

CALIFORNIA BETTA SOCIETY

Keepers and Breeders of Siamese Fighting Fish in Northern California

CBS Newsletter Volume 7 Number 4

April 2003

Presidents Aquarium Side Chat

**Another Newsletter.....
Another time to communicate.....
This can be a good thing!**

I am very pleased to see the interaction on the California Betta Society's Yahoo Groups site and also the numerous emails that bounce around with members sharing ideas, information, etc. Let's all keep aware that with our International Show just around the corner (July 26, 27) this intellectual pool of mental resources will help to make our show a HUGE SUCCESS! There is no turning back now or getting cold feet as show dates have been posted in the March/April edition of Flare!

Dennis and I are looking forward to the May BBQ meeting. Please RSVP when you have a minute as this helps us have enough food on hand as we know what kind of an appetite one can work up talking about Betta's!

For those members interested, our own VP, Dennis Lee, will be the Guest Speaker at the May 3rd meeting of the Sacramento Aquarium Society. He will be speaking on: *Betta's In the Tropical Fish Hobby*. For details check out their website at: www.sacramentoaquariumsociety.org

Last but not least, keep sharing and communicating your love for Bettas among the group. We have all levels of members working at spawning fish, building betta-barracks and trying to raise show quality fish and as my mother always said, "It is a good thing to SHARE!"

Your President *Wendy*

Upcoming Meetings

A general membership meeting will not be held in April and instead our membership agreed to volunteer to help work at the Bay Area Killifish Association's West Coast Weekend Show in Hayward, April 25th and 26th. For more information on the show, see BAKA's website at <http://www.sfbaka.net>. There is still time for additional volunteers and if you are interested in helping out, please contact Wendy at lee_bettaworks@attbi.com.

The May general membership meeting will be Saturday, May 31st at Wendy and Dennis Lee's home in Folsom. The meeting agenda will include an outdoor barbeque, fish and other stuff auction, and lots discussion and planning for the CBS International Show. The show dates have been confirmed with the IBC for Saturday and Sunday, July 26^h and 27th, tentatively in the greater Livermore area.



In This Issue

Presidents chat.....	page 1
CBS Breeders Information.....	page 2
Ask Doc Dennis.....	page 2
Bettaculture Notes.....	page 3
Next Meeting Location and Date.....	page 4
Membership Application	page 4
Newsletter Editor.....	Dennis P. Lee
Photo Credits.....	Betta pics Wendy Gardull-Lee

CBS Breeders Information

Note - This column is to allow CBS members the opportunity to share information on the types and strains of Bettas they keep and breed.

Joe and Kathy Cooper, Castro Valley - are putting the final touches on a closed recirculating system for rearing males Bettas. The system uses 3 quart plastic containers to house individual fish and is equipped with ultraviolet and a central bio-filter/sump setup. Wendy and Dennis Lee, Folsom - rearing Reds and Blue/Green/Steel iridescent Delta Tails; also Black and Yellow/Golds including Plakats. The male pictured below was obtained from Carol Noble and was spawned with a blue female from the iridescent line.



CBS 2003 Officers President

Wendy Gardull-Lee lee_bettaworks@attbi.com

Vice President

Dennis P. Lee lee_bettaworks@attbi.com

Treasurer

June Delane June@savina.com

Secretary

Kathy Cooper knjinevc@pacbell.net

CBS Website <http://cbs.bettas.org>

Ask Doc Dennis

This question appeared on the CBS Yahoo Group site and generated a lot of comments. "This my second spawn and both times the fry die at exactly one week after hatching. I fed them liquidfry for the first three days then microworms. The tank is covered and the water looks good, only those brown lint-like stuff at the bottom. What am I doing wrong?"

I suspect your fry are dying of starvation. It takes the newly hatched Bettas about 24 to 36 hours to absorb their yolk sack and they will usually start swimming and searching for food at that point. The fry are attracted to moving food items which makes it difficult to feed prepared foods. The fry do not feed on the Liquidfry, but adding it to the aquarium water encourages the development of microorganisms for the small Bettas to eat. Live plants are a good way to provide the starter cultures. Fry (not fries) will usually congregate near the top of the aquarium (a good sign) which makes microworms a poor early food choice (they sink). Vinegar eels (an easily cultured nematode) are a much better choice since they congregate near the surface and are smaller than microworms. The smaller San Francisco strain of brine shrimp is an excellent food starting at about 3 to 4 days after hatching.

The brown lint-like stuff is likely left over food and fungus, the result of overfeeding, and should be removed by siphoning.

Send your questions to Doc Dennis at lee_bettaworks@attbi.com or
PO Box 2244 Folsom, CA 95763-2244

Complementary Trio of Bettas (1 male and 2 females)

With your completed 2003 CBS
Membership application (new or renewal)
Fish from members stock to be picked up CBS meeting,
Sorry, no fish shipping

BETTACULTURE NOTES**Dennis P. Lee**

**Editors Note – This is part 2 of a 3 part series
on Betta Breeding for Beginners**

Part 2 - The Spawning Setup

Bettas will spawn in almost any sized container but most Betta breeders use a ten-gallon aquarium to provide hiding opportunities for the female after spawning and also enough space for the initial fry rearing. The aquarium should be clean and filled with about 5 gallons of aged tap water that produces a depth of about 6 inches. Bettas will spawn in shallower or deeper water but 6 inches appears to allow the male an easy swim to pick up eggs, blow them in the nest, and then return to spawning. The bottom should be clean to allow the male to easily see and collect eggs that he does not catch on the drop. It is desirable to maintain a constant and above room temperature in the spawning aquaria. Most Betta keepers report keeping their fish at a water temperature of about 76° to 78° F and spawning is initiated at slightly higher temperatures, about 82° F. A 25 to 50 watt heater should be affixed along the back of the aquaria to maintain spawning temperatures. A small well-seasoned sponge filter should be located in one corner, a thermometer affixed to the wall, and some type of cover placed in the aquaria. Java moss, java fern or a few floating water sprite or water wisteria will provide cover for the female and harbor microorganisms as a first food for the newly hatched fry. The aquarium should be covered to maintain warm moist conditions in the aquarium and a light provide to observe the fishes activities. There is no consensus among breeders as to how long to turn on the lights. We have spawned Bettas with lights on 24/7 while other breeders maintain a natural light/dark rhythm.

Pairing Male and Female - Prior to introducing the male, a glass cylinder (candle chimney or similar container) is placed in the aquaria. The female will be placed in this cylinder later. The male is introduced to the aquaria to become accustomed to the surroundings about 24 hours prior to introducing the female. Some males will start building a bubble-nest immediately while others may not be stimulated until he sees the female. Males usually build bubble-nest under or near some type of cover at the surface. In the wild, this may be plant leaves or small pieces of debris. Many breeders use one-half of a Styrofoam cup as a bubble-nest cove while we have had good success using a 4 X 4-inch piece of wax paper secured to the glass. In some instances males have ignored the cover provided and constructed a nest at an alternative site.

When the female is placed in the glass cylinder, both fish become excited and usually begin flaring and displaying. If the male has not already constructed a nest he will usually begin blowing bubbles under the nest area.

The following day, the female should be released and the actions of both fish observed. Extremely aggressive males will actively court the female and occasionally strike her. Aggressive and very-ready-females will immediately move under the bubble nest and encourage the male with nips and tail-body wagging motions. The female will use the plants for cover if the male becomes overly aggressive. The male will court the female by flaring, with sideways body and tail wags in front of the female, and chasing and nipping. Spawning sometimes occurs within a few hours or up to one day later. We do not leave the pair together longer than two days if spawning does not occur although if either fish is not overly aggressive, they may be left together. If the pair appears reluctant to spawn or the male does not construct a strong bubble-nest, we will add 10 ml of Tetra Blackwater Extract to ½ to 1 gallon of commercially available spring water and drip this into the spawning aquaria. We have also had success adding a small handful of aquarium peat fiber to the spawning aquaria. Both techniques change the water chemistry through the addition of tannins to the water. While this may not be critical for spawning success, the change does seem to improve the quality of the bubble-nest and encourage spawning.

Spawning - This will take place under the bubble-nest and will last for several hours. Often there are several embraces before any eggs are produced as the pair becomes accustomed to each other. After the eggs and sperm are released, the eggs become fertilized as they drop. Both sexes will remain in a semiconscious state for a few seconds after the embrace. After reviving, the male will pickup the fertilized eggs as they slowly fall or pick them up from the bottom with his mouth and blow them into the bubble-nest. Occasionally the female will assist in collecting the eggs and placing them in the nest; and in some instances the majority of eggs will lie on the bottom and will not be placed in the nest until spawning is complete. A pair may make dozens of embraces over the spawning period and several dozen eggs may be released once the pair at a time. Occasionally one or both sexes will eat the eggs rather than placing them in the bubble-nest. The male usually becomes aggressive when spawning is complete and chases the female from the nest site. The female should be removed at this time to prevent injury.

Nest Tending and Egg Hatching - The eggs will appear as a whitish/yellow mass within the bubble-nest and the male will tend and guard the nest, retrieving and blowing back into the nest any eggs that drop. The male may also move the clutch of eggs to other locations. At 82° F. the eggs hatch in about 30 to 36 hours at which point their tails will be seen hanging down vertically from the nest. As some of the fry drop from the nest, they will swim quickly back up or the male will retrieve them and replace them in the nest. The male is removed after the fry are free-swimming, about 3 days after hatching.

California Betta Society

Next Meeting: No general meeting this month
Member volunteers to help at the Bay Area Killifish Society
Westcoast Weekend in Hayward, CA, April 25th and 26th
Saturday, May 31st Meeting: Folsom, CA, Outdoor barbeque,
CBS International Show planning, Fish and Dry Goods Auction

CBS Meetings 4th Saturday of the Month

California Betta Society
<http://cbs.bettas.org>
C/O Gardull-Lee
PO Box 2244
Folsom, CA 95763-2244
Address Correction Requested

CALIFORNIA BETTA SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION – 2003 ANNUAL DUES \$10.00

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

STREET/PO BOX CITY STATE ZIP CODE

E-MAIL (optional) _____

TELEPHONE (optional) _____

BETTA INTERESTS: ? KEEPING ? BREEDING ? SHOW TYPES ? WILD TYPES OTHER _____

Complementary Trio of Bettas (one male and two females) for new and renewals (sorry no shipping)

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO CALIFORNIA BETTA SOCIETY

RETURN COMPLETED FORM AND CHECK TO:

CBS MEMBERSHIP
C/O GARDULL/LEE
PO BOX 2244, FOLSOM, CA 95763-2244