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July 2014
volume XXI
number 5

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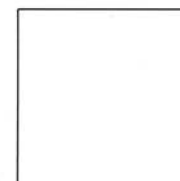
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modern AQUARIUM

Series III Vol. XXI, No. 5 July, 2014

ON THE COVER

Our cover photo this month features a male *Goodea atripinnis atripinnis*, also known as the blackfin goodea. For more on this CARES listed livebearer, see Susan Priest's "So Far, So Good" on page 11.

Photo by Alexander A. Priest

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From the Editor

by Dan Radebaugh

To begin my overview of this month's gratifyingly diverse issue of **Modern Aquarium**, here's a question: What non-native freshwater fish other than tilapia are you likely to find for sale at your local aquarium fish shop *and* at your local supermarket? Hint #1: They're sold under different trade names. Hint #2: See my article on page 21.

A couple of issues ago Joe Ferdenzi provided us a rare (for us) article on aquatic plants. This month Joe chips in with an almost equally rare (for us) article on killifish. This seems a little strange, as many of our members keep and breed killies, and we've had more than a couple of speakers on the subject, but off the top of my head I can't recall more than two killifish articles since I've been Editor. Looking on the positive side, this is our third killie article in the past three years, so maybe things are looking up again for this long-time hobby favorite. See "The Easy Way to Breed Killifish" on page 14. Joe also presents a well-deserved tribute to former Greater City stalwart Carl Kaplan, who passed away in April.

Speaking of killies, this issue also contains Chapter 5 of Rosario LaCorte's **An Aquarist's Journey**, which should delight you whether you are fans of killifish, Rosario, the history of our hobby, or all of the above. See page 25.

Moving to another genus, Sue Priest tells us about her experience breeding the livebearer *Goodea atripinnis atripinnis*, the subject of our cover photo this month. Though not dazzlingly colorful, these and other goodeids can be very attractive in the proper setting. A CARES fish, I commend them to your attention.

Beginning on page 17, Steve Sica treats us to some dazzling underwater photography in "The Moon Jelly and the Filefish." "The LFS Report," this time by guest reviewer Ed Vukich, profiles Aqua Hut, out in Coram, Long Island. Elsewhere, you can find "Pictures from our Last Meeting" on page 28, and pages 6 and 7 contain the winning caption from June, and this month's cartoon, respectively. On page 24 Horst and Linda Gerber treat us to a number of different possible captions for a recent cartoon.

The Undergravel Reporter keeps us up to date with "There's an App for That!?", and our "Fin Fun" reminds us that it's time to give "Three Cheers for the Red White and Blue."



* * * * *

Remember, we need articles. We always need articles! **Modern Aquarium** is produced by and for the members of Greater City Aquarium Society. Our members are our authors, and with ten issues per year, we always, always need more articles. I know several of you are keeping and/or breeding fish, or working with plants or inverts that I would like to know more about, and I'm certain other members would be interested as well. Share your experience with us. Write about it! If you're a little unsure about the state of your writing technique, don't worry – that's why there are editors.

If you have an article, photo, or drawing that you'd like to submit for inclusion in **Modern Aquarium**, it's easy to do! You may email it to gcas@earthlink.net, fax it to me at (877) 299-0522, or just hand it to me at a meeting. However you get it to me I'll be delighted to receive it!





GCAS Programs 2014

It is our great fortune to have another admirable cast of speakers who have so graciously accepted our invitation to join us throughout the coming season, bringing us their extensive knowledge and experiences. You certainly won't wish to miss a moment of our prominent guests, not to mention the friends, fish, warmth, and camaraderie that accompanies each meeting.

March 5	Harry Faustmann <i>Live Foods</i>
April 2	Rosario LaCorte <i>The Fish I've Worked With</i>
May 7	Leslie Dick <i>Fish Jeopardy</i>
June 4	Joseph Ferdenzi <i>Aquascaping</i>
July 2	Joseph Graffagnino <i>Tips & Tricks on Breeding Fish & Raising Fry</i>
August 6	Silent Auction
September 3	Joe Gargas <i>Water and the Aquarium</i>
October 1	Vinnie Ritchie <i>Lake Malawi Cichlids in a Community Tank</i>
November 5	Gary Lange <i>Rainbowfish</i>
December 3	Holiday Party!

Articles submitted for consideration in **Modern Aquarium** (ISSN 2150-0940) must be received no later than the 10th day of the month prior to the month of publication. Please email submissions to gcas@earthlink.net, or fax to (877) 299-0522. Copyright 2014 by the Greater City Aquarium Society Inc., a not-for-profit New York State corporation, or All rights reserved. Not-for-profit aquarium societies are hereby granted permission to reproduce articles and illustrations from this publication, **unless the article indicates that the copyrights have been retained by the author**, and provided reprints indicate source, and that two copies of the publication are sent to the Exchange Editor of this magazine. For online-only publications, copies may be sent via email to donnste@aol.com. Any other reproduction or commercial use of the material in this publication is prohibited without prior express written permission.

The Greater City Aquarium Society meets every month, except January and February. Members receive notice of meetings in the mail. For more information, contact: Dan Radebaugh (718) 458-8437 or email gcas@earthlink.net. Find out more, see previous issues, or leave us a message at our Internet Home Page: <http://www.greatercity.org> or <http://www.greatercity.com>.

Carl Kaplan

February 26, 1916 – April 8, 2014

It is with deep regret that we note the passing of Carl Kaplan, who was 98, on April 8, 2014, in Ronkonkoma, Long Island. Carl was a participant in Greater City Aquarium Society shows in the 1930s, and won a gold medal at the 1932 show.

Carl also participated in Greater City's 75th Anniversary Show in 1997, at which time he graciously donated this historic medal to the Society. (For more details on this event, please see the November 1997 issue of **Modern Aquarium**.) This medal is currently on display at the home of the Society's unofficial historian, Joe Ferdenzi.

Carl was a long-time resident of Manhattan, and was the cousin of world-famous aquarist Ross Socolof. However, as Ross explained in his autobiography, **Confessions of a Tropical Fish Addict**, it was Carl who was responsible for getting him hooked on tropical fish.

Carl is remembered as an old-fashioned gentleman who was very modest about his accomplishments. Joe Ferdenzi recalls what a thrill it was for him to meet Carl in 1997, knowing that Carl represented a link to the Society's history that was unrivaled by anything



Carl last year at age 97.

else. But what then impressed Joe the most was Carl's sincerity, warmth, and generosity.

Carl's wife predeceased him, but he is survived by his daughter Nancy and granddaughter Jessica. Sadly, his cousin Ross also passed away a number of years ago. They will always be remembered as pioneers of our hobby.



President's Message

by Dan Radebaugh

If you take a look at page 3 of your **Modern Aquarium**, you'll see that our speaker schedule for this year is now complete. I'd encourage all our members to congratulate Dan Puleo on an outstanding first year as Speaker Chair. The schedule shows a very nice balance between our members speaking on their areas of expertise and notable guest speakers, as well as a good variety of subject matter. Last month's presentation by Joe Ferdenzi on aquascaping was a thought-provoking look at an important subject that we haven't addressed lately. I also look forward to this evening's presentation by Joe Graffagnino on breeding fish and raising fry. We all have plenty to learn, and we're fortunate to have members with great knowledge who are willing to share that knowledge with the rest of us.

August of course will bring us to our annual Silent Auction/Flea Market, followed in ensuing months by talks on water, African cichlids, and rainbowfish, again presented by a mixture of our own member-experts and distinguished guests. Great job, Dan!

Dan



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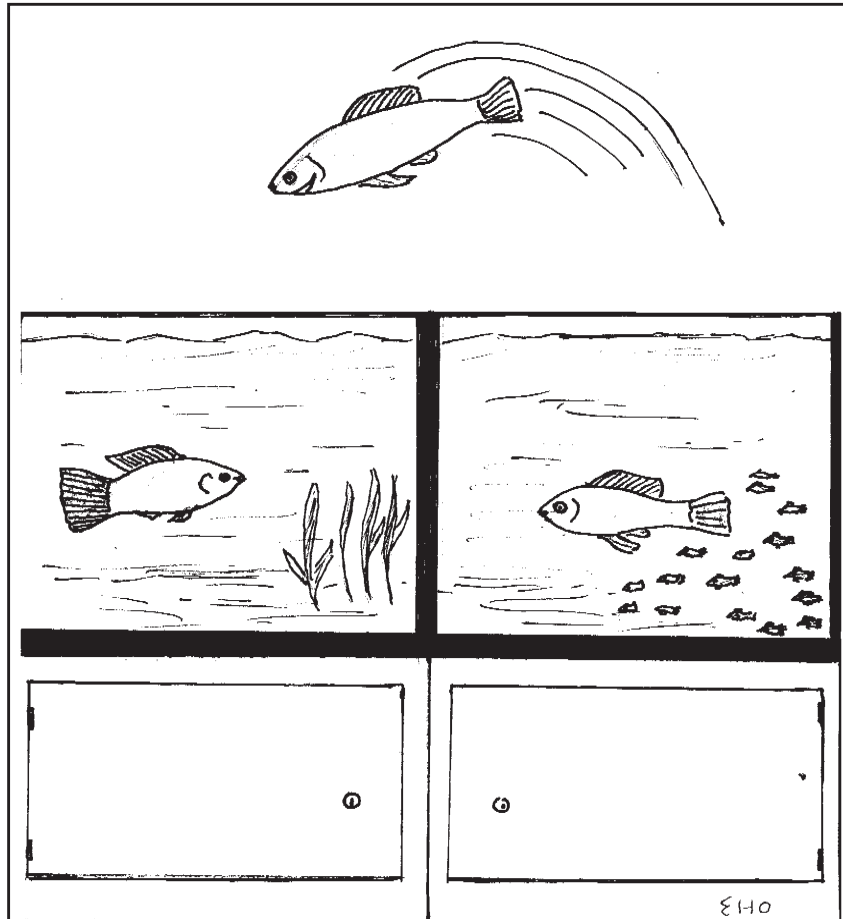
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June's Caption Winner: **Denver Lettman**



“She's just a friend...”

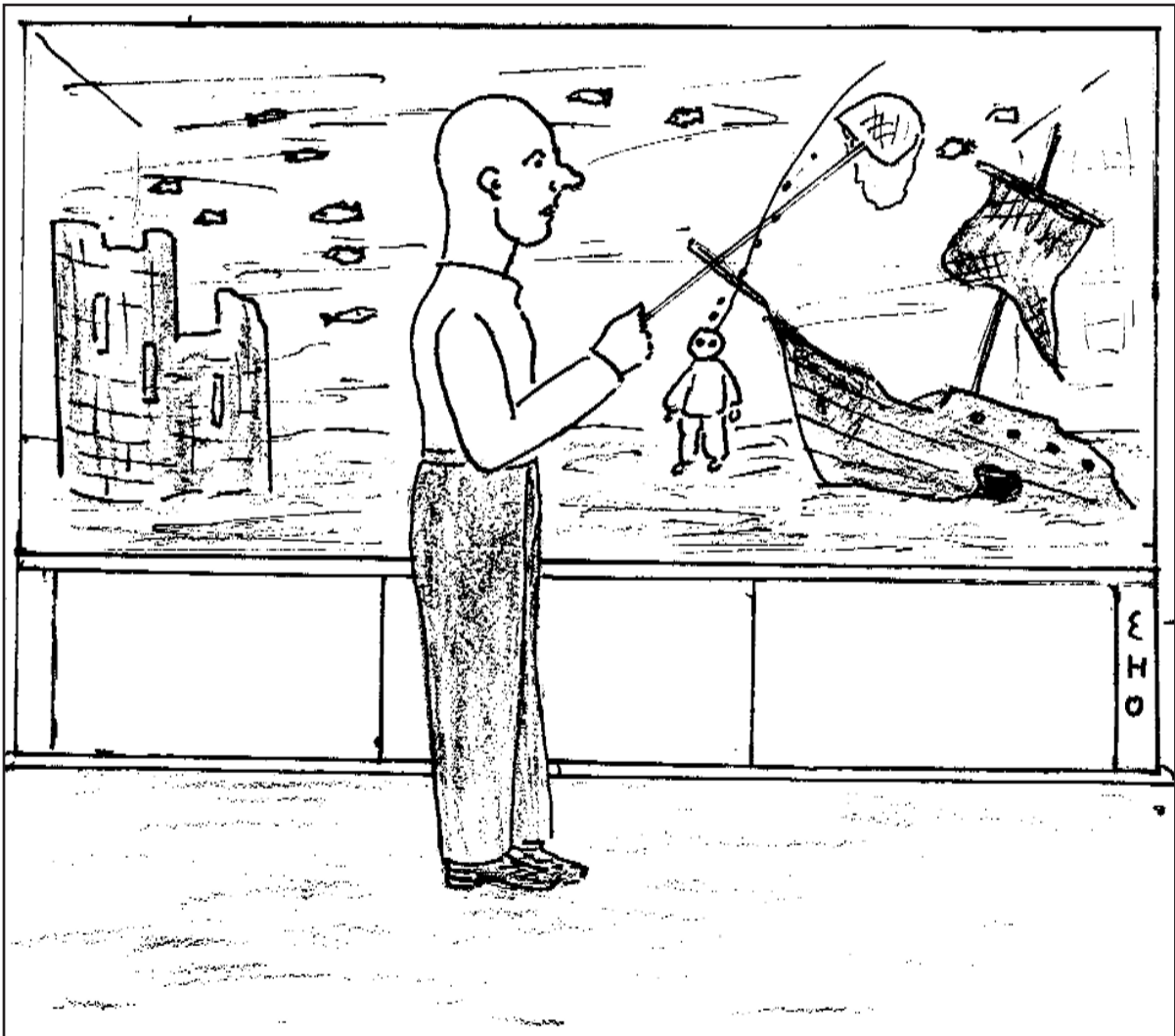
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The Modern Aquarium Cartoon Caption Contest

Modern Aquarium has featured cartoons before. This time though, you, the members of Greater City get to choose the caption! Just think of a good caption, then mail, email, or phone the Editor with your caption (phone: 347-866-1107, fax: 877-299-0522, email: gcas@earthlink.net. Your caption needs to reach the Editor by the third Wednesday of this month. We'll also hand out copies of this page at the meeting, which you can turn in to Marsha before leaving. Winning captions will earn ten points in our Author Awards program, qualifying you for participation in our special "Authors Only" raffle at our Holiday Party and Banquet. Put on your thinking caps!



Cartoon by Elliot Oshins

Your Caption:

Your Name:

Coconut Warning-Fungicide by Jim Carmark

I recently acquired some coconuts that were scored to make them more easily opened. After removing the meat I put the cleaned husks in boiling water. The smell of undecylenic acid filled the kitchen. (I'm a chemist.) This is the cheap athlete's foot medication often sold as a spray or powder. It is also used as an agricultural fungicide. DO NOT USE



THESE COCONUTS FOR FISH HOUSES. The poison is absorbed throughout the husk. I wouldn't eat the meat either. Use organic coconuts ONLY, and if they smell when boiled don't use them. Organic does not mean chemical free; they can still use sulfur and the like. Please pass this info along to other clubs.

Brought to you by the folks at "REEFS AND RIVERS" of Manomet, MA.

Rules for August's "Silent Auction" / Fleamarket

Next month, Greater City has its annual "Silent Auction"/fleamarket. Here is a brief summary of the rules:

- ★ The seller sets an opening price for each item, which must be at least one dollar.
- ★ Bidders write down their bids in increments of at least \$1.00 That is, your bid must be at least one dollar more than the previous bid, and **you may only bid in even dollar amounts** (such as \$1.00, \$2.00, \$5.00, etc.) Bids of dollars and cents such as \$1.50, \$2.75 will be invalidated.
- ★ A bidder may not cross out his/her own bid to enter a lower bid.
- ★ The highest bidder at the end of the auction wins the item.
- ★ Proceeds are split 50/50 between the seller and Greater City. (Of course, the seller may also donate 100% of the proceeds to Greater City!)
- ★ Items not claimed by winning bids (or if there were no bids, by their owners) at the end of the auction become the property of Greater City.
- ★ Bids entered after the auction has been declared closed will be invalidated. The decision of the Auction Chairperson or President on whether this has happened is final.

The LFS Report

by Ed Vukich

LFS in the spotlight: Aqua Hut

264 Middle Country Road, Coram, New York 11727

Open 7 Days a Week

This month the LFS Report is honored to have a guest reporter. I want to thank Ed for doing this, and I encourage others to follow his lead. If you would like to report on your favorite shop just let me know.

Dan P.

Aqua Hut is located on Long Island, and while about 50 miles from Queens it is well worth the trip. Take the Long Island Expressway east to exit 64 Route 112. Turn left onto Route 112 at the light toward Coram and proceed 4-5 miles to Middle Country Road (Route 25), and you will find Aqua Hut in a strip mall which is also home to a large Home Depot.

In my opinion Aqua Hut is one of the best, if not *the* best fish shop on Long Island for a number of reasons. Unlike many pet shops these days they only sell tropical fish and supplies, and have just about anything you could possibly need. The store is large by aquarium store standards, and the majority of the space is devoted to aquariums, which house a large selection of both fresh and saltwater aquarium species. The fish population varies depending on what is available on the market, but they usually have a very good selection. One thing I like is that they usually have a good number of any given species. It's nice to see a tank with 50 cory catfish or 100 cardinal tetras, so if you want to get a school of fish or a breeding group you have that option, and most fish are offered with quantity discounts. Freshwater fish are not guaranteed, but based on the prices and the fact that most of their fish seem healthy, happy, and in good condition, I have rarely had a problem. In addition, they will often have some rare or not often seen fish that you will never see in other shops. I recently purchased some CW51 cory cats which are new, and a species I had never seen before. Needless to say, I bought six on the spot. I also purchased an L081 gold nugget pleco, and there were about 25 of these nice plecos in the tank.

Aqua Hut also has some of the best prices on both fish and supplies that you will find in a traditional brick and mortar store. In many cases I have found their prices to be even lower than some of the major online retailers, so I purchase the vast majority of all

my supplies there so that I can support my local fish shop, and have a great place to go when I want to take a little ride.

Don, the owner, and his staff are very friendly and knowledgeable and always willing to help with any problems you may have, and they have built a loyal and dedicated following in the area. Don also

mentioned to me on a recent visit that they had secured some additional space next door to his current store where he can store his large inventory, and store larger tanks onsite for sale. So if you are looking for that 125 gallon tank for your bedroom, Don and his staff will have it and will be happy to help you get it into your car. Over the years I have mentioned Aqua Hut to many other members of Greater City, and I

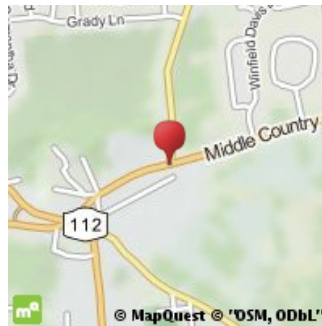
have to say they all speak highly of the store, staff and selection.

On my most recent visit in early March, here are some interesting fish I saw available:

Large Neon Tetra, 99 cents
Clown Loach 2 inches, 3 for \$10
Adult Silver Sailfin Molly, 3 for \$9
Roseline Shark 2 inch, 3 for \$21
Adult Serpae Tetra, 4 for \$5
Leleupi Cichlid 2 inches, 3 for \$27
Demasoni Cichlid Breeding Size (3 inches), 3 for \$24

In addition to the fresh and saltwater fish, here are a few of the prices I observed on their extensive line of supplies, just so you get an idea:

Via Aqua 100 watt heater, \$17.99
Aquaclear 110 Power Filter, \$74.99
Stress Coat 16oz, \$8.99
Whisper 60 air pump, \$17.99
Fluval 106 Canister Filter, \$99.99
Hikari 16 oz frozen bloodworms or mysis shrimp, \$9.99 each or 3 for \$27





As you can see, Aqua Hut is well worth the trip. Now that the weather is warming up, get some of your fish buddies and take a ride and get out of the house. Don and his staff would love to see you, and be sure to mention you came from the GCAS. However, don't try to call them on the phone, as per Don in order to keep the prices this low he saves on the overhead wherever he can. All major credit cards are accepted, as well as good old cash.



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So Far, So Good

Goodea atripinnis atripinnis

by Susan Priest
photograph by Al Priest



When you bring a CARES fish into your home, it changes your perspective. Even though you know that you are a good fishkeeper, that you are already doing a good job, it makes you want to do better. It makes you want to make sure. At least, that's what happened to me. It is now almost a year later. The adult pair is robust and active. The female is quite a bit smaller than the male, but that didn't stop them from doing what comes naturally. The female has delivered her first clutch of fry. So far, so good!

organ of the male. The males "have a gonopodium which can be seen as a lobe-shaped appendage on the anal fin itself."¹ The anal fin also has a notch, which is the visually more distinguishing feature.

Here are the answers to two questions which some of you might be asking yourselves at this point. First, "will one insemination result in multiple pregnancies?" No. *G. atripinnis* are an exception to this outcome, which is common among many livebearers. The female must be fertilized prior to each pregnancy. Second, "do the



Goodea atripinnis atripinnis (male upper right, female lower left)

At some point during the winter, it became clear that the female was gravid. Not knowing exactly when this happened, and with a gestation period of around sixty days, give or take a few, the vigil became a bit of a marathon. Then one morning in the first week of April, my wait, and hers, was finally over. In comparison to the fry of most livebearers, these are fewer in number and larger in size. When all was said and done, there were nine fry which were large enough for me to see without my reading glasses.

Another feature of these fish which is not typical of other livebearers is the external sexual

fry receive nourishment from the female during gestation?" Yes. The embryos obtain nourishment from ovarian fluid which they absorb through a tiny tube extending from their vent.

Important to note at this point is that keeping the adults well fed will virtually eliminate the incidence of predation of the fry. Many livebearing fishes will cannibalize their young almost as soon as they are born, but *G. atripinnis* is not one of them. You should be able to maintain fishes of different sizes and ages together in the same tank.

Since we have brought up the topic of being well fed, let's pursue it further. These fishes are herbivores which should be fed with a heavy hand. However, occasional supplements of protein-rich foods are also advised, with live foods

being optimum. Before the birth of the fry, the adults were getting both spirulina flakes and vegetable pellets daily, as well as two or three feedings of fortified live brine shrimp per week. After the fry arrived, Al was delivering a heaping finger-full of microworms to the tank every day, which the adults took to as readily as the fry did.

"The habitats are very versatile, including lakes, ponds, streams, springs, and outflows. The water may be clear, turbid or muddy, and currents are none to sometimes moderately strong. Different substrates like mud, clay, sand, gravel and rocks occur."² What can we fishkeepers learn from all of this? To me it is saying that these fish are adaptable, and that they can handle pretty much whatever we throw at them.

In my initial attempts to "make sure," I made the error of installing a heater. My intent was to provide a consistent temperature. I have since learned that they do best at the lower end of what would be considered a suitable temperature range for tropics. Even though they are native to equatorial Mexico and Central America, they often inhabit higher elevations with temperatures in the 64°-70°F (18°-22°C) range. The temperature in the vicinity of their tank will rise considerably above that over the next few months, and the air conditioner not far away will lead to fluctuations. However, last year I didn't know about their preference for cooler temperatures, and they made it through a particularly hot summer just fine.

There are still a few miscellaneous points that should be mentioned. As noted in the text box, *G. atripinnis* should be given slightly hard and slightly alkaline water. I have found that an easy way to do this is to add some dolomite to a box filter. Also, as a consequence of heavy feeding they require large and frequent water changes (at least 50% weekly) along with excellent filtration. One last miscellaneous item which needs to be mentioned is the size of these fish. The references which I have been consulting have contradicted each other in the extreme. One thing they all seem to agree on is that the females grow larger than the males, and that

Scientific Name: *Goodea atripinnis atripinnis*
Common Name: Blackfin Goodea
Native Habitat: Mexico and Central America
Reproduction: Livebearer
Water Parameters: 10-25GH (slightly hard), 7.0-8.0 pH (slightly alkaline)
Temperature: 64-72°F (low normal for tropics)
Sexual Dimorphism: Female is typically larger, male has a notched anal fin
Adult length: Male 12cm (4"), Female 20cm (7.5")
Temperament: Peaceful
Nutrition: Herbivorous, feed heavily

they both grow larger in the wild than in an aquarium. I should point out that my pair, seen in the photo on the previous page, is not typical, in that the female is the smaller of the two.

There is one unresolved point which has put me in a bit of a quandary.

All of the references I have consulted describe the presence of "black fins," sometimes on the females, and sometimes on the males. The common name(s) I have encountered are either "Blackfin Goodea" or "Blackfinned Goodea." However, none of the photos of either sex which I have seen illustrate this, nor do my own fish demonstrate it.

As an aside, I would like to report an independent observation of my own. The hornwort which I placed in the *G. atripinnis* tank was taken from my *Poecilia wingei* (Endler's livebearer) tank, which has a colony of small snails (genus/species unknown). I have noticed that the snails in the *atripinnis* tank grow much larger than the ones in the Endler's tank. This makes me wonder if the Endler's are eating at least some of the snail eggs or the newly hatched snails.

It took me a very long time to learn that it doesn't matter how many books you read, or how many web sites you visit. The best teachers are the fishes themselves. So, if you are ready to adopt a CARES fish, let the fish pick you. It will show you the way!



REFERENCES:

¹Baensch, Hans A., **Aquarium Atlas**, Volume 3, Tetra Press, 1996, Page 588.

Dawes, John, **Livebearing Fishes**, Wellington House, 1995.

Dick, Leslie, e-mails/conversations

<http://www.goodeiden.de/html/atripinnis2.html>

²<http://www.goodeidworkinggroup.com/Goodea-atripinnis>

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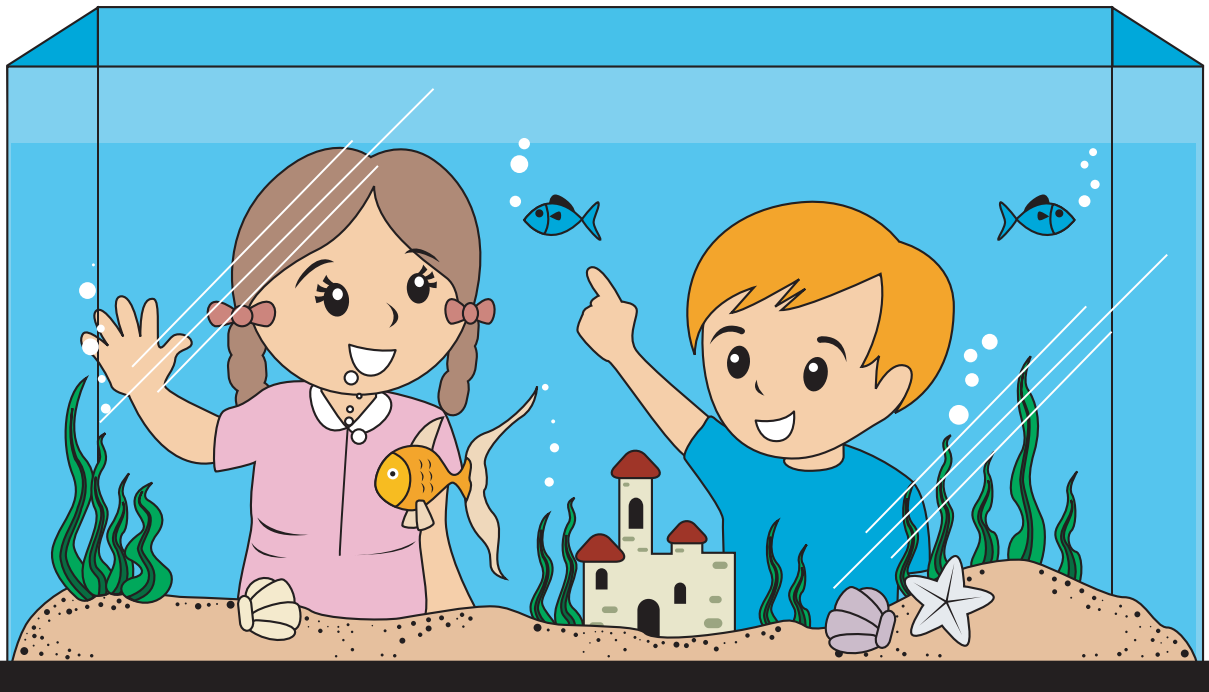
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The Easy Way to Breed Killifish

by Joseph Ferdenzi

If I could only keep one group of fishes, I have no doubt that I would choose the killifishes. Why? Because this group includes many small but highly colorful fish, with an appearance so exotic that few other groups of freshwater fishes can match—but I suppose I would stress the colors. There are many African and South American killifish species whose colors would rival those of many marine fishes. Yet they are small, and therefore can be maintained in relatively small aquariums. And I want to further stress that these colors are not man-made—they are as nature has bestowed them. So, you might ask, if they're so great, how come you so rarely see them for sale in pet shops, and when you do, why are they so expensive? Ah, in the answer lies the reason for this article!

Most egg-laying aquarium fish—and this includes such large groups as catfish, cichlids, barbs, tetras, and rasboras—lay their eggs in large quantities in a single spawning event. This spawning method lends itself to commercial production of large numbers of these fish. Not so with killies. Most killifish females will lay one or two eggs a day, and not necessarily every day. Therefore, collecting killifish eggs, especially from the non-annual species (the vast majority of killifish), becomes a very time-consuming task. Even in countries where labor is very cheap, this is not an attractive business model. After all, hobbyists aside, who is going to walk into a pet shop and choose that orange lyretail killifish (*Aphyosemion australe*) that costs \$8.99 when they can buy a larger red platy (*Xiphophorus maculatus*) for \$1.99? There is no commercial incentive to killifish breeding. Perhaps that is another reason why I gravitate toward killifish—they are only readily available to hobbyists or the *cognoscenti* of the aquarium world.

So, you get the picture—breeding killies is very labor-intensive if you do it the conventional way. But what is the conventional way? Well, for all but the true annuals (whose eggs must go through a "dry" period

of hibernation) it consists of providing a spawning medium (the most common being a "mop" made of synthetic yarn) where the killies lay their adhesive eggs. Every day or two you pluck these mops from the aquariums and examine each strand (a typical mop will consist of anywhere from 50 to 100) for the eggs. You



Aphyosemion australe. Native to Gabon and the Congo.
Photo from SeriouslyFish.com.

remove them using your thumb and forefinger, and place them in a small container of water until they hatch. Well, if your life is anything like mine, do you have time for that? (What is my life like? Let's see: On work days I leave home at 7:30 AM and return at around 7:00 PM. Then I go to bed at around 10:30 because I need to be up by 6:30. That leaves a whopping 3.5 hours to do everything

else—you know, the spouse, the children, the house, and I don't want to leave out eating.) When you throw in feeding the fish and routine tank maintenance, I wish you much luck in having the time to go looking for eggs in six to a dozen mops!

Therefore, I have devised a solution. It consists of keeping the non-annual killifish in heavily planted tanks—the larger the better. I have several kinds of killies that I now maintain this way. Before I describe a typical setup, I readily acknowledge one disadvantage—you will never produce as many fry as you would the conventional way. No matter how heavily planted your tank is, a certain number of fry will fall prey to their parents and older siblings. But if, like me, you have scarce time to pick eggs, the answer to the question, "Is getting some fry better than getting no fry?" explains why I have chosen this method in my present stage of life.

Most killifish do not prefer brightly lit tanks, so heavy plantings also create an environment much to their liking. My experience has led me to conclude that the ideal planting consists of a floating plant such as hornwort or water sprite combined with plants such as *Anubias* or Java fern. In my opinion the hornwort/*Anubias* combination is easier, because these are not finicky about water conditions. I always include gravel

in these setups even though neither *Anubias* nor Java fern is planted in the gravel. Rather, they are usually attached to driftwood or stones—my favorite being petrified wood. Under standard lighting conditions (a 15W fluorescent bulb on a ten-gallon tank, or a 40W fluorescent on a 55-gallon tanks) these plants do well. Hornwort in particular grows copiously, because it floats just beneath the light source. Java moss is also highly recommended, either for the lower stratum or for filling the entire tank.

When feeding the fish, make sure you include very fine foods, so that the fry also have something to eat. Newly hatched brine shrimp are an ideal live food in such a setup—both adults and fry will relish it. Non-annual killifish will eat most anything, and they do not require live food.

Depending on the size of the tank, you will occasionally have to look for fry swimming among the floating plants, and remove them. Why risk losing them? In a larger tank such as a 55 there is less risk, because there is so much more space, including hiding spots, but in, say, a 10, it's a little dicier. So when I see fry swimming among the plants I catch them with a small net, and place them in a small rearing tank (one to two gallons) with other similarly sized fry until they are about three-quarters of an inch in size, at which time they can be moved to a larger rearing tank (10 gallons).

If you can, when acquiring your killies

try to get at least three pairs. This insures some genetic diversity, results in less stress on individual fish, and of course produces more fry.

The photos accompanying this article illustrate three of my killifish setups. The top photo is a 55 gallon tank housing *Aphyosemion bivittatum* "Funge." The floating plants are hornwort and *Najas*, and the

plants underneath are *Anubias barteri* (they have quite an exposed root structure). It also contains a #3-sized gravel as well. The next one is a 20-long housing *Epiplatys annulatus* (the so-called clown killie). This tank has water sprite on top, Java moss, #3 gravel, and petrified wood on the bottom. The third tank is a 10 gallon that houses *Pachypanchax sparksorum*. This tank has a slate bottom and no gravel. It has a very dense growth of hornwort, over some *Anubias barteri* held down by small pieces of petrified wood. None of these setups is complicated. I get fry—not a lot, but I also get to step back and enjoy the natural beauty that the aquarium hobby so abundantly provides.

As an aside, when non-hobbyists see my fifty aquariums they invariably say that it must take me "hours" to feed all the fish. I smile when they say that; I can leisurely do it in under fifteen minutes.





BOWL SHOW RULES

There is a Bowl Show at every GCAS meeting, except our Silent Auction/fleamarket meeting (August) and our Holiday Party and Awards Banquet meeting (December). These shows are open to all members of GCAS. Rules are as follows:

- Only current GCAS members may enter fish in the Bowl Show.
- There is a limit of 2 entries per member per meeting.
- Unlike some other clubs, every month is an “open” Bowl Show at the GCAS (i.e., there is no “theme,” such that one month cichlids are judged, the next livebearers, the next anabantoids, etc.).
- Any fish that wins any prize (1st, 2nd, or 3rd) may not be entered again in the same meeting year.
- The current Bowl Show Coordinator is Leonard Ramroop, who usually also serves as judge (although guest speakers are often asked to do the judging honors).
- 2.5 gallon containers are available for use (brought to the meetings by the Bowl Show Coordinator), but entrants are responsible for providing enough (and suitable) water for their fish.
- For a fish too large (or too small) for those containers, entrants must supply a suitable container, which must be clear on at least three sides.
- Only one fish per container (i.e., no “pairs”).
- No plants, ornaments, or equipment (filters, airstone, etc.) are allowed in the judging tank (an external mirror, or opaque cards between containers is acceptable, as is a cover that does not obstruct side viewing).
- Points are awarded: 5 points for 1st Place, 3 for 2nd Place, and 1 for 3rd Place.
- Ribbons are awarded: blue for 1st Place, red for 2nd Place, and green for 3rd Place.
- The person with the most points at the end of the meeting season receives the Walter Hubel “Bowl Show Champion” trophy at the Awards Banquet.
- The decision of the judge(s) is final.
- A running UNOFFICIAL total of the points awarded is printed in **Modern Aquarium**. Only the tally of points maintained by the Bowl Show Coordinator is official.
- **In case of ties:**
 - 1st Tiebreaker – most 1st Places
 - 2nd Tiebreaker – most 2nd Places
 - 3rd Tiebreaker – most entries

THE MOON JELLY AND THE FILEFISH

Story and Photos by Stephen Sica

If I may offer some free advice to my readers, if any, out there, it is important to always look up. Why? Well, it's unlikely that a meteorite is going to strike, but there are an awful lot of pigeons and other birds out there. I'm sure that just about anyone who has attained the age of reason and who spends time outdoors has had a run-in, or should I say fly-in, with the other business end of a bird. Birds often mistake window reflections for the clear blue sky. I've gingerly sent a few birds in my back yard on their way after a close encounter with the house. I'm sure that it must be a real pain for those birds, and as usual I digress, so let me digress even more.

I first learned about this axiom (See the first line of this story in case you have

already forgotten, and don't worry, because I do not insult easily) as a child when I became enamored with rockets, satellites and the stars. A grade school friend owned a small 30X telescope. He lived exactly ten blocks from my home in Richmond Hill, Queens,

and I often walked to his house in the twilight to look at the moon, the stars, and the planet Venus through his little telescope. Eventually, my father purchased a small telescope for me, but mine was 50X with a one inch larger aperture. I could see even more

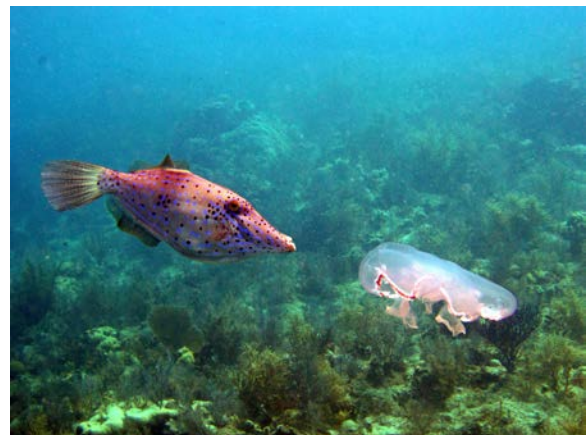
stars, and spent many cold winter evenings gazing at the Great Nebula in Orion's Belt. Later, I learned that the nebula was a nursery for newborn stars. How exciting! Okay, it's not exactly fish up there, except for Pisces, but there are a few fish and sea life references



Filefish encounters a moon jelly off the shores of Key Largo.



The scrawled filefish, *Aluterus scriptus*, is a beautiful and unique specimen with bright blue dots and dashes, punctuated by black spots. It can grow to three feet. This colorful fish drifts through the water at times. It easily blends into the seascape in search of food.



This filefish exhibits intense curiosity during its encounter with a moon jelly.



Filefish studies potential prey. Jellyfish are at the mercy of fish predators due to their lack of mobility. Can a moon jelly sting a filefish? Is the venom harmful or deadly?



Filefish finally moves in and takes a small nibble of the moon jelly.

in the starry sky. Just look up at the Earth's natural satellite. Doesn't it remind you of the moon jellyfish? No? Well, now I am insulted! Let's begin.

Donna and I were finishing another dive off the shores of Key Largo. We had lots of air remaining in our cylinders thanks to the shallow waters, so we decided to swim a few large loops on the reef using the hull of our boat as a center reference. Eventually, it was time to surface. Not coincidentally, my earlier axiom about the sky is also a precept for diving—at least to me. Always look up! I learned this early in my diving career when large oil and gasoline barges and tankers would rumble through Reynolds Channel heading to and fro under the Atlantic Beach Bridge. Even though the channel was 45 feet deep at high tide, the progressively louder thudding of the engines seemed to put those ships just inches above me. Since sound travels much better through water, I'm sure that you can imagine the frightening noise. You could almost feel the pressure from the hull and screws plowing through the water above your head and body.

Back to Key Largo. Look up we did, as we began to surface while swimming towards the dive boat. What we saw were moon jellyfish, *Aurelia aurita*. There were *many* moon jellies. Fortunately, their tentacles are very short, and circle the fringe of the dome tightly. It's difficult to be stung by this jellyfish unless you swim into it or it drifts into you. Luckily, it is only mildly toxic. It will sting

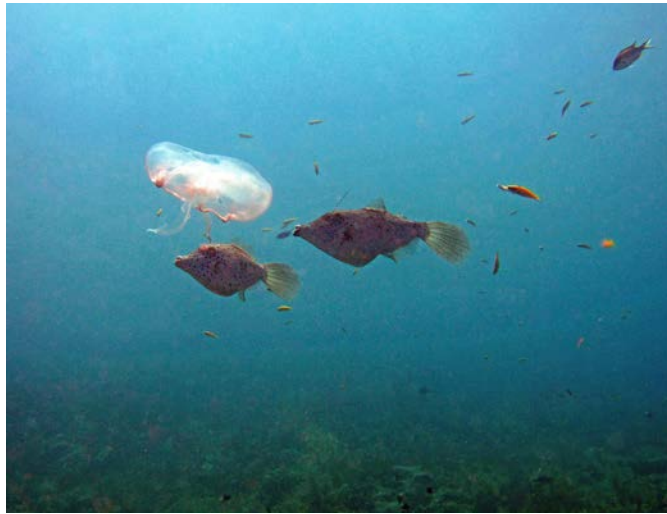
bare skin, causing an itchy rash. I have been stung; the itch and rash clear up in a few days or less, depending on your sensitivity to the toxin. When there are many jellyfish in the area the secret is to duck and dodge your way around them. It's no problem in calm seas, but if there is surge, a current, or waves it is almost impossible to avoid one or two. This is when you have your own personal "moon landing" by being stung.

As we angled upwards to the boat while trying to avoid the jellyfish, a colorful scrawled filefish, *Aluterus scriptus*, swam into view and began a wide circling of the nearest moon jelly. I assumed that the filefish was just curious, because it warily watched the jellyfish while circling closer. This went on for a few seconds. It slowly moved closer to the jellyfish, and finally went right up and began nibbling at it. I think that it was biting the dome, but I could not tell for sure; the filefish may have been nipping at the short tentacles. I had to keep my distance for fear that the filefish would flee. After a few more seconds the first filefish was joined by another. Both began nibbling on the same moon jelly. It was a close but brief encounter that happened in no more than two minutes from when the initial filefish first encountered the jellyfish. There were other jellyfish in the immediate area, but both filefish singled out the same jellyfish.

During this episode I took a series of photographs from about twenty or more feet away. I was far enough away to be unable

to see exactly what the filefish were nipping at on the jellyfish. It appeared that the bites were not severe enough to harm the jellyfish. If they caused any serious damage, I could not tell, but I doubt it. After both filefish finished dining, they swam away, and Donna and I surfaced.

When we returned home I searched the internet and found a few amateur photos, similar to mine, of filefish eating moon jellyfish, but no stories about their relationship to go with the photos. I



Filefish encounters a moon jelly off the shores of Key Largo.

also read on the internet that the Japanese have conducted research to encourage consumption of moon jellyfish by filefish species in an attempt to reduce the jellyfish population. Unfortunately, jellyfish can multiply into large blooms that overrun vast expanses of the oceans. I recollect either reading about or seeing on television (or perhaps the internet) large blooms of huge jellyfish near Japan. I think these were ordinary jellyfish that just grew enormously. While researching this, I also found a story about moon jellies invading a Swedish nuclear power plant's water intake and outtake pipes, clogging the pipes with massive gobs of jellyfish. Similar episodes have occurred in Japan. Since this species can grow to fifteen inches in diameter, I can imagine the damage that a few thousand can cause.

These jellyfish are carnivorous, feeding on zooplankton, small shrimp, fish eggs and larvae. In turn, their own predators are turtles, some fish, and other types of jellyfish. They inhabit coastal waters that are usually

warm, but can withstand cooler temperatures. They have been found in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans. They live in coastal waters, and can even survive in brackish waters with low salinity. Most importantly, they occur in huge numbers. Sexual maturity commonly

happens in spring and summer. Males and females are distinct, and reproduction is sexual. There are more than 2,000 species of jellyfish, more scientifically known as sea jellies, and they are related to anemones and coral. Jellyfish are boneless, brainless and heartless; same as some people, Donna says, and have existed since before the dinosaurs. The next time that you come across a jellyfish in the water just remember that its ancestors knew both the small and the great dinosaurs. Imagine if a dinosaur actually evolved from a jellyfish! It may be improbable, but our planet is a very unique spot in the universe. You never know. My advice—keep looking up!



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RAFFLE.....50 / 50

Ein? Swai? Tra? Basa?

by Dan Radebaugh

Reading Steve Sica's "Fish Bytes" column in our April issue, I was intrigued when he mentioned a food fish called swai, which he described as a large, river catfish. Never having seen the word 'swai' before, I went online and discovered that it is in fact a catfish from Southeast Asia, the Mekong River specifically, and it is a fish that likely many of us have at one time or another kept in our home aquariums. Some of you have probably already guessed this mystery fish's identity, but before I get to that, I must tell you that there are many threads to this story, going back over a number of years.

Some months back, as my wife Marsha and I were shopping for dinner at the local grocery, we saw some fish filets, light in color, called 'basa.' We asked the counter clerk what kind of fish that was, and unsatisfied with his rather vague reply, did some research on our own, finding that 'basa' is an invented name for a large catfish native to the Mekong River, *Pangasius bocourti*, also sometimes called the yellowtail catfish. Moreover, it seems that the basa is a close relative of the aforementioned swai, as well as to the 'tra.' With a little more digging, I discovered that the swai and the tra seem to be different marketing names for the species *Pangasius hypophthalmus*, a fish many of us know as the iridescent shark, a species that has been sold in pet shops for longer than I've been in the hobby, which goes back to the late 1950s.

Nearly everything you can find about *P. hypophthalmus*, or the shark catfish group in general, involves controversy. My search brought up a number of rather heated debates in online fish forums about whether or not iridescent sharks should even be considered for home aquariums. Their potential size (around four feet in

length) argues against them, though many aquarists and some merchants insist that they won't grow this large in a home aquarium. One seller went so far as to guarantee that if a lady in the discussion bought such a fish from him that it would never exceed seven or eight inches in length. Of course there were plenty of supporters of the old myth that fish will only grow to the extent allowed by the size of their tanks, so everything should work out fine. On the other hand, there were those who told of purchasing one or two or three of these fish (they are said to prefer living in groups), only to have them outgrow first a 20-gallon, then a 55-gallon, and finally a 125-gallon tank before a home was found for them in a local public aquarium (a long-shot solution). This brought to mind a thread I came across on a forum years back where a young woman in the U.K. offered an impassioned defence of this fish, citing their gentleness, intelligence, and

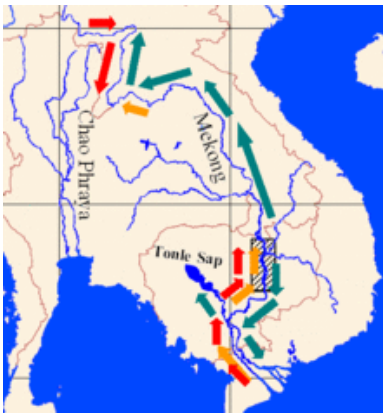
attachment to their owner and to each other. She had kept a pair for some years, both of which were at that time about three feet long and living in a large pond.

More common were stories that the fish perhaps didn't outgrow their quarters, but after a time declined in health. Specifically mentioned in this regard were skin lesions, eventual loss of consciousness, and death. They are said to be notably vulnerable to ich, though this may be due to their owners not easily being able to see the diagnostic white spots on their scaleless bodies. These fish are known for being skittish and easily startled, and since their eyesight is apparently not great they've been known to injure or even kill themselves by crashing into the sides of the aquarium. As they get larger, the potential for having a literal 'tank-buster' increases. Some keepers recommend heavily planting the ends of the tank so that they'll perceive a 'wall' rather than apparent open space.

Parasites aside, the tank size/water quality issue is well worth discussing, whether for this fish or for any large, heavy-bodied species. Symptoms like skin lesions and dying would indicate that the fish are living in a less than optimal environment. Some of the old-timers here at Greater City will recall guest speaker David Boruchowitz (former Editor of **TFH**) and his talk here on the idea of frequent, large-scale water changes. The gist was that in nature, water in a fish's watery environment is constantly being replaced, in the process washing away the various dissolved organic compounds generated by the fishes'



Pangasius hypophthalmus, the iridescent shark.
Photo from scotcat.com.



P. hypophthalmus migrations in the Mekong River. Orange: March to May, Dark green: May to September, Red: October to February. Shaded region: spawning region of the southern Mekong population between Khone Falls and Kratie. Map from Wikipedia.com.

metabolism. A large part of the difficulty of keeping large fish (or large numbers of smaller fish) healthy in a confined space like an aquarium is that the fish are just trapped there, living in their own metabolic wastes, which are not being removed by the natural ‘water changes’ provided by nature. So theoretically, you could keep an Oscar healthy in a ten-gallon tank if the water was constantly being replaced. If you’ve ever visited a fish hatchery you can see this principle in action. Despite the crowded fish runs, the water is continuously being replaced—flowing in one end of the run and out the other—allowing for a much greater density of fish than could otherwise be maintained.



Iridescent sharks in albino form.



P. hypophthalmus with skin ulceration.



Iridescent sharks can injure their noses by crashing into the glass. Photos above from Aqualandpetsplus.com.

So, we know that these fish are native to Southeast Asia, most notably Viet Nam, they aren’t difficult to come by, they can grow to a large size, and they’re easily found in supermarkets. What else do we know about them? Well, let’s look at the supermarket part for a moment, as this leads into some areas of controversy,

including the weird names. One of the reasons this fish has been in the hobby for so many years is that they’ve been a long-time product of aquaculture back in their native lands, and so fingerlings have been available to the aquarium hobby as well as to the “meat men.” This is also the reason we often see other large-growing, aquarium-questionable catfish in pet shops. Ever wonder why North American channel catfish (also quite large as adults) are so easy to find in aquarium shops, and so reasonably priced? If your livelihood is growing and selling fish, you’re going to try to explore all ‘channels!’

Returning to the subject of the weird names (‘tra’, ‘basa’, ‘swai’), the large-scale importation of these fish (*P. hypophthalmus* and *P. bocourti*) as food began in about 1994, as part of our normalization of relations and increasing trade with the countries of Southeast Asia. Did you know that for some years now Viet Nam’s largest trade partner has been the United States? Did you also know that catfish farming is an important industry in the southern United States? Do you recall that part of our elected officials’ job descriptions is protecting the jobs of their constituents? Well, in 2002, “the United States accused Vietnam of dumping catfish, namely *Pangasius bocourti* and *Pangasius hypophthalmus*, on the American market, charging the Vietnamese importers, who are subsidized by Vietnam’s government, of unfair competition. With pressures from the U.S. catfish industry, the United States Congress passed a law in 2003 preventing the imported fish from being labelled as catfish, as well as imposing additional tariffs on the imported fish. Under the U.S. Food and Drug Administration ruling, only species from the family Ictaluridae can be sold as true catfish. As a result, the Vietnamese exporters of this fish now label their products sold in the U.S. as basa fish or bocourti. At the height of the ‘catfish war’, U.S. catfish farmers and others were describing the imported catfish as an inferior product. However, Mississippi State University researchers found imported basa were preferred 3-to-1 to US catfish in a small blind taste test.”

The “catfish war,” incidentally, was also sometimes called the “whitefish war.” The flesh of these shark catfish is light in color, so sometimes their meat is referred to (for instance on the packaging of imported frozen fish sticks) as “whitefish.” Check it out.

While catfish farms in the US usually consist of pond complexes, in Viet Nam and Thailand most farming of *Pangasius* catfish is done in containment pens in the rivers. This is sometimes touted as the reason for the superior taste of these catfish. Their water is constantly being changed by the flow of the river. On the other hand, an ongoing concern voiced by people who have been there and seen the operations, is that in many smaller, “developing” countries, industry is not being crippled by burdensome regulation. The Mekong is arguably one of the most polluted rivers in the world to begin with, and visitors have reported seeing

the use of malachite green in the catfish pens. If you haven't already done so, take a look at the warnings on your ich medication containers. In June of 2001, the US Food and Drug Administration imposed increased and more thorough testing on Southeast Asian farm-raised seafood including the basa fish after repeatedly discovering fish contaminated with heavy metals and banned antibiotics. An Australian team back in 2007, surveying 100 fish from the Mekong, found traces of 14 antimicrobial chemicals at low levels. Earlier this year Russia temporarily halted importation of tra and other aquatic products following their inspection of eight tra fish processing plants late last year. *Caveat emptor!*

Photo from scalestails.tumblr.com



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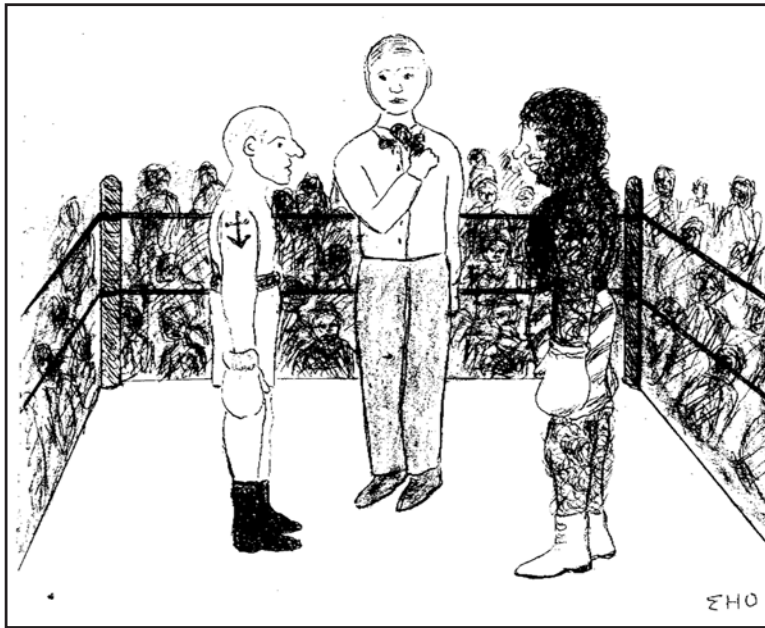
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Cartoon Caption Contest Redux

Some months we only get a few entries in our monthly Cartoon Caption Contest, while in other months we receive quite a lot. Sometimes judging the entries is very easy, other times not so much. As you'll see below, sometimes even the entrants have a tough time judging what caption to send in. Ask Horst Gerber. He forgot to actually send me his entry for our April contest. I suspect that was because he couldn't quit writing captions long enough to decide which one to send. Take a look at the consequences of an overactive mind...



The Unpublished Captions of Horst and Linda Gerber

Hair or no hair, this fight is on!

You need a shave.

I expect a fair fight. No hair pulling.

I wish I had some of that...

Not fair! I can't see his tattoos!

This guy needs that new hair remover, No No.

I wonder if this guy has fleas?

I cut my own hair.

I think this guy gets his money's worth at the barber shop.

Mike Tyson wouldn't need to bite this guys ear off, he'd just pull his hair out.

I want you to know, I cut my own hair!

If I win this fight that guy owes me a hair transplant!

I wonder if he's covering up tattoos?

From one guy to another, get a haircut.



AN AQUARIST'S JOURNEY

Story and Photos (unless noted) by Rosario LaCorte

Chapter 5

During the mid-1950s there were several wholesale establishments in New York City that imported rare fish. Bill Harsell and I purchased our first *Nothobranchius guentheri* as well as (at the time) *Pterolebias elegans*, which in reality was *Cynolebias whitei*—today known as *Nematolebias whitei*. They were purchased from the wholesale firm of Henry Hessel at a cost \$3.50 per pair.



Nematolebias whitei, formerly *Cynolebias whitei*.

At about that time I received a letter from Jacob “Jack” Scheidnass a very active killifish enthusiast and professional tailor in Philadelphia. Jack heard that I was doing quite well with the blue gularis (*Fundulopanchax sjoestedti*), the first killifish I had added to my collection in the early 1950s through a swap with Bill Harsell. Jack was in a real bind, having a large hatch of approximately 200 young gularis, all females! He was quite frustrated, and wondered if I could help him with some males. I responded in the affirmative and invited him to my home. It would be our first face-to-face meeting despite our mutual knowledge of one another. Jack visited my hatchery on a Sunday. We had an enjoyable time in fish conversation, and Jack invited us to his home for a visit. Jack then returned home with the valuable gularis males that he had been so anxious to obtain.

A date for our visit was selected, and I, Bill Harsell, and another killie enthusiast and good friend, Dennis Simonetti, all drove to Jack’s home. We had to enter the lower level of his home, bending down to avoid bumping our heads on the stairwell entrance. Jack was in despair over the quality of the Philadelphia water supply and the detrimental effect it had on his fish. He, like a number of other hobbyists in the Philadelphia area, was within driving distance from the New Jersey Pine Barrens, a large state forest composed of pitch pine and white sand. The rivers

contained very black water and resembled the waters of the Rio Negro in Brazil. The water was extremely low in conductivity, and pH. Jack would go there and fill his 5 gallon containers to use for his killie collection. During our visit, Jack showed us a tankful of *Nothobranchius palmqvisti* (now *N. forschii*). Jack gave me a bag of *Nothobranchiis melanospilus* eggs.



Nothobranchius palmqvisti (now *N. forschii*).



Nothobranchius melanospilus from 1957 wild stock eggs from Jack Scheidnass. Photo taken in 1963.

We had no idea what these fish looked like, but tried to imagine their appearance from Jack’s description. It was a nice visit, and we were quite happy to now have two more killies to add to our growing populations of cyprinodonts. Upon my return home I was able to hatch the bag of *N. melanospilus* and got a goodly number of fry. It was a strain I maintained for 28 years, which just may be a record for line bred *Nothobranchius*. They were lost in the move to my present home in 1985. The temperature was cooler in my new (present), home, averaging 70° F, whereas my former fish house averaged 77°. The result was a hatch of *melanospilus* eggs that consisted of 100% males, thus breaking the 28 year run with this strain.

Jack had purchased the *N. melanosilus* in a Philadelphia fish shop. They originally had been collected by Henry “Hank” Hanson, who was Ross Socolof’s chief breeder at the Gulf Fish Farms in Florida. Jack lost the fish in his initial purchase, and asked the store owner whom he had gotten the fish from. The owner supplied Jack with the contact, and Jack was able to contact Hank and replace his initial loss. Hank was a merchant seaman, and had collected both species in East Africa. More on Hank Hanson later.

One of Jack Scheidnass’ important contributions was his invention of the spawning mop. Being a tailor, and familiar with an assortment of fibers, Jack came up with the idea of using nylon fiber and structuring it so killies could deposit their eggs in the strands. Most people have forgotten, or probably don’t even know about Jack’s role in this spawning innovation. This is one of the reasons that history is so important in any field of knowledge—to credit those who have passed on. Their mark should be remembered.



Nylon mop with *Bedotia* eggs in fiber.

Also around the mid 1950s, I became acquainted with Ross Socolof. I met Ross through Aaron Dvoskin. Ross had a wonderful wholesale fish establishment by the Williamsburg Bridge in Brooklyn called General Aquatics. Aaron also put Ross in touch with Pierre Brichard, the noted fish exporter who pioneered freshwater fish exportation from west Africa, and later made his mark exporting cichlids from Lake Tanganyika. I became quite close to Ross, and until he passed away in 2009, we regularly stayed in touch, initially as pen pals, then through tape recorded messages.

Ross expanded his importation of African species through Brichard. I would visit Ross about twice a month, and thoroughly enjoyed our conversations in his office. Ross encouraged me to cherry-pick any unusual fish, and I found several species then unknown to science in his import tanks.

On one visit in the mid 1950s Ross showed me a black & white photograph of a new characin from Colombia. He also showed me a letter from William “Fred” Kyburz, a plant collector who specialized in philodendrons and anthuriums. Fred’s customers included people from many industrialized nations.



Probably the very first photo ever taken of a living specimen of the Emperor tetra, *Nematobrycon palmeri*. Photo by William “Fred” Kyburz, Cali, Columbia, circa 1957. This photo came to me ‘round robin’ after nearly sixty years. Lee Finley, who obtained it from Ross’ collection, and knowing my interest in characins, sent the photo to me in 2012.

Fred attempted to sell Ross the first emperor tetras. The asking price, as I recall, was \$1.50 each; a handsome price for that era in the tropical fish industry. Ross thought the price was rather extreme and decided not to import them. I attempted to encourage the deal, but Ross was firm and decided against it.

I was already familiar with the emperor tetra. In an earlier edition of **The Aquarium**, the well known ichthyologist Dr. George S. Myers of Stanford University, in a column titled “Hints to the Importer,” featured the fish called *Nematobrycon palmeri*. Dr. Myers, whose observation was based on having seen preserved specimens, recommended it as a wonderful addition to the aquarium. Carl Eigenmann (1863-1927) had described the fish in 1916. Dr. Myers’ foresight was to be confirmed several years later when Fred Kyburz wrote an article for **The Aquarium** in 1960, describing the collection of the new characin, “The Emperor Tetra.” Kyburz was the one who gave it the trade name “Emperor,” and it was a good choice that still remains in use today. The fish was an instant hit.

Remembering the photo Ross had received from Fred, I asked Alan Fletcher, the editor of **The Aquarium**, for Fred’s address, and Alan graciously fulfilled my request. The emperor tetra had been on my wish list for several years, so I contacted Fred, who was living in Cali, Colombia, in the hope of importing the fish myself. He was very cordial, and expressed an interest in doing business with me. Fred was a wonderful writer, and I expressed my admiration for his letter composition and the expressive humor contained in his letters. Despite his Swiss birth, his English was perfect. He informed me that he had been a journalist, but had given up the profession to settle in a mountainous area of Colombia. He mentioned a second species of *Nematobrycon* which he called rainbow tetra, that he had found in a forested

area. These fish were not common, and could only be collected at a rate of 30 or 40 over a several hour period, whereas 400 or so *N. palmieri* were easily captured in much less time. Fred mentioned, and I have confirmed, that *N. palmieri* are quite inquisitive and will swim right into the net. The rainbow tetras, Fred said, could only be caught with “much patience and swearing.”

My response to Fred was based on an article Myers had written several years earlier in which he mentioned a second species called *Nematobrycon amphiloxus*. I assumed that the second species referred to by Kyburz was *amphiloxus*. Well, it was not, but I was presumptive and told Kyburz the second species was *amphiloxus*. This error continued for a few years until Dr. Stanley Weitzman reviewed the material and set the record straight. I will cover this further in a later chapter.

Fred subsequently advised me to contact Jim Thiel, manager of Franjo Fisheries, to obtain the new tetra; they were being sold for \$1 each wholesale. I tried to bring a shipment into Florida where Jim Thiel would handle it and transship them to me. Jim was most kind, and despite my not knowing him on a personal basis, he made every attempt to make certain the fish would be handled correctly to assure a successful importation. Unfortunately, the first box assigned to me arrived along with Franjo's shipment, and the rainbow emperors were in great distress and did not survive. Some of the other tetras that he sent along were OK, but of little value.

Ross Socolof, a few years later, after meeting Fred Kyburz and collecting with him outside of Cali, Colombia, surmised that the area had few interesting fish that would be valued in the aquarium hobby.

My association with Fred Kyburz never resulted in my acquiring the rainbow tetra. That would happen a few years later. The article that Kyburz wrote for **The Aquarium** outlining his discovery of the emperor tetra was a catalyst for me to talk to Sol Kessler, the owner of The Fish Bowl in Irvington, New Jersey. I knew Sol quite well, and he had one of the most impressive stores in the tri-state area. I decided to ask Sol if he would like to share a shipment with me and purchase 100 emperor tetras from Franjo. He was agreeable to the venture, and we agreed to a 50/50 split upon their arrival.

One of my techniques for keeping this line going for so long is to regularly split the fish into three different spawning groups, and cross-breed the offspring of each group to ensure genetic diversity. This strain is as strong today as when it was imported.

Also in the mid 1950s, the cardinal tetra was first imported into the United States by Paramount Aquarium. They became a big hit, taking the aquarium world by storm. They were larger than neon

tetras and much more intense in their overall color. Sol Kessler was the one who brought the cardinal tetras to the attention of Herb Axelrod, through Bill Vorderwinkler. Sol and I both liked unusual fish, so Sol always instructed his wholesalers, and there were many of them in the New York and New Jersey area, to put any rare and unusual fish on the side for him, and if need be he would pay extra for them. Sol had a large tank by the register where you paid for your purchases. The tank sat on the floor, and Sol always had large, beautiful discus swimming about in it. They were impressive! Sol loved discus, and spent a fortune on them. He always wanted to spawn them, but had very little success. On one occasion he did get a spawn, but all the eggs fungused. There were very few discus breeders in those days, and information on breeding them was very sparse.

The naming of the cardinal tetra created a great deal of controversy throughout the aquarium world. When Sol purchased the cardinals from Paramount, he contacted Herb Axelrod to tell him that the cardinal was



Cardinal tetras. Photo from Aquahobby.com

a spectacular fish and he should see them. Axelrod told me In a personal conversation that this was the fish he wanted

to be named in his honor. His association with Dr. Leonard Schultz was close, as they had collaborated on a book together. Schultz was the Curator of Fishes at the Smithsonian. Paramount meanwhile became involved in the collection and distribution of the fish. They knew they had a winner and wanted to have it properly identified. They had a good relationship with Dr. George S. Myers, who described the neon tetra in 1937, so they gave the type specimens to Myers. Myers and Weitzman described the fish as *Hyphessobrycon cardinalis*, whereas Schultz named it *Cheirodon axelrodi*.

The manipulation of an issue date of **TFH** allowed the identification of the cardinal to be valid, as the publication was back-dated as published one day before the Myers Weitzman paper. Dr. Don Jacobs, a botanist from Stone Mountain, Georgia, and a friend, writing a monthly article for **The Aquarium** magazine, called it the rape of a name (see Jacobs' article on spawning the cardinal tetra in the August 1956 issue of **The Aquarium**). I was still closely associated with Axelrod in those days, and still going to his office in Jersey City every few weeks. I would take some of the rare fishes that I had so that he could photograph them. Herb and I had a good association at that time.



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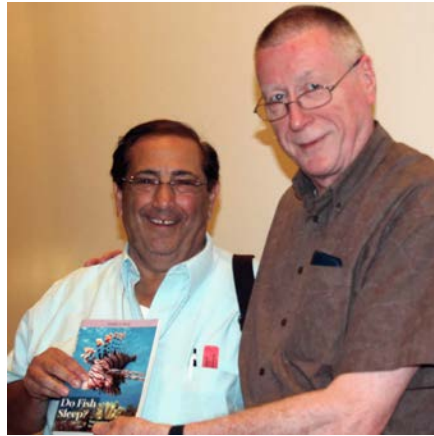
Current GCAS President Dan Radebaugh and Past President Joe Ferdenzi, who presented our program this evening



Joe is drawing the winners of his "Special Raffles"



New member: Al Shunmugam



Door prize winner: Ron Wiesenfeld

Bowl Show Winners:



2nd Place: Rich Waizman



1st Place: Mario Bengcion



3rd Place: Ruben Lugo

our last meeting

Photos by Susan Priest

Our 2013 FAAS Publication Award Winners



Jules Birnbaum



Warren Feuer



Rich Levy



Elliot Oshins



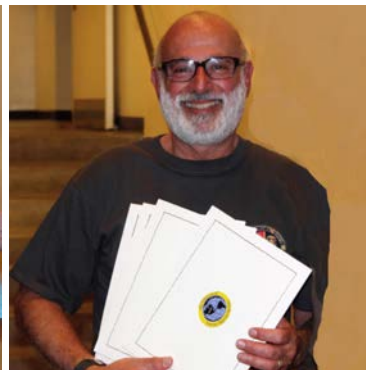
Al Priest



Sue Priest



Dan Puleo



Steve Sica



Dan Radebaugh



GCAS Happenings

July

Last Month's Bowl Show Winners:

1	MARIO BENGCIÓN	DOUBLE-TAIL BETTA
2	RICHARD WAIZMAN	RED-FACE CICHLID
3	RUBEN LUGO	L116

UNOFFICIAL 2014 BOWL SHOW TOTALS:

MARIO BENGCIÓN	16	RUBEN LUGO	10	WILLIAM AMELY	5	RICHARD WAIZMAN	4
CARLOTTI DeJAGER	1						

A WARM WELCOME BACK TO RENEWING GCAS MEMBERS SEAN CUNNINGHAM, ANDREW DeSANTIS & SONS, JOE GRAFFAGNINO, RON KASMAN, FRANK POLICASTRO, JR., AND VINNIE RITCHIE!

A SPECIAL WELCOME TO NEW GCAS MEMBER SHUNMUGAM AL!

Here are meeting times and locations of some aquarium societies in the Metropolitan New York area:

GREATER CITY AQUARIUM SOCIETY

Next Meeting: August 6, 2014

Speaker: None

Event: Annual Silent Auction/Flea Market

Meets: Meets the first Wednesday of the month (except January & February) at 7:30pm:
Queens Botanical Garden
43-50 Main Street - Flushing, NY

Contact: Dan Radebaugh (718) 458-8437

Email: gcas@earthlink.net

Website: <http://www.greatercity.org>

BIG APPLE GUPPY CLUB

Meets: Last Tuesday each month (except Jan, Feb, July, and August) at 7:30-10:00pm.

Alley Pond Environmental Ctr.: 228-06 Northern Blvd.

Contact: Donald Curtin (718) 631-0538

BROOKLYN AQUARIUM SOCIETY

Next Meeting: September 12, 2014

Speaker: Greg Sullivan

Topic: Starting A Saltwater Tank

Meets: 2nd Friday of the month (except July and August) at 7:30pm:

NY Aquarium - Education Hall, Brooklyn, NY

Call: BAS Events Hotline: (718) 837-4455

Website: <http://www.brooklynaquariumsociety.org>

LONG ISLAND AQUARIUM SOCIETY

Next Meeting: September 19, 2014

Speaker: TBA

Topic: TBA

Meets: 3rd Fridays (except July and August) 8:00pm.

Room 120 in Endeavor Hall on the State University at Stony Brook Campus, Stony Brook, NY

Email: Margaret Peterson - president@lisonline.org

Website: <http://lisonline.org/>

EAST COAST GUPPY ASSOCIATION

Meets: 2nd Tuesday of each month at 8:00 pm.

Alley Pond Environmental Ctr.: 228-06 Northern Blvd.

Contact: Gene Baudier (631) 345-6399

NASSAU COUNTY AQUARIUM SOCIETY

Next Meeting: September 9, 2014

Speaker: TBA

Topic: TBA

Meets: 2nd Tuesday of the month (except July and August) at 7:30 PM

Molloy College - Kellenberg Hall ~1000 Hempstead Ave - Rockville Centre, NY

Contact: Mike Foran (516) 798-6766

Website: <http://www.ncasweb.org>

NORTH JERSEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY

Next Meeting: July 17, 2014

Speaker: TBA

Topic: TBA

Meets at: The Lyndhurst Elks Club, 251 Park Avenue, Lyndhurst, NJ 07071

Contact: NJAS Hotline at (732) 332-1392

Email: tcoletti@obius.jnj.com

Website: <http://www.njas.net/>

NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY

Next Meeting: August 21, 2014

Speaker: Rit Forcier

Topic: COLLECTING IN FLORIDA

Meets: 8:00 P.M. - 3rd Thursday of each month except for July & December at: Earthplace - the Nature Discovery Center - Westport, CT

Contact: Sal Silvestri

Call our toll free number (866) 219-4NAS

Email: salsilv44@yahoo.com

Website: <http://norwalkas.org/>

There's an App For That!?!

A series by "The Undergravel Reporter"

In spite of popular demand to the contrary, this humor and information column continues. As usual, it does NOT necessarily represent the opinions of the Editor, or of the Greater City Aquarium Society.

This magazine has run several excellent articles on the invasive nature of lionfish, thanks mostly to our reef diving members, Donna and Steve Sica. Effective August 1, 2014, Florida has banned the importation of live lionfish.¹

The World Lionfish Hunters Association (and, no, I didn't make that name up) reports that Florida has now developed a free app for iOS and Android devices with information about lionfish and a feature to take pictures and report sightings/harvests.²

The World Lionfish Hunters Association also sells lionfish hunting packages. A package with a 4 foot long folding spear and holster, Hexamor gloves, and a 3-prong trident tip (for the spear) goes for \$220. A package with a shorter 2.5 foot non-folding spear with "Paralyzer tip" is only \$119.

A lionfish cookbook on their website is apparently no longer available for sale. (I wonder if it has anything to do with the fact that lionfish are somewhat poisonous?)



Screenshots iPhone | iPad

REPORT LIONFISH
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Report Lionfish/Take a Picture

About-Lionfish

Safe-Handling

LIONFISH

Name:

Email Address:

Number of Lionfish Collected:

Location:

Water Depth:

Water Temp:

Harvest Gear Used:

¹ <http://www.firstcoastnews.com/story/news/local/florida/2014/06/20/florida-lionfish-ban-aug-1/11053481/>

² <http://lionfish.co/florida-fwcc-develops-free-lionfish-reporting-app-ios-android-devices/>

For Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.solodev.lionfish>

For iOS: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/report-florida-lionfish/id807765520?mt=8>



Fin Fun



Three Cheers for the Red White and Blue

Yes, friends, once again it is time to display all things Red, White, and Blue. For us GCAS members, that includes our fishes. Challenge yourself to correctly connect the common names of these seasonally colored fishes with their scientific names. *Happy fourth!*

Common name		Scientific name
White fin cory		<i>Trichogaster trichopterus</i>
Red devil		<i>Tanichthys albonubes</i>
Blue gourami		<i>Aphyosemion sjoestedti</i>
Red three spot barb		<i>Rivulus xiphidius</i>
White cloud		<i>Xiphophorus helleri</i>
White barred synodontis		<i>Jordanella floridae</i>
Blue stripe rivulus		<i>Barbus callipterus</i>
Red lyretail swordtail		<i>Corydoras pulcher</i>
Blue gularis		<i>Synodontis ornatipinnis</i>
American flag fish		<i>Chiclasoma labiatum</i>

Answer to our last puzzle: **CODE WORD 21-18-8-19**

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