

Heiko Bleher: 1st lesson

First lesson, June 17th 2006

Dear Patrizia,

primo de tutto un bell auguri e congratulazione per la stupenda pagina web nuova. Anche se e sempre um po complicato...

I wanted to say to the discus-fantatics and discus-lovers, first of all a nice hello = Ciao a tutti.

Than, after reading a few items on this large website, I have noticed again, first of all, that unfortunately there are still plenty of bad, uneducated pet-shop-owners in this beautiful Italy (which I appreciate and want to live until my last day - if I don't vanish in the jungle...)

How can an employee suggest to place Neolamprologus together with discus??? Not only must this person be insane, but also the vendor has no respect for nature, nor does he have any idea about fishes...

Si io fosse patrone de casa lo buto fora immediatamente una persona del genere...

And it is exactly because of such misinformation around the globe (because you do not find such stupidity only in Italy (magre un po em piu, que in Germania, Svizzera or Austria), but all over the world in petshops, that I sat down some years ago to bring down on paper the knowlege I was able to accumulated on discus. Wild discus are with me since I was 4 (when my mother decorated in the ruins of Frankfurt the first aquarium, and one had a discus) but actually really with the age of 7, when my mother took me and my 3 brothers on her first expedition into the most remote Amazon jungle in search for wild discus - il re del aquario, il re de la Amazzonia, il re dei pesci...

And not only because of that, also because I saw literally thousands of discus-books and magazines around the world writing such a garbage about wild discus, that I got mad, and wors all the time when I looked into it. And none was getting better. Each new one which came out, was wors than the previous one. many did not bother anymore even to change the texts of the previous book/magazine, only the photos were exhanced and the title, and some even deared to declare that they are the pioneer of discus breeding and collecting, while the same person has not breed a sinbgle discus to this date, and has been in Manuas once or twice in the 1990s to step in front of the number one hotel in South America with a discus given by an exporter, claiming he has collected a new species...(it was hundreds of kilometres away from the first discus habitat)...

Such statements made me so mad, that for 3 consecutive years, between my many expeditions yearly, which I will never stop doing, in the search of freshwater fishes, I wrote the book which they call now in germany the "Discus-Bible". A monography about wild discus as it was never ever done before, and probably never will be another one. As I wrote researched and wrote it for generations to come. Not only for todays' discus- Amazon fishes (thers are more than 380 different ones in the book as well)- and nature lovers, but also for those of tomorrow.

It is completed also in Italian and hopefully by end of July available in Italy as well. And now I am writing volume 2, which is a s big, and as complete was tank breed variants is concerned and breeding from the very begin, which each breeders secrets and tricks (more than 300 from 4 continents).

But I do not wanted to tell you actually so much about my books, but about the misinformation we are confronted to in this, on one side unfortunate globalization, and on the other side advantages of it... But sad enough, also the internet does not help to improve our knowlege, except for a few exceptions...(Sorry to say this, but it is a fact, specially as every single human on this planet can now write what he wants and place it - without anyone who checks it - on the net. Every single person now on plant Earth has/or can become an author...).

Talking about wild discus, the first of hopefully monthly messages to come, is about wild versus tank breed variants:

1. Rule: Do never mix wild with tank breed variants in one community aquarium (if you want to breed them, that is a differnt story).

This is the most occurred error discus people around the worl make (and naturally most petshop owners or employees).

If you ask me why: very simple, wild discus live in an complete different habitat (see my upcoming book), but so complete different from anything in captivity, that it can not (in most cases) work. There immun system is completely different fromn tank raised fishes.

Just one example from a different different wild animal:

I had several wild cats (Felis tigris), when I lived in Germany, some of the most beautiful wild animals and extremely intelligend. Not to be compared with dumb house cats. I had these during the time it was still possible to bring them back and raise them. Today they are completly banned and prohibited, and since they started to regulate and stop any importation whatsoever, this species has become almost entirely extinct. (The Washington Convention and so called Animal Protection Associations help only to eliminate the last wild animal on planet Earth, as no-one protects them in nature, in their habitat, only in Rome, Paris, Brussels, Kyoto, etc., where none lives...).

The first one I brought back lived only for 6 month at my fish house and with me (I never have had a wild animal in chains or in a cage, never needed to do that, they all loved and respected me, better than any women (ups, sorry)). Than when it started to vanish suddenly I went to the veterinarian and he told me: "Your dwarf Jaguar had contact with ordinary house cats, domesticated cats, and his immune system is not prepared for that". It is the same when indigenous people in the Amazon become in contact with white man, they die like flies (reed mor in my book about that - in detail).

Wth other words: these are just two examples of what happens (and definately will) when you place wild discus together

with tank breed variants.

Each one has a complete different immune system and none of the two has the same, although the immune system of wild discus is much better intact than that of tank breed variants, that is also a fact to remember.

Unfortunately if you buy an wild discus in a petshop, were they have both together in the same tank, than you better stay away from buying these wild discus...

Now it is amost mid-night and I still have many e-mail to send out. next time I will give you lesson number 2 about wild discus...

In the meanwhile remember what I said and you will already have abetter start with such beautiful creatures...

Arriverdeci

Heiko Bleher