

May 2008 - Joel Willis (JDub)

Congratulations to Joel Willis on winning TOTM for May 2008 with his healthy, thriving cube tank.

Joel is known as JDub on the RTAW Forums and you can read up more about his tank in his Tank Journal.

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Introduction

I have had aquariums in some shape or form for as long as I can remember but first took the plunge into reefing in early 2003... by late 2003 I was hooked but had made my fair share of newbie mistakes, then came my biggest breakthrough in reefing... discovering RTAW. After getting loads of helpful advice from forum members, I built and established a thriving 6x2x2 mixed reef tank.

Slowly over time I drifted into the world of SPS and in early 2007 broke down my larger mixed reef system and started plans for a more specialised SPS system, my current tank.

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Current Tank

My display is a 350L eurobraced 'cubeish' tank (750x750x600h) made from 12mm glass. The main motivation for this size is that it can be lit by a single metal halide and still maintains a decent tank volume to help keep parameters nice and stable. Although I used only cured live rock from my old six foot reef, the new tank still surprisingly went through a long establishment period and only really settled down after 10 months, it is now 15 months old.

Given I wanted to concentrate on SPS I went with a barebottom style tank (starboard) with lots of flow and heavy skimming. The display circulation turns over approximately 50 times an hour. All the live rock is supported by PVC and eggcrate stands to allow good flow under the reef structure.

Filtration consists of the water from the overflow first passing through a sump that contains the large beckett skimmer and some live rock. It then flows into a second sump containing a refugium, with a DSB and macro algae, and finally to the return section to be pumped back into the display.

I enjoy DIY and woodworking so built the cabinet and hood, sumps, fuge lighting and skimmer myself. The cabinet stands one metre tall to allow plenty of room underneath and so the display tank sits at eye level. The hood and cabinet were built with removable side panels to make tank maintenance that much easier.

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Equipment

- * 250w MH with lumenarc mini reflector, currently using 12000k coralvue reeflux globe
- * Twin 2ft ReefOctopus T5 fluoro unit
- * Exhaust fan in hood
- * Tunze 6080 and Tunze 6000 stream pumps
- * DIY beckett Skimmer with 6000lph pump
- * DIY 40w fuge light and reflector
- * DB reeftech Calcium reactor with eheim pump and tunze regulator
- * Return pump
- * Gravity fed auto top up valve
- * PSI Reverse Osmosis unit

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Maintenance

I aim to change 25% of the water once a month with natural sea water collected from the NSW South Coast, but with the birth of my second child recently, I have to admit this has been slipping a bit!

I check my calcium and alkalinity about once a fortnight or when I see something in the tank that looks amiss. I find the best indicator of water quality and parameters are your inhabitants.

I change the MH globe every 12 months and the T5 globes every 6-8 months and usually replace the RO filters every 6 months. I also usually soak my tunze in vinegar every six months to remove the build up of calcium deposits.

The macro algae in the refugium is harvested when required and I generally clean the skimmer once a week. The only additives to the tank are via the calcium reactor and on rare occasion I put a bag of carbon in the sump.

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Lighting Times

9am: T5 on, fuge light off

10am: MH on

8pm: MH off

9pm: T5 off, fuge light on

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Fish, Inverts and Corals

2x ocellaris clownfish, breeding pair (*Amphiprion ocellaris*)

1 x lawnmower blenny (*Salarias fasciatus*)

1 x false lemonpeel angelfish (*Centropyge heraldi*)

1 x collector urchin

Lots and lots of snails or different variety

Multiple types of SPS, don't ask me all the names!

A few LPS scattered amongst the hard corals.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my wife for not complaining about the constant salt water stains on the carpet, the use of the 'good kitchen knives' for coral fragging and location of the top up reservoir in the linen cupboard.

Thankyou also, to the good people of MASAOG and RTAW.

Cheers

Joel Willis (JDub)