

Heiko Bleher: 8th lesson

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Ciao tutti,

here is the late Heiko Bleher – am I not always? If anyone wants to know, the man who did more than anyone else in pioneering the breeding discus and making those beautiful varieties available to all of us today, Eduard Schmidt-Focke (of whom I have written a lot in my volume 2, Salvo knows), wrote about me in 1988 (in the German version of Aquarium Oggi) under the title: Aquarianer, die die Aquaristik bewegen: Heiko Bleher (Aquarists that move – or set in motion – the aquaristic) that he knew me as a child; that he already bought aquatic plants and fishes from my grandfather, Adolf Kiel, and that my grandfather told him “Each minute you talk with me will cost you 100 Marks” (about 50 Euros today). And that was in the early 1950s (and I am just thinking – what should I charge discuspassion.net per minute??)

Eduard also mentioned my mother and the family tradition for more than 100 years; my malaria attacks (and that I am the only soul probably on planet Earth with all 4 existing malaria parasites); what my motion is to always search in the most remote areas of this planet for fishes; and that I never give up – not even under the worst conditions (which is true); about my lectures and seminars I give in 7 languages and 5 continents (anyone who is interested in it, should have a look at my new website: www.aquapress-bleher.com – almost as nice as this discuspassion.net website); etc. But he also wrote (translated into English) “when he comes to me, to photograph or bring me new discus, I always calculate his late arrival of 2-3 hours, But he always comes”;. Now that is why I mention this: I always come. He knew very well (and waited often).

My problem simply is, that life is so short and I only lived so far 10 lives (that is what others say!), and want to live another 10 lives (or at least complete my 1000 destinations, and so far I have collected only in 817, as of December last year; see www.aquapress-bleher.com). As Patrizia knows, I work almost around the clock. Just came back from a tremendous trip: flew to Singapore (Aquarama 2007); flew back to Milan and worked for 3 days and nights; flew to Warsaw and drove to Lodz (Pet Fair 2007 and did hold 4 lectures); drove back to Warsaw, flew to Milan where Natasha brings me my fishing gears to Malpensa (which got lost in Paris a few hours later) and I flew Paris-Singapore-Darwin (Australia), went a few hours later on a 4-days-collecting trip driving 2600 km and collecting throughout the Northern Territories; came back to Darwin, did hold some lectures and flew back to Singapore (in the meanwhile my fishing gear arrived to bring it back to Italy unused), connecting to London than from Heathrow airport to Malpensa. Natasha picked me up and I went straight to work on the final revision on the genus *Symphysodon* (yes there will be another change in discus names). This all in the last 5 weeks.

But let me first of all congratulate you all to this great website, and much more organized (although when I open it, it starts below 20 cm, at least in Firefox we use). Although I was busy as you can see, I still looked into the site and want to make some comments. I know, not everyone likes my comments, because not everyone likes the truth (for that reason I do not have to many friends, but those I have, I know they accept and can live with the truth; difficult for many);

1. The Royal Blue. I think those discus are very nice – compliments – But green rocks? Instead of white fine sand! Please change that, the discus must feel like on the moon. The F1 Royal Blue (I think from Stendker) are very nice. And interesting is: your microsiemens (conductivity is very high) and I was in Jakarta, with a very dear friend and one of those breeders who follows my advice, and his microsiemens measured 900 µS/cm and above for the discus he ships. And for the breeders even there it was as high as 500 µS/cm up to 600 µS/cm. And all of his discus (about 500 breeding pairs) looked very good. That is good for those who buy the discus also. Because they will have little or no problem at all. Simply because if the discus are acclimatized to such high conductivity, it is very easy to place them in our normal tap water in Europe (300-500 µS/cm and some times more).
2. Salvo, grazie per il complimento.
3. Foto del mese (maggio): It is a very nice fish and very interesting (even for me new), the deposizione delle uova a la lana de perlon (mai visto – ved e anche eu posso imparare). Complimenti Vincenzo della Grotta.
4. Anche foto de “Royal Green” sono belli, pero sono “Green”; no “Royal”; (verde “DISCUS”; p.f.). – pero como io detto sono wild molto belli. (And that is what counts! Nice fish.)
5. Acuario del mese- terrible. I can never agree to placing plants into the wrong environment. I am a nature boy and as long as natural nature exists, there is nothing like it for me which can beat that. Cryptocoryne and Anubias have nothing to do in and discus aquarium, and even less *Ophiopogon japonicus* (this is Africa, Asia and far east with Amazonia). mario Ghirardi, p. f. fai un habitat per discus (vede anche www.aquapress-bleher.com i click “exhibitions”; i doppo il 7. Biotope “Rio Minerua”; per una idea).
6. Carmelo Aricò il testo scritto, le sue parole io sono 100% de accordo con lui, i grazie per i complimenti. I can see that you are one of those who really reads my books. And watch my videos. Thank you. I also agree to the rosso turchesi; molto bello i prima qualità. Bravo. Parolo molto, molto correti, bene detto Carmelo.
7. Vacanze: I never made vacanze, per me la vita e troppo corto per restare sur una spiaggia. Io parto per Canada i USA

per conference lunedì, i doppi sono in Tajikistan (after many conferneces in September and October, I go on two Amazon – discus – field trips to unknown places, and I return on the November 11th. to be with Patrizia and Dieter Untergasser and Sera for the convention…of discuspassion.net…).

8. Manzo i tu scalare sono molto belli (but nbot the real P. altum from the upper Orinoco… you can also go to www.aquapress-bleher.com and click on “Publications” and you will see Nutrafin Aquatic News magazines. You can go directly to Rolf C. hagen (just click) and open Nutrafin Aquatic News issue 3 and you can read all about angelfishes and the real P. altum, which I wrote (and show it).

9. For those who are interested: Badis badis belongs to the family Badidae and are found from Pakistan to Thailand. I discovered several and just recently 10 new species have been described (but there are many more – Badis is in that part of the world, very similar to what Apistogrammas are in South America… I just mention it, as I saw something on your web site and like to correct it… But it is never I fish I would suggest for a discus aquarium. They need a small aquarium, live in tiny environments…

10. And to the buyer of Altum Orinoco I want to give the following advice (I think your name is Bostongeorge84): NEVER buy fishes out of a box (this comes from one who worked with fishes all his live – or better 10 lives). Tatore is correct in what he said about bacteria, but besides that: What they tell you is not true ! Venezuela has stopped exports because of political reasons (not because of “bacteria’s”). And no one can send, sell, or give you true upper Orinoco P. altums (see Nutrafin aquatic News issue 3, mentioned above).

So do not believ these stories…

But I know, you all want to know about my lezione numero 8:

I have seen that some of you have learned.

Many people (also on other web sites) have asked me what about pairing different color varieties of wild discus together.

Now I want to tell you, all of you who want to breed must keep the following in mind:

1. Naturally it is advice able to pair only similar looking fishes, but you do not have to make a rule of it. You can mix discus from the Alenquer region with discus varieties from the lake Nhamundá, or from the Canumã affluents, or from Manacapuru region or even the Purus area, it is all the same. It is one species, but just some different colours. As everyone knows, today Italians marry Brasilien girls and Japanese giurls American, etc. They are very different, but still the same species, Homo sapiens. For some who might not know all the location I mentioned here (and has not read my book, volume 1) I can only say: you can mix “brown” discus with “semi Royal”, or “Royal Blue” with “semi Royal”, or “rose discus” with “brown”, etc.

2. The discus I would not mix, is when there are two species involved. That is a “green” discus (S. aequifasciatus), with a “brown”, “blue”, “Royal blue”, etc. And the same applies to S. discus – the “Heckel discus” with a “brown”, “blue”, “Royal blue” or anyone of that category – and never with “green” discus. Any of such crossing will (almost for sure) end up in infertile offspring (after F2 or F3 latest). It is almost as Man with Gorilla female crossing…

3. Now I know like Salvo has done it and many others, and there is also in nature such crossing (hybridization) taking place – I proved it in my book. But still I do not see it good (and Schmidt-Focke was totally against it, after he had done it – “unfortunartly” he always told me). Naturally if one wants, and insists in doing it, than at least after you have young from this crossing (the F1), take these and do NOT – NEVER – pair them again with anyone of the parents and do NOT cross them under them self (that is: Do NOT do brother and sister crossing).

Now, unfortunately I have to go, it is already after 1 in the morning and I have another hard day tomorrow. But do not hesitate to write to me under this web site and next month when I come back, I will surely answer.

All the very best to you all,

always

Heiko Bleher