

**A TREATISE ON THE
MANAGEMENT OF
FRESH-WATER FISH**

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A treatise on the management of fresh-water fish by Gottlieb Boccius

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GOTTLIEB BOCCIOUS

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MANAGEMENT OF
FRESH-WATER FISH**

FRESH-WATER FISH.

A
T R E A T I S E
OF THE MANAGEMENT OF
FRESH-WATER FISH,

WITH A VIEW TO MAKING THEM A SOURCE OF
PROFIT TO LANDED PROPRIETORS:

BY
GOTTLIEB BOCCIUS.

45-



Spiegel or Mirror Carp

LONDON:
JOHN VAN VOORST, PATERNOSTER ROW.
M.DCCC.XLI.

811.

TO
SIR ROBERT SHAFTO ADAIR, BART.,
OF FLIXTEN HALL,
HARLESTEN, NORFOLK.

SIR,

The great interest you have taken in the subject of fish ponds, induces me, with humble apology, to dedicate this short treatise to you.

I hope it will induce those readers who have the opportunity, to give the subject a fair trial; the result, I am sure, will be a source of gratification to their piscatorial friends, and of profit to themselves, in the production of a better quality and greater quantity of fresh-water fish.

The kind attention I have received at your hands, and your friendly introduction to Mr. Yarrell, author

of "The History of British Fishes," renders me grateful for the trouble you have devoted to this subject. To that gentleman I am indebted for assistance in obtaining the wood-cut of the *Spiegel* or *Mirror* Carp, which, although far superior in quality to those we have, does not at present exist in England. I trust, however, that before this winter sets in, I shall be enabled to stock your ponds with the brood of this species.

Again returning you many thanks for your courteous and favorable attention,

I remain,

SIR,

Your very humble servant,

G. BOCCIUS.

A TREATISE, &c.

FRESH-WATER Fish are equally nutritious with those of the sea; they are much lighter as food, and therefore easier of digestion; and were it not owing to the neglected state of ponds, which, on the old system, cause the fish to be muddy, earthy or weedy, there is no doubt that fresh-water fish would be in greater repute and request. I do not doubt that were the system which it is the object of this little treatise to describe, generally adopted, a very great demand for fresh-water fish would ensue; for it is a business-like adage that if you provide for a market by a regular supply, a market is created and increased demand follows. I shall begin by making a few remarks on the situation and number of

THE PONDS OR STEWS.—These ought to be three in number, and it is requisite to make choice of a slight elevation for the first pond. If possible this should be so situated that it may receive the drainings of a village, or at any rate proximity to a farm is desirable, as all the refuse washings from such places supply food to a large extent.

The object in having the first pond higher than the others, is that a supply of water may pass from it to the lower ones in succession: the ponds being connected by a water-course and protected by flood-gates, must have a sufficient depth and descent to allow the whole of the water to pass off readily to the next in succession.

The ponds ought not to be nearer to each other than one hundred yards; the greater the distance between them the better, as each can then have the benefit of the refuse washings of the neighbourhood and adjoining fields, which will of course contribute largely to the support of the stock. Moreover, by having a long water-course between the ponds, when either of them is sluiced off, or as the term is "fished," that part of the store, which invariably escapes with the fall of water, can be recovered in a much cleaner and consequently more healthy state than those which are left behind in the slam or mud.

Clay soils are not genial to fish; therefore light loamy or gravelly bottoms ought to be chosen for the ponds; if however, the clay is not too deep, and by excavating it yellow sand can be reached, then it will leave an equally soft and pure bottom, the sides being of less importance.

In clay bottoms the fish do not thrive, from want of food, in consequence of the water partaking of the racy* quality

* Racy is the term for a species of iron-stone sand found in clay strata.

of the earth, which from its cold and sterile nature does not afford the nutriment requisite for the maintenance of the larvæ of insects, worms, and other minute living creatures, in sufficient number, and so keeps the stock lean and unfit for food.

In forming ponds particular care ought to be taken to make the sides shelve gradually for about six yards; and they are on no account to be deep at the sides, firstly, on account of the sward nourishing large quantities of insects, &c., the legitimate food of the fish; secondly, the ponds are not so easily poached, the shallows being protected by stakes; and thirdly, protection is afforded to the brood.

The only deep that ought to exist at either side should be near the sluice or flood-gate, where it should be twelve or eighteen inches deeper than the rest of the pond, in order that when the water is drawn off, the fish may be collected into a close space, and when the sluice is again closed, that an accumulation of water may immediately take place, sufficient for the protection of the brood or succeeding store.

In the rainy season it is always advisable to let the ponds fill to the full extent of their prescribed boundaries, as this not only brings a large proportion of food from the adjacent grounds, but when the water is again let off or recedes, the borders produce luxuriant and tender herbage, peculiarly adapted for the food of carp, and upon which