

Goldfish Standard

Newsletter of the Association of Midland Goldfish Keepers



Gardens, Ponds and Fish Houses

MARCH MEETING

MARCH 2019 Contents of this issue

DISCLAIMER

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Observations and thoughts from First AMGK Meeting of the year



This was probably the coldest meeting we have ever had in Many a Year, only a few weeks previously we had a record heat wave for early spring, only to be lumbered with freezing temperatures, causing me to shiver continually for over an hour. I had hoped that with such good numbers of our membership in attendance on the day that we could be warming each other up, but to no avail. That said, there was general agreement that the meeting was well worth the trip for those that came the furthest (Yorkshire and Bristol). The biscuits and tea/coffee supplied by Linda and Gary and cheesy fish pastries by Jackie were very welcome as usual.

Over the last four or five years I had undertaken to photograph member's fish houses and ponds when visiting their premises, with a view to creating a subject for a meeting discussion. So, fish houses and general aquatic accommodation it was then! With the help of Grahame and Jackie a week or two before the meeting we had managed to put random photographs in order of breeder onto a device and put them through our new society projector. We are very grateful to Grahame for sourcing such a good value machine at a great price that should prove invaluable for our future meetings over the years and at our Open Show on Saturday, June 29th and the National Show on Saturday 5th October. (more of these events elsewhere, and also at a later date). Members were encouraged to talk about their set-ups as the pictures and videos played on the big screen with questions being asked and answered as we went through the main differences, similarities, challenges and disappointments of each of the member's establishments. Contributor's premises included those of Mick and June, Martin, Phil, Tony, Andy, Gary and myself, with more to come next time on Sunday May 12th from Jackie and Grahame together with an outside speaker on **'All things Filtration'**. As if that wasn't enough, we will also be staging our adult, bluest, prettiest and non-standards fish table show – so please bring as many of your fish as possible on the day to make it a cracking day out.

It was amazing to find out little tricks that each and everyone of us have developed over the years, as shown clearly in the exhibited photographs, and with many of the breeders present to answer questions with fulsome responses there was plenty to learn and divulge to make for a great meeting. Eight of us managed to book a carvery over the road to fill us up and raise our body temperatures sufficiently for the long drive home. Thanks to all those members that came to fill up the meeting hall once again and for all your contributions. Next time we'll check that all the radiators are on and working.

Discussions on Nationwide, elections, constitution, direction and show took up a lot of time at the meeting much to the frustration of some and of great interest to others. It is part of our hobby and essential to maintaining standards for our shows and having to address future changes and developments whilst galvanising current trends within the hobby and offering support to as wider range of hobbyists as possible from wherever they originate.

Pat Davies
CHAIRMAN

Following our discussions at the last meeting with regard to the current state/future of Nationwide etc., the following letter has been sent to the secretaries of the other three member societies and is reproduced herein to keep all our members up to date as to the current state of play. Any decisions/development/progress with regard to the contents and actions required as outlined in the letter will be reported on at the next meeting and published in our next newsletter as appropriate. The letter was sent by Andy (current delegate at Nationwide and Hon. treasurer on behalf of the current secretary of Nationwide, Dennis Godfrey, with his permission).

NATIONWIDE: GOLDFISH SOCIETIES UK



Judged to the Nationwide Goldfish



Standards of the United Kingdom



Organised & Sponsored by:- Association of Midland Goldfish Keepers (AMGK); Bristol Aquarists Society (BAS); North East Goldfish Society (NEGS); Northern Goldfish & Pondkeepers Society (NGPS)

Today I want to write to you all, both AMGK Members and Members of the Nationwide, as the Treasurer of the Nationwide Goldfish Societies UK or NGSUK for short.

As discussed at the AMGK meeting on 10th March 2019

Three years have now passed since we last had a formal meeting and in that time a lot has happened, with three very successful National Shows, judged to the Nationwide Goldfish Standards UK, which have proved beyond any doubt to be truly a quality set of goldfish standards.

Also, from a financial point of view, the NGSUK can now stand on its own without the need of financial support from its member societies.

But as we all know, as time goes by, things change and the Constitution for the NGSUK was set up in such a way that after a three year period we, at least, have to re-elect/appoint a new Chairman. It is also an opportunity to confirm the Treasurer, Secretary, Head of Judges and Standards, along with the Delegates from the founding societies.

Most of this work will be done behind the scenes, by email, but will be shared with the general membership to keep everyone up to date with any developments. It is fair to say at this point that there will be some changes in people who are currently holding positions within the NGSUK.

One thing that is very clear, is that the current Chairman needs to be re-elected or a new Chairman appointed, as this is a fundamental part of the NGSUK Constitution.

Also, I understand, that the Secretary wishes to stand down at this time and there are some new delegates to be appointed. The current Secretary, Dennis Godfrey, has given his blessing for me to try and coordinate the re-election/appointment of a new Chairman, confirm a new Secretary and establish who are to be the new delegates.

Please could you forward to me the names of people, who may wish to stand for any of the positions, however the position of Chairman will need to be proposed and seconded.

Please could you be kind enough to respond by the end of April 2019.

You can email me at andrewbarton67@gmail.com

Kind regards,

Andrew Barton

TREASURER
Nationwide Goldfish Societies UK

Gardens, Ponds and Fish Houses

AMGK March Meeting



How nice it was to see the room full with a very positive atmosphere on the first meeting of the year, with members taking the time to welcome new people to the club for their first visit, with a nice cup of tea and a biscuit.

The afternoon's entertainment was a selection of pictures of several members fish houses and gardens, which were all very different in their layouts and construction.

It was interesting to see the many different ways in which the filtration and water quality was kept, along with the diverse methods of fish keeping.

Most of the members were present at the meeting and were quite happy to give a running commentary as their slides were being shown and helping the membership by answering any questions that were asked about how they went about their fish keeping.

Andrew Barton
PRESIDENT

Recognized Fancy Fish

At the meeting we discussed the formation of a guide to help with the understanding of several popular varieties of goldfish that are available, but are not bred by breeders in the UK but can be purchased in the UK.

We are trying to put a guide together, using drawings and photographs, ready for the AMGK June Open Show.

Please note that the guide will not be as comprehensive as any Nationwide Goldfish Standard.

The varieties that we wish to concentrate on at the moment are:

- Butterfly
- Demekin
- Chocolate Pompon with dorsal
- Tamasaba
- Hamanishki or Crown Pearlscale
- Oranda (Other than veiltail type)
- Chinese Lionhead

If you have any photos or drawings of these fish could you please email them to me at andrewbarton67@gmail.com

The 2018 SHOW



The
Goldfish Society
of **Great Britain**

This was the last show to be staged in its current format in London.

The management of the G.S.G.B. has been taken over by Andy Green of Star Fisheries, which it is hoped will breathe a new lease of life into the society.

The show itself was well supported with a large auction of quality fish. Elaine Edmunds was presented with **The Best in Show** award, which she won with an adult Bristol Shubunkin.

Well done Elaine!

I didn't arrive at the show until later in the day but did get the chance to chat to some old fish keeping friends who I had not seen for some time and I took the opportunity to wish everyone the best for the future, in light of the changes that were happening.

At the end of the show, Martyn Clare and myself were given the opportunity to take away and store a large quantity of plastic tanks. A generous offer from the society which we are grateful for and I gave the assurance that the tanks would stay within the goldfish hobby and put to good use in the future.

In many respects it was not only a sad day for G.S.G.B. but also for the amateur goldfish keeping hobby as a whole.

But every cloud has a silver lining and we await to see what will be revealed by Andy Green after taking over from the current G.S.G.B. Management.

I'm sure we will be in for a few surprises.

So watch this space!

Andrew Barton
President AMGK

Join our **facebook** closed group

The Association Of
Midland Goldfish
Keepers
Closed group



Need any help? - please contact Heather Carrier on 07549 526622

2018 was the year
where the Butterfly was the
centre of much attention.

The Butterfly

Several members acquired Butterflies last year, with at least three of those members being successful in breeding them, with very positive results.

The Butterflies have been shown at club meetings and open shows, including the National and there is a genuine interest from those members to develop the strains of Butterflies that they have and eventually to have a Nationwide Goldfish Standard to work to.

As the lead coordinator in the development of the Butterfly Standard, I have been approached by members who keep this fish, with regard to what they need to do going forward into 2019.

Evidence

Members will need to supply me with photos of their results along with a log of what breeding programme they have been conducting - including the results of how true to type the bred fish were.

Also the opportunity to see the fish, whether as a working group meeting or on an individual basis.

Please note that the evidence will have to cover several breeding seasons.

Andrew Barton
Coordinator

Development of the Standard

As a group we will have to decide on the following things before we can seriously put a Standard together.

They are, for both adult and baby fish.

- The correct size and shape of the tail.
- What metallic and nacreous colours there are.
- The shape and size of the eyes.
- Fins and body.
- How we will satisfy the special characteristics of the fish in question.

This is a lengthy process but in time things will develop and we will eventually get into a position where we can submit a proposal to the Nationwide Committee.

In recognition of the various sponsors that support our Open Show and that of the National it is considered appropriate that we have a regular inclusion of the names in our published **AMGK Goldfish Standard Magazine** and include them in our electronic distribution of said magazine.

In addition, we would ask all members who use the products from our contributing sponsors to report on findings such as ease of use, fish appetite, water quality changes, growth rates of fish etc.,

This will help all our members and be excellent feed back to fish food manufacturers and distributors that support each show.

SHOW SPONSORS RECOGNITION



FishScience Aquarium Foods

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- Recreates the natural insect based diet that goldfish would eat in the wild
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- Easily digested for low waste

Plus Naturally enhances the colour of the fish using Spirulina algae, paprika and krill
...and the fish really like it

www.fishscience.co.uk



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LONDON OR NON STANDARD SHUBUNKIN?



The above fish was actually placed first in a GSGB London Shubunkin breeders class.

In my opinion the tail of this fish is too upright for a London Shubunkin and too small to be a Bristol Shubunkin.

I have bred similar fish from Bristol Shubunkin stock where one of the parents had a tail too small to be a good Bristol, but was bred from because of its upright tail.

These are photos of two Shubunkins I bred with a small upright tail from Bristol Shubunkin stock.

I call them my MIDWAY SHUBUNKINS



I feel 2019 will be my last year for breeding any fish at all.

Due to ill health in 2018 my breeding effort was only 10% of what I used to do, which is not enough and will only disappoint when it comes to exhibiting my fish.

After all breeding fish was my incentive for keeping fish in the first place.

Brian Bates
AMGK Member

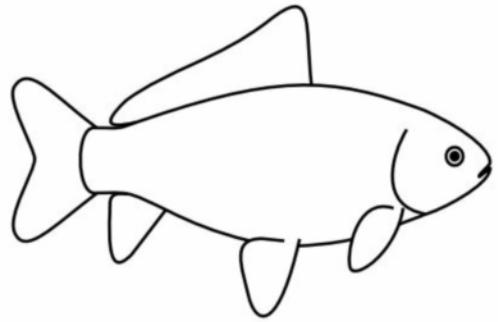
It is my sorry duty to announce that Brian Bates, one of our regular members has regrettably decided to give up his hobby of breeding some of the most excellent fish in a number of varieties at the highest championship level over many years, due to poor health.



We wish him well in his enforced retirement and hope that he can visit at some of our future meetings and shows should his current health experience some improvement. I have passed on the society's best wishes to Brian and his wife, Avril, when visiting to collect most of his fish related equipment, that he so generously offered to our society membership at the last meeting. We're currently organising a second visit with a larger van to collect the remaining larger items.

Pat Davies

A personal observation of Brian's article by Pat Davies, a fellow fish breeder .



It is understood that the above concerns have been forwarded to the other societies that make up the Nationwide Goldfish Societies UK, that have adopted and produced the current Nationwide Goldfish Standards. It is difficult to add comment or opinion without seeing the fish in the flesh, although Brian, the author, did view the fish at a show outside the rules and standards of Nationwide. Personally, looking at the photograph only, the tail far exceeds the proportion to the rest of the fish of that expected of a true London Shubunkin (especially a class winner). At any 'Nationwide' Show, this fish would be severely 'down pointed' and most probably disqualified as not passing the 'type test'. The profile around the mouth region also looks suspiciously like a 'Parrot beak', that I get once or twice from time to time in my own line bred Bristol Shubunkins. However, this may not be the case in reality – and just the photographic angle.

For many years there has been little sign of the correct tail for a London Shubunkin on any show bench, instead of being an exact replica of the Common Goldfish, (as shown clearly in the Nationwide Standards), almost all London Shubunkin exhibits have been shown with a slightly longer tail with the two lobes positioned in a near closed 'scissor' formation in a rather low slung position in relation to the body contours. These lobes often close together and partially open as the fish swims. In more recent shows Brian and a few other dedicated breeders have sort to rectify this error with entries at Nationwide shows reflecting some success in this endeavour.

It may be that the type of fish shown in the photograph could be used to help improve the tail shape of a London Shubunkin as the lobes have good separation, but could only be considered a work in progress and not a complete restoration of the standard. Incidentally, like Brian, I too occasionally produce fish with similar tail formation (In Bristol Shubunkin Stock only) and would hope to keep one good specimen to put back into an experimental spawning to see if I could attempt to eradicate the overlap of the two large rounded lobes, as sometimes occurs within more mature stock. This would be a tricky proposition as the risk would be that the desirable rounded shape of each lobe could be weakened and would therefore be counter- productive. Only time would tell. It is these challenges undertaken with care and skill that make for good fish keeping and breeding. We all strive for excellence, with Brian being no exception, hence his original article. These observations are made only to encourage discussion and observation that can only lead to greater understanding of what is expected of any standard. It is through discussion and observation that a sensible modification of any standard in future years can be made, should it prove necessary, in order to help current and future breeders attain excellence in their breed on the show bench.

A note to remember is that when the revisions were made to earlier standards some three years ago, it was agreed that there would be at least a five year moratorium on any possible modifications. In any event it would require agreement of all societies, having taken opinions of relevant variety breeders, within Nationwide before such a change could be considered and ratified.

What is wrong **FISH?** with my

In this, the first of a short series of articles on fish health, we will look at some clues that can be used to diagnose what is wrong with your fish.

The majority of fish and pond keepers will experience problems with unhealthy fish at some stage. Sometimes the cause of the poor health is obvious and it is relatively easy to treat the fish. However it can also be more difficult to get a good diagnosis despite looking at books, magazines and relevant web sites.

David Pool

Recognising unhealthy fish.

The first stage in treating a fish is to recognize when it is unhealthy. Early recognition of an unhealthy fish is important if that fish is to be successfully treated.

The first signs of poor health are often a change of appearance or behaviour, which might include:

- Gaping at the water surface
- Sulking at the surface, bottom or behind structures in the aquarium
- Not feeding
- Clamped fins
- Rapid gill movements
- Change in colour
- Emaciation

Care has to be taken when interpreting these signs, as they are not always a sign that the fish is not well. A change in colouration, for example, may indicate that the fish is in breeding condition, or has adjusted its colour to match the surroundings. Sulking behind structures may be the natural behaviour of shy or timid fish species. As a general rule however, if the fish are looking or behaving differently to normal it is advisable to have a closer look at the fish concerned.

Diagnosis

These first observations give a clue as to the possible cause of the poor health. The secret here is not to jump to conclusions. Decide firstly why the fish is behaving or appearing as it is, and then what would cause it to do so. The list of possibilities can then be examined to determine the actual cause of poor health.

Lets look at two examples to demonstrate this stepwise diagnosis:

Fish Gasping

You notice that a fish in your aquarium or pond is gasping at the water surface (opening and closing its mouth right at the surface of the water). It is gasping because it cannot get enough oxygen and there is more oxygen at the water surface. This does not necessarily mean that there is insufficient oxygen in the water. It could be that the fish is unable to get sufficient oxygen from the water.

Possible causes of this include:

- Pollutants. A build up of ammonia, nitrite and chlorine can cause irritation and damage to the gill membranes. The fishes response to this is to produce additional mucous in order to protect the skin and gills from irritation, but with the side effect of making oxygen uptake less efficient.
- Physical damage. This can result from severe poor water conditions, bad handling or parasitic attack. This will reduce the surface area of gill tissue that can actually absorb oxygen resulting in the fish not getting the quantity they need.
- Gill parasites. Parasites such as gill flukes (*Gyrodactylus*), protozoans and bacterial infection can cause both physical damage to the gill tissue and irritation of the membranes, resulting in excessive mucous being produced.
- Blood parasites. High levels of blood parasites such as *Sanguinicola* (a parasite of carp) will absorb oxygen before it reaches the vital organs within the body.
- Low oxygen levels in the water. This could result from too many fish in the aquarium or pond, or insufficient water movement to allow oxygen to enter the water. High levels of plants or algae can also remove oxygen during the night (when they are not photosynthesizing and actually producing oxygen).

Fish rubbing

A second example could be that you have observed your fish rubbing against underwater objects. Taking the diagnosis stepwise we have:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Symptom of poor health.... | Fish Rubbing |
| Caused by | Skin or gill irritation |
| Resulting from..... | Poor water quality (eg raised levels of ammonia, nitrite, chlorine or chloramine. Sudden changes in pH or hardness) Skin parasites Gill parasites Abrasive particles in the water |

It is important that you don't jump to the wrong conclusions. As an example of this, you may have noticed the fish were rubbing and the actual cause was poor water conditions. If you decided that it was due to gill parasites and treated the water for a parasitic infection you would cause further distress to the fish. As already mentioned, early diagnosis of a problem gives the best chance of controlling it effectively – so a wrong diagnosis can be a big issue because it delays taking the right actions.

How to decide what is the problem.

After creating a list of possible causes of poor health, it is necessary to decide which one is responsible. One very good guide comes from the time of onset of poor health and its rate of spread. There are three main possibilities:

1. Affects all of the fish, or all of the fish of a particular species or size, and occurs quickly (say overnight). This suggests a water quality problem.
2. A small number of fish are affected initially, but this number gradually increases. This suggests an infectious disease.
3. Only one or two fish are affected and the problem does not spread to any other fish. This suggests a non-infectious disease, physical injury or malformation

The next stage in our diagnosis is dependent on which of the above groups the fish can be placed in. If the problem is due to water quality, testing, partial water changes and the appropriate use of treatments will help. If due to parasites, some indication of which parasite is responsible is important of the correct remedy is to be selected.

In future articles we will look in more detail at water quality issues and some of the more common parasites.

5th National Fancy Goldfish Open Show 2018



The video of the show can now be viewed on **YouTube** or by going to the bottom menu on the home page of our website **amgk.co.uk**



We all send our best wishes to Tony Roberts (a founder member of our society) following his recent surgery and hope for a speedy recovery back to health for him and his fish breeding, showing and judging for the greater good of the fish keeping hobby fraternity.

Thank you from Tony Roberts

I would just like to say many thanks to all the AMGK members for your very amusing card, sending me all your best wishes for a speedy recovery. I am pleased to say that I am making good steady progress and looking forward to seeing you all at the shows and enjoying another successful fish keeping season.



*Mum holding me as a baby
by the pond in 1969*

WELL AT LONG LAST

I finally get the time to sit down and write an article for our Newsletter.

Most of you will know me, Jackie Pedley, from the shows and catering, and more over my cheesy fish shape biscuits at meetings.

So here is how I got into the hobby, and I have to say it was from a very early age!

I originally came from Birmingham, a little "Hamlet" called Kingstanding to be exact, LOL. I lived in a 30's semi with Mum and Dad and I remember being fascinated by my father's goldfish in the small pond we had. I recently found my old "babies first book" (if anyone can remember those), and in it was written that my first friends were **"The goldfish in the pond."**

After a couple of years my parents divorced and I lived mostly with my Grandparents in yet another 1930's semi which backed onto Perry Hall Park. I spent many a sunny afternoon in the park with my Grandmother catching sticklebacks in the Japanese Gardens only to get them back home and days later of course they died. I knew nothing about keeping fish at the age of 6 and neither did my Grandparents. I had various fish tanks like any child. I had goldfish and tropical, but they all died or got rehomed as life got in the way of everything and priorities changed.

In the early 1990's I bought a large hexagonal tank with half a dozen mixed varieties from the Holly Bush near Cannock.

It was there that I was told about Tommy Sutton, a breeder of top quality goldfish based in the midlands. I remember arranging a visit to his place and was amazed at the size of the set up. I remember dodging airlines, and stepping over extension cables which were everywhere, but he had some fantastic fish to look at. I must have had a good eye because all the ones I wanted to buy were not for sale, so I came away with nothing but it was worth going to see this local famous man and his fish.

In 1997 I moved to Telford but, unfortunately, I was sharing a house and had to rehome my fish with a friend who had a massive pond. Despite there being celestials, moors, ryukins and bubble eyes, they all survived the winter and grew to a huge size.

I never kept fish again until the summer of 2016.

I had recently lost my mum from cancer, and my father had already died when I was 16 so I had no immediate family left so I decided I needed a focus, a therapy, a new hobby. Then I saw an advert on the local Freecycle Group for a black moor goldfish with its tiny tank...for free. Apparently, it didn't get on with other goldfish and was being bullied. I think this fish must have gone around Freecycle a few times so home with me it came, tank, pink gravel, plastic plants and the fish all sloshing away in the footwell of the car. I was a little apprehensive, as I wasn't sure if my cat, Missimoo, would watch it, try and play with it, or eat it. She did none of these things, she seemed to know it was out of bounds. Of course though, after a few weeks I felt it was lonely. **I had named this fish Henry.**

So off I went to Ripples and purchased a rather nice small calico fantail. However, when I put them together, I noticed it was bullying the black moor, just like the previous owner said, chasing it up and down the tank relentlessly. So I decided to partition the tank.

A few days later I woke up to find that the tank had lots and lots of tiny cyst things at the bottom of it. In a panic I got onto the Internet and soon found out that these were in fact, as I suspected, eggs. **So Henry became Henrietta** and that is where my real interest began. I was completely hopeless at rearing the fry, I left the filter in, gave them liquifry instead of live BBS, I was a complete novice and followed the advice from the staff at an aquatic centre, which I must say looking back, was not very good. However, in my Internet search I wondered if there were any shows or clubs I could join, to gain knowledge and take the hobby further.

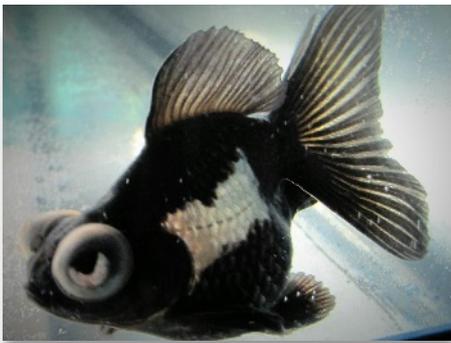


MY FIRST PONDS



To my amazement, I came across the The Association of Midland Goldfish Keepers, with the Chairman Pat Davies being based in Telford, not only that, but the Nationwide show was also held in Telford, right on my doorstep! Wow, So I immediately rang Gary the Treasurer to join up, and after that, I entered the Nationwide Show which was coming up in September. I was so excited. Gary was the first person I ever spoke to in the Club and he made me feel so welcome both over the phone and on the day of the show, we had a long chat about the club and I was now counting the days to the show!

The only class I could enter at this point was the Non-Standard class, but even for a Non standard class I had to get something decent to enter. In came Star fisheries, the only supplier of quality goldfish I could find on the Internet at the time, and placed an order for 3 panda butterfly tails, all quite small. I was really excited to receive them and by post of all things! I will never forget that day opening that massive polystyrene box from a courier. (You know that feeling!) and they were adorable and really nice quality too.



I named one Oreo and he went on to win the Non Standard class, which I was sooo excited about it.

I remember being outside the hall when the judging was taking place and trying to climb up to see in the window to see if they had judged the class, it must have looked hilarious at the time. When I realised I had won a prize, as daft as it sounds I felt really important LOL!

That is where my hobby took off and grew into breeding, showing, and now specialising in breeding butterfly tails so that the club can finally set a standard for these beautiful fish for a class of their own. I fell in love with this variety after watching Solid Gold and Dexters World on YouTube. I have always loved telescopes and together with those lovely butterfly shaped tails I think they are well deserving of a standard in the UK.



THE POND NOW



THE NEW FISH HOUSE

I want to give my heartfelt thanks to Gary, Linda, Pat, Andy, Heather, June Kemp and everyone in the club and beyond that have made me feel so welcome, it means a lot to me to be part of such a wonderful hobby with such nice people, and long may it all continue.

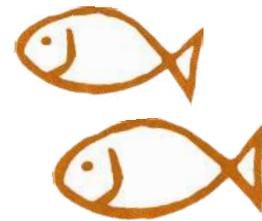
Jackie Pedley
AMGK Member

DIARY DATES

FOR 2019

Dates for meetings at Binley Hall starting at 1.00pm

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Sunday 12th May | 1.00pm - 5.00pm Adult Fish Show (Talk on All Things Filtration) |
| Sunday 18th August | 1.00pm - 5.00pm Baby Fish Table Show Bred 2019 (Speaker to be agreed) |
| Sunday 20th October | 1.00pm - 5.00pm AGM & Presentation of Awards |



Other dates for 2019

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Saturday 29th June | AMGK Open Show |
| Saturday 20th July | NEGS Open Show - TO BE CONFIRMED BY NEGS |
| Sunday 28th July | AMGK President's Fish Houses & Garden Open Day 10.00am onwards |
| Sunday 1st September | BAS Open Show |
| Saturday 14th September | NGPS Open Show |
| Saturday 5th October | National Fancy Goldfish Open Show |

ARTICLES FOR YOUR NEWSLETTER

Please send to: **8a Howard Road Stafford ST17 9EW** or email amgkblog@gmail.com

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