

## Heiko Bleher: 3rd lesson

Heiko Bleher: 3rd lesson, August 28 2006

Cara Patrizia, cari lettore de discuspassion,

solo oggi - de nuovo con ritardo, pero prima de andare in jungla - le mando il numero 3 dei consigli per i wild.

But first of all I want to thank you all for the nice comments. Specially some guys like Piero 76; than Alessandro, and tell him that I am, unfortunately for many, a man who does not hide his thoughts and spells the truth open out (which many people, like now poor Andrea, do not like to hear). But also thanks to Maxdema for the <sup>3</sup>guru<sup>2</sup> and Gass for his English texts (although I do understand Italian very well, except I am poor in writing it&Scaron;); to Patrizia (almeno un auto so posteggi bene - cosi hano detto altri&Scaron;) e GRAZIE a Tatore per le traduzioni.

E mancha ripondere a Mazza - espero che ha fatto buone ferie - voglio rispondere a sua domanda.

It is always better to collect some wild and sell them in order to breed those and bring them into the hobby. I have tried to do this all my life and most of the tank-breed discus today on the world market are from fishes I collected and Schmidt-Focke (first) breed, and later others (first German)breeders. This helped us to have what we have today.

Naturally there will always be people, who should not receive a wild discus, but how to avoid that? How can you avoid that a special dog, cat, a hamster or a beautiful Iguana gets into the hands of a wrong person? I think it is impossible to control this (and no law can help there). This is a fact we all have to live with. And I think if one has to pay a high price for a good wild (from the right source, as I explained in lesson number 2), than he (or she) will almost certainly take good care of the fish. Only if wild discus are sold as bread and butter fish (for extreme cheap prices, which naturally will be below cost), than the value will disappear, as it has happened with many tank breed discus around the world. This, naturally, is not healthy and will not help the hobby. As it is the case with anything: what is very cheap, has no value and is treated accordingly. If you pay one Euro for a new cellular phone, you will not take as much care as if the phone did cost you 200 or 300 Euros. Correct? The same applies to anything, a new car, a watch, a pair of jeans or a discus&Scaron;.

And remember: wild are today almost better off in the hobby than in nature, because of continuous habitat destruction. Only two days ago new satellite photographs proved that the destruction of the Amazon rainforest is going with twice the speed as ever before (and I have seen that it is even much faster disappearing, than what anyone says now, simply as not even satellite photos can see it all). But you will be able to find this out and understand it better what I am saying once you read my new book, which actually is now in press and if the binder works well, we should have the Italian edition end of September, latest by mid October.

Now let me give you another - the 3rd - lesson on wild:

We have now established that 1st: do NOT mix wild with tank breed varieties; 2nd: get your wild ONLY from reliable source. The 3rd most important fact about wild is: Do NOT put your wild in an aquarium full with plants - wild do not live with aquarium plants, except Utricularia foliosa, in some places - which is floating - and other floating plants such es Pistia stratiotes and Salvinia auriculata, Eichhornia species or Azolla species. But even those not always. If you are lucky in nature, you find a Cyperus species with its roots in the discus-habitat, or one of the many swamp-plants and trees (which I cannot list here, but everyone is shown and written up in my book). And naturally when the water rises and discus breed in nature, they go into the flooded forest and there they are between tree-trunks, and swim between the top of trees (as those are submerged), but not between planted aquarium plants&Scaron;.

The famous aquarium plants, which in Germany and the US are still called Amazon-sword-plants (genus Echinodorus), are NOT found anywhere in the Amazon near a discus habitat. Remember: wild always live (during daytime) in deep waters (2-5 m) and only at night come near the surface&Scaron;.(again, see my book).

If wild (and even tank breed) discus do not have an open space to roam (swim) they will not be happy. Have a look at some of the biotope-aquariums I made, which can be seen under:

<http://www.hagen.com/canada/english/aquatic/more.cfm>

If you want to do it as Schmidt-Focke has done it sometimes, just place potted sword-plants (ie Echinodorus bleherae) in the aquarium, were they can swim around, that is ok. Better (and that he did also) is to have above, or next to, the aquarium potted plants, like Philodendron with long roots, and those will go automatically into the aquarium and discus will love it. (So many live dring day below roots&Scaron;).

Now I have to go, as I must prepare my Amazon trip - have only 2 days left and my equipment is tremendous and besides must also still write some articles&Scaron; (which I get paid for - to finance my many trips&Scaron;). As mentioned, this is my first trip into the jungle were I take 11 discus-freaks from Denmark, as they have asked me long time ago. If it works well maybe someday I can take some of you to a discus-wild (in the sense of the word)-field trip&Scaron;.

Always  
Heiko