



Aquatic news

New directors join OATA board

Two new directors were welcomed to the OATA board at the trade association's Annual General Meeting, held on December 4.

Mark Smith, of Pets at Home, and Jeremy Gay, of *Fishkeeping News*, join the 15 other voluntary directors on the association's board.

OATA's board of directors is currently made up of 17 people intended to represent the whole of the industry, from wholesalers and manufacturers to importers and retailers. There is still one vacancy on the board, which is usually made up of 18 people.

Ben Bowles, of Pets at Home, has left the board, along with Ben Windeatt, of Pets Choice, who stepped down prior to the AGM.

EcoMarines' Laura Carlin continues in the second year of her two-year stint as chair before she hands over to Dr Donna Snellgrove of Mars Petcare, who is current vice chair.

OATA chief executive Dominic Whitmee said: "We are very grateful to all those business people who volunteer their time to sit on our Board and offer their thoughts and expertise on our work programmes. "The OATA team could not achieve what we do without their help and we look forward to hearing contributions from our two new directors."



Jeremy Gay

Mark Smith

Monkfield Reptile appointed distributor for Zoo Med

Monkfield Reptile has been officially appointed as a UK distributor for the Zoo Med brand, effective from the end of January 2025.

Through the new partnership, Monkfield Reptile will offer a wide variety of Zoo Med products for exotic pets. ALF remains a distributor for the Zoo Med range.

Jamie Blackstone, head of global sales at Monkfield Reptile, said: "This collaboration brings together two like-minded companies that share the same core values of quality, innovation, and expertise in reptile care."

Rita Zarate, VP sales and marketing at Zoo Med Laboratories, Inc, added: "As a company made up of passionate reptile hobbyists, we are dedicated to providing the supplies and knowledge needed to successfully care for reptiles, amphibians, fish, insects, and other exotic animals, ensuring they remain healthy and happy."

Zoomark's Aqua Project to showcase latest aquarium trends

The aquarium industry will be in the spotlight once more in the Aqua Project zone of the next edition of the Zoomark exhibition, taking place in Bologna, Italy, next May.

Located in Hall 29, the Aqua Project area will feature the main Italian and international companies in the aquarium and terrarium sector, who will be presenting their most important innovations in food and accessories.

Confirmed exhibitors include Amtra, Aqual, Aquarieland, Aquatlantis, Artemia Koral, Askoll, Dajana Pet, Ferplast, Funhobby, Nawa, Prodac, Red Sea, Sanko, Sera, Teco, Tropical, and Zoo Med.

Organisers of the event have also renewed their ongoing partnership with Italian trade association AIPA (Associazione Italiana Piccoli Animali) for the 2025 edition.



In brief

REPTILE OWNERS URGED TO RESPOND TO SURVEY

Exotic pet owners' platform Responsible Reptile Keeping (RRK) has teamed up with the Federation of British Herpetologists to launch a new survey of the category.

The Worldwide Reptile Super Survey seeks to collect sufficient data to support submissions to the Government, helping it to make "sensible" laws and ensure reptiles are kept responsibly.

NEW VIDEO GAME ALLOWS PLAYERS TO STOCK AN AQUATIC STORE

A new computer game has been launched giving players the opportunity to create and stock their own aquatic store.

Aquatic Store Simulator allows players to choose plant life, decorations and fish to sell to customers within a fixed budget, as well as creating a personalised retail space.

The game also includes educational elements regarding fish care, including monitoring pH levels.

SCIENTISTS UNCOVER SECRET OF SWIM DEPTHS

Researchers from Swansea and Deakin Universities have found that marine animals swim at similar relative depths when travelling and not feeding to save energy.

Dr Kimberley Stokes, Professor Graeme Hays and Dr Nicole Esteban from Swansea and Deakin Universities led research across six institutes in five countries comparing the swim depths of several sea turtle, penguin and whale species. All travelled at around three body depths from the surface in order to swim in the 'sweet spot' that minimises wave formation at the surface and vertical distance travelled.

The study was published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (PNAS).

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