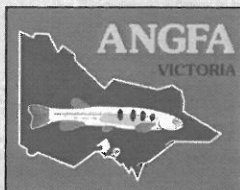




AUSTRALIA NEW GUINEA FISHES ASSOCIATION
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CONVENTION 2013 MELBOURNE





The 2013 Convention is proudly hosted by:
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CONVENTION PROGRAMME

FRIDAY OCTOBER 11

- 6.30-7.30 pm Registration
7.30-9.00 pm ANGFA Inc Annual General Meeting.
9.00-10.00 Happy Hour.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 12

Master of Ceremonies: Steve Baines

- 8.30-9.00 Registration.
9.00-9.45 Convention Opening Sequence featuring
Dr Alan D. Henningsen.
9.45-10.30 Glenn Briggs –
"Mogurnda from the Wet Tropics Region of Far North Queensland".
10.30-11.15 Morning Tea
11.15-12.00 Phil Littlejohn –
"Cryptic Organisms of Victorian Freshwaters".
12.00-12.45 Peter Unmack –
"Using genetics to understand rainbowfish relationships, interpret past hybridisation and the evolution of colour patterns".
12.45-2.00 Lunch.
2.00-2.45 Mark Bachmann –
"Ecology, management and restoration of three coastal wetlands: Ewens Pond, Piccaninnie Ponds and Long Swamp – key aquatic habitats for nationally threatened fish and crayfish in South Australia and Victoria".
2.45-3.30 Mike Hammer –
"Taxonomy Territory Style".
3.30-4.00 Afternoon Tea.
4.00-4.15 Ian Baddock –
"Species Maintenance Group Report".
4.15-6.30 ANGFA Auction".
6.30-7.30 Free Time.
7.30 pm Convention Dinner.
8.00-9.00 Heiko Bleher –
"Biotope Aquaria".

SUNDAY OCTOBER 13

Master of Ceremonies: Steve Baines

- 8.00-9.00 Registration.
9.00-9.45 Adam Kereszy –
"Outback Fish – Part 2".
9.45-10.30 Ian Morris –
"Time & Tide – the Legacy of Lake Carpentaria".
10.30-11.15 Morning Tea
11.15-12.00 Brian Andrews –
"Husbandry practices in the commercial production of Rainbowfish at different farm sites".
12.00-12.45 Nick Romanowski –
"Nanotanks for aquatic invertebrates and other small animals".
12.45-2.00 Lunch.
2.00-2.45 John Sinclair –
"No More Beating About the Bush – a reflection on 45 years of environmental observations from Wewak to Warrnambool and further afield".
2.45-3.30 Mike Hammer –
"2013 Hindenburg Wall Biodiversity Discovery Expedition".
3.30-4.15 Afternoon Tea.
4.15-5.45 Heiko Bleher –
"ARU Expedition Take 2".
5.45 Convention Closing Address.



ANGFA COUNCILS/COMMITTEES

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1333, ad@irg-online.de



CONVENTION PRESENTERS

Brian Andrews	5
Mark Bachmann	7
Heiko Bleher	6
Glenn Briggs	10
Mike Hammer	11
Alan D. Henningsen	12
Adam Kereszy	13
Phil Littlejohn	15
Ian Morris	15
Nick Romanowski	17
John Sinclair	19
Peter Unmack	21

CONVENTION ORGANISERS

The 2013 ANGFA National Convention has been organised by the ANGFA Victoria Inc. Regional Group Organising Committee: Kwai Chang Kum, John Cousins, Gary Moores, John Lenagan, Lyndon Giles, Tony Tucceri, Glenn Briggs, Greg Martin, Paul Byham, Gerard Carmody, Neil Armstrong, Ron Bowman and Ken Smales.

The support of our sister clubs and their committees, sponsors and members also deserves special mention. Without their support and help our task would have been just that little more difficult. Thank you to Judy Munif, Conference Facilitator, and her staff at Ciloms for their assistance with the convention.

The organising committee would also like to thank Steve Baines, President of ANGFA Qld. Inc. for his duties as Master of Ceremonies for both the Saturday and Sunday Programmes.

This publication has been designed and produced by Ken Smales. Thanks to Neil Armstrong for his Snowy River image used for the cover and also used as a background throughout this publication.

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Kongs	18
Pet Pacific	19
Pisces Enterprises	21
Subscope Aquarium	15
Upmarket Market	17

SPECIAL NOTICE:

ALL MEMBERS AND VISITORS TO THIS CONVENTION ARE REQUESTED TO ENSURE THAT MOBILE PHONES ARE SWITCHED OFF DURING CONVENTION PRESENTATIONS.

WELCOME!!

Please use this weekend to exchange information and make new friends and contacts.

Use the pages at the back of this Souvenir Convention Booklet to record their names and addresses.

Take notes, ask questions.
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Please join in and enjoy yourself



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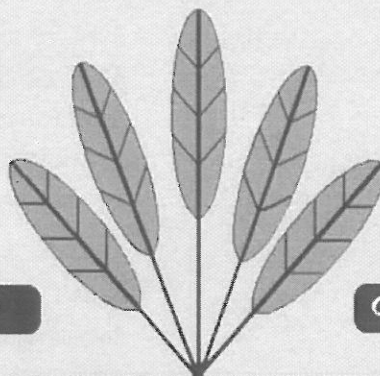


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Total volume: 125 millilitres



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Home of the Dinosaur



Brian Andrews

Talk – “Husbandry practices in the commercial production of rainbowfish at different farm sites”

Abstract of talk:

This Powerpoint presentation looks at the different techniques and methods used on several different sites to commercially produce rainbowfish.

The stages of production are divided into four parts: continuous breeding, hatching and the first stage of rearing in glass tanks, grow-out in ponds, (plus pond-culture) and finally (if there are any survivors!), harvesting, size-grading sorting, counting and shipping.

In each of the four parts, relevant aspects such as water chemistry, temperature, volume, and water quality maintenance, diet, stocking densities, growth rates and size-variation problems, health issues, harvesting and handling, and finally shipping, are covered.

Brief biography:

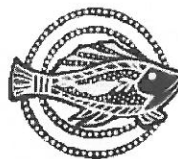


Born in South Africa in 1951, Brian Andrews acquired his first tropical fish at the age of 8 years, and ended up with 17 tanks in his bedroom. After completing his schooling and undertaking about 5 years in marine aquaculture research, in 1983 Brian and a business partner, Fanie Myburgh, launched *Amatikulu Hatchery*. By 1989 this ornamental fish farm was producing and selling around 2.5 million fish per annum of over 100 varieties, including livebearers, egg-layers, goldfish and koi, all on one site.

In 1990 Brian immigrated to Australia and in 1993 launched *Kilcoy Ornamental Fish*, a farm which grew to produce about 800 000 fish per annum of around 50 species. This business closed its doors in 2004 due to an irremediable problem with the quality of the bore water supply.

Over the following years Brian has been involved in a range of aquaculture projects, including (most notably for him) the hatching and rearing of the iconic weedy seadragon over a 5 month period of research at *Seahorse Australia* in Tasmania.

In late 2011 he published a 528 page book on freshwater ornamental fish farming, firstly in hardcover, and more recently in 10 separate eBook sections, particularly for hobbyist breeders. For more information on the book, visit www.ornamentalfishfarming.net



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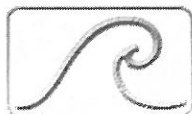
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Mark Bachmann

Talk – “Ecology, management and restoration of three coastal wetlands”

Abstract of talk:

Mark, (previously with the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources) was the inspirational manager and leader behind the creation of the Piccaninnie Pond reserve. He is currently manager of Glenelg Nature Trust and will talk on his current organisation in trying to find a way of getting people involved in conservation around these ecosystems. There is also potential for ANGFA to become involved.

Nature Glenelg Trust has been established as a not-for-profit environmental organisation in South Australia and Victoria. The organisation's purpose is simply to work with community to protect and enhance the natural environment in the South East of South Australia and South West Victoria, between the Murray River (SA) and Mount Emu Creek (Vic).

Within this region, the organisation has a particular focus on wetland conservation and restoration activities, but will also work on a wide range of other biodiversity and environmental community projects

Brief biography:

Mark has been working on a range of environmental issues in the South East of South Australia and South West Victoria for the last 16 years.

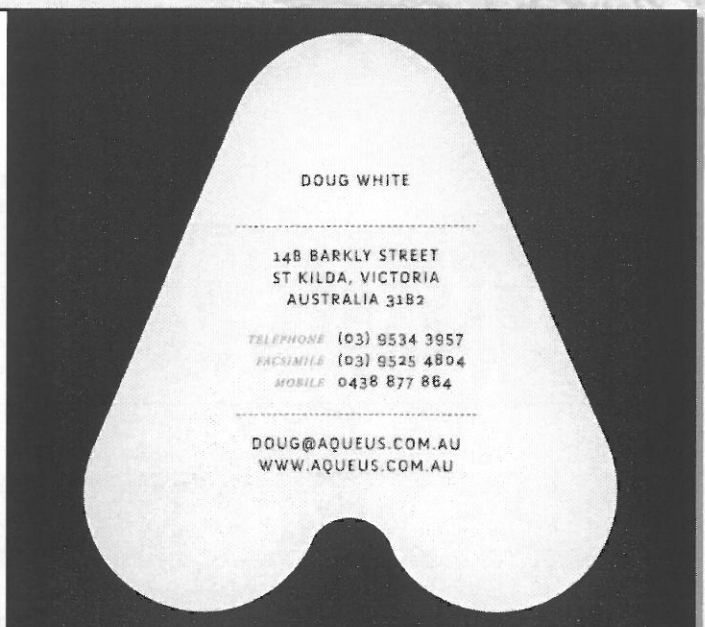
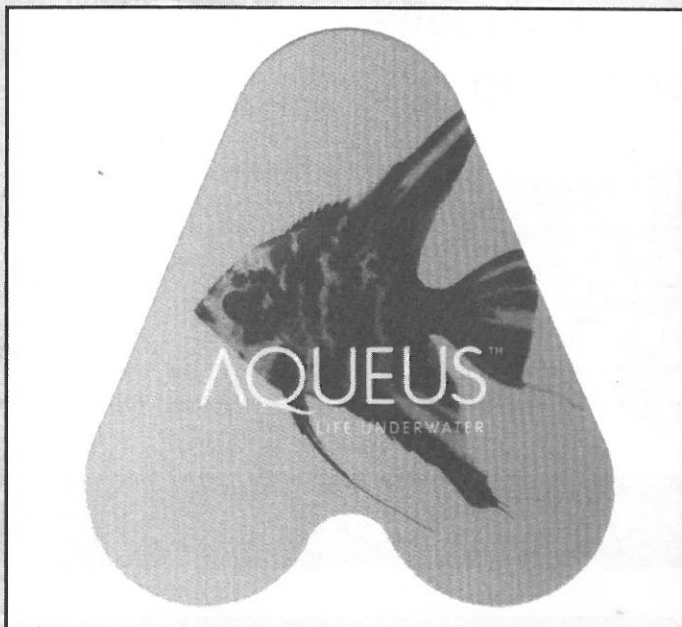


As a graduate in the late 1990's he worked as a project officer for the Nature Conservation Society of SA helping farmers to protect coastal wetlands in the State's South East, while at the same time undertaking

honours research into the ecology of an endangered mammal in South Australia, the Swamp Antechinus (*Antechinus minurus*).

In 1999 Mark moved to Mount Gambier with his family to take up full-time employment with the SA Government, where he worked for 12 years on a wide range of conservation initiatives, including over a decade spent working towards the restoration and Ramsar nomination of the Piccaninnie Ponds wetland system. The successful Ramsar nomination was formally announced by the federal government in January 2013.

In January 2012, after 6 months of behind the scenes preparation with a group of trusted colleagues in 2011, Mark led the launch of a new not-for-profit environmental organisation called Nature Glenelg Trust (www.natureglenelg.org.au). The new organisation is now working in both South Australia and Victoria, on a wide range of on-ground conservation initiatives, including a particular emphasis on wetland restoration and native fish ecology, conservation and management.





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Heiko Bleher

Talk – 1 “Biotope Aquariums”

Abstract of talk:

This presentation from Heiko will not only feature rainbow and blue-eye habitats but will also include lots of other fish and their habitats.

Talk – 2 “Aru Expedition”

Abstract of talk:

Heiko will discuss his January 2013 expedition to the Aru area of PNG where, together with Jerry Allen, they discovered many new fish.

Brief biography:

Heiko Bleher is one of the best known aquarium fish collectors in the world. Heiko travels the world seeking new fish, and has had many varieties of fish named after him, including *Chilatherina bleheri*, so beloved of rainbowfish enthusiasts.



Born in war torn Germany in 1944, into a family with a history of collecting aquatic plants and fish going back to the year 1900, Heiko followed on

from his grandfather and mother in developing Frankfurt's largest aquatic plant and fish establishment.

Heiko spent much of his youth in Rio de Janeiro and the Brazilian interior with his mother and siblings. Fluent in seven languages, he has authored many articles which have appeared in more than 100 publications, including *Aqua Geo* which he set up himself to highlight studies of aquatic environments worldwide. His expeditions into New Guinea have provided us with much of the knowledge of New Guinea species we have today.

Heiko began to give lectures and seminars around the world in the 1970s, he made his first TV film – “*The World of Aquarium Fishes*” in 1982, and appeared in several TV shows in different countries. His first Discus book was published in 1982 (and reprinted 10 times), and has contributed to many magazines around the globe. In 1983 his first motion-picture film “*The Wimpel Piranha*” was made, followed by films in New Guinea, Australia, Central America and Brazil – a total of eight films. From his Aquarium Rio base in Frankfurt, his company supplied most of the wholesalers worldwide (in 86 countries) with many new species – includ-

ing various forms of Discus. In 1997 he closed his Aquarium Rio company and moved to Italy where he lives today.

With the discovery, rediscovery and introduction of over 6,000 aquarium fish species up to 2012, he has probably collected more fresh and brackish water species than anyone else in history since the early 1960s, including such fishes as *Melanotaenia boesemani* (with G. R. Allen), *M. lacustris* and *M. praecox* (probably one of the most popular aquarium fish at this time), *Pterophyllum altum*, *Steatocranus bleheri* and *Channa bleheri*. Heiko has also collected most of the rare L-numbered Loricariid fishes, many new Corydoras species, countless tetras and dwarf cichlids from West Africa and South America, plus oddballs such as knife fishes, blue-eyes and flounders can be attributed to Heiko's explorations. One of his best-known discoveries (with Gordon Stables) was the first freshwater sawfish ever found in a remote lake in northern Australia.

He commenced working on a gigantic book in 1987 about all freshwater and brackish water fishes, for which he has already written 3200 pages and photographed over 28,000 fishes! Together with Helen Larson and Douglas Hoesle, Heiko is also working on a large book of all Gobiidae; his work on other titles includes Volume 3 of *Bleher's Discus* (his final work on this monograph); a book about all Inland Fishes of India; the Cichlidae of West and Central Africa; a book about the families Bedotiidae, Telmatherinidae, Melanotaeniidae and Pseudomugilidae, as well as other titles.

His life is dedicated to fishes – perhaps more than his mother or grandfather or any other person living or dead hence the name “Mr. Fish”.

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Glenn Briggs

Talk – “Mogurnda from the Wet Tropics Region Of Far North Queensland”

Abstract of talk:

The Wet Tropics Region of Far North Queensland (FNQ) is one of the most interesting areas in Australia for freshwater fish diversity. Its high rainfall, varied topography and numerous aquatic habitats all contribute to making this a very unique area of Australia for native fish enthusiasts.

During e-mail correspondence regarding Mogurnda populations, Mark Adams at the SA Museum informed Glenn of several genetically distinctive populations that had been caught in tributaries of the upper Tully River. Mark's desire for specimens from the Tully and other areas of FNQ enthused Glenn into going on several collecting trips to Cairns to see these variations first hand.

The presentation features many of the various Mogurnda populations collected from FNQ, with particular emphasis on the Atherton Tablelands. There might even be a few rainbowfish photos for good measure!

Brief biography:

Glenn started keeping aquarium fish back in 1975, starting with a typical tropical community tank, but soon after becoming interested in collecting and keeping native fishes. His fishkeeping hobby gradually grew in size – convincing his parents more tanks and a garden pond were a good idea. Next came part time work at the local aquarium



store (to help pay for more new fish!) This eventually led to full time work at several aquarium retailers before he changed direction and started working in the finance industry. After getting married in 1986, Glenn greatly expanded his fish keeping, building a fish-room and filling it with 40-50 aquariums of Cichlids, natives and Killifish, plus garden ponds for local native fishes. His wife Jenny soon realised there was no way to avoid fish food in the freezer or live blackworm stored in the fridge, so she soon bought him his own fridge!

In 1998, Glenn went back to working in the aquarium trade, predominantly in aquarium fish wholesaling. Glenn still maintains a large number of aquariums and ponds at home, mainly keeping Purple Spotted Gudgeons (*Mogurnda* spp), Rainbowfishes and Pygmy Perches, plus a 14 year old Coal Grunter that is the “culling machine”.

A foundation member of ANGFA National, Glenn has enjoyed participating in the organisation for many years in a variety of roles, he was made a life member of ANGFA Victoria in 2007.

WELCOME!!

Please use this weekend to exchange information and make new friends and contacts.

Use the pages at the back of this Souvenir Convention Booklet to record their names and addresses.

Take notes, ask questions.

This is a unique opportunity to increase your knowledge of our aquatic environment.

Please join in and enjoy yourself

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Mike Hammer

Talk 1- "Taxonomy Territory Style!"

Abstract of talk:

The Northern Territory, Australia is a great place to study fishes. The wet dry tropical climate and diverse habitats ranging from vast floodplains, numerous large rivers, billabongs, sandstone escarpment streams, and extensive estuarine habitats (and diverse marine environments) translates to a wide variety of known species, and promise that there are still others to be discovered. In order to document the diversity of fish life, we need to collect fishes (the fun bit in the field!), preserve tissues and specimens and place them in accessible collections, before careful examination of body features and measurements, and DNA. There are currently a range of projects occurring across field studies and taxonomy of fishes in the Northern Territory, and there are many ways ANGFA members can get involved. This presentation will highlight projects and discoveries during "Bush Blitz" trips on the Daly River and Roper River, an adventure into central Arnhemland (Maningrida), and from collecting in and around the suburbs of Darwin.

Talk 2- "2013 Hindenburg Wall Biodiversity Discovery Expedition"

Abstract of talk:

The heady days of early exploration in the 1880's saw adventurers like Alfred Russel Wallace travel to remote parts of the world, leading to the first European observations of spectacular and sometimes bizarre animals. Surprisingly, there are still many regions which are yet to be fully explored (including parts of Sahul), and much remains to be discovered by today's naturalists and budding scientists. In February 2013 staff from the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory joined a Wildlife Conservation Society expedition to the Hindenburg Wall region of Papua New Guinea where around 80 new species of plants and animals were discovered! This presentation features some interesting fish like the Ok Tedi Rainbowfish, but more broadly shows what it is like to spend a month in remote tropical jungle working closely with local communities as part of a team contributing to biodiversity conservation.

Brief biography:

Dr Michael Hammer

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory



Michael is an aquatic ecologist, with 15 years studying and observing fishes and their habitats, especially Australian freshwater species. He currently works as the Curator of Fishes at the Museum in Darwin, a new appointment taken up in late 2011. His research involves biodiversity assessment (extensive field sampling experience; trained in genetics focused on investigating species boundaries), linking the ecology of fishes into wider issues in biodiversity conservation, providing key advice to management (e.g. impact assessment, threatened species issues), promoting awareness of fishes and their plight, and specific conservation action. He is driven to disseminate the outcomes of research using a range of mediums, with a strong publication record (~100 papers, book chapters and technical reports) and media profile (regular feature stories). This work is achieved through a collaborative base with partner research agencies, government stakeholders and community groups.

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Alan D. Henningsen

Talk – “The Moment of Truth: Where Fresh Meets Salt”

Abstract of talk:

While Alan Henningsen's head gets perilously close to sharks at times – in his job as a Fishes Research Specialist at the National Aquarium in Baltimore, USA – his heart swims with the much smaller fish that inhabit the upstream limits of the intertidal zones of intermittent estuarine environments. These are amongst the most variable aquatic habitats on the planet, as, within a short period of time, they can range from 100% fresh to 100% marine.

At a cellular level, such an environment is extremely hostile, not only because of the massive changes in salinity, but also because of the huge variation in nutrients and other minerals – and hence food organisms – determined by the relative dominance of marine and riverine influences at any given time.

What all this means is that, collectively, these habitats form a hotbed of evolution, as the extreme natural

selection pressures lead to faster rates of adaptation than in other areas. This makes such habitats an ideal natural laboratory for the study of polymorphism and speciation.

Dr Henningsen has been compiling research into the adaptive characteristics of fish that thrive at the sea-water-freshwater interface, and comparing the characteristics of each with those of their closest freshwater and marine relatives. The research focusses on 47 species occurring within eight ecosystems across three continents, and the results provide a fascinating insight into the very processes we are all familiar with throughout our own native fish populations.

Brief biography:

Fishes Research Specialist

National Aquarium, Baltimore, USA

Dr Henningsen will be in Australia during October, discussing similar research being conducted within our own intermittent estuarine environments.

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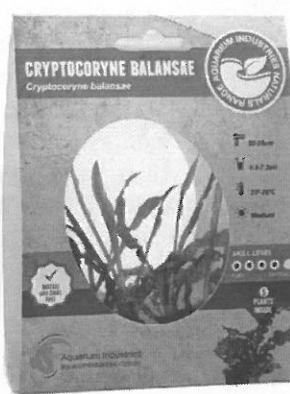
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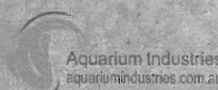
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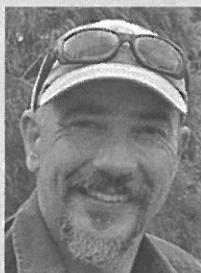
Talk – “Outback Fish – Part 2”

Abstract of talk:

It's probably fair to say that not much has changed in the unpredictable rivers of western Queensland for millennia. In contrast, the recent past has seen some unwelcome developments. Feral species like goldfish and gambusia are widespread in the Cooper catchment, as are translocated species like sleepy cod. Across all the rivers, redclaw crayfish are displacing native blue-claw. To make matters potentially worse, the Newman government is now considering repealing legislation that was put in place to protect the relatively untouched catchments of the Lake Eyre Basin and allow irrigation. On a more positive note, the red-finned blue-eye project at Edgbaston has had a few wins, and following the conclusion of a trial period of gambusia removal and red-finned blue-eye relocation there are now more populations of the endangered species than there have been since they were first discovered back in 1990. That said, the situation is still dicey, and the next big flood could still see gambusia invade: for this reason the project has entered a new phase, with barriers of different materials installed around springs and a captive breeding agreement being negotiated with the relevant state agency. In 2012 the species was included in a book on the 100 most endangered species worldwide published by the IUCN: with a bit of luck they won't be included if the book is re-written in a few years' time. But one thing's for sure; nothing's easy about trying to save a critically endangered animal, especially when it's a fish 3cm long that lives in some of the weirdest fish habitat imaginable.

Brief biography:

Adam Kereszy has worked in ecology, natural resource management, communications and education. He received the gold medallion and title of Young Adventurer of the Year in 1992 from the Australian Geographic Society, and his writing and/or photography have been featured in a diverse range of publications ranging from special interest magazines to scientific journals. His primary research interest is the freshwater ecology of waterways and species in central and inland Australia, and his most recent work has involved trying to prevent the critically endangered red-finned blue-eye from becoming extinct. Adam is the author of several peer-reviewed scientific papers and a large number of conference papers. In 2011 his natural history book, *Desert Fishing Lessons: Adventures in Australia's Rivers*, was published by University of Western Australia Press and in 2012 the book received a certificate of commendation at the Whitley Awards in the popular zoology category.

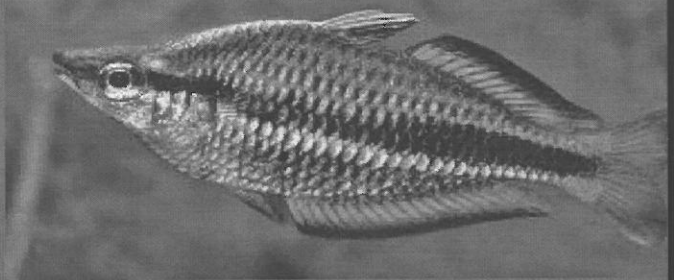
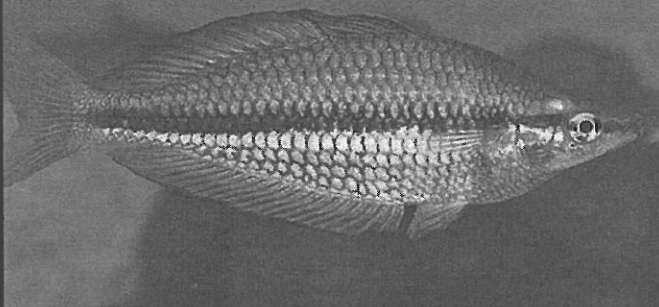


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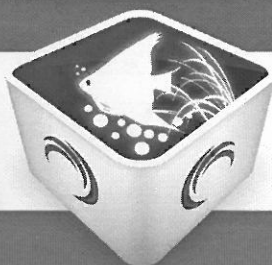
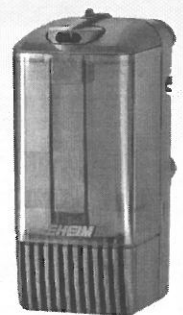
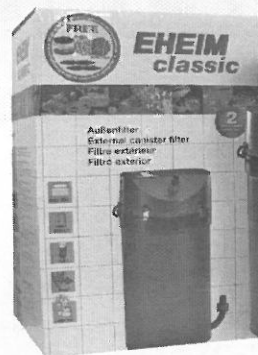
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Phil Littlejohn

Talk – “Cryptic Organisms of Victorian Freshwaters”

Abstract of talk:

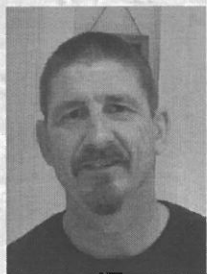
Phil will be presenting images of aquatic life that are cryptic by nature or too small to be seen with the naked eye, with tips for identification.

Either inhabiting on a rock in the form of biofilm surface growth or free living in the water column, microscopic aquatic life is an essential component of the food chain for higher taxa.

The importance to identify what species occur and how they interact can help plan strategies for conservation and can also be used as indicators of the health of our waters.

Phil will also present some of our larger aquatic invertebrates; including species that inhabit niches of our waterways not easily sampled, species that are naturally rare, and species with a limited distribution.

Brief biography:



Phil has been fascinated in aquatic life for many years and has a desire to collect, identify and photograph all known freshwater species of fish and crustaceans of Victoria including the smaller species such as the syncarids, cladocerans and copepods. Also of particular personal interest at present are the microdrile worms, leeches, snails and mussels. Because of the pure wealth of species in Australia, he only targets local (Victorian) species.

Phil's challenge is trying to understand the terminology used for each group, so that he can key out identification to at least genus level. Phil finds it very satisfying (some say obsessive) collecting something you have targeted after all the research and planning. Although it is often a solo adventure after people realize you are targeting something you can hardly see!

Phil has worked for Australia's largest importer wholesaler of ornamental fish since 1979, with a special interest in fish parasitology.

Phil finds it interesting that what is in nature can often be found in aquariums, such as different species of algae, protozoa, rotifer, copepod, microdrile worms, turbellarians, mites, nematodes, bryozoan and if you are lucky, freshwater sponges!

Ian Morris

Talk – “Time & Tide – the Legacy of Lake Carpentaria”

Abstract of talk:

Ian's presentation recounts some of the highlights of his travels to the Northern Territory, northern Queensland and the lower river systems of southern Papua New Guinea (this region being the old Lake Carpentaria).

Brief biography:

Ian – Biologist, educator, conservationist, and author – was chosen to train a group of traditional owners to



work as park rangers at Kakadu, because of his long association with Aboriginal education, his fluency in several Aboriginal languages, his early adoption into the kinship system of the Aboriginal clan where he taught biology, and his deep commitment to the park. Ian continues his work in public education by consult-

ing for *BBC Natural History Unit* and *National Geographic*, and continues his conservation work for the federal and state governments as a consultant for many national parks in Australia.

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Nick Romanowski

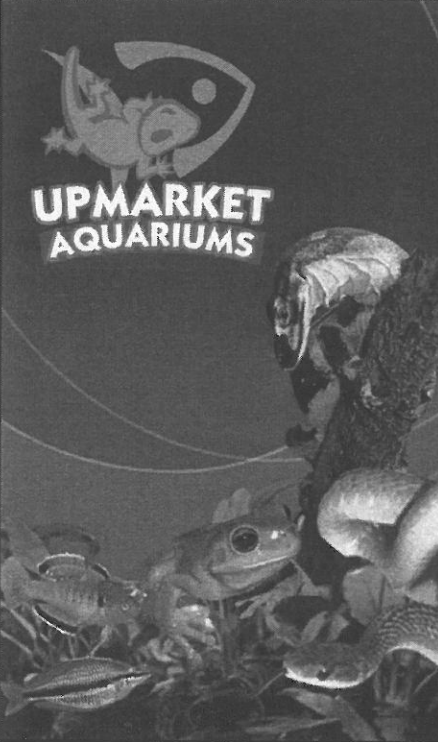
Talk – “Nanotanks for aquatic invertebrates and other small animals”

Abstract of talk:

You don't have to turn your garage into a fish room to keep and photograph many of the smaller aquatic animals, and it isn't hard to maintain dozens of invertebrate species in a corner of your lounge, without even using filters. Nick will describe how he has maintained a range of nanoaquariums (some with just a litre or two of water) to study and photograph the remarkable lives of many ecologically important animals below the surface, and has even created convincing imitations of complex ecosystems in buckets under a sheltered verandah. His talk will include many images taken for his most recent book: *Living Waters: The Ecology of Animals in Swamps, Rivers, Lakes and Dams*.

Brief biography:

Nick Romanowski is a zoologist with a particular interest in fishes, crustaceans, and many other smaller aquatic animals, and has been a member of ANGFA from the beginning though he is rarely seen at meetings due to the 6 hour return drive from his home in the Otways. As a part of studying plants as animal habitat in the late 1980s he set up *Dragonfly Aquatics*, Australia's first indigenous wetland nursery, experimenting with hundreds of plant species collected from Tasmania to the tropics in the process. Nick is also a writer and photographer with 14 books published on various aspects of wetland ecology, plants, restoration and management, including four commissioned by CSIRO Publishing in recent years.



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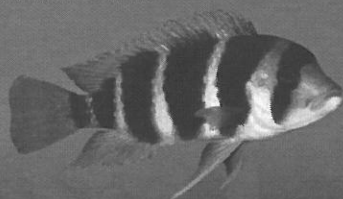
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John Sinclair

Talk – “No More Beating About the Bush”
– a reflection on 45 years of environmental
observations from Wewak to Warnambool and
further afield

Abstract of talk:

John Sinclair has spent over 42 years campaigning to protect the outstanding natural values of Fraser Island and 25 years leading safaris to explore Australia's most outstanding natural landscapes in every corner of the continent. On his fifth ship based safari earlier this year he completed a 90% circumnavigation of PNG. As an avid and observant environmentalist, he has been acutely aware of the changes and the degradation of Australia's natural resources, particularly its withering wild lands. John will pull no punches describing the widespread environmental degradation he has observed in his travels and the fight he has continued to wage to preserve Fraser Island's natural integrity.

Brief biography:

John Sinclair founded the Fraser Island Defenders Organization in 1971. Since then he has headed all of FIDO's campaigns to stop sandmining, to get World Heritage recognition and simultaneously to stop logging and to improve the management of recreation on the island. He remains active in monitoring the use of the island to ensure that FIDO's aim of the "wisest use of Fraser Island's natural resources" is being carried out.



He was named the *Australian* newspaper's "Australian of the Year" for 1976 for his leading role in protecting Fraser Island. He was awarded the prestigious international Goldman Environmental Prize in 1993. He is a researcher, advocate and organizer but also works with the Queensland Government in a consultative role though the Community Advisory Committee and now spends weeks working on Fraser Island to stop weeds degrading the island's outstanding natural values. His latest project is getting volunteers to build a 52 kilometre extension of Fraser Island's Great Walk which he believes will become a more popular walk than Tasmania's Overland Track.

He has actively served voluntary conservation movement at all levels from grass roots to state, national and international levels always in an honorary capacity. He was a pioneer of Australian ecotourism leading hundreds of safaris designed to educate, to monitor and to recruit supporters. Over the last 25 years has seen more of Australia on the ground than almost any other Australian.

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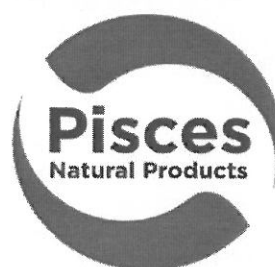
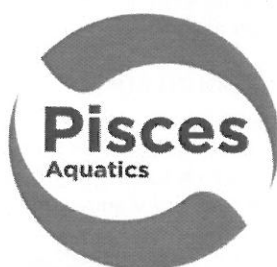
Talk – “Rainbowfish Genetics”

Abstract of talk:

Rainbowfishes account for an incredible 15-20% of all fish species found in Australia and New Guinea. The family *Melanotaeniidae* represents the largest monophyletic lineage (i.e., a group of species with the same common ancestry) of freshwater fishes in the region and they are probably the most widespread group too. The sheer number of species, their extreme variations in colouration and the ease in which they hybridise make them an especially interesting group to study from an evolutionary perspective. In collaboration with Dr. Gerald Allen, and with tremendous help from many people across the region and within the rainbowfish hobby, we have been building a clearer picture of rainbowfish evolution. Rainbowfishes have existed within the region for a considerable time, probably over 65 million years based on current biogeographic estimates. Most of the early branching rainbowfish lineages are all species poor, and they have fairly restricted distributions (*Cairnsichthys*, *Iriatherina* and *Rhadinocentrus*). The main diversity today is found in the general *Melanotaenia* (57 spp.), *Chilatherina* (11 spp.) and *Glossolepis* (9 spp.). In this presentation, Peter explores the generic relationships of rainbowfishes and their biogeography. These results provide insights in the history of hybridization between rainbowfishes. Having a robust phylogeny of rainbowfishes allows us to examine aspects of their evolutionary history including things such as changes in their colour patterns.

Brief biography:

Peter's fascination with fishes began with the purchase of his first fish tank in 1979. He soon obtained additional aquariums until he filled two sheds and the backyard with fish tanks and tubs of water. Since 1985, Peter has kept various Australian native freshwater fishes ranging from the smallest to the largest, most of which he collected from various travels. Peter has collected fishes extensively throughout much of mainland Australia as well as various parts of Papua New Guinea, North America and southern South America. Peter was fortunate to be able to turn his fish hobby into an academic career. His interests are broad and include just about anything to do with freshwater fishes, but especially biogeography, conservation and desert springs. He changed hemispheres in 1994 and moved to California, then onto Arizona to complete studies on the biogeography of Australian freshwater fishes at Arizona State University. He went on to do research at Brigham Young University in Utah on the biogeography of fishes in southern South America and western North America, followed by another project at the National Evolutionary Synthesis Centre in North Carolina working on developing GIS models to predict biogeographic patterns in freshwater organisms. Peter recently moved back to Australia at the University of Canberra where he is examining bioregionalization patterns in the Murray-Darling Basin.



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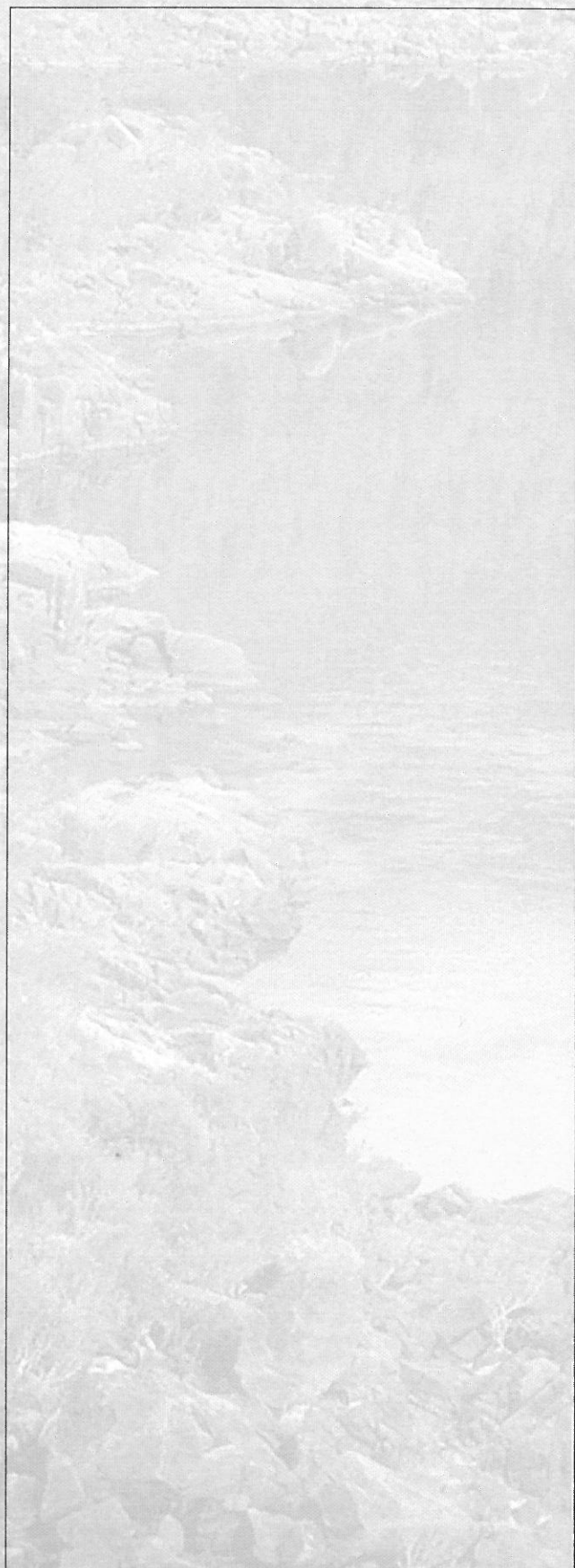
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