



# The Raleigh Aquarium Society

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## October 2nd, 2008

*Next Meeting: Thursday @7:30pm November 6th, 2008.*

Meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at the [North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine](#) located at [4700 Hillsborough Street in Raleigh](#). Visitors are welcome! Snacks and light refreshments are provided. A raffle of fish and fish related items follow the meeting. Due to Security Issues, NCSU has required that the doors going into the downstairs lobby remain locked. Please be on time, as we will have a designated person standing by the door to let you in. If you are late, you may try knocking or call Linda Twaddle at 919-880-3782 or John Patterson at 919-264-4011.

## Meeting Agenda

### MACNA XX

This month, Carmie and Daniel will present a recap of THE marine aquarium conference of the year, MACNA XX. This is a must see for area reef and marine enthusiasts who couldn't make it in person but don't skip this program just 'cause you only keep freshwater. As we've seen in the past, a great deal of the information in the hobby applies to both sides of the FW/SW fence. Also, there'll be another great raffle and lots of time for socializing and refreshments. Thanks again, Jeff for the extra effort in providing the munchies.

# Business Meeting

Business meetings are open to everyone who is interested in participating in Committees, general business of the club and the Workshop and Swap Meet planning. Business Meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at the NC State Vet School, upstairs in the lobby area as follows:

October 16, 2008

November 20, 2008

December 18, 2008

January 15, 2009

February 19, 2009

March 19, 2009

April - no meeting

May - no meeting

June - no meeting

July

August - no meeting

September - no meeting



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# Suitable Aquarium Blennies

by Gerald Jennings and Terry Hall

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Aquarticles

More and more aquarists are beginning to discover the great attraction of keeping cold-water marine life, for though the colours and shapes of tropical marines are outstanding, those of our native fishes are not to be despised. In addition there is a lot to be said for learning the different techniques of managing marine aquariums with less expensive fishes which you can collect for yourself.

The blennies of our coast are excellent subjects for keeping in a cold-water marine aquarium, but do make sure that it is kept cold, for though some blennies frequent rock pools that heat up considerably between tides, they cannot stand too much heat and live far better in the cold. Use plenty of rocks and weeds for a blenny aquarium, and try to arrange an above-surface ledge of rock onto which the blenny can climb. The pectoral fins and ventral fins of some blennies are used like hands and feet for crawling about, and while this is mainly when they are in the water - and thus lighter - they are sometimes used to drag the fish onto an above-surface ledge. This is not to "sun" themselves as some folk think, for to expose themselves to the sun for any length of time would be fatal to any blenny as they must keep their gills damp. Therefore, if you do arrange a rock ledge at or above water level; be sure to drape wet seaweed over it to form a dank cave. Inside this your blenny will often conceal himself.



Then it is just a matter of obtaining your blenny and that, fortunately, is not at all difficult if you have access to the coast anywhere, and who hasn't nowadays? Choose a beach where there are some rock pools and a time when the tide is out. Search each pool carefully, looking under the bladder wrack where it hangs in festoons down the side of the pool. Most likely the first fish you find will be a "Shanny". This is one of the most common of our blennies for it is present all around our coast. It is an interesting fish because of the variation in its colouring and blotchy markings. In length it can be up to six inches, while the colour is greenish-yellow, darkened with blotches of black, brown, or grey. Many blennies have a small filament sprouting from just above the eyes. The Shanny does not, so this feature can be used to distinguish it from others of a similar appearance. Although the food of the Shanny is mainly small water creatures of many kinds and some fishes, it does also eat some seaweed. In captivity it is easy to keep and soon learns to eat scraps of raw fish, pieces of mussel, and similar foods.

With a similar taste in food, the Butterfly Blenny, *Lipophrys ocellaris*, is very much harder to find, for it has now become fairly rare. Nevertheless, it may occasionally be found among thick masses of seaweed in the larger pools towards the lower tide marks. It is up to 7 inches long. This blenny is easy to recognise, for it has the first spine in its dorsal fin extended beyond the others and there is a large "eye-spot" on the dorsal composed of a round black spot surrounded by a thin white line. In addition the Butterfly Blenny has a filament above its eyes.



Montagu's Blenny, *Lipophrys montagui*, is a smaller fish than the first two mentioned, being only 3 inches long. This one also has the filament on the head above the eyes, but in addition, this filament is of an orange colour and it is connected to the dorsal fin by a series of small tentacles which sometimes show clearly and at other times are hardly discernible. The Montagu's Blenny lives in the tide edge among rocky pools and seaweeds and is somewhat more colourful than the first two described. It is brownish-grey with darker bands, but over this colouring is a series of bluish-white spots. The caudal is of an orange-red colour like the filaments over the eyes. Being smaller it is sometimes more convenient to keep in an aquarium, but always remember that all blennies have powerful jaws and teeth so that smaller living creatures are rarely safe from them. The Montagu's Blenny is inclined to skulk under rocky ledges, keeping out of sight for long periods.

Looking something like the others but a larger size, is the Tompot Blenny, *Paralipophrys gattorugine*. This reaches a length of nine inches and has acquired its name of "Tompot" because it is so often found in lobster pots which it has entered to steal the bait. It will not normally be found in rock pools because its normal haunts are in slightly deeper water among rocks. The simplest way to catch one of these is with a hoop net baited with any kind of fish, or crushed-up shore crabs. Lower this to the bottom near rocks and after five minutes haul it up very smartly.

Belonging to a slightly different group, though still with the name of blenny: *Blennius ascanii* or Yarrell's Blenny. This fish is up to 7 inches long, and lives in similar places to the Tompot, so may also be found in lobster pots or the hoop net. In colour the Yarrell's Blenny is reddish-brown, marked with blotches of lighter and darker colours. It is a longer, more slender fish than those already described; The filament over the eyes is supplemented by smaller ones farther forward, and by quite large ones on the first spines of the dorsal.



An extremely interesting fish is the Viviparous Blenny, *Zoarces viviparus*. Although this fish is reputed to reach a length of two feet, such big ones are rarely seen and a more normal size would be less than a foot. It would need a much larger aquarium but would be worth the extra trouble. The females mate in winter and carry their young about inside themselves for 3-4 months. When released, the babies are 1 to 1.5 inches long, perfectly formed and well able to fend for themselves. A large female can give birth to about two hundred at a time. This fish should be sought among seaweed lying on tumbled rocks near the lower tide marks, while the young ones may be almost anywhere in that sort of region.

All these blennies have been kept in captivity and all are good feeders, so that they are most suitable for a first attempt at keeping salt-water fish.

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# Trading Post



# Monthly Web Links

**Raleigh Aquarium Society Forum** on Yahoo Groups  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/raleighaquariumsociety/>

**Potomac Valley Aquarium Society** in the Washington D.C. area <http://www.pvas.com/>

**Atlanta Area Aquarium Association** in Atlanta, Georgia <http://www.atlantaaquarium.com/>

**Carolina Fish Talk** <http://www.carolinafishtalk.com/>

**Charlotte Area Aquarists Society** [www.aquacharlotte.net](http://www.aquacharlotte.net)

**Marine Aquarium Society of the Carolinas** <http://masotc.net/>

**North Carolina Koi & Watergarden Society** <http://www.nckws.com/>

**Carolina Aquatic Plant Enthusiasts** <http://www.ncaquaticplants.org/>

**Aquatic Gardeners Association** <http://www.aquatic-gardeners.org/>

**KingFish Services** <http://www.kingfishservices.net/>



# Club Sponsors

*(The following businesses give RAS members a discount on purchases)  
You may be asked to show your RAS membership card*

**[Aquatica](#)** 5533 NC Hwy 42-West, A-16, Garner (10%) **919.661.7790**

**[Critter Country Inc](#)** 14 Technology Drive, Garner (10%) **919.772.3761**

**[Down Under, Salt Water Fish & Corals](#)** 1543 US Hwy 70 West Garner, NC 27529 (in the Gateway Plaza). (10%) **919.662.8820**

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**[Pet Mania](#)** 7901 Falls of Neuse Rd #125, Raleigh (10%) **919.676.3225**

**[Pet Paradise](#)** 9101-141 Leesville Road, Raleigh (10%) **919.848.8881**

**[The Pet Pad](#)** 1347 Kildaire Farm Road, Cary, (10%) **919.481.6614**

**[Triangle Tropical Fish](#)** 3600 N. Duke St. Suite #36 Durham (10% excluding aquariums and stands) **919.479.0088**

Please contact John Jankowski at [raleighaquariumsociety@yahoo.com](mailto:raleighaquariumsociety@yahoo.com) if you are an active member of the Raleigh Aquarium Society and do not have an up to date membership card. Membership cards can be picked up at any meeting.

# Raleigh Aquarium Society

## Application for Membership

Membership privileges include:

- Ability to post items in trading post section of monthly newsletter
- A discount card good at participating local pet stores
- All club discounts on club functions
- Education from the most knowledgeable aquarium experts in NC
- Yearly Membership - \$15.00 (includes spouse and children)

(Membership dues run from March 1st each year. New members joining any other time will be pro-rated at \$3 + \$1 for each month remaining in the year.)

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date to begin membership: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

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Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

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Renewal Membership

Mail to:

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