

Fish 'N' Chips

A Monthly Marine Newsletter
January 2001 Issue

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From Liz

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 1/31/01

Close One! By the time you get this it'll really be February, but I couldn't let there not be a January issue. So, better late, than never...

eGroups now Yahoo! Groups - A while back I informed you the Yahoo! was taking over eGroups, the service I use to send Fish 'N' Chips out to the world. Well, the acquisition has been completed and we now have some new addresses which follow.

To subscribe, ~~send an email to FishNChips-subscribe@yahoo.com~~ visit <http://www.marinefiends.com/> (*updated 10/05/05*).

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

~~Our group's main page at Yahoo! Groups can be found at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FishNChips>.~~ (*updated 10/05/05*)

~~Our chat room can be accessed via the Fish 'N' Chips website at <http://petsforum.com/>~~

fishnchips/chat.html or via the Yahoo! Groups page at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fishnchips/chat> (*updated 8/24/04*).

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Critter Corner

Valenciennea puellaris, the Orange-Spotted Goby (Maiden Goby)

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 1/31/01

General Information:

The Maiden Goby is a cream/white colored fish with several lateral rows of orange spots along its entire body. It also has several lateral rows of iridescent blue spots from the **pectoral** fins to the mouth. Its underside is a plain cream/white color.



Characteristic of the Goby Family, the Maiden Goby will have an elongated body, long, blunt head, and high-set eyes. Gobies are similar to blennies (Family Blenniidae) and are often confused with them. Gobies have long, blunt heads (same as Blennies) but Gobies are usually more colorful and their **pelvic** fins are fused to provide a 'suction disc' which they use to perch on rocks and the sea floor - they can even perch on vertical surfaces. Some Gobies appear to lack the fused pelvic fins, but closer examination will show that the fins are fused, just close to the fish's body. This 'suction disc' allows Gobies to live in areas with high water flow. Another distinguishing feature is that nearly all Gobies have two separate **dorsal** fins, while Blennies have only one long dorsal fin.

Firefish (*Nemateleotris* sp.) are also confused with Gobies. Since the 1980s, Firefish belong in the wormfish (*Microdesmidae*) family.

Gobies do not have a **swim bladder**. This is why they spend most of their time in a still position. Swimming will be brief and jerky. The lack of a swim bladder is another characteristic in common with Blennies.

The largest Goby can reach 18 inches (46 cm), but most Gobies are less than 4 (10 cm) inches

in total length. The Maiden Goby can grow to 6 to 7 inches (17 cm).

Scientific/Common Name & Information:

A member of the Gobidae Family, Perciformes Order, and Actinopterygii (ray-finned fishes) Class, the scientific name for the Maiden Goby is *Valenciennea puellaris*. Gobies called Sifter or Sleeper Gobies are from the *Valenciennea* spp. There are fifteen different species in the *Valenciennea* **Genus**. The Gobidae family is the largest group (containing over 1500 species) of fish in both saltwater, freshwater, and brackish water. In total, Gobies account for 267 **genera** and 2100 described species. All but 200 are marine fish, mostly in the tropical and subtropical reefs.

The approved common name of *Valenciennea puellaris*, according to the FishBase (<http://www.fishbase.org/>), is Maiden Goby. However, you will find this fish listed with several different common names. I found it called Orange-Spotted, Orange Spotted Sleeper, Orange Diamond Goby, and other variations on these. I even found it called an Orange Square Goby and a Pretty Prawn Goby. The Orange-Spotted Goby was the most popular and that is why I chose to reference it in the article's title. However, in an attempt to encourage proper naming of this fish, I felt it was important to call it the Maiden Goby or *Valenciennea puellaris* throughout the article.

The approved common names of *Valenciennea puellaris* and their country of use are:

- Eleotris taché d'orange, Mauritius (French)
- Maiden Goby, Micronesia (English)
- Mano'o-sina, Samoa (Samoan)
- Orange-dashed goby, Australia (English)
- Otomehaze, Japan (Japanese)

The *Valenciennea puellaris* also had a scientific name of *Eleotriodes puellaris* which is no longer valid.

In The Wild:

This fish is found in the Indo-Pacific region, from the Red Sea to Samoa, north to southern Japan, south to the Great Barrier Reef and New Caledonia. In the wild, this fish will inhabit the sandy areas of a clear lagoon and seaward reefs. They are usually found in pairs and use burrows as a refuge. The burrows will be shallow (only a few centimeters) and made under large pieces of rubble. This fish has also been found on dark volcanic sand such as what is found in the Philippines, Indonesia, and the northern Mariana Island.

Home Aquaria:

In the home aquarium, the Maiden Goby shares the job of maintaining your substrate. Constantly sifting through the sand to find food or make a burrow, the Goby turns over the sand bed and prevents algae from covering the surface. The work of the Goby also prevents **detritus** from accumulating and forming dead spots in your sand bed and from the sand becoming packed down.

Gobies can only sift fine sand. Gravel may injure their gills. The sand needs to be coarse and about the size of sugar crystals.

The Maiden Goby will not spray sand all over your rocks or corals. That would be the Blue-Cheek Goby (*Valenciennea strigata*). You may, however, have to flatten your sand bed every now and then when the Goby has made it look like sand dunes in the desert or as Nick Dakin said, "craters on the moon."

Gobies live in holes either found or dug in the sand. Gobies will tolerate moderate to bright lighting but they need some dimly light areas to retreat to. They will typically chase after food in the water column but they will never get too far from the safety of their burrow.

Gobies are peaceful and will not bother other fish or invertebrates. They will do well in a community tank. Of course, you must always be cautious of the new addition being bullied or thought of as food by larger fish.

Gobies may rest upon corals and clams. Most corals will tolerate this, but Tridacnid clams and gorgonians are especially sensitive. The coral or clam may not expand fully and would then begin suffering from lack of light, etc.

In regards to Gobies sharing a tank with each other, I found information which can get a little confusing. According to my research, Gobies will tolerate other Gobies in the same tank if they are not of a similar species. Gobies will share a burrow with a mate. They may also share a burrow with another Goby of the same or a similar species. They may establish territories but the territories will be small. Depending on the Goby species, the territory may be defended. The usual method of defense is chasing and fin flaring by the dominate Goby. Obviously, the larger the tank, the less trouble you'll have with territory disputes. To sum up what I researched, you must be careful if you plan to add a Goby of the same or a similar species to a tank with an existing Goby. I could find no information specific to the Maiden Goby in regards to having more than one in a tank or how territorial they are. However, I did find several references to mated pairs sharing a tank.

According to my research, it is better to add a Goby to your tank early so that it has time to settle into its new home without being bullied by other fish. This will obviously avoid stress on

the fish. My problem with this is that a Goby added to a newly established tank may work against the development of a live sand bed. It's nearly impossible for one fish to eradicate all the life in an established sand bed, but I don't know if that's true of a new sand bed.

Before bringing your Maiden Goby home, watch it's behavior in the fish store's tank first. As with all fish purchases, make sure you see it eat first - preferably prepared or frozen food (not live); avoid purchases from a tank with ill or dead fish; make sure the fish you are interested in is breathing normally; etc. In regards to purchasing Gobies, it's important that the fish is aware of it's environment and you. Gobies should always be alert and if they aren't, you shouldn't purchase them. In nature, Gobies are heavily preyed upon, they should always be on the lookout.

Diseases:

Given good water quality and a tank that isn't overstocked or overfed, your Maiden Goby should remain disease free. If not, Oodinium (**Amyloodinium**) or Ich (**Cryptocaryon**) may set in. Newly introduced fish should be checked for spots often. They will not tolerate copper, malachite, or formalin treatments, or medications containing these ingredients.

Foods & Feeding:

Gobies are primarily carnivores. They will sift the sand through their gills looking for worms and small crustaceans. They are known to accept brineshrimp. They can also be offered mysis shrimp, finely chopped meat and fish. Live and frozen foods should be given. Some Gobies will accept flaked and prepared foods and these should be tried. As with all our livestock, a varied diet will avoid deficiencies.

It is frequently reported that the Maiden Goby starves to death due to a lack of food in the substrate.

Reproduction:

Sexing Gobies can be difficult. Some species of Goby are easy to sex (for example, the Catalina Goby - *Lythrypnus dalli* - the male has an extended first dorsal ray which the female lacks), some are not. Some Gobies will be easier to sex during spawning. The male's fins may elongate and he may change color. I found no specific information on sexing the Maiden Goby, although one reference noted the female was the bigger of the pair.

Spawning takes place in burrows or caves. The eggs are guarded by the male. After hatching, the larvae drift into the plankton to develop. They will migrate back to the sea floor as juveniles.

Captive bred Gobies are available. The Caribbean Neon Goby (*Gobiosoma oceanops*) is

commercially bred in the USA. According to Nick Dakin's Go For A Goby article, he has had Catalina Gobies, Neon Gobies (*Gobiosoma oceanops*), and Maiden Gobies spawn in single-species tanks. Unfortunately, the larvae were difficult to find let alone feed. According to Nick Dakin, the eggs are no larger than dust specks.

Nick Dakin's article also goes into detail on the breeding behavior of the Maiden Goby. The female laid eggs in a half flowerpot. After fertilizing the eggs, the male buried the flowerpot with the female inside. The female emerged after about seven days in fine health.

Cost:

Store: My local fish store (Queens, New York, USA) didn't have any Maiden Gobies for sale at this time.

Online:

US Dollars: I found prices from \$15 to \$30 on five sites.

Canadian Dollars: \$21. I only found one site selling this Goby.

Some care should be taken when looking to purchase this Goby. Besides the many common names and the confusion that may cause, I also found one site selling an 'Orange Spot Sleeper Gobi' with a scientific name of *Amblyeleotris Guttata*. The *Amblyeleotris Guttata* also has the common name of Orange Spotted Prawn Goby.

Photo Credits:

The *Valencienea puellaris* photo was used with the permission of Robert Fenner, <http://www.wetwebmedia.com/>.

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What's Up @ ReefsUK

- <http://www.reefsuk.org> -

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 1/31/01

1/8/01 - A new article has been added to the ReefsUK site entitled "The Spawning and Raising of *Amphiprion Clarkii* Without the use of Infusoria/Rotifiers" by B. P. Windibank.

1/24/01 - New Livestock Database is online. This is the first ever UK based online database listing who is propagating corals and captive breeding fish/inverts and where to get them. This database should be your first stop in looking for new livestock. Do you part to help save the reefs, purchase or trade for propagated livestock, list your own breeding/propagating, and

encourage any fish stores you know who sell propagated livestock to enter their information.

1/24/01 - Frank M. Greco's Food Recipe is online. Frank M. Greco has sent in a recipe for a gelatin mix. The article explains how to create a food mix that encapsulates the food so that nutrients are not lost in your tank. Please check the Articles link within the Marine Aquariums section on our Web site.

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 1/31/01

New Stuff Found

On Fishroom.com (<http://www.fishroom.com/> (*url dead 10/03/05*)):

- Article "Host Anemones, The Early Years" by Adam Woods

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

- Article "Marine Snow" by Richard Harker and Robert Toonen
- Article "Particle Size of Southdown Sand from Home Depot" by Robert Toonen

International Marine Aquarists

I have joined the International Marine Aquarists Mailing List and I cannot recommend it

enough. The list has some very experienced hobbyists from all over the world on it. I've already made some great new friends. To join, please visit http://lists.topica.com/lists/International_Marines/ (*updated 10/05/05*) or send an email to International_Marines-subscribe@topica.com. The Forum's website can be found at <http://members.theglobe.com/boba14/ima/default.html> (*url dead 10/03/05*). It's well worth joining.

Acropora Growth Movie

Subscriber and friend, Fabrice Poiraud-Lambert has published an Acropora Growth Movie which shows the growth of two acropora - one pink tipped and one green. It is fascinating and I highly recommend it. You can find it at <http://mars.reefkeepers.net/movie.html>.

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

Online Vendors - Food

- Aqua-Fins - <http://www.spartanburg.net/aquafins> (3/11/99) (*url dead, 10/02/05*)
*US Dollars, Secure Online Ordering. (Listed by FNC)
- [AquaBid.com](http://www.aquabid.com/) - <http://www.aquabid.com/> (5/21/00)
*US Dollars, **Auction Site**
- [AquaDirect By AquaLink](http://www.aquadirect.com) - <http://www.aquadirect.com> (12/20/99)
*US Dollars, Phone Orders, Mail Orders, Secure Online Orders. (Listed by FNC)
- Aquarium City - <http://www.aquariumcity.com/> (12/2/00) (*url dead 10/05/05*)
*US Dollars, Phone, Fax, and Secure Online Orders
"A low cost virtual store for all of your aquatic/aquarium needs. Shop online for a huge selection of brand name filters, pumps, heaters, reptiles, dry food, additives, and many more aquarium supplies."
- [CoralFarms](http://www.coralfarms.com) - <http://www.coralfarms.com> (4/22/99)
*US Dollars, Phone Orders.
"We are the largest importer of cultured Solomon Islands SPS and soft corals. Our focus is on captive and cultured livestock."
- [Exotic Tropicals](http://ExoticTropicals.com) - <http://ExoticTropicals.com> (9/19/00)
*US Dollars, Secure and Non-Secure Online Ordering, Phone Orders (Listed by FNC)
- [Fish To The Nth](http://home.earthlink.net/~fish2nth/) - <http://home.earthlink.net/~fish2nth/> (9/20/99)
*US Dollars, EMail & Phone Orders.
"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"

- [Indo-Pacific Sea Farms](http://www.ipsf.com) - http://www.ipsf.com (1/12/99)
*US Dollars, Email Orders, Mail Orders. (Listed by FNC)
- [Jen's Saltwater Haven](http://www.jensalt.com) - http://www.jensalt.com (6/24/99)
*US Dollars, Non-Secure Online Ordering, Phone Orders.
"Jen's Saltwater Haven is dedicated to providing the marine/reef hobbies with high quality products at affordable pricing."
- [Marine Fish & Supplies](http://www.fishsupply.com) - http://www.fishsupply.com (8/9/00)
*US Dollars, Secure Online Orders, Email, Phone, and Fax Orders.
- ~~Monolith Marine Monsters (m3)~~ - http://www.marine-monsters.com (*url dead 8/24/04*) (6/25/99)
*US Dollars, Secure Online Ordering, Phone Orders, Fax Orders.
- [Petopia.com](http://www.petopia.com) - http://www.petopia.com (2/12/00)
*US Dollars (Listed by FNC)
- [PETsMART.com](http://www.petsmart.com) - http://www.petsmart.com (2/12/00)
*US Dollars (Listed by FNC)
- [Premium Aquatics](http://www.premiaquatics.com) - http://www.premiaquatics.com (4/20/99)
*US Dollars, Secure Online Ordering, Phone Orders
- [SeaMe.com Internetshop for Aquarium and Pondproducts](http://www.seame.com) - http://www.seame.com (5/27/00)
*US, HFL, DM, GB£, Secure Online Orders.
- [Tampa Bay Saltwater](http://www.tbsaltwater.com) - http://www.tbsaltwater.com (1/12/99)
*US Dollars, Phone Orders, Email Orders. (Listed by FNC)
- [That Fish Place / That Pet Place](http://www.thatpetplace.com) - http://www.thatpetplace.com (12/20/99)
*US Dollars, Phone Orders, Mail Orders via their catalog, Secure Online Orders. (Listed by FNC)

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 Insurance

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 1/31/01

A recent conversation on ReefsUK Chat Mailing List is the inspiration behind this month's tip. Is your tank insured? Is the potential damage it could do to your property or your neighbors covered if the worst happened and the tank cracked? The consensus on the ReefsUK Chat group was that it pays to check your home owners or renters insurance policy. You probably won't get your insurance carrier to insure the cost of the livestock, but you should be able to get them to cover the tank, the equipment, and any damage done if the dreaded ever happens.

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 1/29/01

Event	Start Date/ Time	End Date/ Time	Location	Event Details, Notes, and For More Info

Message Board Poll Contest	now	3/1/01		<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>
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>
Western Marine Conference 2001	4/6/01	4/8/01	Monterey, California, USA	<p>Info: For more information, visit http://www.seabay.org/</p>

Mandarin Survey	Jan 2001	unknown		Thorough and detailed, hopefully it will assist in gaining further insight into the conditions and methodology required to keep these fish alive and healthy in captivity. If you have ever kept a mandarin, please fill out this survey, even if it has died. Visit the #Reefs website at http://www.reefs.org/ .
Lighting Survey	Nov. 2000	Open Ended		Info: The subject that reefers spend forever discussing and arguing over. Add your information to build a picture of what people are actually using. Visit the #Reefs website at http://www.reefs.org/ .
Aquarist Profile Survey	Aug. 2000	Open Ended		Info: What is the profile of a marine aquarist? Visit the #Reefs website at http://www.reefs.org/ .
International Coral Reefs Conference of Paris	March 2002		Paris, France	Info: http://www.circop.com/ .

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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What the ... ?

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 1/31/01

Air Bladder / Swim Bladder

An air-filled structure in many fishes that functions to maintain buoyancy or, in some species, to aid in respiration. Also called swim bladder.

Amyloodinium

Amyloodinium ocellatum is commonly called Oodinium, Marine Velvet, or Saltwater Ich. Possible signs of the disease are cloudy eyes, gasping for breath, listlessness, and white spots. Positive signs of the disease are gold or brown spots, rough skin, and rubbing against rocks, etc. Treatment can be done by a freshwater dip and copper (as long as inverts are not in the tank).

Cryptocaryon

Cryptocaryon irritans is a parasitic infection where white spots appear on the body and fins. Fish will scratch themselves against rocks and breathing may become rapid if gills are affected. Treatment can be done by copper or other anti-parasite remedies, but this is incompatible with inverts. Cleaner shrimps and wrasses will remove the parasites, but may not keep up with a major infestation. Cryptocaryon is often referred to as the marine equivalent of the freshwater white spot disease, Ichthyophthirius, or Ich.

Detritus

Piles of organic compounds that accumulate in the aquarium. Commonly will contain fish wastes, fragments of rock, leftover food, and so on. Usually detritus will accumulate in low water flow areas (tank corners, sumps, etc.). Detritus is rich in plant nutrients (in other words, the bad algae's food) and should be removed via mechanical filtration, good circulation, siphoning, and water changes.

Dorsal

The dorsal fin is the fin directly on top of the body. For example, the fin that sticks out of the water on a shark.

Genera / Genus

Genera is the plural of genus. In the taxonomy classification, the genus is the category ranking below a family and above a species. Simply said, it's a class, group, or kind with common attributes.

Pectoral

Of or situated in the breast or chest.

Pelvic / Pelvis

A basin-shaped structure of the vertebrate skeleton that rests on the lower limbs and supports the spinal column.

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Prove It!, a Bibliography

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 1/19/01

Article: Critter Corner

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- WetWebMedia, <http://www.wetwebmedia.com/>

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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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