

Keeping Tropical Fish Becomes Hobby for Area Couple



ATTRACTIVE HOBBY—Bette Hoskins, the Mail Tribune's Jacksonville correspondent, looks over some Siamese fighting fish, part of her collection of tropical fish. She has 80 varieties of fish in some 300 tanks throughout her home.

By **BETTE HOSKINS**
Mail Tribune Correspondent
Jacksonville — Keeping tropical fish in home aquariums is a hobby that has become attractive to many

New Postal Rates Start Tomorrow

Postal Inspector John A. Eldswick urged Medford area residents to be sure to place the correct postage on letters tomorrow, when the new postage rate increase goes into effect.

Postage rates for first-class letters will be increased from 4 to 5 cents an ounce with air mail letters costing 8 cents an ounce instead of 7.

First class post cards will cost 4 cents instead of 3 with air mail cards going from 5 to 6 cents.

The extra charge of 1 cent for stamp booklets containing the 5-cent and 8-cent denominations has been dropped. The booklets will be sold at their face value of \$1 and \$2, respectively.

In addition, Eldswick continued, the booklets will contain a handy postage chart on the inside cover.

Eldswick warned residents that insufficient postage will be collected from the addressee or the letter returned to the sender.

Additional information on the new postage fees is available at the local post office.

Rogue Valley residents as well as people the world over. As a family hobby it has no equal, combining mystery, fun, fascination, relaxation and entertainment.

Aside from all of these reasons, it is educational and a means of promoting family togetherness, a fact to which we can personally attest, having entertained countless family groups on Saturday tours seeking additions to the family community tank. (A selection of fish compatible to each other, housed in one tank.)

Usually a small bowl of guppies donated by some well-meaning friend to one of the children in the household, is the bait that quickly leads to a larger more elaborate set-up of a tank and its accessories — filter, aerator, hood with lights and a heater with thermostat control.

These are the essentials but there is an endless supply of gadgets, remedies and instruction on the market, all somewhat confusing to a beginner. He would do well to avoid them at first and learn by actual experience and fish gossip sessions with fellow fish fans.

A bowl of guppies was the same bait that led to our fish keeping hobby. It quickly began getting out of hand, as we outgrew the living room, den and were forced to set up headquarters in the basement. Recently we built on another room, where we are now operating under the name of "Carbetta Aquarium."

My list of acquired titles as a fish-wife, include fish

PART OF COLLECTION—These fish are called Cherry Barbs. They're one of the 80 varieties of tropical fish that Bette Hoskins has in her unusual collection.



filter washer, baby fish catcher, clerk and listening post for all kinds of fish woes that plague our fellow fish enthusiasts.

Environment Provided
Good aquarium housekeeping for this private water world of tropical wists includes providing the fish with an environment as close as possible to what they would naturally seek in their native haunts. Tropical fish must be able to breathe, eat proper food, live in water of the right temperature, from 65 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

Plants in an aquarium help supply the oxygen required to maintain fish life as well as for ornamental purposes. Tropical fish thrive well on most good prepared foods available in this area with occasional "treats" of mosquito larva, brine shrimp (the eggs of which may be purchased and hatched out by patient fish keepers), bits of canned shrimp and other sea foods and an occasional dab of cooked spinach which is especially appreciated by fish from the Gourami and Black Mollie family.

Always remember never to overfeed, as left over food will decay and foul the water in the tank and create a gas that will kill the occupants swiftly and without mercy. Good housecleaning assistants for this purpose are several varieties of snails and cat fish scavengers. Every fish tank should have several of these garbage disposers.

Water Is Adaptable
The water in the Medford area seems to be especially adaptable to tropical fish.

Some of the more popular fish available in this vicinity (many of which are shipped in by air freight in plastic bags) are: the Platy or Moon family, Swordtails, Mollies, and Guppies, all of which are live-bearers (have live babies). Then there are the egg laying types such as Cichlids, which include the well-known An-

There are also Bubble-nest builders which include the Gourami and the many kinds of Bettas or Siamese Fighting fish. Other interesting types are the Egg Scatterers, Egg Hangers, Egg Buryers, Egg Stowers, Egg Anchors, Egg Splashers, Egg Hiders, Egg Scoopers, Egg Carriers and Mouth Breeders, to mention a few. All of these and many, more hundreds of kinds and types are available to intrigue, confuse, baffle and sometimes infuriate their human keepers.

Places of Interest
Any home with a well kept aquarium immediately becomes a place of lasting interest to everyone in the neighborhood, a conversation piece with always a new angle. These are pets which stay at home, require no license and can't possibly annoy the neighbors. For shut-ins they can be constant companions with their whole world to view.

Our so-called hobby has expanded to approximately 300 tanks and 80 varieties of fish, at present, with future expansion plans.

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Directors Approve Report

Members of the Medford Chamber of Commerce board of directors unanimously approved a report presented by newly elected president, William J. Williams, to streamline the committee structure of the chamber, going away with the old system of 6 divisions and 22 committees.

The action was taken at the first board meeting of the new year. The new proposal combines certain committee functions, reducing the total number of committees to 17. Divisions will no longer be used.

"Returns are coming in from chamber members indicating committee service preference," William said, "and assignments will be considered early next week by the executive committee."

The new president also submitted a resolution to the board which was unanimously adopted.

Supports Pear Shippers
The resolution supports the Medford Pear Growers and

Shippers request that the U.S. department of agriculture, marketing service, purchase surplus sizes and grades of D'Anjou pears to relieve the present depressed market and result in orderly marketing of the crop balance.

The annual dinner of the chamber will be Friday evening, Jan. 25. Plans for this meeting will be developed through the executive committee.

New officers serving with Williams are Manville Heisel, first vice president; Dwight Houghton, second vice president; and Murray Dumas, treasurer.

Eight new board members recently elected by the chamber membership to serve a three-year term include Frank Benesh, Pacific Power and Light; J. H. Creager, Pacific Northwest Bell; Otto Frohn-mayer, attorney; Dwight Houghton, U.S. National Bank; C. A. Hubbard, Hubbard Brothers; Gerald T. Latham, Medford Mail Tribune;

Bill Thorndike, Concrete Steel; Richard Travis, Mechanic's Industrial Laundry.

Forresters Now Live in England

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Forrester, formerly of Ashland and Medford, are now living in England, where he recently was appointed head of the department of sculpture at Salford Technical college, at Salford, Lancashire.

Forrester is well known in southern Oregon, and was the artist who did the play sculptures in Medford's city parks, the busts of Shakespearean figures at the Oregon Shakespearean Festival theater in Ashland, and other pieces.

They left here early last year for study and work in Italy, but recently moved to London and will take up residence in Salford this month.

Their two children, Jack and Winnie, are with them.



BIRDING

By **JOSEPH HICKS**

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT
On Dec. 28, 23 members of the McCamant Bird Society participated in the 63rd nation-wide Christmas bird-count. Clear sunny skies prevailed throughout the day, enabling the observers to set a new record for this area of 90 species totaling 17,403 birds.

There were more starlings (6,050) counted than any other bird. Apparently starlings are still increasing in numbers in this area, as only 1,655 starlings were observed on the previous Christmas count. A corresponding reduction in robins from 647 last to 49 this year would possibly indicate the starlings are displacing the robins in this area.

A decline in western blue-bird population is also indicated by the 56 birds observed this year as compared to the 213 on last year's count. Again the starlings may be displacing our bluebirds. However the intensive freeze of last winter undoubtedly had a large share in reducing the bluebird population as nearly all bluebirds resident in the valley at that time were frozen to death.

Two new species were added to the Christmas list this year. Two observers, who climbed to the top of Roxy Ann, were fortunate to find the rare Northern three-toed woodpecker. This woodpecker is dark gray with a "ladder-back" of gray and white, and a distinctive yellow cap. There have been two previous sightings of the Northern woodpecker in the Green Springs area; but never before was it seen on Roxy Ann, or observed on the Christmas count.

Six dunlins were also counted on Hoover lake. The dunlin is a shore bird with a slight droop at the tip of the long, stout, black, bill. In the winter it has a gray suffusion across the breast and a clear belly as contrasted with the black belly displayed during the breeding season. Dunlins have never been reported in this area during the winter season.

It is noted that only one burrowing owl was reported on this count. For the past six years there has been a colony of 12 to 24 burrowing owls near Hoover schol. Apparently, something has recently happened to this colony, or otherwise there would be the usual 10 to 12 owls on this count. I hope they are not being shot, for they are colorful and interesting birds. They are also highly beneficial to man as their diet consists principally of mice.

The Christmas bird count is sponsored by the National Audubon Society, New York. Over 8,000 persons in the United States make an annual survey during the Christmas season of over 600 local census area. Each area consists of a circle 15 miles in diameter, comprising about 176 square miles. Normally, the survey is made in the same areas each year. This permits the Audubon society to present a comparative yearly picture of the bird population in the nation.

Taking part in the count were Dr. John Reynolds, the Misses Jean and Ellen Reynolds, Lester Igo, Mrs. Robert Hubbard, Mrs. Howard Bush, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Richardson, John Linn Jr., James Femrite, Mr. and Mrs. Everett Lasher, Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Joseph Hicks, the Misses Betty Jo and Michelle Hicks, Mrs. Ray Briggs, Mrs. Naomi Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Tompkins, Mrs. George Hartley, Robert Maben, and Orville Bendure.

Species and numbers of birds listed on this count follows: pied-billed grebe, 11; great blue heron, 24; black-crowned night heron, 8; burrowing owl, 1; belted kingfisher, 2; red-shafted flicker, 90; acorn woodpecker, 89; Lewis' woodpecker, 33; yellow-bellied sapsucker, 1; hairy woodpecker, 4; downy woodpecker, 11; northern three-toed woodpecker, 1; Jay's phoebe, 2; horned lark, 40; Stellar's jay, 13; scrub jay, 188; common crow, 15; black-capped chickadee, 16; mountain chickadee, 51; chestnut-backed chickadee, 2; whistling swan, 16; mallard, 214; pintail, 19; green-winged teal, 52; American widgeon, 150; shoveler, 14; wood duck, 5; ring-necked duck, 1; canvasback, 4; Lesser scaup duck, 38; bufflehead, 3; ruddy duck, 24; common merganser, 2; Cooper's hawk, 1; red-tailed hawk, 33; Swainson's hawk, 2; golden eagle, 3; marsh hawk, 5; pigeon hawk, 2; sparrow hawk, 73; ruffed grouse, 1; California quail, 304; ring-necked pheasant, 107; American coot, 135; killdeer, 190; common snipe, 34; dunlin (red-backed sandpiper), 6; rock dove, 20; mourning dove, 390; barn owl, 1; plain titmouse, 14; common bushtit, 2; white-breasted nuthatch, 24; red-breasted nuthatch, 20; brown creeper, 5; winter wren, 1; Bewick's wren, 6; long-billed marsh wren, 3; robin, 49; hermit thrush, 3; western bluebird, 56; golden-crowned kinglet, 75; ruby-crowned kinglet, 19; starling, 40; cedar waxwing, 300; loggerhead shrike, 1; water pipit, 40; myrtle warbler, 15; Audubon's warbler, 2; house sparrow, 369; meadowlark, 418; redbwinged blackbird, 114; tricolored blackbird, 2,000; Brewer's blackbird, 3,600; brown-headed cowbird, 30; evening grosbeak, 1; house finch, 8; pine siskin, 13; American goldfinch, 140; Lesser goldfinch, 95; rufous-sided towhee, 37; brown towhee, 28; Savannah sparrow, 21; lark sparrow, 7; slate-colored junco, 1; Oregon junco, 750; white-crowned sparrow, 200; Golden-crowned sparrow, 390; fox sparrow, 2; song sparrow, 45.

The national Bald Eagle census will be taken during the period from Jan. 3 to 21. Anyone seeing any bald eagles in Jackson county during these dates are requested to telephone the information to me.

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