

PROFILE OF A GUPPY BREEDER #4
Bob Larsen
MID NIGHT EXPRESSIONS

Frank Schulterbrandt 1/25/2016



We all have stories as to how we got involved with tropical fish and fancy guppies. Our stories seem to overlap and take on the same paths, so it is also true with the man who I am about to introduce to you. He has been a member of the South Jersey Guppy Group as far back as I can remember. He has won multiple color class awards over the years and has specialized in breeding and raising guppies that have black bodies. He has won the color class championships in the HB-GREEN, HB-PASTEL, HB-PURPLE and the BLACK class. He has won other color classes but has specialized in the Half Black Bodied colored guppies. One of the most rewarding moments for this person was after a few years of trying to win the Half Black Pastel class he finally succeeded in doing so. Another highlight for this breeder was at a New England IFGA show, he won three best of shows awards. So that is why I have entitled this article the "MID NIGHT EXPRESSIONS". It gives me great pleasure at this time to introduce to you, Bob Larsen, along time member of the SJGG.

Hi frank, I will list your questions then answer them...

1: When/how did you first get involved with tropical fish ? and When did you get involved with guppies and how long have you been raising guppies and why guppies ?

I started with fish at age 11. As a kid I worked for Arnold Sweeney and at times Luis Rexford ([two very well known guppy breeders in that time frame](#)) , cleaning box filters etc, one of the benefits was going to shows and shops where fish were sold. Both of these men were guppy breeders. As a kid I also kept other livebearers.

The teenage years were tough. My parents thought I was nuts because I spent so much time with the fish, but that did not discourage me. The other problem was chasing girls. Once I had my own house I got into guppies again. That was 1971. Keeping guppies always intrigued me I guess due to my back ground and the challenge of creating different strains. I still say that back in the old days the fish were stronger and bigger than today and there was not as many strains.

2: Did you belong to any club before joining the SJGG ?

I belonged to the North Jersey Aquarium Society club and I am a life time member. I joined in 1973.

3: How many tanks do you have and what size tanks are they ?

I currently have about 150 tanks. They are 10's 5's and 2's

4: What are you favorite colors / types of guppies ?

I always liked MULTIS, HALF BLACK PASTELS and HALF BLACK GREEN. I never wanted Black ,Red or Red Albino but I have them and actually liked them now as well. I also have Purple, Half Black Purple, Aoc Bicolor, Half Black Red, Half Black Blue and Green.

5: What was/is the hardest Black Bodied Guppy that you had to work with and why ?

Of all the half black colors I think the ¾ blacks might be the hardest. They tend to show purple or blue. They also are hard to get size on. Also females that are 3 or 4 months old don't show a gravid spot and don't seem to load up the same as red or green. I go by the dates on my stick on notes to know when a female is or should be ready. As the females get older it is easier to tell when they are ready.

6: How many times a day do you feed your guppies and what do you feed them ?

I feed live baby brine once a day and many various dry foods once or twice a day maybe once a week they get frozen beef heart or adult frozen shrimp.

7: What is your water maintenance routine and your lighting system (how long the lights are on / off) ?

I change water on Monday and Tuesday about 50 percent. I refill 25 percent each of those days. Baby tanks are changed a couple times a week. The babies are kept in 5's so they get dirty quick. I have overhead fluorescent lights that are on about 10 hours a day. I might be changing that in the future.

8: What was the funniest thing that happened to you while you have been breeding guppies.

I had reds from Fred Previtera years ago that I did not want, he insisted I take some, he was winning best of shows all the time and with his albino line also. I got his reds and could not do a thing with them. I gave half of a large drop to my son and the rest to Ed Ligotti. My son took the red class the next year.

9: What was the worst thing that happened to you while you have been breeding guppies.

The worst thing is still on going. When I moved from New Jersey to Pennsylvania the water was different. I lost most of my fish. The water was acidic. I had a cylinder installed that brings the PH up. I also found out that I need to aerate the water for 24 hours before using. What also messed me up was getting fish from several different people. You never know what problems you are bringing into your room. I had problems with fungus etc. Finally now I think I have everything under control. Along the way many fish were thrown out.

10: How long did it take for you to get your first IFGA award and then to win your first IFGA Color Class ?

I probably started showing IFGA around 1976. I think I won my first color class about 1978.

11: Besides Baby Brine Shrimp what are your two favorite foods to feed your guppies ?

Besides baby shrimp I like Zeigler's and my own concoctions.

12: When did your son Bob get involved with guppies.

My son Bob JR. has had fish since a teenager, he as of now doesn't have a favorite.

13: How many lines of your favorite color strain do you have ?

I try to keep 2 or 3 lines of all my fish.

14: How many first place color class championships have you won ?

2013 was my best year, I won the Half Black Purple, Half Black Pastel, Half Black Green and the Black IFGA classes. I also was 3rd over all in the Grand Male standings. In addition to these first place finishes in the above mentioned classes, Bob finished second in AOC Bi-Color, third in Half Black Yellow, third in SnakeSkin Solid, fourth in Half Black AOC and fourth in the Multi class. So indeed this was a great show season for Bob. Well rewarded and well deserved, the results of a lot of hard work.

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