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September 2025

volume XXXII

number 7

Greater City Aquarium Society - New York

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Series III Vol. XXXII, No. 7 September, 2025

ON THE COVER

Our cover photo this month features a photo of a wild *Betta Stigmose* from Ivan Ferdous, one of our GCAS Facebook Fishy Friends. Beautiful photo, Ivan!

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From the Editor

by Dan Radebaugh

Well, as I scan our meeting schedule on the opposite page, I see that we are now well into the second half of our meeting schedule for this year.

Steve Sica has been a tremendous source of top-notch articles for us through many years, and I am truly grateful to receive them. Be sure and check out his newest article on the Glass Bloodfin Tetra on page 7.

You hopefully have noticed the return of The **Modern Aquarium** Cartoon Caption Contest. If you have a caption to enter, just email it to me at gcas@earthlink.net. We'll have some copies of the cartoon at our regular meeting, and you can enter by filling in your name and caption and giving it to me or to Marsha at that time.



“Fishes on the Web” this month tells us about how you can make money by catching the Northern Pike Minnow. Check out page 11.

For the second time this year we get to see some aquatic art! See page 12. Though this time it came via another club, but hey! We get by with a little help from our friends.

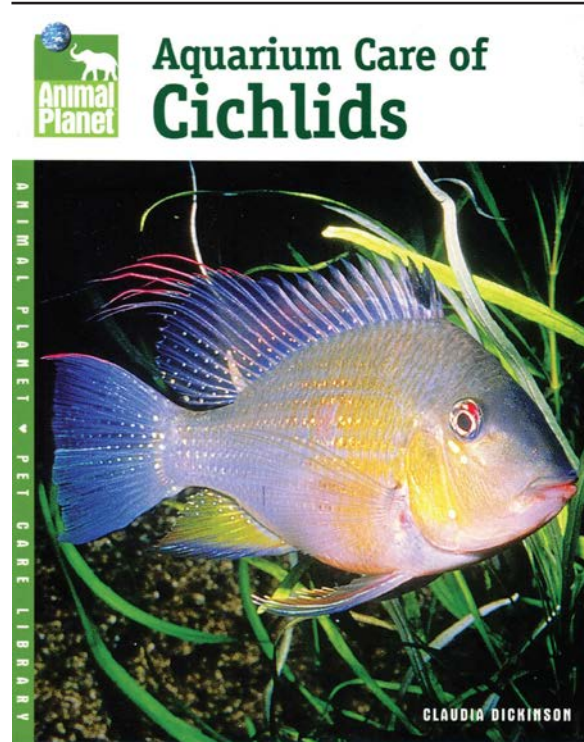
Likewise, from Timothy J. Brady of the **The Aquarium Club of Lancaster County** we have an article on *Gasteropelecus sternicla*, the Hatchetfish, and from Roberto Prati of the **Greater Pittsburgh Aquarium Society**, on *Betta channoidis*. See page 16.

Longtime GCAS member Ron Kasman is the subject of this month's Who Are We?, by Marsha Radebaugh. See page 18. “Paradise Revisited,” by Alexander A. Priest is our MA Classic this month. Check it out. You won't be disappointed.

On page 23 Jules Birnbaum tells us about “The Biggest Fish in the Sea.” And he isn't kidding!

Photos from our last meeting are on pages 24-25, while Member Discounts and GCAS August Happenings are on 26 and 27.

Fishy Friends Photos are on page 28, while The Undergravel Reporter (Using Baby Corals To Protect Against Warming Oceans) is on 29. The issue closes with From The Pages Of Yesteryear, which features **The Aquarium: 1933**.



by Greater City member Claudia Dickinson
(Animal Planet® Pet Care Library)

Hardcover – Also available on Amazon Kindle
<https://www.amazon.com/Aquarium-Cichlids-Animal-Planet-Library/dp/0793837774>



GCAS

Meeting Schedule

2025

March 5	Breeder Boxes
April 2	Natural Aquariums, Part 1
May 7	Natural Aquariums, Part 2
June 4	Guppies
July 2	The Balanced Aquarium
August 6	Night At The Auction
September 3	The Blue Gularis
October 8	Cichlids with Livebearers
November 5	TBD
December 3	Holiday Awards Dinner!

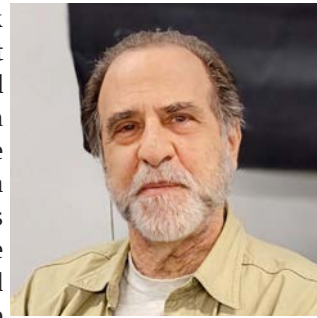
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The Greater City Aquarium Society meets every month except January and February. Members receive notice of meetings in the mail or by email. For more information, contact: Dan Radebaugh at (718) 458-8437, email to gcas@earthlink.net, or fax to (347) 379-4984. For more information about our club or to see previous issues of **Modern Aquarium**, you can also go to our Internet Home Page at <http://www.greatercity.net>, <http://www.greatercity.org>, or <http://www.greatercity.com>.

President's Message

by Warren Feuer

What inspires you? What fuels your creative fires? In an HBO/Max special, Billy Joel spoke about the inspiration for many of his biggest hits. Not surprisingly, most of them came from things that had occurred in his life. For example, "Uptown Girl," the well known video with his then girlfriend, soon to be his wife Christie Brinkley, was about someone else he was dating when he wrote it but featured Christie Brinkley, as she was then his girlfriend. However, it was his description of the circumstances around his song "In the Middle of the Night" that I found the most interesting. It seems he literally woke up from a dream, as the song's lyrics cite, and became obsessed with writing the song to the music he heard in his head. By the way, if you are a fan of Billy Joel, or just want to learn how his songs came to be, this is a don't miss! There are two, two-hour episodes and I was left wanting much more!



I recently saw a best-selling author on TV talking about how she decides what to write about, and her answer was that she gets inspiration from everything around her. Another "kinda" well known author, Stephen King, in a book he wrote titled **Danse Macabre**, discusses how he waits for his "muse" to land on his shoulder and leave him ideas/inspiration. Of course being Stephen King, he uses language I can't repeat here.

When I was editing and writing for **Modern Aquarium** on a regular basis, I seemed to get inspiration everywhere. For example, I wrote an article "A Tale of Two Sick Cichlids" that came to mind from a Jeopardy question on the book "**A Tale of Two Cities**," and that title stuck in my head until I completed the article. It was not a great article, and certainly not up to Dickens' standards, but that idea stuck in my mind until I completed the article. In fact, some of my recent President's messages have come about as a result of an idea that popped into my head and eventually led to a column.

I am very happy to report that GCAS is doing well financially. Much of our current financial health can be traced to the fantastic auctions we've been having. Thanks to those who bring in bags of fish and plants as well as other items for sale in the auction (whether 50/50 or complete donations) and donations from generous product manufacturers and local pet stores, our auctions have been impressive. In addition, the smart fiscal policies we've followed, starting when we were fortunate to have had Jack Traub, a CPA, as our treasurer, followed by Jules Birnbaum and now by our current Treasurer, Lenny Ramroop, the line of folks who keep the best financial interests of our club in mind continues. Looking in from the outside, it might be tempting to think that we have become a sort of money-making machine. That's simply not the case. I am proud to state that we are a generous club, donating to such hobby related causes as the American Cichlid Association Paul Loiselle Conservation Fund, Project Piaba and many others. We always sponsor classes in aquarium conventions such as the Bi-annual Catfish Convention, the North East Council weekend conventions, the Keystone Clash, the annual American Cichlid Association and the American Killifish Association conventions, to name a few. Currently, we are looking into how we can help support the Alley Pond Conservation Center as thanks for allowing us to meet there each month. And this is just a sample of all the ways we help the bobby and those associated with it.

Going back to treasurers and our treasury, having served as the treasurer of another aquarium society I completely understand what the position entails, and I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the great job Lenny does in a largely thankless task, as our Treasurer. Every month Lenny sits in the back of the meeting room taking in money from the auction sales, making change as necessary and paying those who are due money from previous meetings, as well as to reimburse those who have laid out money to purchase the drinks and snacks we provide. Since I have assumed the GCAS president's role, it's been the consistent and complete support of volunteers such as Lenny who make my position work. And he always has a smile on his face. As I stated last month regarding Jason Kerner, I am likewise proud to call Lenny my friend.

Last month, at our first "Night at the Auction" GCAS for the first time offered a 70/30 split to those who brought in fish and/or plants. Based upon the number of people who came and the large number of lots for sale, I'd say it was a success. It was a way for Greater City to say thank you to those who provided the auction's contents.

As you read this, Autumn is creeping up on us. And, after that, Winter. As a fellow aquarist, I task you with finding inspiration around you and translating some of that into our hobby. Maybe a new tank, a redo of a current tank or just some new fish. I look at the Amano style tanks that appear in TFH each month and

marvel at the creative process that brings them about. And every year there are aquatic design contest results published. I don't have that talent but maybe you do. Don't be afraid to let that creativity out.

This month and next, we will be featuring guest speakers. This month's presentation on the Blue Gularis will give you a look at one of the most beautiful and impressive killes there is. In October, our guest speaker's topic is scheduled to be "Cichlids and Livebearers." It promises to be a great presentation. Knowing the speakers as I do, we are in for a treat each month. Who knows maybe one or both of the presentations will light a spark in your creativity?

Until we meet again, take good care all.



Warren



GCAS Thanks You!

Our Generous Sponsors and Advertisers

The Greater City Aquarium Society extends our heartfelt thanks to the following manufacturers for their generous donations. Thanks also to our advertisers, whose contributions to our success as a Society are deeply appreciated. Please patronize our supporters.

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BOWL SHOW RULES

There is a Bowl Show at every GCAS meeting, except our Night at the Auction/ fleamarket meeting and our Holiday Party and Awards Banquet meeting. Bowl 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 as 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.
- B.Y.O.B. (Bring Your Own Bowl!) Entrants are responsible for providing suitable containers and suitable water for their fish. These containers must be clear on at least three sides.
- Only one fish per container (i.e., no “pairs”).
- No plants, ornaments, or equipment (filters, airstones, 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

A NEW FAVORITE: THE GLASS BLOODFIN TETRA

Story and Photos by Stephen Sica

While back, I was in the Petco on Jericho Turnpike in New Hyde Park. The young man who manages the tropical fish department occasionally orders freshwater fish that I think are not commonly carried by many other pet or aquarium shops. Donna, Cordelia and I sporadically take a drive there to either just look around, or purchase food and treats for our dog and cat. I enjoy checking out the fish section for the aforementioned uncommon fish, or like many hobbyists, just to gaze at the fish. Who doesn't enjoy wandering a shop's fish tanks imagining how enjoyable a fish would be in your aquarium, especially if you discover a new fish or one that you haven't seen in a while?

One day while Donna was walking Cordelia around the store searching for bargains, I saw silvery, red-tailed fishes swimming around in a tank above my head. More than twenty years ago I had a small school of bloodfin tetras in a community tank. They were okay fish, if you know what I mean, but I never was fully impressed by their appearance. I do like just about every fish but with so many varieties available today, sometimes you have to carefully choose your very favorites. If space or time is limited, choosing sometimes can be difficult.

The red-tailed fish that I saw that day appeared different. I was unaware that Petco was having a limited time sale on tetras for their rewards members. Buy three tetras and get a fourth for free. I had recently renovated my ten gallon plant-only tank; it was currently sitting in the basement with a few plants and no fish so I purchased eight

tetras and put them in this tank where I could watch them and try to decide why I liked them. Each fish cost \$2.99 so the eight that I purchased were about eighteen dollars plus tax.

I added a few more plants and moss in the rear of the tank when we arrived home. After the tetras acclimated to their new home, I scheduled a study session for



tomorrow's feeding. I soon learned that as soon as I approached the tank, all eight fish would swim into the moss and plants in the rear. I bent over and stuck my face near the front of the tank. This really made the fish hide. Could you blame

them? When I backed away, they would return to feed.

A few days later we spent two nights in Riverhead, and the fish missed a meal or two. I knew that they would be hungry and finally show themselves. I carefully walked down to the basement early in the morning upon returning home. Their timed fluorescent light was not yet on, so the fish were in semi-darkness except for early morning sunlight from a small window. I opened the tank's glass top, but the fish had already scattered. They never saw my face. This pleased me somewhat. A pinch of flake food fell onto the surface of the water while I stepped back. All eight tetras made a beeline for their breakfast. It became obvious that being in close proximity with these fish spooked them. Maybe the elevation of their tank in Petco affected them or they were just uncomfortable with people.

A few weeks later I added six young *Corydoras aeneus* as dither fish. The catfish enjoy swimming all around the tank at

different levels so I thought that they would socialize the tetras. The catfish did not help, but like most hobbyists, I enjoy corydoras catfish.

Anyway, my anti-social fish adjusted well enough to grow to almost two inches in length. They appear happy swimming around their ten gallon aquarium, mostly near the surface while the corydoras swim mostly at the bottom with forays to the surface and to rest on plants. So far, the tank doesn't seem to be overcrowded with fourteen fish. I change two to three gallons of water every two weeks. I also try to do my best not to overfeed the fish. Since these fish can be skittish, plants in the water column and overhead will provide coverage to comfort their nerves. They seem to prefer shady areas. The lighting is a single T-8 fluorescent fixture on a timer for only five hours every day. So far, the only algae to



grow is on the underside of the glass top and the plants are doing fine. After I cleaned the glass top recently, it occurred to me that perhaps I should leave this algae to shield the water column from some light. If you

want to try a small fish that is easy to care for and attractive in schools, you should consider the Glass bloodfin tetra, *Prionobrama filigera*. It might grow to a maximum size of two and one-half inches, although the average size is two inches. It swims in upper waters, so mid-level and bottom dwellers will nicely fit in. It is found in tributaries that flow from the Amazon River into Columbia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru and Brazil. Feed these fish flake, frozen and live foods. Water temperature can vary from low 70s to 80 degrees, and pH can be 6 to 7.5. Current literature claims that it is easy to breed but adults will eat their eggs.



An Aquarist's Journey

Rosario La Corte is one of the world's leading authorities on breeding fish and he has written numerous articles and books, contributing greatly to our understanding of fish and their habits.

Now, for the first time, here is a compilation of his travels, adventures, successes (and, very occasional failures) all relating to collecting, keeping, and breeding fish, and in his own words (and edited by **Modern Aquarium's** Editor, Dan Radebaugh).

Available in softcover at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)



August's Caption Winner:

Caption by Joseph Ferdenzi



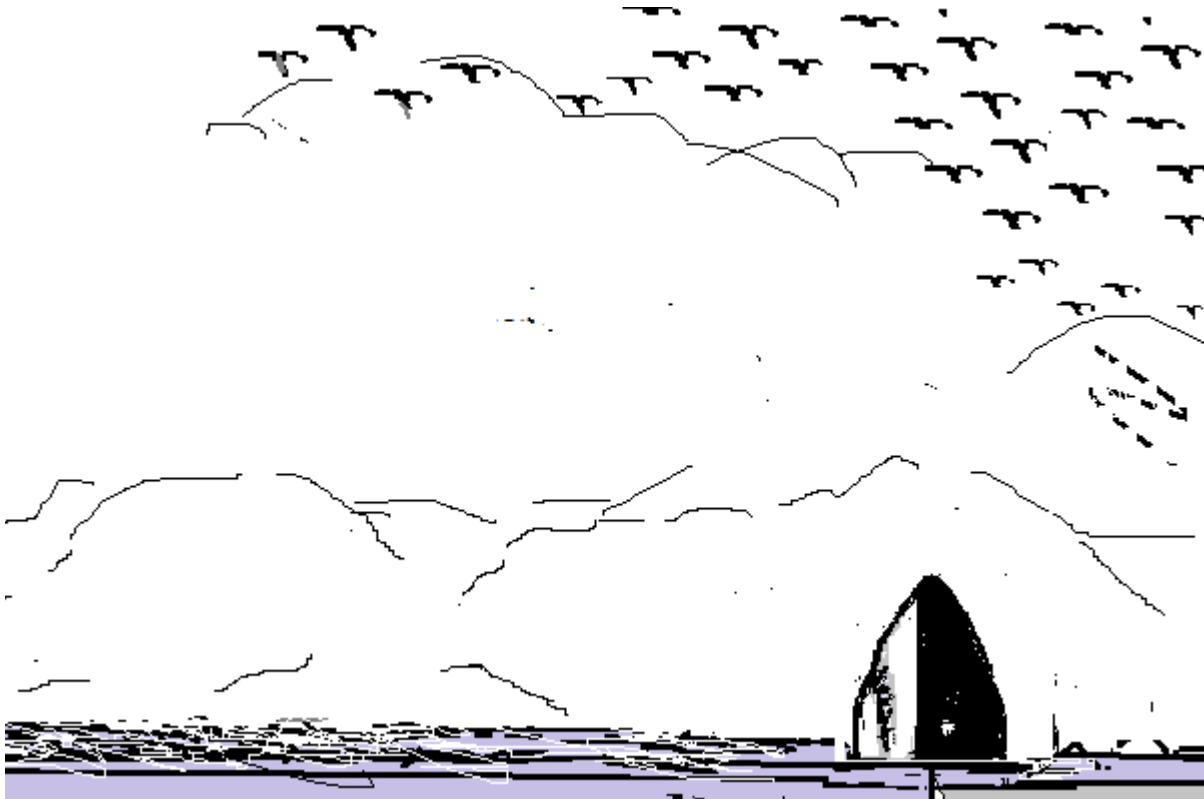
Aren't you glad we live in a No Smoking Zone?



The Modern Aquarium Cartoon Caption Contest

by Denver Lettman

Modern Aquarium has featured cartoons before, and like we did the last time, you, the members of Greater City, get to choose the winning 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 Radebaugh 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!



Your Caption:

Your Name:

FISHES ON THE WEB

You could get paid for catching these fish!



Northern Pikeminnow

Northern Pikeminnow are a native species that eats millions of juvenile salmon and steelhead each year in the Columbia and Snake River systems. The goal of the Pikeminnow Program is not to eradicate Northern Pikeminnow, but rather to reduce their average size by removing 10 to 20% of the larger fish from their population. Reducing the number of larger Northern Pikeminnow and thus shrinking the average-sized fish in the population can greatly help juvenile salmon and steelhead make it to sea, since smaller sized Northern Pikeminnow eat fewer smolts than larger fish.

Anglers are paid for each Northern Pikeminnow that they catch (from within program boundaries) that is 9 inches or larger in total length, and the more you catch, the higher the reward. In 2024, rewards begin at \$6 each for the first 25 Northern Pikeminnow caught during the season. Anglers are paid \$8 for each fish they catch from 26-200, and \$10 for every fish caught over 200 cumulatively. Anglers are also paid \$500 for each specially tagged Northern Pikeminnow.

The Pikeminnow Program is in effect on the mainstem Columbia River from the mouth to Priest Rapids Dam (upstream of the Washington's Tri-Cities) and on the Snake River from the mouth to Hell's Canyon Dam. For more info, see below:

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/you-could-get-paid-for-catching-these-fish-species/ar-AA1KdVSV?ocid=socialshare>



AQUATIC ART

Untitled Watercolor

by Vivian Chi

This piece originally nally appeared in the March/April 2024 issue of the Missouri Aquarium Society's *The Darter*.



Gasteropelecus sternicla - Hatchet Fish

by Timothy J. Brady

Many years ago visiting a local aquarium shop I saw my first hatchet fish. I tried my hand at them a few times with not too much luck. I knew at the time that they were jumpers, but not too much more about them. The information I was able to find was not much help. Needless to say I lost them within a few months, and then again. Information was not as easy to find, nor the volume available today. I am hoping this information will be helpful for anyone thinking about keeping them or might inspire to give these fish a try.

Most freshwater fish like to hang out in the lower two-thirds of the aquarium, so it can be hard to fill in the upper third with some activity. Enter the hatchet fish. This top-dwelling nano fish has a very unique appearance that looks even cooler when you have a large school darting around just beneath the water surface. However, they have some special care requirements, so let's take a closer look at this interesting oddball – an oddball schooling fish with wings.

Background

Freshwater hatchet fish come from the Gasteropelecidae family and are distantly related to tetras. They can be found all over South and Central America, and are known for having a hatchet-shaped body and pectoral fins that extend out from the body like bird wings. Their strong pectoral muscles enable the hatchet fish to jump several inches out of the water, allowing them to quickly escape predators.

Common hatchet fish: *Gasteropelecus sternicla*

Scientific classification

Domain: Eukaryota
Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Class: Actinopterygii
Order: Characiformes
Family: Gasteropelecidae
Genus: *Gasteropelecus*
Species: *G. sternicla*
Binomial name: *Gasteropelecus sternicla* (Linnaeus, 1758)

Cuyuni fish (*Gasteropelecus sternicula*) of Guyana
“*Gasteropelecus sternicla*”. Integrated Taxonomic Information System. Retrieved October 29, 2004.

Froese, Rainer, and Daniel Pauly, eds. (2004). *Gasteropelecus sternicla* in FishBase. August 2004 version.

There are several species sold at local fish stores, but their availability may be seasonal. They usually range from 1–2.5 inches (2.5–6 cm) long, so we have listed them roughly in order of smallest to biggest size.

- Pygmy hatchetfish (*Carnegiella myersi*)
- Blackwing hatchetfish (*Carnegiella marthae*)
- Marbled hatchetfish (*Carnegiella strigata*)
- Silver hatchetfish (*Gasteropelecus levis*)
- Common hatchetfish (*Gasteropelecus sternicla*)
- Spotted hatchetfish (*Gasteropelecus maculatus*)
- Platinum or spotfin hatchetfish (*Thoracocharax stellatus*)



Cuyuni fish (*Gasteropelecus sternicula*) of Guyana

Natural Habitat

Freshwater hatchet fish are found in South and Central America, inhabiting slow-moving rivers, streams, and flooded areas, particularly in the Amazon basin. They are surface dwellers, often found near the water's surface where they can catch insects and other small organisms that fall into the water.

Hatchet fish naturally inhabit slow-flowing, tropical freshwater environments in South and Central America, particularly the Amazon River basin. They are found in rivers, streams, swamps, and calm pools with dense vegetation. They prefer soft, slightly acidic water with temperatures ranging from 72° to 83°F (22° to 28°C).

South America: Hatchet fish are endemic to this region, with various species found in countries like Brazil, Peru, Colombia, and the Guianas.

Amazon Basin: The Amazon River and its tributaries are a major source of hatchet fish, with species like the common hatchet fish (*Gasteropelecus sternicla*) and marbled hatchet fish (*Carnegiella strigata*) thriving in its waters.

Slow-Moving Waters: They prefer areas with slow currents, such as backwaters, streams, and flooded areas.

Vegetation: Hatchet fish are often found near dense vegetation, which provides them with cover and hunting opportunities.

Surface Dwellers: They are surface-dwelling fish, meaning they inhabit the top layer of the water column.

This article originally appeared in the July 2025 issue of TThe Aquarium Club of Lancaster County's Tank Tales.

Water Quality

Hatchet fish can live in a wide range of pH, GH, and other water parameters because their habitat experiences rainy seasons and flooding every year. They are tropical animals that thrive in temperatures between 75–80°F (24–27°C). They thrive in tropical freshwater of slightly acidic to neutral water (pH 6.0–7.5), and soft to moderately hard water (2–12 dGH).

Tank Conditions

A schooling fish, they need to be in a big group of at least 6–12 fish of the same species. The more fish in their school, the safer they feel and the more comfortable they are displaying their natural behaviors. For example, observing a group of 30 schooling silver hatchet fish in a tank, they changed directions at the same time. They prefer a well-planted aquarium with plenty of surface area and a secure lid to prevent jumping, as they are known for their ability to jump when startled.

A school of hatchet fish in a blackwater aquarium, hatchet fish are not super active, so you can keep them in a 20-gallon aquarium or larger. The tank must have a tight-fitting lid or hood because they will jump out of the narrowest slot they can find. If you have any openings for the filter, heater, or automatic fish food feeder, make sure to cover them with craft mesh or another material.

Avoid keeping hatchet fish with other fish that are aggressive, large enough to eat them, or fast-swimming and able to outcompete them for food. They do best with tankmates that are similar-sized and peaceful, such as tetras and corydoras catfish. South American dwarf cichlids like German blue rams and Apistogramma cichlids are also fine because they occupy the lower half of the tank, while hatchet fish stay up above.

In the Aquarium

These fish are peaceful towards other fishes, but frequently bicker among themselves. Typical lifespan in captivity is around five years, but they can live longer.

Because of their natural tendency to jump when alarmed, they may jump out of aquarium tanks. To prevent this, the top must either be completely sealed, or the water level lowered so the edges of the tank extend further upwards than the fish are capable of jumping. This is also less common with the addition of floating plants, to provide cover. It is also advised to keep them in a planted aquarium.

To prevent this, the top must either be completely sealed, or the water level lowered so the edges of the tank extend further upwards than the fish are capable of jumping. This is also less common with the addition of floating plants, to provide cover. It is also advised to keep them in a planted aquarium.

Diet

In their natural habitat, they feed on insects and other small organisms they find at the water's

surface. In the wild, Silver hatchets are carnivores, feeding on microinvertebrates and zooplankton at the surface. A diet made up of various high quality protein based flake foods or floating pellet foods are ideal, in addition to offering bug bites and frozen foods such as bloodworms, brine shrimp and daphnia. Variety is the spice of life in order to maintain color, immune function and longevity of your fish.

One of the main problems that fishkeepers have with hatchet fish, especially as they get bigger, is underfeeding, because they really prefer to eat from the water surface and do not like swimming down to get sinking foods. In the wild they use their small, upward-facing mouths to feed on insects and zooplankton. Therefore, feed tiny foods that float for a long time, and decrease water flow near the surface so the food won't sink as quickly. Good floating foods include high-quality flakes, floating pellets, freeze-dried foods, and live baby brine shrimp that tend to swim toward the aquarium light.

As carnivores, they will readily eat many types of small annelid worms, insects, and crustaceans, and they will also eat standard flake foods. They have a reputation for being greedy fish.

Water Conditions

Hatchetfish thrive in tropical freshwater conditions with temperatures between 74–82°F (23–28°C), slightly acidic to neutral water (pH 6.0–7.5), and soft to moderately hard water (2–12 dGH). They prefer a well-planted aquarium with plenty of surface area and a secure lid to prevent jumping, as they are known for their ability to jump when startled.

Key Aspects of Breeding Hatchet Fish

The Marble Hatchet breeds in soft water (about 5°), and a low pH (about 6.0). A diet of fresh mosquito larvae and fruit flies may trigger spawning and the depositing of eggs on floating plants. The eggs hatch within 36 hours and the fry should be fed a quality live food such as brine shrimp.

Breeding hatchet fish, particularly Marbled Hatchetfish, can be challenging, but is achievable in a dedicated aquarium setup. They are egg-scatterers, and the parents will eat their eggs and fry, so the adults need to be removed after spawning. Successful breeding requires specific water parameters, a suitable tank environment, and careful attention to detail. Water conditions: Soft, acidic water (pH 5.5–6.5) is crucial. Peat moss filtration can help maintain these conditions.

Temperature: Maintain a temperature between 76–79°F (24–26°C).

Vegetations: Include plenty of floating plants and hiding places for the eggs.

Diet: Feed the breeding fish a high-quality diet of live insects like fruit flies and bloodworms.

Spawning: The fish will scatter their eggs among the plants and on the substrate.

Fry Care: Remove the parents after spawning.

The fry will hatch in about 36 hours and should be fed infusoria initially, then baby brine shrimp.

Introduction Care

While some species like the common hatchet fish are now available as captive-bred or tank-raised, most hatchet fish are caught from the wild. By the time they travel from the wholesaler to the fish store, they may be underfed with weakened immune systems, making them more susceptible to disease. Ask the fish store how long they've had the hatchet fish, watch them eat, and observe their behavior before making a purchase.

It is recommend that you always quarantine hatchet fish, feed them lots of high-quality foods, and proactively treat them with the trio of quarantine medications if possible. Hatchetfish are prone to ich or white spot disease, which is easily cured with Aquarium Solutions Ich-X. Also, wild- caught fish often have internal parasites like tapeworms, so treat them with Fritz ParaCleanse and then treat them again two weeks later to eliminate any worm eggs that hatched.

The video cited below provides information about hatchetfish care and breeding:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OuUg4kpkqrQ>

References

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_hatchetfish

<https://www.liveaquaria.com/product/1027/marble-hatchet?pcatid=1027&c=883+1027&s=ts&r>

<https://www.aquariumcoop.com/blogs/aquarium/hatchetfish?srltid=AfmBOoqv-ZjrguWBXDNGdisSsHLeVH1QE7K6j3MTthQZ1meyP9yicTIg>

<https://www.aquariumcoop.com/>



Who Are We?

by Marsha Radebaugh

In its 100+ years of existence, Greater City Aquarium Society has had a membership of thousands. Each month, with the exception of those during the Pandemic, our meetings have an average of 40 – 60 members and visitors in attendance. We all know who the “stars” are, the officers, presenters, regular runners, etc. are individuals well known to the rest of us. There are those, however, who quietly and consistently attend most if not all meetings. We sit beside each other, sometimes chatting, sometimes not, without any idea who our neighbors are outside of this room. Well, I think it’s time we found out. As Membership Chair, I have the opportunity to meet and greet each of you, checking you in and handing you your **Modern Aquarium** issue, your door prize ticket and collecting dues. I know who you are! But do you? So, going forward, as often as I can I’m going to select a loyal member and introduce him or her to the rest of you in this column.

Meet Ron Kasman

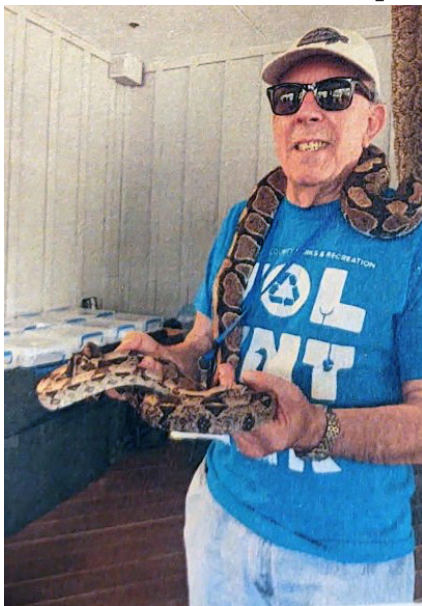


If you glance around the room at any given meeting, you will notice that we have a fair share of “senior” members. One of our more senior members, by length of membership at least, is Ron Kasman, though you’d never guess it by his appearance or lifestyle. As a matter of fact, you could say that Ron leads a “double life.” That’s because from December through May of each year, for about the last 10 years after Ron retired from the printing business, he and Fran, his wife of 37 years, a former school teacher, have been able to escape the brutal New York winters by relocating to Lake Worth, Florida. Good planning, right? Well, yes, but a challenge for a fish keeper. Each December Ron has to make arrangements for the fish he keeps in his two community aquariums; a 75-gallon and a custom 23-gallon. He keeps quite a variety of cichlids and catfish, including



barbs, green and gold severums, rasboras, algae eaters, and tetras. If any of these are of interest to you, that time is coming when Ron will be looking for someone to adopt or foster this great collection through the upcoming winter. Though he doesn't have any tanks in his home in Florida, he nourishes his love of animals by volunteering at the

Okeeheelee Nature Center (ONC) in West Palm Beach. In fact the Center recently recognized him for his dedication to the Center, and for his special affection for their Diamondback Terrapin, Luigi.



Born and raised in Brooklyn, Ron joined the Brooklyn Aquarium Society long before he even had any tanks of his own. When he and Fran got married, she presented him with a ready-made family, her two young daughters Amy and Debbie, and also provided him with a lifelong hobby by bringing along an unused aquarium which he proceeded to populate. The rest, as they say, is history. They set up housekeeping in Queens and Ron joined the Greater City Aquarium Society. That was way back then in 1988. Ron is a member of the Nassau club as well.

Among his other interests, aside from spending as much time as possible with his 4 grandchildren, Jared, Evan, Tyler and Max, Ron enjoys shopping for produce! Yes, he's a salad connoisseur! Maybe that's what keeps him looking so much younger than his years. His volunteerism isn't limited to Florida, either! He also volunteers at his local SNAP Senior Center, where he's taking a painting class! Wow, a really busy guy!

So look for Ron at our next meeting if you'd like to volunteer to adopt or foster, and don't forget to eat your salad!





by Roberto Prati,
Greater Pittsburg Aquarium Society

Originally published in the October, 2014
issue of *Finformation*, GPAS

For the background on this fish species we spin the globe and stop it on Asia. *Betta channoides* are native to the Mahakam river basin in the province of Kalimantan Timur, the eastern Kalimantan side of the island of Borneo, Indonesia. The snakehead betta inhabits brownish, acidic, black water forest streams entering Mahakam River on the northern side near Mujub. They are collected in shallow water among plant roots and leaf litter. The snakehead betta got its name because of the shape and markings on its face that resembles the snakehead fish of *Channa*.

my decision to try to purchase a pair even easier.

I took the pair home and placed them in a 10- gallon tank in my fish room. The tank sits on my top row of tanks and is painted black on all sides, but the one end of the tank that faces the front of my rack. In the tank I sunk 3 inches worth of oak leaves and a sponge filter in the middle. The temperature was kept in the mid 70's. My tap water is around 7.0 when I filled the tank and didn't do a single water change in 2 months other than top off the tank when it was needed. The pH dropped down to 6.0 in that time and you

An Important Distinction

The **SNAKEHEADS** (*Channa spp.*) are wildly illegal invasive species capable of destroying whole ecosystems

The Snakehead **BETTA** (*B. channoides*) is a peaceful mouthbrooder

Do not confuse them.

➔ **BAD**



➔ **GOOD**



As many of you know, I got my start in this hobby breeding mouth brooding African cichlids from Lake Malawi. So it only makes sense that when I wanted to start on my Anabantoids class I purchased a betta that was a mouth brooder. Also the fact that it is one of the best looking bettas out there made

needed a flashlight to see in the tank. The photo below is of the female in the breeding colors. The black and dark grey stripes can almost be black and white when she is really ready. The red on the female stays only on her fins. I have read that the white seams on the edge of *Betta channoides* fins only happen

to males and it's a sign to be able to pair fish. This, in my experience, is not true as you can see this female has the white seam around her fins, and she is a true female. The male in breeding colors gets much more pronounced reddish wine colored than he usually is.

The pair was fed mostly live foods such as white worms, black worms, mosquito larva, and adult baby brine that were gut loaded. They did occasionally eat frozen bloodworms, glass worms and Daphnia. They were fed once a day and usually twice on weekends when I have more time.

Betta Channoides

IUCN Status

Endangered in Borneo



This pair was not too aggressive with one another when breeding. The actual breeding was never seen, but this is how it would go. The female initiates spawning by showing off her breeding coloration. Eggs and sperm are released during a typical labyrinth fish position, where the male wraps his body around the female. After the male fertilizes the eggs, the male catches the eggs that the female drops on his anal fin. The female then collects the eggs in her mouth and spits them to the male and he catches them before they sink to the bottom.

Snakehead betta males are notorious for swallowing eggs after a few days, so it is better not to disturb the male during the incubation. The male will incubate the eggs for usually 12 days, and when ready he will release the small fry from his mouth. The female would come to eat and then hover about an inch or two above a specific leaf. At first I didn't understand until I wanted to see what was going on with that. She would be there for a day or two and not This pair was not too aggressive with one another when breeding. The actual breeding was never seen, but this is how it would go. The female initiates spawning by showing off

her breeding coloration. Eggs and sperm are released during a typical labyrinth fish position, where the male wraps his body around the female. After the male fertilizes the eggs, the male catches the eggs that the female drops on his anal fin. The female then collects the eggs in her mouth and spits them to the male and he catches them as before they sink to the bottom.

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This continued on each time they spawned. It was amazing to me with that many leaves in the tank and how dark in the tank she knew exactly what leaf he was directly under. From what I read online and what people told me, males would spit the fry and then protect them. In my experience this was not true, because the first 3 times he held eggs I never saw fry and if he did spit some fry he ate them or swallowed the eggs altogether.

Since my patience was wearing thin I attempted to do something that most people wouldn't - I attempted to strip the male as I would with a female Malawian cichlid. The male was only an inch and a half and so when I grabbed him to strip, all you could hold on to was its head and it was very difficult to keep trying to open his mouth. I eventually got him to spit and there were fully developed black fry were about 1cm that were swimming on their own. I don't know if this has ever been done before.

In my head, I was either going to keep watching the male swallow or spit and eat

the fry or risk injuring the male and getting my hands on some fry. Since the first time stripping the male took a bit longer the male's head by the gills was a bit bruised due to me handling him so much. So I ended up putting him in a breeder box and getting him back to health before I put him back in the tank with a female ready to go.

Another note—as the male sat in the floating breeder box the female would sit underneath the floating breeder waiting on the male or directly next to the same side he was on in the net. The male does not eat during the incubation period, so feeding the male up after stripping is a good thing, because if you put the male right back in with the female she will stress him to spawn again, and he will be too skinny and probably die.

The first spawn the male was carrying 30 fry when I stripped him. The fry were big enough to eat all that was moving such as baby brine and micro worms. They did not go for powder foods or flake. The fry grew pretty fast and will reach sexual maturity in 4 months of age. I did notice some grew bigger faster and would predate on the smaller ones. The fry are also jumpers because I would find a few on the floor from time to time even with the lid on the tank. I think the light would spook them, and they would just jump out or if they were being bullied around they may have gotten scared and jumped out.



The striking patterns of the snakehead betta.
Photo by Roberto Prati

These fish are rare in shops, but because of their stunning adult coloration they are highly desired among breeders. This fish is very similar to *Betta albimarginata*. The only differences are that the *B. channoides* are smaller and have a rounded caudal fin. The fishes also have different number of spines in their fins. Breeding these fish was pretty easy once you gave them the right foods and water conditions. They may take a few attempts if they are a new, young pair, but they will figure it out. These are awesome bettas to start off with if you can get your hands on them. These fish have sparked my interest in bettas a bit more than I had in the past, and I will get a few more species that get larger and that are also mouthbrooders.



The Biggest Fish In The Sea!

by Jules Birnbaum

It can grow to 60 feet (largest measured 61.7 feet). A newborn can measure almost two feet. They can live 100 years. It is called a Whale Shark. This fish is being studied to determine the health of the oceans. Each year scientists look for these huge fish in the Indian ocean near the Ningaloo Reef, one of longest reefs in the world. Little is known about their mating, how often they breed, or where they go to give birth. The waters there are shallow and clear, and whale sharks are attracted each year by the seasonal growth of plankton. Some interesting facts from the internet follow below.

Whale sharks have a broad, flat head, relatively small eyes, five large gill slits, two dorsal fins, two long pectoral fins, two pelvic fins, one anal fin and a large sweeping tail. It has a vestigial spiracle behind the eye, which is an evolutionary remnant of its common ancestry with the bottom-dwelling (benthic) carpet sharks.

Unlike most shark species, its mouth is located at the front of the head (terminal) instead of the underside of the rostrum (subterminal). The whale shark has a huge mouth, which can reach up to 4 feet (1.2 m) across, located at the front of the head. Inside the mouth are specialized flaps called velum. These stop the back flow of water as the whale shark closes its mouth, preventing the loss of food.

The skin of an adult whale shark can be as thick as 4 inches (10 cm) and has the consistency of strong rubber, which limits possible predators to killer whales, great white sharks, tiger sharks and humans.

Color

Whale sharks have a two-toned pattern of light spots on their dark gray back with a white under side. Each whale shark has its own individual spot pattern; like human fingerprints, no two are exactly alike.

Teeth

The teeth of the whale shark are tiny and pointed backward; they are thought to have no function in feeding.

There are about 300 rows of tiny teeth along the inner surface of each jaw, just inside the mouth.

Diet

Consists of zooplankton, specifically shrimp and fish eggs as well as krill, jellies, copepods, coral spawn, etc. and small fishes (sardines, anchovies, etc).

These fish can only swallow small prey because its throat is very narrow, often compared to the size of a quarter.



Whale Shark photo from Istock.com

Feeding Behavior

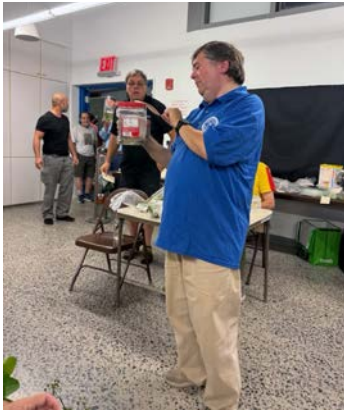
A whale shark filters food from the water by “cross-flow filtration,” which means the particles do not catch on the filter. Rather, water is directed away through the gills while particles (which have more momentum) carry on toward the back of the mouth in an ever more concentrated stream. A bolus or spinning ball of food grows in diameter at the back of the throat until it triggers a swallowing reflex. This is very efficient and does not clog the filter.

These fish are a major attraction of the Georgia Aquarium, which posts photos and videos of them online.



Pictures From Our Last Meeting

Photos by Marsha Radebaugh & Jules Birnbaum



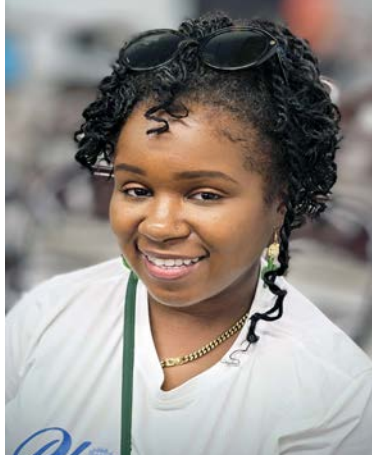
Joe Ferdenzi gets the Night At The Auction going with a little help from his friends!



More auction goodies waiting to receive new homes!



Bowl Show Winners (from left): Richie Waizman, Harry Faustmann, and Joseph Ferdenzi!



New Members Akeem Jefferson and girlfriend Lisa



Scott Peters and Steve Sica check out the auction goodies!



New member Richard Lanzi



Madison Warns likes the bunnies!



Welcome back, Jim Breheny!



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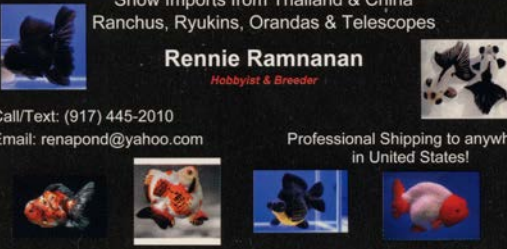
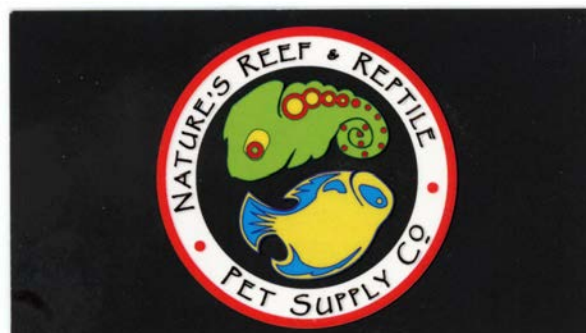
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GCAS Happenings

August

A WARM WELCOME BACK TO RENEWING GCAS MEMBERS ARTIE MAYER AND KEN IP!

August's Bowl Show Winners:

1ST PLACE JOE FERDENZI - HARLEQUIN RASBORA
 2ND PLACE HARRY FAUSTMANN - GOURAMI
 3RD PLACE RICHIE WAIZMANN - BETTA SPLENDENS

UNOFFICIAL 2025 BOWL SHOW TOTALS TO DATE:

JOHN BUZZETTI	5	MARK SOBERMAN	5	HARRY FAUSTMANN	12	JOSEPH FERDENZI	9
RICHIE WAIZMANN	18						

Here are some aquarium societies in the Metropolitan New York area:

GREATER CITY AQUARIUM SOCIETY

Next Meeting: October 8, 2025

Speaker Subject: Cichlids With Livebearers

GCAS Usually Meets the first Wednesday of the month
 at 7:30pm, at the Alley Pond Environmental Center
 22465 76th Ave, Oakland Gardens, NY 11364

Contact: Joseph Ferdenzi (516) 484-0944

E-mail: GCAS@Earthlink.net

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

BROOKLYN AQUARIUM SOCIETY

Meets the 2nd Friday of the month (except July and August) at
 7:30pm: New York Aquarium - Education Hall, Brooklyn, NY
 11229

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

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

LONG ISLAND AQUARIUM SOCIETY

Meets: 2nd Fridays (except July and August) 8:00pm. Meetings
 are held at AMVETS Post 48, 660 Hawkins Avenue,
 Ronkoncoma, NY 11779

Website: <https://ncasweb.thechinesequest.com/>

NASSAU COUNTY AQUARIUM SOCIETY

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

Molloy University - 1000 Hempstead Ave, Rockville Center,
 NY, Barbara H. Hagan Center for Nursing, Room 239

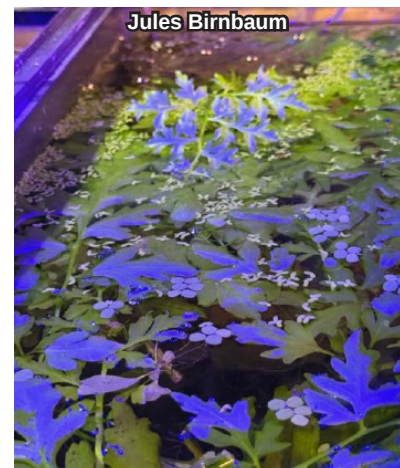
Contact: Mike Foran (516) 798-6766

Website: <https://www.nassaucountyaquariumsociety.org/>

Fishy Friends' Photos

by Greater City Aquarium Society Fishy Friends

Below are photo submissions to our “Fishy Friends” Facebook group. I’ve left the subjects unnamed, but not the photographer. If you see a shot you like, and want more info, ask the photographer about it! I’m sure he or she will be delighted to tell you!



Using Baby Corals to Protect Against Warming Oceans

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.

The Florida Aquarium has incubating baby corals for implantation in the tropical waters off the Florida Keys, in a protracted battle to protect Florida's coral reefs from higher temperatures.

Scientists at the Florida Aquarium have claimed that 84% of the world's coral reefs have been damaged since 2023 due to warmer ocean waters. Two years ago, Florida had a record coral bleaching event caused by a marine heat wave, which killed off large numbers of coral. That same year scientists with the Florida Aquarium plucked a number of parent coral colonies that appeared to be more resilient to the warming waters and brought them to the Florida Aquarium to ensure their survival.

At the Florida Aquarium's Apollo Beach coral breeding lab, the parent colonies were used to produce 1,050 baby elkhorn corals, which look like knobby and golden-brown pastries. The Apollo Beach lab was, in fact, the first land-based facility to spawn elkhorn corals. On May 7, those baby corals were packed up to move to another lab in the Florida Keys, where they were distributed to several allied organizations that are working on coral restoration. Some will continue to grow in the Keys Marine Laboratory. Many of those corals will head directly to the ocean to be planted.

Florida's coral reefs are vitally important for both fish and humans. They form a vibrant habitat for fish, and they also lure in fishermen and tourists alike who want to capture or view the beautiful tropical fish often found near the reefs.

Keri O'Neil, director of the Apollo Beach lab, described her goals as breeding animals that are more durable to warming waters which she says are fueled by human-caused climate change. Warmer waters are known to "bleach" corals, which weakens them and leaves them vulnerable to disease or death.



Another researcher, Matt Wade, stated that without human intervention, these elkhorn corals would not naturally settle on Florida's reefs because too many have been lost for them to breed successfully on their own. Mr. Wade described his mission as a modern-day Noah's ark, in which scientists collect animals at risk of population collapse, grow their population in captivity with the right mix of resilient genes, and release them back into the wild. Mr. Wade also stated that the facility received corals from Honduras which are able to withstand even higher temperatures and pollution from a nearby city. Cross-breeding the Florida and Honduran ("Flonduran") elkhorn corals may create corals that are even more resistant to warmer ocean temperatures.

Hat tip to the Undergravel Reporter Emeritus, Al Priest, for sharing the article that inspired this piece.



Sources:

<https://www.tampabay.com/news/environment/2025/05/13/florida-coral-reef-conservation-efforts-tampa-aquarium/>

Photo: uat.oceanservice.noaa.gov

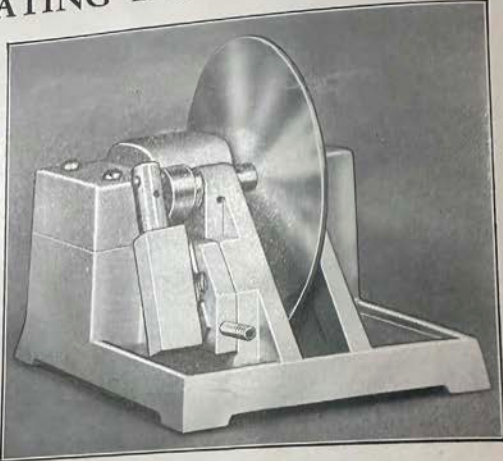
From The Pages of Yesteryear

The Aquarium

July 1933

VIII THE AQUARIUM JULY, 1933

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