



# Something Fishy

*The Official Publication of the  
Ottawa Valley Aquarium Society*

September 26, 2005

Welcome to the 2005-2006 season of the Ottawa Valley Aquarium Society and welcome to the sporadically produced newsletter. I hope this year to produce the newsletter more regularly than has been done in the last 5 or 6 years.

I have decided to return to the newsletter its traditional name of "Something Fishy". It's with the "Something Fishy" name that the newsletter was last produced with any regularity.

In each edition of the newsletter you will find the club news and schedule and one or two informative articles. I'd like to encourage all OVAS members to submit articles for the newsletter. If you have articles or any comments at all please send them to [newsletter@ovas.ca](mailto:newsletter@ovas.ca).

Marc Le Blanc  
Newsletter Editor

## 2005-2006 Schedule

### **Monthly Meetings:**

- September 26
- October 24
- November 28
- January 23
- February 27
- March 27
- April 24
- May 29
- June 26

(Meetings are at 7:00pm at the  
Jack Purcell Community Centre  
at 320 Jack Purcell Lane, Ottawa.)

### **Giant Auction:**

- March 5

## Memberships

Last year's memberships have expired and it's time to purchase this year's memberships.

Memberships fees (and all OVAS revenue) are used to pay room rental, equipment (laptop etc.), insurance, website, supplies and more.

There are three classes of annual membership.

- Adult membership (\$20.00) for persons 16 years of age or older.
- Junior membership (\$7.00) for persons 15 years of age or younger.
- Family memberships (\$30.00) are also available.

Memberships may be purchased at an OVAS meeting or online at [www.ovas.ca](http://www.ovas.ca)

# Blackouts - A Free Algae Killer

by Sean Kettle

There is nothing more enjoyable than looking at a well-maintained, beautifully-aquascaped planted tank. Conversely, and ironically, there is nothing more frustrating for the hobbyist than dealing with “new tank syndrome” and the onset of what feels like outbreak after outbreak of algae until the tank finally stabilizes itself.

Algae doesn't discriminate. It hits neophyte and expert alike. It can manifest itself in low-light, lightly planted tanks, or in “high tech tanks” with pressurized carbon dioxide and custom lighting enclosures. The simple truth is the environment we as hobbyist try to maintain for our plants is also an ideal environment for algae.

There are many commercially available solutions for algae. These range from medications you can treat the water with, additives for your filter, UV sterilizers and diatom filters just to name a few.

Medicate a tank against blue-green algae (which is part bacteria, part algae) and you run the risk of introducing med-resistant strains the next time. Diatom filters and UV sterilizers can put a big hole in your wallet.

Even buying algae eating fish means less room in your tank for the fish you want to keep, and more money feeding those algae eaters after the outbreak is over.

Why not naturally remove the algae without spending a dime. Blackouts are 100% effective, and cost you NOTHING! Additionally, there are no side effects to your fauna or your pocketbook by employing a blackout.

The reason blackouts work on removing algae is rather simple.

Algae is, for the most part, a very simple

organism. For example, green water is single-celled. The plants you have intentionally introduced into the tank are far more complex botanically speaking. Healthy plants will always outcompete algae for resources in a tank. Healthy plants can also withstand adverse conditions better than algae. This is true of blackouts. Plants can survive short periods of no light by using up stored nutrients. Algae can not.

So, how do you blackout your tank?

Blackout procedures

1) Feed fish. Healthy fish can survive a full week without food. This will be their last meal until the blackout is over.

2) Do a large water change. 50% is advisable. Since you will not be able to monitor water chemistry at all during the blackout, you want to ensure you have fresh water before you begin.

3) Completely blackout the tank. Absolutely NO light should be able to penetrate into the tank. Use corrugated cardboard, heavy blankets, etc...

4) Do nothing for 5 days. Do not feed fish. Do not take off covers “just to make sure”.

5) After 5 full days, remove cover and perform another large waterchange (required because of dead and decaying algae) and tank maintenance.

and finally

6) Find the root cause for your algae problem in the first place. A blackout is not the solution to your algae problem. Finding the nutrient imbalance and correcting it is.

*OVAS members receive discounts at the following stores:*



Discount available at the listed stores only, no discount when ordering online. You get 15% off of all items except aquarium kits.

Big Al's Aquarium Services  
1900 Innes Road, Ottawa, ON, K1B 3K5  
(613)244-3474

Big Al's Aquarium Services  
145 Roland Michener Drive,  
Kanata, ON, K2T 1G7  
(near Terry Fox and 417)  
(613)592-2822



Discount available at the listed stores only, no discount when ordering online. You get 15% off of dry goods only, no live plants or fish, etc...

Super Pet Ottawa  
Emerald Plaza  
1547 Merivale Road, Nepean, Ontario,  
K2G 4V3 (613) 224-1212

Super Pet Barrhaven  
3161 Greenbank Road, Unit #64, Nepean,  
Ontario, K2J 4H9 (613) 843-9977

Super Pet Kanata  
255 Kanata Ave., Kanata, Ontario, K2T 1K5  
(613) 254-9989



Pet Circus  
274 Bank Street,  
Ottawa, ON  
K2P 1X6

(613) 234-8456

15% discount



Critter Jungle  
Hampton Park Plaza  
1405 Carling Av, Ottawa, ON  
(613) 729-7354  
15% on all aquarium-related items and live fish, plants, except for items already on sale.

**2005-2006 OVAS Executive**

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Vice-President: Sean Kettle (vice-president@ovas.ca)  
Secretary: Art Williamson  
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Membership: Sue MacLean  
Program Director: Alain Decelles

Breeder Awards: Matthew Séguin (bap@ovas.ca)  
Librarian: Colin DeSouza (librarian@ovas.ca)  
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