

# THE AQUARIUM TRADE PERSPECTIVE

GL BIOTIC SYMPOSIUM - 2014

Joe Olenik  
**Hoffer's Tropic Life Pets**  
**Aquatic Environments**  
Milwaukee, WI

# PERSONAL BACKGROUND

- Son of a Foreign Service diplomat – began keeping tropical fish in Hong Kong, B.C.C. 1970
- B.S. in Zoology with emphasis in Fishery Biology/Ichthyology, University of Wisconsin 1978
- Aquatic Dept. manager @ Hoffer's Tropic Life, Milwaukee, WI  
Employed since 1980
- Owner of Aquatic Environments – custom aquarium display design, installation, maintenance since 1979
- Avid hunter, fisherman, outdoorsman

# STORE HISTORY

- Independent, family-owned retail facility
- 40+ Years in Business
- Full Line – Aquatics/Herp emphasis
- 32,000 sq. ft. retail space
- Specializing in marine, rare & exotic fish & inverts, live plants, water gardening
- Promote Captive Bred vs Wild Caught Specimens
- Dedicated specialists in each department





WELCOME TO  
HOTELS POPCORN  
PETS

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# AQUARIUM KEEPING TODAY

- Fishkeeping has become less of an elite 'hobby', more of a leisure activity – lower commitment
- Access to more remote collecting locations results in availability of an increased diversity of species
- Commercial propagation worldwide has increased the sheer numbers of fish available
- Ease of transportation/holding
- Better understanding of habitat requirements and improvements in life support technology make fishkeeping easier



# REASONS FOR RELEASE

- Failure to research purchases
- Financial distress
- Relocation
- Changes in family circumstances
- 'Free Willie' Syndrome







# STORE RESPONSIBILITY

- Avoid problematic species
- Qualify and educate consumers
- Discourage impulse purchases
- Knowledge of regulations & laws
- Responsible sales practices
- Accept unwanted fish & plants if possible
- Support Habitatitude and similar programs
- Partner with shelters, aquarium societies, rescues, schools, nature centers, other organizations