

Trend of Aquatic Plants

1980

The dawn of planted aquarium

Aquatic plant hobby suddenly starts spreading with the launch of CO₂ equipment

1990

Nature Aquarium comes under the spotlight

Glossostigma gains popularity.

July 18, 1954 Takashi Amano is born in Niigata-shi, Niigata-ken (former Maki-machi, Nishi Kanbara-gun), Japan

The late 1970's - After being an enthusiastic aquarist, Amano brings his passion to growth of aquatic plants. In a series of failure and setbacks, he withers countless number of plants. He also produces a significant number of waste designs in pursuit of development of his original plant growing equipment.

1983 Amano writes for aquarium magazines. He widely disseminates *Cardina japonica* (Yamato Numa Ebi) as a measure against algae, one of the biggest concerns for growing aquatic plants. This is why *Cardina japonica* (Yamato Numa Ebi) is called "Amano shrimp" in the world.

1984 Amano opens his shop "Aqua Design Amano" in Terao, Niigata-shi, Japan. This shop showcasing many Nature Aquariums draws people's attention as a pioneer of aqua interior. The official logo of ADA is decided with a view to full-scale business. This marks a start of the ADA brand.

1985 ADA launches IC-pH Controller, an automatic pH controller exhibiting the world's top performance of the time. This controller supplies CO₂ when the pH level exceeds the predefined upper limit while it supplies air if the pH level falls below the predefined

lower limit to keep the pH at the optimal level automatically. This equipment is too innovative for the time when people thought aquatic plants were only to enhance the attraction of the fishes in the tank. Iwagumi layout is established in the combination of *Echinodorus tenellus* and Senmigiwa stones.

1986 Amano receives the first FM Award from the monthly magazine "Fish Magazine". ADA distributes the first general catalog of ADA products which is a black-and-white leaflet. Product catalog specialized in equipment for growing aquatic plants is hardly seen at the time.

Amano proposes the recreation of natural ecosystem within an aquarium and also long-term maintenance of aquarium. The huge poster titled "The Balance of Nature" created as a symbol of Amano's proposal becomes a hot topic among aquatic plant hobbyists.

1987 74-TA/Ver.1, the world's first CO₂ regulator system using a small CO₂ cartridge is launched. There is an episode about this regulator (precisely, it is a needle valve) where a sales person who actually saw this product was very surprised of its great preciseness and immediately sent the TA regulator to the headquarters of his company in Germany. For your information, "TA" stands for Takashi Amano. An external CO₂ diffusion bottle is launched. This bottle takes in water from the outflow pipe of the external filter and mixes the CO₂ with the water in the glass bottle. For liquid fertilizers, Green Brighty series No.1 to No.3 are released upon adoption of the system in

which three types of fertilizers are used according to the growth stage of aquatic plants. This system is the predecessor of the current STEP system.

1988 The shop "Aqua Design Amano" is relocated to Maki-machi, Niigata-ken (now Niigata-shi), crowded with a large number of aquarists from all over Japan. People jokingly call the shop "the Shop for 'Not for Sale'" because Amano puts a "Not for sale" tag on most of the fishes that have grown well with the intention to put them in his planted aquariums.

1989 The layout style "Nature Aquarium" is proposed under the concept of "Learn from Nature and Recreate a Nature". Nature Aquarium is a term created by Amano, which means natural aquarium. The CO₂ system 74-TA/Ver.2 is released with the further advancement of CO₂ regulator as a result of improvements and development. Power Sand, a product of ADA's unique study and research on substrate, is released. This is very innovative sand that has been developed taking into account long-term maintenance and water flow within the substrate as well as nutrient supplementation. Power Sand solves the hardening problem of ocean sand, which is the major substrate material at the time. Bio Ring and Green Bacter, the first-generation biological filter media, are also released in this year.

1990 The first video in the industry "Nature Aquarium World" is released. Amano starts writing serial

articles for monthly "Aqua Life" and "Fish Magazine" magazines. His articles are regarded as a precious information source among hobbyists when the information on how to use the equipment for growing aquatic plants and how to create planted aquarium are not commonly available. Brighty K is released for supplementation of potassium which tends to be in inadequate supply in planted aquarium. Following the STEP series system, ADA proposes its unique nutrient supplementation method of supplying potassium.

1991 The CO₂ system 74-TA/Ver.3 is released with the improvement of easier grip of the cock to enable the fine adjustment of CO₂ discharge rate. Amano rents fallow paddy fields in a mountain village to observe Japanese native aquatic plants. Through underwater photography, he turns his attention to the light transmission in the water (which leads to subsequent development of NA Lamp).

1992 Aqua Design Amano Co., Ltd. is incorporated on April 21. The CO₂ system 74-TA/Ver.4 is released as a further advanced version of the TA series with enhanced safety feature of gas escape port. This improvement is made with an eye on future popularization of CO₂ regulator by meeting the needs of highly-safe equipment that everyone can use with peace of mind. The new CO₂ system 74-YA/Ver.1 is released following the release of the latest system of the TA series. The advertising copy "The ADA Phenomenon" on the Aqua Life magazine attracts a great

deal of attention, evoking the start of the Nature Aquarium boom. "Glass no Naka no Daishizen", a photo book as a bible for old fans, is released. This book is later translated into seven languages and creates a global sensation. It is later found that the hobbyists from Germany, an advanced country in aquarium field at the time, were shocked and amazed when looking at this photo book. The first Aquatic Plants Layout Video Contest is held. The tweezers which are a prototype of subsequent Pinsettes are released.

1993 The logo for "NATURE AQUARIUM GOODS" is decided and the product package is renewed and standardized. The new package of white and silver boxes, designed by Amano who has been inspired by the package of German camera brands Leica and Rollei, is simple and creative, breaking through the orthodox image of existing aquarium equipment. About 140 items of new products are developed and launched in this year in line with the renewal of the package, including the CO₂ system 74 (for small CO₂ cartridge accommodating the country's largest capacity of 74g), Brighty K, Green Brighty STEP 1-3, Power Sand, Pollen Glass, CO₂ Glass Counter, Trimming Scissors Straight, Pinsettes L and the Softener series. The Editorial Department is established for strengthening of advertisement and publication sections.

1994 NA Lamp is launched. There is an episode where Amano's unique theory of "blue light having a high transmissibility in water is effective for growth of

aquatic plants" surprised a lighting engineer from Matsushita Electric (now Panasonic) who is involved in a space development project. The color temperature of 8000K, the world's first achievement of a lamp for aquatic plants, influences the subsequent development of lamps. CO₂ system 74-TA/Ver.5, the final version of the TA series, is released. CO₂ system 74-Forest which supplies the forest-scented CO₂ is launched based on the innovative idea of adding values such as fragrance, deodorization and sterilization to CO₂. CD titled "Mizu-Shizen eno Kaiki (Water - A Return to Nature)" is released under the theme of "Feel planted aquarium by five senses", but it turns out to be too ahead of its time. Amano's second photo book "Mizu-Shizen eno Kaiki" is released. ADA releases the full-scale lighting system for 60cm tank "Green Glow/604", which is equipped with all possible functions according to Amano. "Aqua Journal" is first published. The large refillable CO₂ tank "Tower" is released based on Amano's view that installing ordinary green CO₂ tank is not acceptable in terms of safety and design. The CO₂ system 74-YA/Ver.2 is released. This model continues to be the standard model from this time on. In October, Pollen Glass AIR is released with a focus on the importance of aeration during night. In December, ADA released its general catalog, which gains popularity as the "catalog with a frog on the cover". The Aqua Life magazine covers the list of ADA's distributors and retailers nationwide. ADA's headquarter building is completed.

