELukan, Fish 'N' Chips)

The above list matches a portion of the site list maintained on the Fish 'N' Chips Web Site

as of the date of this publication. What you see above is what was listed as on their site by the submitter. The date that follows in parenthesis is the date submitted to the list. For the complete up-to-date list, check out the Fish 'N' Chips Web Site at (<http://www.marinefiends.com/> (*updated 8/24/04*) (address updated 4/24/00).

**Site Submission and Updating:** To submit your site for inclusion in the Fish 'N' Chips newsletter and web site based Fishy List, please go to the Fish 'N' Chips web site at (<http://www.marinefiends.com/> (*updated 8/24/04*) (address updated 4/24/00) and complete the Site Submission Form. Please do **NOT** send any site submission or update requests via email - *I will not process them*. Of course, emails are welcome if you are having trouble submitting the form or if your browser doesn't support forms (AOL for example).

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## Chips...er...Tips The Toothbrush

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 4/11/00

What could you possibly use a toothbrush for in a fish tank?

- Use the back end to stir up the gravel or sand bed.
- Those bristles do a good job scrubbing algae off the rocks.
- It can actually get into the corners of a tank without banging your knuckles.
- Hey, they do a good job on snails that have collected a green carpet on their shells (don't these guys have a barber?).
- Cleaning the teeth in your overflow box.
- Just plain cleaning the overflow box.
- Works great cleaning tubing (and saves the hassle of those bendi-brushes until you HAVE to use them to get into the bend!)
- Great for cleaning every nook and cranny in skimmer cups.
- Does a good job loosening the junk in the skimmer itself during maintenance.

**To Submit Your Tip:** Send your tip via email to [fishnchips@mail.com](mailto:fishnchips@mail.com) with a subject of *Tip-Submission* (information updated 4/26/00: coding replaces need for subject notation) and I'll publish it in an upcoming issue of Fish 'N' Chips. I'll write it up for you or you can do it yourself if you are so inclined. Make sure you let me know if I can include your name and

email address or if you'd rather go anonymous.

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## Upcoming Events

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 4/2/00

April 2000

***Date and Time:*** from now until May 1, 2000 on Fishroom.com

***Info:*** "Mystery Contest 7" Sponsored by Tampa Bay Saltwater (<http://www.tbsaltwater.com>). A random poster in the message board "The Reef" will win 20 pounds of aquacultured Florida Keys rock. Winner pays shipping.

***Access:*** See the Message Board "The Reef" at Fishroom.com (<http://www.fishroom.com> (*url dead 8/24/04*)).

***Date and Time:*** from now until July 1, 2000 on Fishroom.com

***Info:*** "Poll Contest" Sponsored by Aquarium Hardware Supply (<http://www.ahsupply.com>). Answer any poll in the message board "The Cove" and you'll be entered to win \$50 off any power compact order from AH Supply. You may enter once per poll and if you place an order before the contest is over and end up being the winner, you'll receive a refund.

***Access:*** See the Message Board "The Cove" at Fishroom.com (<http://www.fishroom.com> (*url dead 8/24/04*)).

**To Submit Your Event:** Send your event and all the specifics (date, time, location, pricing, contact info, etc.) via email to [fishnchips@mail.com](mailto:fishnchips@mail.com) with a subject of *Event Submission* (information updated 4/26/00: coding replaces need for subject notation) and I'll publish it in all issues of Fish 'N' Chips prior to the event.

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## What the ... ?

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 4/3/00

## Pelagic

Pelagic organisms live in the water of the ocean above the bottom. They have the ability to swim around or move in some fashion. Pelagic is also used to refer to eggs that are at the mercy of the ocean currents.

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## Prove It!, a Bibliography

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 4/14/00

*Article:* Critter Corner: Banded Snake Eel

- About.com, <http://saltaquarium.about.com/>
- Aquacon, <http://www.aquacon.com/>
- Discovery Online, <http://www.discovery.com/>
- Direct Pet Supply, <http://www.directpetsupply.com/>
- Dr. Burgess's Atlas of Marine Aquarium Fishes by Dr. Warren E. Burgess, Dr. Herbert R. Axelrod, and Raymond E. Hunziker III
- Exotic Tropicals, <http://www.exotictropicals.com/>
- Fish Base, <http://www.fishbase.org/>
- Fishes of the Great Barrier Reef by John E. Randall, Gerald R. Allen, and Roger C. Steene
- Flying Fish Express, <http://www.liveaquaria.com/FFExpress/>
- M.E. & Me Photography, <http://www.meandmephoto.com/>
- The Aquarium, <http://www.fishaquarium.com/> (*url dead 10/05/05*)
- The Pet Stop, <http://www.thepetstop.com/>

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## Newsletter Disclaimer

To subscribe to Fish 'N' Chips, send a blank email to ~~FishNChips-subscribe@egroups.com~~ or go to <http://www.egroups.com/subscribe/FishNChips> visit <http://www.marinefiends.com>

[com/](#) (*updated 8/24/04*).

To unsubscribe, ~~send an email to FishNChips-unsubscribe@egroups.com~~ visit <http://www.marinefiends.com/> (*updated 8/24/04*).

Any and all comments, suggestions, etc., should be directed to [fishnchips@mail.com](mailto:fishnchips@mail.com).

The Fish 'N' Chips Website can be found at <http://www.marinefiends.com/> (*updated 8/24/04*).

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