

reach maturity in the year following hatching. Males grow faster and to larger sizes than females. Average size: Males 90mmSL Females 65mmSL.

Males become much more brightly coloured during spawning. Females remain pale and are distinguished from males by the short anterior dorsal fin; in males, the dorsal and anal fin rays are extended and usually overlap.

- Adrian Tappin

BOOKS

Australian Freshwater Fishes. Biology and Management, Merrick J.R. and Schmida G.E. publ. by J. Merrick NSW 1984, 409pp. \$33 (from the author).

This is the long-awaited 'bible' of Australian freshwater fish and, if anything, serves to show us how little we still know about certain fish: the bank of information on many fish seems to have increased little since John Lake's book of 1978. But as an information source for beginning aquarists it is worthwhile reading.

There is plenty of information regarding the 'table fishes' such as Murray Cod and Yellow Belly owing to research grants having been channelled in that direction.

The section on the prettier ones such as rainbows and blue-eyes is relatively detailed but some of the less attractive species such as gobies and perchlets are obviously in need of some research. In that respect, the book certainly pinpoints species of which little is known.

The distribution system used is the same as used by Lake in 1978 but here it is really unsatisfactory. Every dozen or so pages a map showing drainage divisions is used, but each fish's distribution is not mapped! All we see is the same barren map being

repeated! A more suitable system would have been to shade in the area where distribution is known.

The introduction is good, providing food for thought, but could easily have been enhanced by diagrams, line drawings and maps. Also the presentation of information about each species could have been organised more effectively to make for easier reading, eg, under headings of, say, Distribution, Size, Food, etc.

Even though my comments in the main may appear negative, I still see it as a worthwhile, interesting book boasting excellent (in the main) photography by Gunther Schmida.

- Glenn Leiper

FEEDING NATIVES

White Worms

Having kept one strain of white worms for 15 years, with only about five changes of soil during that period, the success of my method speaks for itself.

Make at least two boxes from dressed pine, 300mm x 200mm x 75mm, with a close fitting lid of waterproof ply. Cut several 25mm holes in the lid and glue fly wire over these.

Use a potting mix which has a portion of peat, sand and soil in equal amounts, and add water till the mixture is just moist. Place 60mm of mix in each box and stir in a cup of shell grit, which acts as a buffer against a drop in pH and also helps to keep the mix open and aerated.

A matchboxful of worms starts the culture in each box. Place the worms in the centre and slightly buried. Keep in a cool place.

After 24 hours begin feeding by placing a small amount of food in the centre and