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IN THIS ISSUE

Page 2	Editorial.
Page 3	Rainbow Spawning Mops.
Page 4	BOOK REVIEW : Australian Native Fish for Aquariums.
Page 4 - 5	Making Rainbows look Stunning
Page 5	Feeding your Rainbows.
Page 6	NATIONALLY SPEAKING..
Page 7	Aquarium notes on some Galaxiids.
Page 8	ANGFA South East Queensland News.
Page 9	News from Tasmania - Endangered Fish Study.
Page 10	ANGFA Victorian Regional Group News.
Page 11 - 12	News from Victoria - Result of conference on Conservation Status of Victorian Freshwater Fish.
Page 13	Around the World - Club information.
Page 14	Round-up.
Page 14	DATES TO REMEMBER.
Page 14	Buy / Swap / Sell.

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AQUARIUM NOTES ON SOME GALAXIIDS.

by Peter Unmack.

I have kept the following species of galaxiids in aquariums, G. maculatus, G. truttaceus, G. brevipinnis and G. olidus, all of which make interesting aquarium pets.

G. truttaceus and G. brevipinnis may grow to 300mm (12 inches) long, G. maculatus to about 200mm (8 inches) and G. olidus to about 135mm (5 inches). Galaxiids aren't fussy about the pH and water hardness, they are able to survive wide variations (I have caught G. maculatus in water at 400-450 ppm in the Hopkins River). No galaxiids should be kept in tropical aquariums, they are strictly a cold water fish. I have found that the fish become stressed over 22-24°C although I have had all four species at approximately 28°C for two weeks.

Galaxiids will readily eat any live or dead (frozen) foods. They will eat flake foods but I found that after two weeks they became extremely aggressive towards each other. I then fed some mosquito larvae and all their aggression disappeared. They seem to like to kill their own food (you will never find abundant galaxiids and gambusia, or any other small fish living in the same stretch of river).

When keeping galaxiids it is a good idea to try to keep the size of the fish as uniform as possible to avoid the big fish eating or picking on the smaller fish. I have kept all four species together and as long as the fish weren't starved they got on well together.

These fish, in my opinion, cannot be sexed. I have had G. maculatus that have been extremely fat (with milt). Galaxiids are unlikely to spawn in aquariums, with the possible exception of G. olidus, due to their complex breeding biology.

Overall I have found the galaxiids to be longlived and quite attractive aquarium fish. These notes could probably be used as a guide to keeping most of the galaxias species. Other related species are the Galaxielly and Paragalaxias.

Some helpful references :

"The Galaxiid fish of Australia." Records of the Australia Museum 33, pp 443-605 by R.M. McDowall & R.S. Frankenberg.

"A Guide to the Freshwater Fish of Victoria" by P.L. Cadwallader and G.N. Backhouse.

"The Freshwater & Estuarine Fishes of Wilsons Promontory" by P.D. Jackson & J.N. Davies.

..... and in several articles in FISHES OF SAHUL.

