



ANGFA ACT

NEWSLETTER

MAY 1996

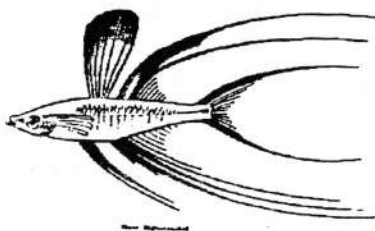
VOLUME 3 ISSUE 3

May Meeting - Guest Speakers Mark Lintermans & Ron Bowman

We are extremely lucky for this meeting to have two guest speakers. **Mark Lintermans** who is the Senior Wildlife Ecologist with the Wildlife Research Unit of the ACT Parks and Conservation Service. Mark is responsible for all freshwater research, fisheries management and stocking and monitoring of fishes in the ACT.

Mark will be giving two talks. One will be on the Trout Cod's status in Australia and the ACT in particular. The other will be a brief outline of the current developments of Electrofishing. Mark's talk will begin at 8.00pm. and I urge everyone to be in attendance by that time.

Ron Bowman, who the Americans fondly refer to as "Rain Bowman" is the only life member of ANGFA. During late 1982 Ron learned of the proposed formation of a national study group for indigenous fish species and, attending his first meeting, he suggested the name "Australia New Guinea Fishes Association" to provide the acronym ANGFA and sketched a cover proposal for the journal which was to become "Fishes of Sahul" the official publication of ANGFA. Ron has bred over 300 different species of fish and had kept native fish. A graphic artist since 1948 and a passion for fish breeding since 1955, combined skills and an eye for detail needed as Editor, Designer and Production artist for "Fishes of Sahul". Artwork for ANGFA logos (including the Trout Cod for ANGFA (ACT)), the ANGFA badge, letterheads and convention brochures followed. Ron will be talking on the propagation of *Melanotaenia pygmaea* and *Melanotaenia praecox*. *Pygmaea* do not seem to be as prolific as *praecox*. Ron will then present a general discussion on rainbows, blue eyes and any other matters of interest to members.



An example of Ron's artwork, the beautiful delicate Threadfin Rainbow, Iriatherina wernerii.

AUCTION - MAY MEETING

The May meeting will also feature a mega auction. Fish will be coming from Queensland, so make sure you bring your money with you....

STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS

Jerry Allens latest book

RAINBOWFISHES In Nature and in the Aquarium

Will be available at the May meeting. Only limited copies are available. The price of the book is \$45.00, if we run out you will have to wait for more books to be imported into Australia, don't know how long it will take, and we have been advised that the price will be higher.



President's Report

Well we have finally closed the books on the 1995 convention. The result has shown that we have succeeded in meeting our aim, to make the convention the most successful yet. We have transferred funds to the amount of \$3973.39 to the ANGFA National Committee.

A committee position (Membership and Publicity Officer) is now vacant due to the resignation of Andrew Boyd. As you are no doubt aware, Andrew is the President of Canberra & Districts Aquarium Society. Due to the compatibility clashes between the two clubs, he submitted his resignation. I wish him well in the future. I am always prepared to promote good relationships with CDAS. Thanks to the volunteers of CDAS who handed out ANGFA forms at the Canberra Show, we have already received one enquiry.

As President of ANGFA (ACT) I thank Andrew sincerely for the work that he has done for ANGFA (ACT). Some of the members may not know, but it was Andrew Boyd and Doug Williams that made the effort to get ANGFA (ACT) up and running. They made the first representations to ANGFA national to become a regional group.

Also, there is an excellent article in Australian Geographic No.42 on the fish of the desert. Also an excellent poster is included, and the cover is an excellent drawing of the Chequered Rainbowfish, that can be purchased as a print. Have a look at any Australian Geographic shop.

Have just received the ANGFA WA 1st issue of their newsletter. Looks very interesting with pictures of habitats and Fish of the Desert, that can be downloaded to your own PC if you have Internet access. Shows how to access stories on Internet.

That's it for me, see you at the May meeting.....Andy Wattam, President

AUSTRALIA NEW GUINEA FISHES ASSOCIATION

PLANT CORNER - Hans de Vries

Cryptocoryne 'Disease'

To the aquarist, no genus of waterplants is as important as the *Cryptocoryne* (or crypts for short). These plants are among the most beautiful and valuable of all aquarium plants. Before considering any of the species, it may be useful to briefly describe one of the problems often associated with the growing of crypts by the novice. It is the crypt 'disease', recognisable by the leaves becoming slimy and all leaves rotting quickly. It may start with a single plant, but can quickly spread and affect all crypts in the aquarium. Some crypts however, appear to show some resistance. The more resistant species are recommended to the novice, before introducing the more expensive and less resistant species.

One of our members, Rene Jez, experienced the first occurrence of the 'disease' in 1960 (after several years without problems with literally hundreds of crypts). At that time, he was quite sure it was a viral disease. Now he is not so sure.

What are the main causes?

Differences between temperatures around the roots and the leaves. Heating of the water above the gravel causes this difference. In the cold gravel the roots slow down growth while the leaves are assimilating normally. The best way to avoid this is to heat the substrate (with under gravel heating) or a false bottom (similar to undergravel filters) with the flowing water taken from above the gravel.

Too much nitrate. Nitrate is produced in the aquarium through the waste products of the fish and their food. Crypts occur mainly in areas where water is low in nitrate levels. Nitrogen is taken up by the plants in these waters in the form of ammonium. In the aquarium, crypts will take up nitrates but this will be stored in the leaves and is not converted and used by the plants as food. Too much stored nitrate will cause the 'disease'.

Changes in light levels. A sudden change in the intensity of light such as the replacement of old fluorescent tubes, particularly if the new tubes provide stronger light can cause problems for the crypts. Removal of floating plants in the aquarium may also have the same effect.

Extreme water temperatures. All crypts are tropical plants and are best maintained in water temperatures of 26 to 28 Celsius. However, some species will tolerate temperatures down to 22. If the temperature of the aquarium water exceeds 30 (e.g. in a hot summer with intense artificial lighting close to the surface of the water) or drops below 20 the disease can also take effect.

Other changes in water chemistry. Replacing more than 1/3 of the water, over fertilisation, and the use of algicides can also cause the 'disease' to take effect.

Replanting. Crypts do not like to be disturbed after planting. In the aquarium it takes approximately one year for crypts to become established. By replanting or rearranging these plants periodically, they may become stunted and become 'diseased'.

Preventative measures.

Besides the reasons above, **regular** water changes of not more than 1/3 of the water, with water from your regular source is recommended, ensuring that the temperature of the replacement water is approximately the same as your aquarium water. If tap water is used, it is useful to 'age' the water for at least one day. This is especially important in areas where the water supply is chlorinated. Do not use chemical neutralisers if you grow crypts. Regularly check the PH and the hardness of the water. Crypts prefer slightly acid water but are reasonably adaptable if no sudden changes occur. The hardness of the water should be maintained at a minimum of 80ppm. CO fertilisation is highly recommended as is the use of laterite with a reasonable iron content of the substrate.

If all fails (which has happened to me) and your crypts disappear, just maintain your aquarium in a good condition and the crypts may appear again as the rootstock in all but severe cases, may not have been affected.

Good Underwater gardening



ANGFA ACT OFFICE BEARERS

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Those Bloody Victorians

Andy Wattam President ANGFA ACT

I was sent to Melbourne with work, and was very lucky that it coincided with a couple of fish meetings. So a couple of changed flights saw me stay in Melbourne for the weekend also. The weather was its usual self **MISERABLE** it rained for 4 of the 5 days I was there. I must also admit, that one of the days was extremely hot (for Melbourne) and to see the silver budgie sitting there sweating and suffering made me feel good. However, one thing is for sure, if you want to see the weather change, just stay in the one place in Melbourne and wait about 10 minutes.

Here is a small account of my stay:

Friday 9th February

I attended the meeting of the Victorian Cichlid Society (VCS) which was very entertaining. The Silver Budgie (aka Neil Armstrong) gave a splendid talk, with his usual quality terrible slides of his trip to Pepperminardi (hope I spelt that right!). As it turned out the budgie had committed to speak at the VCS and forgot there was a plant study group meeting on the same night (typical). However, it is good to visit other clubs and help spread the word about our native fish. As visitors, both the budgie and I participated in a game called "fish heads" run similar to celebrity head. A fish name is placed on card onto your head and you have to be the first to get the name correct. Ernie Hicks of the Cichlid Society got the dwarf gourami in about 4 questions. To encourage greater participation in the hobby, the budgie volunteered us both. Thanks!! I think we would have been all right with general fish or natives, but we were given Cichlids to identify. Budgie was given the Blue Acara, and I was given a Blue Afra (which I still believe to be a haircut). Needless to say the budgie won after a lot of free tips. Great game and more fish clubs should try this as it raises awareness amongst the newer members and participation from the club. Apart from that it was also good fun.

Saturday 10 February

I attended the Victorian ANGFA meeting, an honorary Victorian. A talk was given by Alex Caughey about collecting fish on stamps. They are easy to keep, relatively cheap and don't die! The next talk was given by Ron Lewis on the captive breeding program of the Trout Cod, our emblem in the ACT. Both talks were excellent. The auction had a good range of fish and plants. I was lucky enough to win a raffle prize.

The Swamp Dog Kicker (aka Bruce Sambell) also appeared at the VIC ANGFA meeting and it was good to catch up with him. They get good attendance at those meetings, I mean, who would travel that far to hear about native fish?

Sunday 11 February

Raided some of the budgies slide albums, and managed to get some slides of Killifish and frogs. Went to Aquatic Art (Erich & Barbara Goelz) shop and picked up some killies to play with. He had some lovely Altum angelfish there also, along with his large range of fish. The budgie then left me at the Airport with about 5 minutes to spare before the plane was scheduled for take off.

Here was when the fun began.....

I boarded the Dash 8 (I now know what the dash stands for) aeroplane that would take me back to sunny Canberra. The pilot started the left hand engine - fine. He then started the right hand engine and the whole side of the plane went black. The 18 passengers sitting on that side of the plane did not take this too lightly. The next thing you know, the pilot and co-pilot came bolting out of the cockpit and out the door, with no explanation. Well, as you can imagine there were 36 passengers all sitting with their seatbelts fastened, as the seatbelt light was on, looking at each other wondering if we should follow the leader.

The pilot and co-pilot came back into the plane and told us that when the plane was checked/serviced, that somebody had forgotten to tighten an oil-cap and that as soon as the engine was started, the cap fell off and the plane was covered in oil. They then had to have the plane washed before we took off.

The air hostess asked if she "could get us anything". Me, seizing the opportunity, yells out "how about a parachute". Other comments included "go over the safety instructions again" "will somebody kick the wheels" "a train ticket" and others. This seemed to calm the other passengers down that were searching for the air-sickness bags.

After the plane was airborne, things seemed to settle down, until about half way home. All of a sudden the plane dropped approximately 3-400 feet according to the pilot. We were all looking for parachutes then. The flight continued and all of a sudden the engines on the plane started revving very hard. The pilot informed us that ice had formed on the propellers, and he had to rev the engines hard to get the ice off.

I can tell you that there were some happy people to get off the plane in Canberra, and I am sure the Pope would have been proud to see 39 people kissing the tarmac.

The story doesn't stop there....

I was talking to Bruce Sambell about the fun I had and was astonished to find out that he had a similar story to tell.

The Melbourne to Sydney leg of this trip was fine. He changed planes at Sydney for the trip to Brisbane. The plane started taxiing along the runway. At the end of the taxi area, instead of turning 90 degrees, the plane turned 360 degrees and started heading back to the terminal.

As Bruce was sitting just behind business class, he had not noticed that the back of the plane cabin was fast filling with smoke. The captain announced that he was aware of the problem and that was no need to be concerned. Everything was fine. He announced that the problem had occurred when oil had leaked from an engine into the Airconditioning pack. There was no mention of fire, but my mum told me many years ago, that where there is smoke, there is fire. Anyhow after returning to the terminal, the passengers sat patiently for approximately 20 minutes for the problem to be solved. After this time, the captain announced that there was no way that he was going to fly the plane as he wasn't happy with the repairs. (Perhaps the araldite didn't work, or they couldn't put the fire out).

So then it was "everybody off". Bruce ran around to see if he could get on the next plane, to catch his connecting Brisbane/Bundaberg flight. He managed to acquire a seat and boarded the plane. He was thinking how lucky he was to get on the plane, and that he should arrive in time to get the connecting flight. HA! big mistake, the bloody thing then managed to get a puncture and they had to change the wheel.

He finally managed to get home safely. Luckily for us, otherwise no more donations of fish at the ANGFA Conventions.

Therefore if you are considering attending ANGFA Vic meetings, and you have a bit of talent when it comes to fishkeeping, watch out!! the lengths the Victorians will go to in keeping you there are immense!!!

Happy stirring

Andy Wattam

P.S. I am awaiting some sort of payback, from this mob - I will report on it when it happens. It won't happen overnight, but it will happen.

General Meeting - Minutes 7th March 1996

Venue: Canb. Workers Club.
Time commenced: 8.00pm.
Those present: 25 members and guests.
Apologies: Jann Aiten.

Office Bearers Reports:

President; ACT and Victorian Convention Committee persons to meet at Albury NSW sometime around the end of April. Date 27th April 1996.

Vice President; Erich Friese is the new Curator of NAAWS. We should send Erich a complimentary newsletter as a matter of good faith. We wish Erich all the best in his new position.

Secretary; Correspondence dispatched and received as read.

Treasurer; We are financial. Full financial statement to be supplied. Rena currently owes us \$1368.00. - Andy to follow up.

Membership Officer; Not much happening.

Editor; Contributions for the newsletter are required.

Librarian; A library catalogue is available to all who request one from this evening onward.

Species Maintenance; Requested all members to complete their forms, as issued.

General Business:

Newsletter, - Andy and others were not happy with the layout and dispatch times for our newsletter. Andy will now assist Alan Salmon with the layout and circulation dates. (Alan, Andy and other interested committee persons to discuss this in greater detail at the April Committee Meeting.)

Sale of Display Tank, - Clint Dixon found a buyer for our display tank. Clint was heartily thanked by all present.

Raffles, - A custom fishing rod, (courtesy of Tiny Egan) to the value of \$150.00 was raffled along with a free game voucher from Pitch and Putt.

Food samples from Kongs Aquarium Supplies were given as minor prizes.

We thank all sponsors for their donations and look forward to continued good relations with them.

Guest Speakers, - Mark Lintermans has been tentatively booked for May and Ron Bowman and or Neil Armstrong for July.

Tank Tours, - Are to begin in the colder months, Alan Ford offered to coordinate them. First tour TBA.

Next Field Trip, - To be advised via our newsletter.

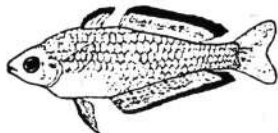
Insurance, - ANGFA National are looking into obtaining competitive quotes.

Best of the years articles, - A booklet containing quality ANGFA articles is to be compiled by ANGFA (ACT). The booklet will be something similar but not the same as the one produced annually by RSG, Nth America. The first edition is scheduled for distribution in September/October 1996. Just in time for the next Convention! Alan Ford, Peter Hughes and interested others will take this on as a joint venture. Dick Barwick has already offered to contribute an article. Other prospective authors are to be contacted soon.

David Manby's marriage, - David and Anna, his bride to be, were given a card which was signed by all members present. Congratulations David and Anna.

Guest Speaker: Mr Dick Barwick was our guest speaker for the evening. Dick continued his fascinating story on Lungfish. Dick is a very interesting and entertaining speaker. Dick was of course given a complimentary bottle of the now, renowned ANGFA Port.

Meeting closed at 10.30pm



PERSONALITY PROFILE No. 8

NAME	Andy Wattam
HOBBIES	Fish, Computers, Shooting, SCUBA Diving and driving.
OCCUPATION	Project Specialist - Australia Post
FAVOURITE FISH	Corydoras barbatus
FISH OF SAHUL	Melanotaenia affinis (variety PAGWI)
FAVOURITE PLANT	Madagascar Lace Plant
HARDEST FISH	Pseudomugil furcatus - we can't keep them alive in ACT
MAIN SPECIES INTEREST	Fishes of Papua New Guinea

ANGFA ACT FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS AT 1 APRIL 1996

CREDIT

Membership fees 94/95	\$175.00
Membership fees 95/96	\$375.00
Auctions/Raffles	\$565.95
Coast Trip	\$ 70.00
Books - Waterplants	\$149.60
Sale Display Tank	\$600.00
Interest	\$ 1.69
TOTAL	\$1937.24

DEBIT

Membership Credit Union	\$ 10.00
Address Labels	\$ 13.50
Printing	\$ 75.00
Stationery/Stamps	\$146.55
Telephone	\$ 5.05
Dalbarb Freight	\$ 70.00
Coast Trip	\$277.00
Xmas Barbeque	\$ 84.75
Timer switches	\$ 30.32
Repair National Aquarium	\$ 27.00
Hire meeting Hall	\$ 37.50
Books - Waterplants	\$149.40
Books - Rainbowfishes	\$675.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 55.25
Credit Tax	\$ 2.44

TOTAL

Balance Credit \$278.48

\$1658.76

Note: Printing cost has been adjusted to appropriately represent the amounts payable by ANGFA (ACT) and the ANGFA convention.

Items for Sale.....

ANGFA Badges (Metal)	\$ 4.00
ANGFA Convention Shirts	\$25.00
ANGFA Caps	\$15.00
ANGFA Badges (Cloth)	\$ 7.50
ANGFA Port	\$10.00

Jerry Allens Rainbowfishes - In nature and the Aquarium. Strictly limited copies

\$45.00

See Treasurer for these items.

FOR SALE:

Melanotaenia fluviatilis
Melanotaenia eachamensis
Melanotaenia eachamensis (euramoo)

Contact Alan Ford on 292 4210 for details.

ANGFA ACT Membership Application

ANGFA ACT meets on the first Thursday of every second month (January, March, May, July, September & November) at 8.00 p.m. in meeting room 1 at the Canberra Workers Club, Childers Street, Canberra City.

We extend a special welcome to ANGFA members, or other society members that share our interest in the aquatic realm.

Membership of ANGFA ACT costs \$5.00 per annum due on July 1 each year. All ANGFA ACT members are urged to hold current membership of the national body ANGFA Inc. (Fees, currently \$25.00 per annum)

YES!! REGISTER ME AS A MEMBER OF ANGFA ACT

Mr/Mrs/Ms: SURNAME:
 Given Names:
 Address:
 Suburb/Town: Postcode:
 Telephone: (Home)
 Telephone: (Work)
 email Address:

Forward this application with relevant fees to:
 Hans de Vries
 Treasurer, ANGFA ACT
 11 Stevenson Street, TORRENS ACT 2607