

The Livebearer World



Southern Livebearer Aquatic Group (UK)

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Apologies to our President and Vice-President for accidentally omitting their names from committee list.

We are all very grateful to them both for the help and advice and support they give to our group.

Secretary's Page

Dear Members,

It is with a mixture of sadness and relief that I must announce that I shall not be standing for the National Committee again this year. After four years in the post I feel it is time to stand down. There are many reasons for my giving up but first and foremost amongst these must be that I am planning to build a new fish house which will take up much of my spare time for the next two years. Another reason is that it is important to allow new blood a chance in committee posts as they may have some new ideas which would be of benefit to the group. I will most certainly not be giving up livebearers - in fact, my commitment to this group of fish is even stronger than ever before. Over the last six months we have doubled our tank space and it is our plan to do so again in the next six months. Our new fish house, once it is in operation, will give us the facilities to maintain some of the really unusual livebearers such as Stingrays and Four Eyes.

All this expansion will mean a great deal of work and will leave me very little time for committee work. Even so, I shall still be active on two committees and that is enough for anyone!

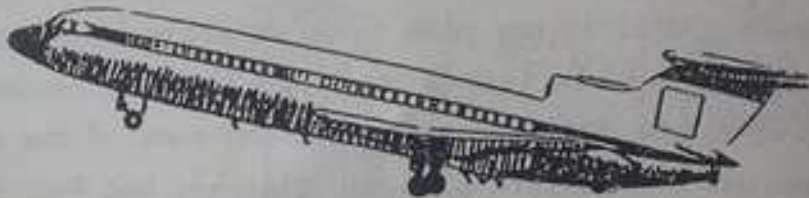


In the four years that I have been the National Secretary, I have had the satisfaction of seeing the group grow into the largest livebearer group in the world. I wish the new Secretary all the luck in the world - whoever they are. I hope they will try to do the best they can for the National Group, as I have always done. Even though I shall no longer be on the National Committee I will still be working to publicise S.L.A.G. through my articles in the Aquatic Press and, on a local level, I shall still be very active around the Show scene either Judging or Exhibiting.

AMERICAN TRIP

Diary of an English Hobbyist in The States by D. Lambert

On August 22nd to 24th this year, the American Livebearer Association Convention was held at Kalamazoo. As part of my holiday I decided to visit the show and see how the Americans went about things. Much to my surprise, when I told some of my American friends that I would be attending I was asked to give a lecture on the English hobby and also to help with the judging at the show. At the time, I must have had a brain storm because I accepted. This is the tale of what happened next.



20.8.86. I flew with British Airways to Chicago and a very pleasant trip it proved to be. I was offered a pre-dinner drink so I chose my favourite tippie, Bacardi and Coke. With the meal I was given a small bottle of wine and, afterwards, a liqueur. That, I thought, would be it... but not, around they came again with the B&C and the invitation that if I wanted more I only had to ask!! When I came out of my alcoholic haze at Chicago, I realised I might have overdone it a bit! I negotiated the steps to the waiting bus which would take me to Immigration and Customs clearance. Immigration took absolutely ages but, once through, I had to face Customs.

Now, before leaving home, I had obtained the necessary forms for importing fish into the States. Clutching these in my sweaty palms, I headed for the Customs desk. Once

I handed them to the Customs Officer, I knew I had made a mistake getting involved with all this bureaucracy. The Customs man looked with uncomprehending eyes at the forms. His eyes seemed to lose focus, his nostrils flared, sweat even broke out on his forehead as he said in a shaky voice, "Please wait here". Ten minutes later, another officer appeared who gave a casual look at the offending forms, told me to wait and went away muttering. Finally, I knew I had struck pure gold when an officer with enough gold braid to put an admiral to shame, walked across, took one look at the forms and said "O.K., you can go".

Mike and Diane Schadle - who invited me to stay with them up to convention time - were waiting. Mike and Diane are the A.L.A. Journal Editors and I had been corresponding and trading with them for about a year.

When we reached their house, it was up to the fish room. The set-up consisted of some forty tanks, most with plants in pots and all with filtration. In general, the fish were livebearers but there were one or two cichlids as well. In the living room were several mixed community tanks. The first task was to sort out the fish I had brought and re-bag those that needed it. Then down to a nice cup of tea made in the micro-wave! Mike and Diane had very kindly purchased some tea bags specially in case what they had heard about the English was true. They had heard correctly and, as an Englishman, tea was the first thing on my mind.



NEWS from AREA GROUPS

News from South & West Area Group

On 5th October, fifteen of the twenty-five members of South and West Group attended a meeting at Sanddeford Hospital Social Club. There was a talk on Derek's trip to America and Mexico followed by a general discussion on what the group wanted to do in the future. It was decided to start a Breeders Award programme for the New Year and details of this would be sent to all the members of the group with the first News Letter.

It was decided to start a bi-monthly News Letter so that members could keep in contact on a regular basis. Species lists were obtained from those members present. The date of the coming A.G.M. was mentioned and it was decided to attend as a group. Transport arrangements to be circulated to the group. An auction was held at which twenty-seven lots of fish and twenty-three lots of plants were sold.

The next meeting will be held on 7th December at a new venue in Andover. Contact D. Lambert for details.

News from Scottish Area Group

The Scottish area group held a meeting on Friday, 19th September at St. Bridesdale Community Centre, Orwell Terrace, Edinburgh. There were thirteen members present. Matters for discussion were the trip to D.G.L.Z. Scottish Livebearers Show and S.L.A.G.'s forthcoming A.G.M. Names were taken and transport arranged so the group will be represented at the A.G.M.

News from London Area Group

Group of S.L.A.G. hosted the 1986 Area International Show at the Hampton Gurney School, London, in September.

It was a great success with 165 entries and 45 exhibitors. Entries included several from Overseas, from Germany, USA, Canada and Scandinavia.

Members from all over the UK attended. We also had an Auction of some of the more unusual livebearers which was very successful.

Best Exhibit was owned by Ivan Dibble - a *Priapella intermedia*.

Best Overseas Exhibit was M and D Schadle's *Skiffia francesae*.

We thank everyone who made this Show the success that it was and hope that we see them again at our next Show in 1987.



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At 3.00a.m. we began to descend as we approached the airport. Seatbelts were fastened and soon the landing lights of Mexico airport could be seen—a great feeling. Then we were down and minutes later we were off to the airport buildings for the usual checks.

Everything was going smoothly, then it was Dennis' turn. Whether it was nerves or excitement when he took his suitcase to be checked he could not remember the combination numbers to open it. Lots of different numbers were tried plus banging, pulling, tugging and thumping and still nothing happened. So he was told to clear off and it was John's turn to have a laugh.

Outside we managed to get a bus organised to take us to the hotel where we were to stay for two nights. 'Hotel Galleria Plaza' owned by British Airways is in the 'Pink Zone' the posh bit of Mexico City. After a drink and a shower it was off to bed for it had been a long day.

Sunday morning we went out to do some sight-seeing and to hire a car for the next twelve days. We finished up catching a cab and spending two hours or so looking round a market. After the market we decided to walk back to the hotel, but we didn't realize how far it was. Some of the sights we passed were quite breath-taking or was it the high altitude that caused it?

All the traffic islands have monuments or statues on them in Mexico City. The one outside the hotel was 'The Angel' a statue to mark the Mexico's independence in 1821. We sat on this island watching the traffic and trying to pick up a few hints on how to drive for the next part of the holiday.

On Monday morning we checked out of the hotel after paying the phone bill (3mins. £38.00) and went to collect the car.

Maybe it's the thin air, but to drive in Mexico City it's every man for himself. Forget giving way and courtesy and drive like maniacs and do everything crazy. Dennis got the job as driver as it was the only seat left after John and I got in.

loaded with the three of us and all our clobber it must have looked like a five barred gate but still it tried valiently to clear it--and failed. Result--a buckled wheel. We had to empty the car to reach the jack and a smooth spare wh wheel. Miles from anywhere and getting dark we had to try and straighten the buckled wheel with the wheel brace and jack handle. Suddenly from no-where a Mexican and some kids turned up to watch the performance.

We stayed at the first town we came to that night, Acambro. It looked a bit wild in places and having a walk round at night we were pleased there were three of us.

Early away again the next morning, calling in at Patzcuaro, the scenery was great on the way. At Patzcuaro there is a massive lake and in the centre is an island with a town built on it. During the Mexican civil war the island remained independent. From here we went to Uruapan to the 'Eduardo Ruiz National Park' Nice place with lots of flowers and waterfalls. Everything looked bigger than usual.....even the spiders.

The streets are full of people selling odd things. Little old Indian women sit on the pavement slapping pancakes made of cornmeal from one hand to the other, stuffing lumps of meat and cheese into them adding green peppers.....the Mexicans love them. Not much sleep was had by any of us that night the peppers and spices set our backsides on fire.

We were crossing the state border from Hidalgo to Michoacan. As we turned a corner border guards were emptying cars and buses for searching. What a queer feeling it was, all sorts of things flashed through our minds for the next few seconds. Guards were walking about with rifles over their shoulders and behind us a machine gun post with two soldiers ready for anyone who tried to make a break for it.

(What will happen now? Read about it in the next journal)