



Alexander Bonanno

Territory Manager

USA

I have 12 years of experience with aquariums (8 with marine). My undergraduate research focused on breeding and rearing ornamental fish for the aquarium trade. I worked on developing rearing and breeding protocol for many marine species including clownfish, gobies, grunts, jacks and fire shrimp. Becoming one of the first to raise *Haemulon striatum* and *Selene vomer* in captivity. I also have many years of experience culturing live feeds including brine shrimp, four species of phytoplankton, two strains of rotifers, and two species of copepods both in the lab and at home. I worked at The Audubon Society of Rhode Island where I designed and maintained aquatic exhibits for the public including a 2,000-gallon bay and ocean exhibit as well as freshwater, saltmarsh, and tide pool exhibits. After, I worked at an aquarist at the Walt Disney Company maintaining various exhibits including a 5.7-million-gallon shark and ray/large pelagic fish exhibit and a 800 gallon SPS dominate display. As a previous aquarist I have experience with quarantine and disease treatment of marine fish which I also implement at home. I have had many personal tanks in the past, currently I have a 60-gallon mixed reef display and a 40-gallon breeder that I use as a coral grow out/frag tank.

I have a Bachelor of Science in marine biology from Roger Williams university and a Master of Science in Marine Science and Technology from the University of Massachusetts. My Graduate research focused on developing a detection method to combat cyanide fishing in the Indo-Pacific. I received the 2019 Graduate Scholarship from the Marine Aquarium Societies of North America for this work. In my free time outside of reefing I enjoy playing tennis and golf. I have three SCUBA certifications and love to photograph marine ecosystems while scuba diving. I regularly volunteer with a local non-profit called Save The Bay, participating in shoreline cleanups and habitat restorations.

Favorite coral: Currently I have a bit of a Goniopora obsession. Recently some amazing color variations have been coming into the hobby and I love the beautiful movement they add to the tank.

Favorite fish: My dream is to have a display large enough for an Achilles tang.



Samuel Christensen

Biology Teacher

Denmark

I've been reefing for the last 5 years. I have multiple tank syndrome and keep several different biotopes, because I just can't choose one and stick with it. This also gives me a great opportunity to experiment with corals in different conditions and using different combinations of Tropic Marin products on the different tanks.

I love helping people. Whether they have issues with chemistry, corals, filtration or just need –someone to bounce ideas off of, I will happily help. My favorite part of the hobby right now is buying brown or wild colored acroporas and discovering what aquarium colors they can get in my care.

Favorite coral: Acropora abrotanoides, Oulophyllia spp, Porites cylindrica, Sarcophyton spp.

Favorite fish: Ostorhinchus cyanosoma - Yellowstriped cardinalfish



Leo den Breejen

***University Lecturer and Coral breeder
Netherlands***

I live in Amsterdam. I'm a teacher in Biology at a University in Almere. I got a degree in Biology, Education and Business Administration.

I started keeping aquaria when I was five years old. Already from the start I tried to mimic accurate biotopes, combining fish and plants from the same location in the world. It was much more to me than just fish in a glass box. The thought of recreating accurate underwater environments fascinated me and gave me great satisfaction from early on. From the Mexican fast flowing clear rivers to the dark rainforest creeks of the Congo, in my mind I visited all of them.

When I was the age of 16 this evolved into keeping reef aquaria. The increased challenge to keep the organisms healthy and thriving, but also the heavy reliance on chemistry, data and equipment sparked even more passion for this hobby and I have been keeping reef aquaria ever since. Later on I specialized in keeping and propagation stony corals, an even bigger challenge.

In 2009 I founded my own website www.leonardosreef.com where I wrote articles about reefkeeping, aquarium aesthetics (Iwagumi) and relevant scientific breakthroughs. Locally I helped a lot of people with starting up their reef aquarium and advising them about reef husbandry, also focussing on the aesterical part. Until this day I'm still advising several of those clients.

Two years ago I redeveloped my brand -Leonardo's Reef Laboratories- and started to propagate corals on a professional scale, while doing coral research at the same time.

In my free time outside of reefing (if that's possible) I like to work out in the gym, travel (especially Asia), asian culture and gardening.

Favorite coral: Every Acropora basically, but if I have to choose, Staghorn Acropora were my first introduction into SPS and have a special place.

Favorite fish: I love the *Acanthurus guttatus* because of its erratic swimming behavior (they are found in the surge zone of the reef) and great personality.



Samuel Nietzer

***Researcher at University of Oldenburg and Scientific Advisor at Tropic Marin
Germany***

The focus of my research lies on reproductive biology of stony corals, particularly on larval settlement and the early life stages. I've been curator of the research aquarium at University of Oldenburg since 2013.

Favorite coral:

Favorite fish:



Hans-Werner Balling

***Research and Development at Tropic Marin / Inventor of the Balling-Method
Germany***

Since 1987 I have always been a marine aquarium professional.

I cared for several larger and smaller (800 l to 5000 l) display tanks in a public museum from 1987 to 2001. Since 2001 I am doing R&D for Tropic Marin with experimental setups in the company.

I had a small freshwater aquarium in my youth and South America tanks for ca. 15 years.

I love nature, nature photography and I am designing my big garden as a biotope network.

Favorite coral: Sturdy Acroporas, Acropora millepora and every kind of meandroid “brains”.

Favorite fish: Triggerfish, they are very curious and have a strong personality.



Lou Ekus

***CEO Tropic Marin USA
USA***

For many years I maintained a system that I designed and built that consisted of a 150-gallon mixed reef, a 150-gallon community fish only tank, and a 90-gallon predator tank that housed a miniates grouper and a zebra moray. These tanks all tied into the same filtration system built into a large Rubbermaid Stock Tank with a home-built protein skimmer and algae scrubber. Now, we travel so much for Tropic Marin that we maintain a 150-gallon African Cichlid tank and a 29-gallon Mangrove tank. I consider all the tanks, around the world, that I help people with as my current aquariums!

I used to be the media trainer for many famous TV chefs. I get bored easily, so I have lots of hobbies. I love fishing of all kinds (I do lots of catch and release), saltwater fly fishing, hot air ballooning (I am a registered commercial pilot), antique cars (Irma is out 1931 Ford Model A deluxe roadster), Bar-B-Que (I am a Pit Master and we used to own Holy Smokes BBQ and Whole Hog House restaurant).

Favorite coral: Changes every day. Today it is all types of Montipora. Easy to grow quickly. Great coral for a newbie to help venture into SPS keeping.

Favorite fish: Also changes every day. Today it's Novaculichthys taeniourus (Dragon Wrasse). For many years I had one that was so freindly, it would lay on my hand whenever I cleaned the glass in the aquarium.



Sven Kerber

***Marketing & Product Manager of Tropic Marin
Germany***

I'm in the company for about 3,5 years and have a small reef tank in my office for 2 years. Even if I'm quite new to this hobby, I'm very interested in reef keeping. I like colorful tanks with a lot of different animals.

I've a Master of Science in Business Administration and am responsible for almost all Marketing activities of Tropic Marin.

In my free time I'm playing the Saxophone and doing some creative small craftwork – mainly with wood. Also I like cooking and BBQ.

Favorite coral: Blastomussa, Acanthastrea, Zoanthus, Euphyllia

Favorite fish: Yellow Tang, Flame Angel

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