

Fish 'N' Chips

A Monthly Marine Newsletter
October 2000 Issue

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From Liz

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 10/24/00

In Memoriam. I am sad to report that Gary Meadows of Harbor Aquatics (<http://www.harboraquatics.com> (*url dead, 10/02/05*)) passed away on 9/30/00 while attending MACNA XII in Florida, USA. For me, Gary and Harbor Aquatics was a source of infinite information on the subject of clams and more. He was a friend, to me, to many, to the hobby. We'll miss you Gary. I hope wherever you are, there are plenty of reefs.

Gary's wife Joy and his family have set up a MASNA Scholarship Fund in Gary's name. Anyone interested in donating, please visit <http://www.masna.org/meadows.htm> (*url dead, 10/03/05*).

Articles Wanted! Following is a list of some of the article ideas I've come up with or been asked to write about. Since I barely have time to get an issue together some months, anybody who'd like to tackle one of these should let me know. It would be appreciated! This is by no means the be all and end all of articles wanted. If you have an article you'd like to submit, just email me (fishnchips@mail.com).

- Information on the importance of quarantine.
- Follow-up on setting up a quarantine tank.
- Methods of parasite control.

- Information on dealing with your local fish store (LFS).
- Information on the different styles of filtering systems/tank setups.
- Critter Article on Brain Corals (open and closed types).
- Article on CITES (Convention on International Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), <http://international.fws.gov/global/cites.html> (*url dead 10/02/05*).
- product/hardware/website/service reviews and descriptions (always wanted)
- tips (always wanted)
- DIY projects (always wanted)

Tank Showcases Needed. I am officially out of Tank Showcases. This will be the last one. Please submit your tank photos and descriptions so I can give your tank it's day in the sun! Just send them via email to fishnchips@mail.com.

Visit This Month's Subscriber's Tank Showcase

Arthur's Reef Tank is this month's Showcase and can be seen at <http://www.marinefiends.com/showcases.html> (*updated 8/24/04*).

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E-Yuck, Hair Algae Ridding your Tank of it!

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 10/19/00

This article originated as a post on the ReefsUK Chat Mailing List. In a response to another pest algae post, I mentioned that I had had hair algae in the past. I was asked to post on how I had gotten rid of it. Well, as is my usual fashion, I wrote and wrote and wrote. A friend told me I should publish it, and so I am (thanks Carol!). Hope it helps some of you out.

The hair algae in my tank was so bad it covered the whole tank - including the glass - front, back, and sides. How come I let it get that bad? When I was pregnant with my son, I was very sick and I couldn't take care of the tank. My hubby was too busy taking care of me to take care of the tank. So, hair city. The tank was completely broken down about 2 or 3 times and still we battled hair.

Chemicals and Quick Cures - Stop using them! They don't work and they just add more crap to your tank which makes the problem worse.

Cleaning - I used an old toothbrush to scrub glass, rocks, overflow boxes, etc. Every possible surface I could get at with that toothbrush, was scrubbed. It's important to catch as much of what you scrape and scrub off and remove it from the tank by hand. Don't let your filter system take it. It's not possible to get it all, I know, but get what you can and take it **out**. The more out of the tank, the less to spread.

You have to siphon the detritus out. I had a bare bottom tank - another left over to the time I started in the hobby - and detritus used to pile up in the corners around my once live rock. Get in there and siphon that crap out. Do it when you do your water changes (or more often if you have to), make sure that replacement water has been pre-filtered. I know this is harder, if not impossible, to do with sand and gravel beds. I've got a crushed coral bed now so I can only imagine what trouble it would have been back then. I probably would have siphoned the whole bed out just to be rid of the problem. A drastic comment I know when that might be a live sand bed. But, I have no experience with them so I cannot say what I really would have done back then.

Feeding - Limit your feedings. This wasn't hard for me at the time since I think I had one fish and one shrimp left.

Filtering - Look at your filtering system carefully. Consider it anew if you can. Only in your head, I am not suggesting you replace it. I added a Fluval canister filter (borrowed from my brother and since returned) to increase the water flow and so that I was positive the water was actually going through my filter media. My main filter system is a wet/dry with bio balls, a left over from when the hobby was young - or at least the stage of the hobby when I entered it. With the sump, I wasn't sure water was being pushed/pulled through my filter media and not just swimming around it - water will, after all, take the shortest and easiest route to it's destination.

Add filter media and replace it regularly. I added Poly-Filters and Chemi-Pure. The Poly-Filters remove impurities, medications, and phosphates. The Chemi-Pure removes chemicals and helps keep your pH stable.

I added filtering resins. I added SeaChem's De-Nitrate and PhosGuard. I've since had conversations with other hobbyists that say these resins may not really do what they say they do. That you have to be sure to place them in your filtering system where they will get exactly the flow of water they note needing through them or else they don't really do the job and just end up becoming bio beds. I can't say if they worked for me or not, but I did beat the problem eventually. Today, knowing what I know, I'd probably put these resins in the quick cure category and skip using them altogether.

Clean the filters, sponges, etc. You absolutely have to clean your filter stuff once a week. Overflow box sponge, drip tray, overflow tube, anything that can clog will clog with hair and any surface you ever had hair growing and a critter can't get too will sprout again given the chance.

Add snails to your overflow box and skimmer. **Small** snails only, otherwise you'll block your water flow. They'll eat what grows on those hard to reach surfaces.

Herbivores - I added tons of hermits and snails to my tank. And I do mean **tons**. I can't remember the exact amount, but it must have been near 4 or 5 dozen of each. With a 55 gallon tank, that works out to one hermit **and** snail for every 1.15 or .9 gallon. Just a little overkill, I know, but I was a desperate girl!

Frank Greco has said that hermits attacked his SPS corals and because of this he's banished all hermits from his reef tanks. I've never seen this in my tank (yet and hopefully not at all). But, at the time, nothing was living in my tank but hair! Hair had killed what little corals I had. Now, with a tank full of life, I'm keeping a close eye on the habits of those hermits.

For your information, Frank M. Greco is the SysOp of Animalforum.com's Aquarium Newsgroup. Visit Animalforum.com at <http://www.animalforum.com/>. You can find Frank posting on the ReefsUK Chat Email Discussion Group often.

I added a Kole Tang (*Ctenochaetus striatus*, also known as the Yellow Eye Tang) and an Algae Blenny (*Salarias fasciatus*, also known as the Lawnmower Blenny). They did a wonderful job helping. But they will only eat short hair. The long hairs will be ignored so you've got to do your job and mow the lawn for them to do their jobs.

There are other animals that I've read and heard about since my battle that are supposed to also work - Fox Face (*Siganus unimaculatus*) and now there is supposedly a hair algae eating nudibranch (*T. crispata*). I have no experience with either of them though.

Lighting - Make sure you've got good, new bulbs over your tank. Limit your photoperiod if you have too. I run my lights for 12 hours. But, my tank is pest algae free. Cut back your time and replace your bulbs when they are supposed to be replaced. Be mindful of your existing corals - don't deprive them of their life-giving light too much or you'll lose them.

Skimmer - A skimmer wasn't part of my original setup. They got popular after the wet/dry bio ball system phase of the hobby. That's my memory anyway, I could be wrong - remember I was a newbie at the time. As my research into my battle with hair continued, I added a skimmer. I couldn't afford a really good one, so I made do with an inside the tank hang on

airstone driven cheapo skimmer. It worked for a while but then just became it's own algae factory. Ripped it out and cleaned it more times than I care to admit. Pain in the A**! This is one thing I'd do over if I could, I'd just spend the \$150-200 and get a **real** skimmer (which I have now by the way).

Water - Not a single thimble full of tap water was added to my tank unless it had first gone through two Tap Water Purifiers, a DI (deionizing) unit. I daisy chain them together so the water is filtered through two so the second one catches what the first one missed. This is especially useful near the end of the life of the first one's cartridge. If you can afford and are allowed to add an RO (reverse osmosis) or an RO/DI combo unit, I highly suggest one. I live in an apartment and this is not an option for me.

Test your tap water. My tap water is high in phosphate - a pest algae's best friend. It's important that you test your tap water. Test it before and after you run it through whatever filtering system you use (DI, RO, or combo). If you know what your water is like before you add it to your tank, you'll have a better idea of knowing exactly where your problem is coming from. If it's not the water, then it's what? - bad/poor quality gravel bed leaching phosphates back into the tank, too much food, etc.

I think that's about it. It's all I can remember for right now anyway. It was over 4 years ago and worth it in the end. My tank is clear, beautiful, and the animals in it are happy, thriving, and propagating on their own (corals growing and spreading, mushrooms popping up everywhere, and a recent Strombus snail explosion). So, the battle was worth it and the war has been won. I can't tell you how many times I lay on the couch, fat as any mom to be can get, sick to boot, complaining to my hubby that he should just rip the whole system down and put the tank away. He refused of course, saying stuff like, how much money have we spent on that tank, you love it when it's clean, and things only a spouse of a fish head can come out with and get away with!

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

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 10/29/00

10/10/00 - A new article, "George Kidd's Sand Plenum System", has been added to the site. Look for it in the Marine Aquariums section. The article explains in pictures and words how

George set up a plenum.

10/25/00 - A new article, "Xenia Propagation", has been added to the site. Look for it by following the articles link in the "Coral Propagation" section.

To join the ReefsUK Mailing List, send an email to post@reefsuk.org.

To join ReefsUK Chat (Email Discussion Group), visit the ReefsUK Website for instructions.

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 10/29/00

New Stuff Found

On Reefs.org (<http://www.reefs.org/>):

- #Reefs Talk 10/15/00 "Coral Farming in a Two Bedroom Apartment" by Todd Crail (Library / #reefs Talks section).
- #Reefs Talk 9/24/00 "Not so Pretty on the Outside, but Gorgeous Looking In: Low Budget Reef Aquariums" by Michael Gerdes (Library / #reefs Talks section).
- Article "Feeding Clams" by Daniel Knop (Library / Articles section).
- Article "Removing Clams from Water" by Daniel Knop (Library / Articles section).
- Article "Seagrass Tank" by Eric Borneman (Library / Articles section).
- Article "Copperband Butterflies and Sandbeds" by Brian Ferguson, Scott Fleming, and Ron Shimek (Library / Articles section).
- Article "Fish Farming" by Various Authors (Library / Articles section).

Something for all my subscribers running their own websites. CooTank is an JavaBean/Applet

live menu system. CooTank appears as an aquarium tank. Each object (Tropical fish, jellyfish, seahorse, shell and even user images) in the tank represents one or more web objects (pages). You can find CooTank at http://www.coolshare.com/html/bean_ck.htm.

Marine Related News

While not quite involving the animals we keep in our tanks, the following news releases are good news for all of us who love what the oceans bring to our lives.

On 10/12/00, President Clinton signed the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC). This is the first comprehensive international treaty for the protection of endangered sea turtles and their habitats. The entire news release can be found at http://www.usnewswire.com/topnews/Current_Releases/1012-153.html (*url dead 10/03/05*). The statement made by President Clinton can be found at http://www.usnewswire.com/topnews/Current_Releases/1012-154.html (*url dead 10/03/05*).

On 10/13/00, the U.S. Senate approved legislation to prohibit shark finning. This is the practice of cutting off a shark's fins and discarding the remainder of its carcass back into the sea. The Shark Conservation Act would ban shark finning in all U.S. waters and take steps to address the problem internationally. The entire news release can be found at http://www.usnewswire.com/topnews/Current_Releases/1013-123.html (*url dead 10/03/05*).

Problems with #Reefs Chat

On 10/26/00, #Reefs (<http://www.reefs.org/>) notified their mailing list members that their chat network is having problems. A temporary fix if you cannot get onto any servers is to try using the command `/server 64.144.233.228` in the status window.

This Month's Selection From The Fish 'N' Chips Fishy List

Informational & Educational Sites Event Listing (Meetings, Conferences, Etc.)

- [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."
- <http://www.fishroom.com> (*url dead 8/24/04*) (7/29/99)

"We are a community. Always looking for people to help."

- [PetsForum Group](http://www.petsforum.com/) - <http://www.petsforum.com/> (3/31/00) (Listed by FNC)
- ReefPortal - <http://www.reefportal.com/> (9/28/00) (*url dead 10/03/05*)
- The Reef Web - <http://www.thereefweb.com/> (9/18/00) (*url dead 10/05/05*)

The Reef Web is provided by The Reef Web Conservation Company, a non-profit company dedicated to preserving natural reef resources by providing marine aquarists the information they need to succeed in the hobby while minimizing impact on reefs.

The above list matches a portion of the site list maintained on the Fish 'N' Chips Website 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 Website at (<http://www.marinefiends.com/>) (*updated 8/24/04*).

Site Submission and Updating: To submit your site for inclusion in the Fish 'N' Chips newsletter and website based Fishy Links List, please go to the Fish 'N' Chips website at (<http://www.marinefiends.com/>) (*updated 8/24/04*) 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.

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Chips...er...Tips

Handling a Bristleworm

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 10/24/00

Avoid touching a bristleworm with your bare hands. There are some that are potentially dangerous to you. It would be rare to be seriously hurt by a bristleworm (fireworm, etc.) found in your home tank, but don't take the chance. If you have to touch a bristleworm, wear gloves. I recommend the rubber latex gloves used by nurses and doctors, or the commercially available ones that look just like them. I purchase mine in the houserepair/painting section of my local department store. I use them for all sorts of tank jobs like moving rocks around, mixing up my gravel bed, repositioning a coral, etc. You can also use the rubber gloves designed for dishwashing. Don't take them from the kitchen sink to your tank - dishwashing soap is not tank friendly. I keep separate pairs for tank work and other household jobs so no chemicals get near my fishies.

To Submit Your Tip: Send your tip via email to fishnchips@mail.com 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 10/19/00

Event	Start Date/ Time	End Date/ Time	Location	Event Details, Notes, and For More Info
Article Writing	now	10/31/00 extended		<p>Contest Info, Etc.: Write about anything you want to. It can be saltwater, freshwater, funny or serious, just as long as people will enjoy reading it. Visit the fishroom.com (http://www.fishroom.com/ (<i>url dead 10/03/05</i>)) for complete details.</p> <p>Prize: \$50 credit from Premium Aquatics (http://www.premiuaquatics.com/)</p>

Message Board Poll Contest	now	11/1/00		<p>Contest Info, Etc.: Just go to fishroom.com's (http://www.fishroom.com/ (<i>url dead 10/03/05</i>)) The Reef message board and reply to the new poll posted there.</p> <p>Prize: 20 lbs. of Florida Keys aquacultured live rock.</p>
Message Board Poll Contest	now	12/1/00		<p>Contest Info, Etc.: Just go to fishroom.com's (http://www.fishroom.com/ (<i>url dead 10/03/05</i>)) The Sunken Forest message board and reply to the new poll posted there.</p> <p>Prize: \$50 credit from AH Supply (http://www.ahsupply.com/).</p>
Seahorse Exhibit	4/20/00	April 2001	New York Aquarium	<p>Info: Some of the animals to be featured are leafy sea dragons, weedy sea dragons, pygmy seahorses, pot belly seahorses, local seahorses, giant seahorses, and pipe fish.</p> <p>Where & Contact Info: Brooklyn Aquarium, West 8th Street and Surf Avenue, Brooklyn, NY (USA), 11224. Phone: (718) 265-FISH.</p>

To Submit Your Event: Send your event and all the specifics (date, time, location, pricing, contact info, etc.) via email to fishnchips@mail.com and I'll publish it in all issues of Fish 'N' Chips prior to the event.

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Prove It!, a Bibliography

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 10/20/00

Article: E-Yuck, Hair Algae

- Harbor Aquatics, <http://www.harboraquatics.com> (*url dead, 10/02/05*)
- The John Rice Home Page, <http://www.globaldialog.com/~jrice/index.html> (*url dead 10/03/05*)
- The Reef Aquarium Volume One by J. Charles Delbeek and Julian Sprung, First Printing July 1994, Published by Ricordea Publishing
- Thiel Infobase, <http://www.athiel.com/>

Article: Caught In The Net, Marine Related News Section

- U.S. Newswire, <http://www.usnewswire.com/>
- Special thanks to Frank M. Greco, SysOp of Animalforum.com's Aquarium Newsgroup (<http://www.animalforum.com/>) for posting the news releases on the ReefsUK Chat Email Discussion Group.

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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/> (*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.

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

To view the current issue of Fish 'N' Chips, visit <http://www.marinefiends.com/current.html> (*updated 8/24/04*).

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