

rest of the year but I will keep my eyes open for them.

Visit This Month's Subscriber's Tank Showcase: Cedric C. Kirkman's 10 Gallon Reef Tank is this month's Showcase and can be seen at <http://www.marinefiends.com/showcases.html>. To submit your tank photos and information, visit <http://www.marinefiends.com/submittank.html>.

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Chem 101

Water Quality Testing: Ammonia

By Dan Cole of MOPS 07/22/05

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 06/11/06

What is Ammonia?

Ammonia is a toxic waste that is excreted by fish or caused by decomposing plant matter and uneaten fish food. At low levels Ammonia is stressful for most fish and other inhabitants -- at higher levels, it is deadly. Fortunately, naturally occurring bacteria is present in most established systems that converts this ammonia to nitrite and, in turn, to the less toxic nitrate. This process is known as the "Nitrogen cycle".

Why is it important to know your Ammonia level?

This beneficial bacterium is present in established aquarium and pond filters, but it takes time for it to reach sufficient levels to handle the wastes that are produced. Cleaning or replacing your filter cartridges and other filter material, or using some medications can disrupt this biological process. Adding additional fish and excessive feeding can also overwhelm our filters and result in higher ammonia levels too. Testing for ammonia will tell you if your system is able to handle the biological load or if your fish are at risk. Testing your water is fairly simple and there are a number of inexpensive test kits and monitoring devices available. Ideally your Ammonia should be ZERO.

What do I do if my Ammonia level is to high?

The first thing you'll want to do is to reduce the level of toxic ammonia and you can do so in a number of ways...

1. By performing water changes -- the solution to pollution is dilution.
2. By using ammonia removing resins like Ammo-Chips and White Diamond Crystals or by using Filter Media like [HBH's Ammonia Remover](#).
3. By using a liquid ammonia remover to convert the ammonia to something less toxic. These liquids don't actually remove the ammonia but they do make your water non-toxic and safe for fish. Products like [Ammono-Lock](#), [AmQuel](#) and [Prime](#) work this way.

The other thing you will want to do is to determine why you have ammonia in the first place. You want to solve the problem and not just continue to treat the symptoms. It might be that your aquarium or pond hasn't had time to establish a good biological filter or you may have disrupted the biological process by using medications or by replacing your filters or cleaning them in water containing chlorine or chloramines. Chlorine and Chloramines will kill the beneficial bacteria we are trying to encourage. It is also possible that your filter is too small for the current fish load or perhaps it just needs to be cleaned. Something is interfering with the "Nitrogen cycle" and you'll want to take steps to correct the problem and improve your biological filter. Products like [BioZyme](#), [Stability](#) and [Stress Zyme](#) can be used to add beneficial bacteria to our systems so we can get things back on track.

Good luck!

Editor's Comments:

Editing was limited to spelling and grammar corrections if necessary and putting the article into the Fish 'N' Chips format. The above article was originally published in the MOPS Newsletter which you can subscribe to by visiting <http://www.mops.ca/>. The links to the products are there so that you can obtain more information on them if you desire, not as an endorsement of that product or that you should purchase them through MOPS. The products that are mentioned in the article but are not linked are for freshwater and/or ponds only.



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A Short & Sweet Review

ViaAqua OCEANPURE Synthetic Sea Salt

By rudeanduncouth, 08/11/2005

Edited By Elizabeth M. Lukan, 03/17/06

I have had two experiences with this salt and neither one of them have been good.

The first experience I had with it, it got moisture in the bucket. I have never had this problem before with salt, so I do not know how well it mixes at this point. This salt would not dissolve. I have let it go for 48 hours and it still hadn't dissolved all the way. There were still particles floating around.

The second experience I had with this salt was refilling a 300 gallon holding tank. The tank had about 50 gallons left, and I filled it back up with RO water, then put the salt in. After having diatom problems, I tested the silicates in the salt tank, and RO tank. The RO tank was fine, but the Salt tank, was almost off the chart for silicates.

Perhaps, I got a bad batch, but we have gone through two buckets before we tracked down the problem. It may have been just one of the buckets that was the problem. I will be honest, I don't know.

I would hesitate to continue using it.

Editor's Comments:

Editing was limited to spelling corrections and some grammar (capitalizing the beginning of a sentence, adding a period at the end, etc.). No other editing was done, what you read was exactly what was posted on the Saltcreep web site.

More information and an image of the product can be found at <http://www.commodityaxis.com/ProductData.aspx?id=61>.

Please visit Saltcreep at <http://www.saltcreep.com/> for this review, forums, and much more.



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Caught In The Net

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 06/10/06

New Stuff Found

Advanced Aquarist's Online Magazine (<http://www.advancedaquarist.com/>):

- Volume V, Issue V, May 2006 - <http://www.advancedaquarist.com/2006/5>

Reefkeeping Magazine (<http://reefkeeping.com/>):

- June 2006 - Volume 5, Issue 5 - <http://reefkeeping.com/issues/2006-06/index.php>

Seas the Day Ocean Book of the Month (<http://seastheday.theoceanproject.org/seastheday/book/index.htm>)

- June 2006 - Values at Sea: Ethics for the Marine Environment, edited by Dorinda G. Dallmeyer - <http://seastheday.theoceanproject.org/seastheday/book/june2006.htm>

Ocean Voyager: A Five-Part Journey to Defend Our Oceans

Take a one-of-a-kind online voyage to defend our ocean. You will receive an email once a week for five weeks which will show you "hot spots" from around the world that are under attack and what you can do to help stop it. Visit <http://www.oceanvoyager.org/> to sign up.

Wallpaper of the Month



Title: Blue Sea Dragon

Copyright: Vlad Gerasimov, [VladStudio](http://www.vladstudio.com/)

Link to Wallpaper: <http://www.vladstudio.com/wallpaper/?267>

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Marine News

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 06/11/06

05/04/06, Marine Conservation Society (MCS)

Local charity gets active to save our seas

http://www.mcsuk.org/press/press_release.php?cust_id=68

05/04/06, Census of Marine Life

Diverse Sea Bugs, Other Life Revealed on Landmark Atlantic Cruise to Census Zooplankton and Animals at Depths to 5 km

<http://www.coml.org/medres/zoopla/Final-Census-news-release-05-04.pdf>

05/05/06, NOAA News Online

Elkhorn and Staghorn Corals Listed in Threatened Status; NOAA Hosting Public Information Workshops in South Florida and Caribbean

<http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2006/s2627.htm>

05/05/06, NOAA News Online

US Coral Reef Task Force Announces New Conservation Initiatives Aimed at Reducing Illegal Aquarium Trade in Reef Fish; NOAA Rules on New Protections for Threatened Coral Species

<http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2006/s2625.htm>

05/05/06, The Age

Govt to create 13 new marine parks

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/National/Govt-to-create-13-new-marine-parks/2006/05/05/1146335911371.html>

05/15/06, Environmental News Network (ENN)

Alaska Gets Its First Artificial Reef

<http://www.enn.com/today.html?id=10453>

05/26/06, Marine Conservation Society (MCS)

good beach guide 2006: rain stops play on scotland's beaches

http://www.mcsuk.org/press/press_release.php?cust_id=71

05/26/06, Marine Conservation Society (MCS)

good beach guide 2006: driest weather in ten years brings best ever beach results for the uk
http://www.mcsuk.org/press/press_release.php?cust_id=70

05/26/06, CenSEAM

NIWA Graveyard Expedition 2006

http://censeam.niwa.co.nz/outreach/censeam_graveyard

05/30/06, Marine Conservation Society (MCS)

Have your say on the marine bill

<http://www.mcsuk.org/campaigns/campaigns.php?title=have%20your%20say%20on%20the%20marine%20bill>

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Chips...er...Tips

Feeding Tip #6

By Stan & Debbie Hauter

Edited By Elizabeth M. Lukan, 01/13/06

Know all about the feeding habits of the fish and marine animals you are keeping, what and how they eat in their natural ocean environments.

Only put in small amounts of food at first until the fish figure out that what is put in the tank is a food source. Remove any uneaten pieces of food if not consumed within an hour after feeding time.

Do not overfeed! This can cause poor aquarium water quality that most often leads to various types of algae problems.

Editor's Comments:

Editing was limited to spelling and grammar corrections and putting into the Fish 'N' Chips format. The above is part of a larger article, How To Tips For Feeding Saltwater Livestock, which can be found at http://saltaquarium.about.com/cs/fishphotosa_b/ht/feedswfish.htm.

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Upcoming Events

By Elizabeth M. Lukan 06/11/06

Event	Start Date / Time	End Date / Time	Location	Event Details, Notes, and For More Info
June 2006				
MCS Coastal Challenge	now	Apr. 8, 2007		http://www.mcsuk.org/support/support.php?title=Coastal%20Challenge
Diseases of Warmwater Fish: Specialized Training for the Aquatic Health Practitioner	Jun. 5, 2006	Jun. 16, 2006	Ruskin and St. Augustine, FL, USA	http://www.conference.ifas.ufl.edu/ame/wwf/
Marine Bill Conference	Jun. 15, 2006		London, UK	http://www.mcsuk.org/events/events.php
Doctors Foster & Smith 2nd Annual Coral Conference & Frag Swap	Jun. 23, 2006	Jun. 25, 2006	Rhineland, Wisconsin, USA	http://liveaquaria.com/general/general.cfm?general_pageid=381
MarLIN's 2nd Marine Life Volunteer Recording Conference	Jun. 29, 2006	Jun. 30, 2006	University of Plymouth and the Marine Biological Association, Plymouth, UK	http://www.mcsuk.org/events/events.php
July 2006				
MASLAC Meeting: Speaker Adelaide Rhodes AKA "Pod Girl" on pods - their care, importance and abundance.	07/15/06			Marine Aquarium Society of Los Angeles County: http://www.maslac.org/

August 2006				
MASLAC Meeting: So Cal Creations will show us how to work with acrylic and take care of our acrylic tanks.	08/12/06			Marine Aquarium Society of Los Angeles County: http://www.maslac.org/
September 2006				
2006 AZA Annual Conference	Sept. 25, 2006	Sept. 29, 2006	Tampa, FL, USA	http://www.aza.org/ConfWork/AC_Intro/
October 2006				
Backer's 40th Annual Pet Industry Trade Show and Educational Conference	Oct. 6, 2006	Oct. 8, 2006	Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, Rosemont (Chicago), Illinois, USA	http://www.hhbacker.com/hhbacker/x06tradeshaw.asp
November 2006				
Second Annual Coral Reef Conservation and Management Conference	Nov. 8, 2006	Nov. 9, 2006	James L. Knight International Center, Miami, Florida, USA	http://www.informalearning.com/coralreefs

To Submit Your Event: Visit <http://www.marinefiends.com/submit.html>.

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Just for Laughs

Submitted by Doreen Pratt, 05/05/06

Edited by Elizabeth M. Lukan 05/15/06

What do you call a fish with no eyes? A fsh.

To Submit Your Joke: Visit <http://www.marinefiends.com/submit.html>. Your joke **must** be family friendly and fish related. If you can't tell it to your children, don't send it to me and expect to see it published.

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