



## **Visible Elastomer Implant (VIE) use for Medical Management in Syngnathids at the Aquarium du Québec**

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**Abstract:** Managing and identifying an individual fish within a group is a well-known challenge in the aquarium industry. Our veterinary technician team were consistently in search of a solution for a high-quality and effective monitoring system that could work with several species within the collection without causing an unreasonable stress or harm to the individual. Challenges for physical and visual identifiers for syngnathids are even greater as they can change color with their environment, identifiers can be lost as they age or can cause injuries. In 2013, we identified a material that was used for visual identification in field research and tested and presented from one aquarium in the USA. We began testing the application of this silicone based material with our bony fishes, while developing a coding table for each species that identifies locations and color coding. In 2015, we were confident with the efficiency of this product so we extended this program to our syngnathids. The success with this group has greatly improved our ability to medically manage them. In this presentation, we will explore our experiences and uses with the product including preparation, application, anesthetics and handling techniques, color coding, monitoring and documentation.

**Keywords:** Conservation and management, Medical monitoring