WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26

GROWING YOUR SALES WITH WATER GARDEN PLANTS
11:00 am – 11:45 am
Pierre LePochat, WaterScapes Aquatic Plant Nursery and Brandon McLane, Florida Aquatic Nurseries, Inc.

Waterlily flowers have always been a sign of beauty from the ancient Egyptians to artists like Monet. Capture this beauty and help increase sales in your own retail stores. Water garden plants are a great seasonal item for spring and summer to help boost sales. Container water gardens take up very little space and can fit anywhere from apartment balconies to backyard decks making great additions to almost all your existing customers homes. We will discuss plant varieties, care techniques, and tips to make your customers successful.

KEEPPING YOUR FISH HEALTHY: A BRIEF GUIDE FOR RETAILERS
1:30 pm – 2:15 pm
Roy P. E. Yanong, VMD, Professor and Extension Veterinarian, UF/IFAS Tropical Aquaculture Laboratory

What are important considerations for keeping the fish in your store healthy and sellable? In this seminar, I’ll briefly review acclimation considerations and then discuss factors important for maintaining healthy fish including water quality, nutrition, general health and disease management, and biosecurity. I will also provide suggestions for record keeping and written health and disease management protocols.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27

USING LIVE FISH AS A TRAFFIC DRIVER AND BASKET BUILDER
11:00 am – 11:45 am
Jamie Gunter, Spectrum Brands, Global Pet Care Division

There is a great opportunity in Pet Retail to capture and keep aquatic shoppers as retail locations featuring live fish are drying up. There are 7.5 million aquatic supply purchasing households in the US today, according to Nielsen Panel Data through October 2019. Given the shrinking number of retailers selling live fish, it is important to understand the how to attract and engage potential new shoppers to the hobby. In our discussion I will outline a key underserved shopper group, their purchasing habits and their annual spend. You can leverage this shopper intelligence to optimize your assortment, marketing programs and in store signage to target this group and grow your sales base.

“THE WIDE WORLD OF FRESH AND BRACKISH-WATER ORNAMENTAL FISH”
1:30 pm – 2:15 pm
Edward C. Taylor, Aquatics Columnist for Pet Business Magazine

What to carry in your aquatics department? That might seem like a no-brainer. The question is: have you explored all the different possibilities, or do you just go with the flow? If your store does not stand out from your competition, why are people going to choose you over the others? Through the years, it has been my experience and observation that stores with a diverse selection of types and species of fish - draw the most customers. So - I present a short synopsis of the major groups of freshwater fish and why it is important to know their interrelationships and salability. There will be a handout to follow during the talk.
Brandon McLane is Vice President of Florida Aquatic Nurseries, Inc. in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, one of the largest producers of aquatic plants in the United States. He has been with Florida Aquatic Nurseries since 2006. Brandon works in all aspects of the company from discovering and hybridizing new plant varieties to developing websites and business plans. Brandon attended the University of Florida where he received a Bachelor of Science Degree with a specialization in Landscape and Nursery Management in 2003.

Pierre LePochat is owner of WaterScapes Aquatic Plant Nursery in Plant City, Florida, wholesale grower of aquarium and water garden plants. In 2004, Pierre purchased The Snailery of Tampa, an aquatic plant business, renaming it WaterScapes Aquatic Plant Nursery. The business has grown over the past 15+ years, moving from 3 acres of in-ground ponds and four small greenhouses in north Tampa to a 7-acre farm in Plant City with above-ground propagation tables and vats in over 100,000 sq. ft. of greenhouses. Pierre is President of the Florida Tropical Fish Farmers Association, the aquatic plant representative on the Aquaculture Review Council (an advisory council to the Florida Commissioner of Agriculture), and a member of the Florida Aquaculture Association.

Dr. Roy Yanong’s longtime interest as a tropical fish hobbyist led to a career in fish health. He attended the University of Pennsylvania’s School of Veterinary Medicine, concentrated in aquatic animal medicine, and graduated in 1992. He was staff veterinarian at 5D Tropical for 4.5 years before joining the University of Florida/IFAS Tropical Aquaculture Laboratory in 1996. Roy provides outreach, research, and educational programs in fish health management, including on-site veterinary assistance and disease diagnostic support for the aquarium fish industry throughout the state. He is also host of the Aquariumania podcast on PetLifeRadio.com.

Jamie Gunter is the Trade Marketing Director for Spectrum Brands, Global Pet Care Division. She has over 15 years of CPG experience in retail advisory roles. Jamie is a pet lover, fish keeper and serves on the Pet Leadership Council. In the last 5 years she has created many retail and shopper solutions for Pet Specialty. She has a bachelor’s degree in Business and Product Development from Belmont University, Nashville, Tennessee.

Edward Taylor started keeping tropical fish in 1965 and has maintained an active interest in the hobby and industry ever since. After receiving a BS in Chemistry from Duke University, he opened a cutting-edge store in southern New Jersey. A few years later, he moved back to Va. Beach, Va. (his hometown) to enroll in Old Dominion University and receive his MS in biological sciences with a concentration in Ichthyology. While in graduate school, he was actively breeding fish for resale in Philadelphia and New York. By 1980, he became assistant editor of Tropical Fish Hobbyist Magazine. After that, he moved to Florida where he worked at two of the larger fish farms in the Tampa Bay Area. By 1990, he moved to Orlando and worked with SeaLife Aquarium - a retailer and aquarium maintenance company with hundreds of accounts. Finally, heading home in 1996, he has been the aquatics columnist for Pet Business Magazine for over 25 years. He has spoken extensively at aquarium events throughout the U.S. and Canada.