

October 2010 - Murray & Gemma Stiles (GemmaS & Semillon)

Congratulations to Murray and Gemma Stiles on winning TOTM for October 2010 with their Red Sea Max 250.

Murray and Gemma are known as Semillon and GemmaS on the RTAW forums and you can find out more about their tank in their tank journal.

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Introduction.

This is our first venture into the keeping of marine organisms after keeping numerous cichlids as well as a planted freshwater aquarium. We started researching information on marine aquariums around a year ago and got this tank started 4 months later. We chose a Red Sea Max 250 for our display as it seemed like a decent size for a beginner just learning their way. In hindsight the RSM 250 would be more suited to an experienced aquarist looking to keep a specialised anemone tank rather than a tank for beginners.

The Tank.

As stated, the tank is a Red Sea Max 250, which measures 960 x 552 x 665 mm with a volume of 250 litres. This system comes standard with a 6x39W T5 lighting fixture that we have found to be sufficient for our mixed reef. The only issues

we felt we needed to address with this system where the lack of flow and a means of keeping the tank cool.

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Filtration.

We've retained the built infiltration of the RSM which allows for surface skimming of the display water and also allows the protein skimmer and return pumps to be concealed from view.

The system contains 35kgs of live rock and a shallow sand bed to provide biological filtration. The eternally temperamental RSM 250 protein skimmer is still in service since we felt there is no point in heavily modifying an "all in one" setup. There are two sponges that are in place to stop micro bubbles from exiting the skimmer, these also provide a fair amount of mechanical filtration as well.

Water Flow.

The RSM is fitted standard with one 1200lph pump and one 2400lph pump for circulation. We have supplemented this with a Vortech MP40WES. We like to mix it up a bit with the flow, when out of the house I like Nutrient Transport mode to really clear out any detritus from the tank, though when we are around we tend to run Reef Crest (100%) or Lagoon mode (80%) since it's quieter. Night time is usually Lagoon Mode (100%)

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Lighting.

The lighting is the standard RSM fitting, but we have changed out the bulbs to the following configuration.

x3 39W ATI Blue Special

x2 39W ATI Aquablue

x1 39W KZ Fiji Purple

We run these lights for 10 hours per day.

Other Equipment.

The only other equipment we have added so far is a Hailea 250A chiller. It has been reliable so far, if a little noisy.

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Water Parameters.

SG: 1.0255 (Refractometer)

Alk: 8.5dKh (Salifert)

Ca: 400ppm (API)

Mg: 1380ppm (Salifert)

PO4: 0.00ppm (Hanna Checker)

NO3: 1ppm (API)

Additives, Conditioners and Maintenance.

We run Rowacarbon - 1 cup, semi-passively in a ~2000L/hr flow section of the filter chamber.

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Fish.

x2 Amphiprion ocellaris (ClownFish)

x1 Centropyge bispinosus (Coral Beauty)

x1 Cirrhilabrus condei (Conde's Fairy Wrasse)

x1 Nemateleotris magnifica (Fire Goby)

x1 Pseudochromis porphyreus (Purple Dottyback)

x1 Salarias fasciatus (Lawnmower Blenny)

x1 Synchiropus splendidus (Blue Mandarin)

x1 Zebrasoma xanthurum (Purple Tang)

Corals.

SPS: Various Montipora and Acropora

LPS: Various Acanthastrea, Echinophyllia (Chalice), Euphyllia (Hammer, Frogspawn, Torch), Lobophyllia and Scolymia.

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Inverts.

x1 Tridacna maxima clam

x1 Lysmata amboinensis (Redline Cleaner Shrimp)

x1 Entacmaea quadricolor (Bubble Tip Anemone)

x1 Strombus Snail

x3 Trochus Snails

Many turbo snails

Maintenance.

On a daily basis we manually top up using RO water, usually 2-3 cups worth. We also dose 110mls of Randys Two Part Recipe #2 to maintain our calcium and alkalinity levels. The fish are also fed every day.

The display glass requires cleaning twice a week with the magnet cleaner.

Weekly maintenance consists of a 20L water change using artificial salt water. Our salt of choice is D-D H2Ocean salt. We also clean the skimmer cup and neck, clean the bubble trap sponges, rinse the carbon media bag and clean any salt splash from the lighting. The corals are fed a mix of frozen rotifers, cyclopeeze and Tropic Marin Zooton/Phyton at this time.

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Acknowledgements.

Thanks to everyone on the forum who has answered our many questions over the last 12 months, especially those who frequent the RTAW chatroom or have put some effort into populating the Reefpedia with useful information. Special mention to Michael (galleri) and Ben (n0rk) for answering so many of our questions!

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