

ID 87

Evaluation of ornamental fish farmers' knowledge on common freshwater fish diseases and treatments in Galle district

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Abstract

Adequate knowledge in aquatic health management is one of the most vital components in sustainable ornamental fish farming. One of the major drawbacks in the Sri Lankan ornamental fish farming sector has been noted as a lack of knowledge in aquatic health management. Few studies have been reported in Sri Lanka that addresses the farmers' knowledge of aquatic health management. The main objective of this study was to evaluate the knowledge on common freshwater fish diseases and treatments among ornamental fish farmers in Galle district. The Galle district has 35 Km² of inland waters, a rich coastal area, and a tropical climate. Primary data was collected using a telephone-based survey followed by statistical analysis. The study revealed that only 76.74% out of 215 respondents are currently engaged in ornamental fish farming. Several reasons were identified for the reduced interest in long-term engagement (> 5 years) in ornamental fish farming. Platy (29.10%) was reported as the most commonly farmed species. White spot (36.90%) was the most commonly reported disease, followed by fin rot (21.80%), dropsy (11.50%) and anchor worm infection (7.87%). The most common practice reported by the respondents to control diseases was frequent water changes (81.20%). This study revealed that majority of the fish farmers (68.43 %) in the study area do not practice recommended treatment methods. Therefore, this study highlights the importance of adequate knowledge in terms of disease identification, treatment and prevention among the ornamental fish farmers in the study area.

Keywords: Diseases, Ornamental fish farming, Precaution, Treatment

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