

DELTA TALK

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF P.V.A.S.

NOVEMBER 1976

Volume 7
Issue 11



DELTA TALE is published for the benefit of the Potomac Valley Aquarium Society (formerly the Potomac Valley Guppy Club), a non-profit organization, established in 1960 for the purpose of furthering the aquarium hobby by disseminating information, encouraging friendly competition, soliciting participation in its show, and promoting good fellowship. Correspondence should be addressed to Secretary, P.V.A.S., P.O. Box 6219, Shirlington Station, Arlington, Virginia, 22206. Original articles and drawings may be reprinted if credit is given the author and DELTA TALE. Two copies of the publication in which the reprint appears should be sent to DELTA TALE which will forward one copy to the author. All materials for inclusion in the DELTA TALE must reach the editor no later than the Saturday after the monthly Monday meeting.

The Potomac Valley Aquarium Society takes no responsibility for the claims or statements made by advertisers in this publication. Complaints against any advertiser herein should be forwarded in writing to the Editor, DELTA TALE.

Editor: Ruth Brewer

OFFICERS FOR 1976

| | | | |
|----------------|---------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| President | John Jessup | Corres. Secy. | Chuck Story |
| Vice-President | Heinz Lenzen | Asst. Corres. Secy. | Michael Sprague |
| Recdg. Secy. | Susan Sprague | Treasurer | Gene Aldridge |

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

| | |
|---------------|----------------|
| Ted Walsh | Craig Tingen |
| Bob Smith | Pete Tietjen |
| Warren Garnar | Dave McInturff |
| Ruth Brewer | Jan McInturff |

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Volume 7 | Issue 11 |
|---|-------------|
| | <u>Page</u> |
| Meeting Notices..... | Opposite |
| Bowl Show Results and Standings..... | 7 |
| Membership & Things..... | 9 |
| Nominations for Officers and Board..... | 9 |
| BAP Report..... | 10 |
| Bowl Show Schedule for Balance of 1976..... | 13 |
| Featured Articles | |
| CICHLID NOTEBOOK - LABEOTROPHEUS | |
| By Eugene T. Aldridge, Jr..... | 2 |
| JUDGING A SHOW | |
| By Peter D. Tietjen..... | 8 |
| GENE'S A GRANDFATHER | |
| By Dave McInturff..... | 10 |
| LET'S TALK CICHLIDS #33 | |
| By Edwin (Bud) Welty..... | 11 |

This month's cover is a tracing by Michael Sprague of a slide by Gene Aldridge. The fish is a *Melanochromis vermicivorus*.

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING

The Board of Governors met October 5 at the home of Jan and Dave McInturff with ten members and five guests present. Gene Aldridge reported approximately \$650 in the treasury prior to the meeting.

The matter of membership renewals was brought up. The late payment of dues does not affect the membership date.

The Board reaffirmed the fact that our membership list would not be given to anyone but club members.

The dinner and auction on October 23 and 24 were discussed. Heinz Lenzen reported all plans with the Country Squire Inn running smoothly. Dave McInturff said that a sit-down auction was planned with individuals registering and being given a number for the purpose of keeping purchasers' accounts. An advertisement has been placed in the Washington Post for the two Sundays preceeding the auction.

Pat Tietjen, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, gave a report. The committee decided upon the following slate:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| President | Pete Tietjen |
| Vice President | Dave McInturff |
| Corresponding Secretary | Mike Sprague |
| Recording Secretary | Susan Sprague |
| Treasurer | Gene Aldridge |
| Board Members | Heinz Lenzen Steve Siska |

The next order of business was proposed changes to the monthly bowl shows. Some of the possibilities are a new point system and ribbons or equipment instead of trophies.

The final discussion centered around the Christmas Party. The meeting adjourned at 9:45.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Sprague, Recording Secretary

* * * * *

BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING
November 2, 1976

Craig Tingen
115 S. Iris St.
Alexandria, VA
751-0672

BOWL SHOW NOVEMBER 15, 1976

Guppies: Multi, 2 matched males, AOC
Cichlids: Mouthbrooder New World, Other Africa/Asia, Open
Other: Tetras, Characins, Open

rarely will the bladder heal and usually death is slow and may prolong into weeks. I've noticed that air bladder damage is more common in your compressed fish: angels, silver dollars, etc.

Another thing I've witnessed is the poor fish trying to bury itself in the gravel to elude the net. Depending upon the species, the amount of damage will vary. Such "tuffies" as Jack Dempseys will mark up only slightly but if a discus gets down into the gravel, the marks on the body will be too numerous to count. The thicker the body slime, the more the fish will mark up. Although it may not seriously damage the fish it is unsightly and could possibly develop into more serious problems.

Trying to catch good jumpers like Tri-colored sharks and Tinfoil barbs can also be an interesting experience. As soon as the net touches the fish their natural instinct tells them to head for the top and leave the water. If the top is still on the tank, the fish will come to a sudden and abrupt stop. If you took time to remove the top, the fish will almost always end up bouncing on the floor. The sudden stop of the tank top or the floor may just be enough to end your problems. If the fish is dead you don't have to catch it.

By now you may be saying to yourself that I've caught fish a thousand times but nothing like this has ever happened. Well, all I can say is that you are the exception and not the rule.

When selecting your net, some thought should be given to it. First rule: buy two large nets. When I say large that is exactly what I mean. The larger the net the easier and quicker it is to catch your fish. Six, eight or ten inches preferred. I've seen people catch fish in a net that the net was smaller than the fish. Second: you should buy a fine mesh and a coarse mesh net. The fine mesh is used for the fish that don't have barbs or hard bony fin rays: livebearers, Danios, small tetras, etc. The large coarse mesh should be used with the fish that have bony fin rays or barbs: catfish, cichlids, scats, etc.

Before catching the fish, everything that is removable (rocks, ornaments) should be removed from the tank. This makes the fish easier to catch because of less hiding places. Also there are less items for the fish to hurt themselves on during the chase.

When catching, it's much easier and less dangerous to use two nets (one to catch and one to chase) especially if you're catching in a tank that has plants or other hiding places.

Jim and Nancy White of the Akron, Ohio club came up with a good idea for catching their show fish. They took a frame from a large net and attached heavy plastic to the frame making in a sense a "plastic net". I would imagine that this would be hard to drag through the water but it would not mark the fish when caught.

For catching larger fish, a plastic bag may be used. You can either chase the fish with the bag or you can use a net to chase the fish into the bag. If the tank size permits, a plastic bucket may also be used in catching the larger fish. These methods usually enable you to catch your fish without marking them up at all. After catching the larger fish, I like

The four young men: Fryer, Iles, Ribbinck, and Jackson, spent two years studying the flora and fauna of Lake Malawi. As a result of this trip, I know, references (3), (4), (5), (7), and (11) were published. Other material may have been, I do not know. I have copies of the ones mentioned above.

This genus is endemic to Lake Malawi, is a member of the conglomerate grouping "Mbuna", and generally spends all its time in rocky shore areas. The water chemistry of these areas is hard and alkaline. This means we must use water with hardness values of 200.0 ppm to 300.0 ppm and pH values of 7.2° to 7.8°, and temperature ranges of 70° to 85° F. These fishes are more aggressive and breed more readily at higher temperatures.

With the underslung mouth and jaw structure this genus is able to feed in a horizontal plane to the food source. This is a big assistance when feeding, seeing one's enemies and being able to escape. The main source of food for these two is algal aufwuchs scraped from the rock surfaces. The loosely attached algae is referred to a "loose aufwuchs" and the firmly attached tufts of Calothrix are removed from the rocks and swallowed. Any animal matter eaten is strictly coincidental to the scraping and eating algae.

The following three paragraphs have been taken from my article "Labeotropheus trewavasae" in the March 1976 issue of DELTA TALE.

"As a whole, I would not say they are overly aggressive, if you use a little common sense. I would not put two full grown males of either species, or combination thereof, together in anything smaller than a 200 gallon tank. Even this may be too small a tank. Other species can be kept together without much trouble as long as there are plenty of caves for hiding. I currently have full grown Pseudotropheus macrophthalmus, Labidochromis fryeri, and Labeotropheus trewavasae males living together in a 40 gallon tank. The females will do quite a bit of squabbling among themselves but no real damage is done. Currently, I have three females to go with each male.

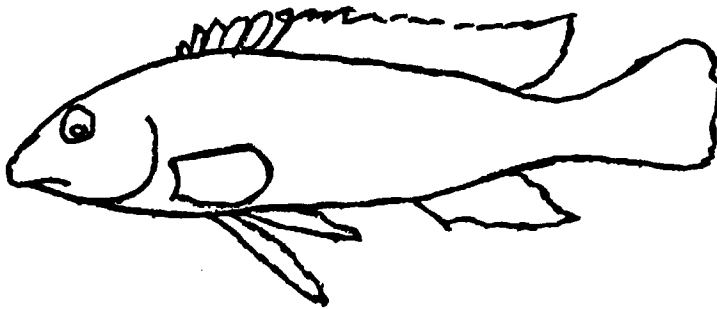
The two species in the genus LABEOTROPHEUS are maternal mouthbrooders and the males are polygamous. To keep some sort of peace in the family the male should have a harem. Breeding follows the standard mbuna methods after a vigorous courtship. The eggs are a dark beige and chicken egg shaped and roughly 2-3 mm in diameter. The eggs are held for 21 to 28 days depending on the average temperature. The normal period is 21 days in my fish room. The average spawn for my females is 28 babies about 10 mm in total length. The female provides parental care after a fashion, she will pick up the babies for roughly four days after release whenever anyone comes close to the tank. They are large enough on release to eat baby brine shrimp. From here on they are able to take prepared or flake foods, anything they can get in their mouths. They are sexually mature at about a year. I have seen nine month old L. trewavasae go through the spawning motions, however, they should be a year before concrete results can be expected. The male will start to show colors at six months.

The L. trewavasae comes in a multitude of color forms. The basic male colors are a bright blue barred body and a fire engine red dorsal fin. Most females are some form of blotch, though the books talk of solid colored ones. Over the years, I have owned about 25 females with only one being solid colored. The blotch pattern is a combination of many shades and patterns of black, orange, and white. I have seen no two alike. The species of this genus would be a very interesting addition to your tank, so why not try?

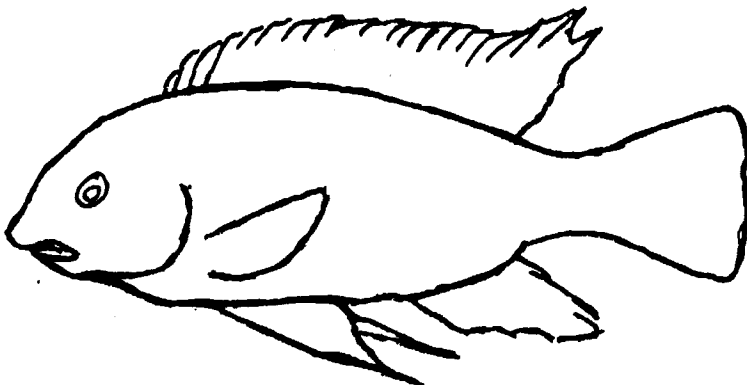
The L. fueelleborni males come in many of the same colors as the L. trewavasae, with a leaning to the darker colors. Most of the females are solid colors. It has to be proved, by field work, not desk work, whether these two species separate themselves where they share rocks, by patterned versus solid colored females. Are you interested enough to go to Lake Malawi and prove it one way or the other?

REFERENCES

1. AXELROD, Dr. H. R., (1975) African Cichlids of Lakes Malawi and Tanganyika, Third Edition.
2. AXELROD, Dr. H. R., (1976) African Cichlids of Lakes Malawi and Tanganyika, Fourth Edition.
3. FRYER, Dr. G., (1956) A new species of LABEOTROPHEUS from Lake Nyasa with a redescription of LABEOTROPHEUS fueelleborni, AHL, and some notes on the genus LABEOTROPHEUS, Rev. Zool. Bot. Afr., Vol. LIV, 3-4, 21 Dec 1956.
4. FRYER, Dr. G., (1959) Proceedings of Zoological Society of London, Vol. 132, Pt. 2, March 1959
5. FRYER, G. & ILEW, T. D., (1972) The Cichlid Fishes of the Great Lakes of Africa.
6. TREWAVAS, E., (1935) "A synopsis of the cichlid fishes of lake Nyasa", Annual Magazine of Natural History, (10) 16: 65-118.
7. JACKSON, P. B. N., (1961) Occ. Papers Nat. Mus. S. Rhodesia, (25B): 535-621.
8. LIEBERMAN, S. & N., (1967) Tropical Fish Hobbyist, Nov 1967, Vol. XVI (#141) No. 3.
9. GOLDSAMT, D. L., (1973) Tropical Fish Hobbyist, March 1973, Vol. XXII (#205) No. 7.
10. AHL, (Berlin); Einige neue Fische der Familie "Cichlidae" aus dem Nyassa-See. Page 51-62, January 1926.
11. JACKSON, P.B. N. & RIBBINCK, T., (1975) Mbuna.



LABEOTROPHEUS TREWAVASAE



LABEOTROPHEUS FUELLEBORNI

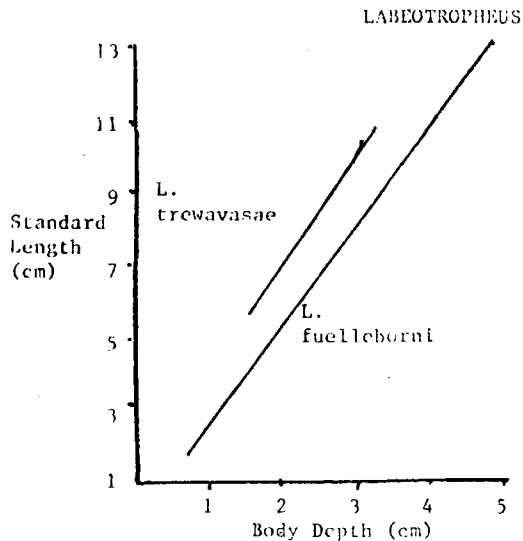


Figure 1. Ratio Standard Length to Body Depth

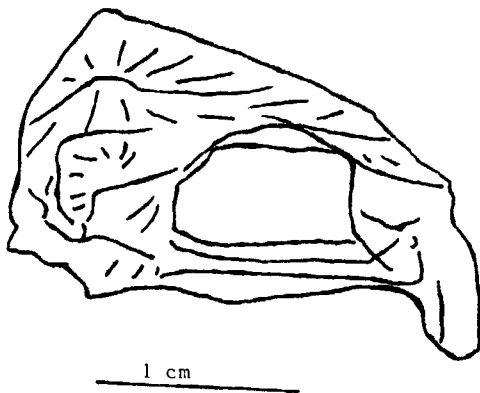


Figure 3. Skull

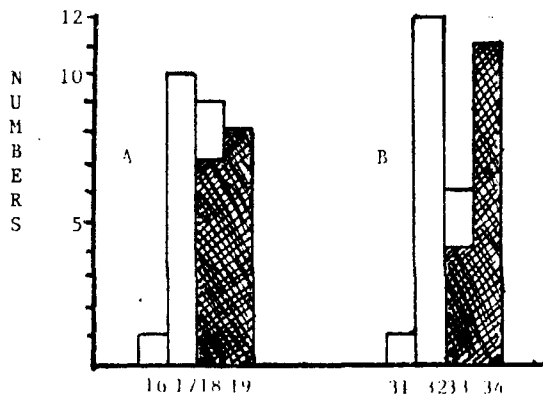


Figure 2.
A. Dorsal Fin Spines.
B. Scales Longitudinal Series.
White Blocks-*L. fuelleborni*.
Black Blocks-*L. trewavasae*.

Measurements

Labiotropheus trewavasae:

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Total Length | 11.7 cm |
| Snout | 38.6-42.5% of HL |
| Head | 28.3-32.2% of SL |
| Caudal Peduncle | - As long as deep or longer |
| Anal Fin | III, 7-8 |
| Caudal Fin | XVIII-XIX, 7-8 |
| Gill Rakers | Short 8-9 |
| Interorbital width | 28.7-37.4% of HL |
| Eye Diameter | 22.5-26.8% of HL |
| Scales Longitudinal Series | 33-34 |

Labiotropheus fuelleborni:

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Total Length | 11.0 cm |
| Snout | 32.4-42.8% of HL |
| Head | 29.6-34.0% of SL |
| Caudal Peduncle | - Not quite as long as deep |
| Anal Fin | III, 7-8 |
| Caudal Fin | XVI-XVIII, 7-10 |
| Gill Rakers | Short 8-9 |
| Interorbital width | 29.0-42.0% of HL |
| Eye Diameter | 23.9-30.4% of HL |
| Scales Longitudinal Series | 31-33 |

BOWL SHOW RESULTS AND STANDINGS

October 11, 1976

| | <u>1st</u> | <u>2nd</u> | <u>3rd</u> |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| <u>Guppy:</u> | | | |
| Blue | - | - | - |
| Black | - | - | - |
| AOC | Walsh | Walsh | - |
| <u>Cichlid:</u> | | | |
| Angelfish/ | | | |
| Discus | - | - | - |
| Tilapia | - | - | - |
| Open | McInturff, J. | McInturff, J. | McInturff, J. |
| <u>Egglayer/</u> | | | |
| <u>Livebearer:</u> | | | |
| Sharks & | | | |
| Loaches | McInturff, D. | McInturff, D. | - |
| Catfish, | | | |
| non-cory | McInturff, D. | McInturff, D. | - |
| Open | McInturff, D. | - | - |

| | <u>POINT STATUS</u> | | | | <u>Oct.</u> | <u>Qtr.</u> | <u>Ann.</u> |
|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | <u>Oct.</u> | <u>Qtr.</u> | <u>Ann.</u> | | | | |
| <u>Guppy:</u> | | | | | | | |
| Walsh | 7 | | 125 | <u>Egglayer/</u> | | | |
| McInturff, S. | - | | 12 | <u>Livebearer:</u> | | | |
| Nixon | - | | 2 | McInturff, D. | 11 | | 110 |
| Hardy, B. | - | | 5 | Donnelly | - | | 13 |
| Hardy, Don | - | | 4 | Lenzen | - | | 25 |
| Hardy, Dan | - | | 2 | Nixon | - | | 4 |
| | | | | Warren | - | | 2 |
| | | | | Mahoney | - | | 15 |
| <u>Cichlid:</u> | | | | | | | |
| McInturff, J. | 11 | | 95 | | | | |
| Warren | - | | 36 | | | | |
| Sprague | - | | 9 | | | | |
| Nixon | - | | 6 | | | | |
| Lenzen | - | | 5 | | | | |
| Tietjen | - | | 3 | | | | |
| Mahoney | - | | 5 | | | | |
| Donnelly | - | | 1 | | | | |

REMEMBER - NOVEMBER IS DOUBLE POINTS FOR THE BOWL SHOW. BAG UP THOSE
LITTLE RASCALS AND BRING 'EM IN!!

JUDGING A SHOW
OR, THE FIRST SIX BETTAS ARE THE HARDEST

By: Peter D. Tietjen, PVAS

The Tidewater Aquarium Society of the Norfolk-Hampton-Virginia Beach area holds its show each year at the end of September. Over the past few years, PVAS and TAS have exchanged judges and maintained cordial relations. But even so, it came as a surprise when I got a call from Bud Hampshire of TAS to come down and be one of the judges for this year's show. The main reason for this surprise was that I had never judged a show before. Oh sure, some monthly bowl shows, but never a major trophy-awarding, open-to-the-public show. I explained this to Bud who replied "Well, you gotta start somewhere" and with those reassuring words I accepted.

John Jessup, our fearless leader, also was to be a judge and so we agreed to split expenses and a motel room and drive together. We left late Friday afternoon and arrived in Virginia Beach around 8 P.M. We checked into the motel and went out to hit the "hot spots", such as they were. One thing I learned, if you even want to make easy money, take on Jessup at pinball. Finally, after four draughts in two bars, we returned to the room and went to bed.

TAS has an annoying habit of scheduling the judging of its shows for 7 A.M., which means a 6:15 A.M. wake-up, followed by 15 minutes of "Sunrise Semester" on the Jamestown Colony and the first part of "Mission Impossible" at 6:30. We were picked up at 6:45 and left for the judging site.

All the while my apprehension over judging was growing. All I could visualize was hundreds of beautiful identical fish which I had to judge. We arrived at the Botanical Gardens (where the show was held), and my fears increased as I saw the beautiful dealers tanks in the lobby. We were given the judging forms and shown the exhibit hall. The six judges were split into two teams of three and each team judged half the fish. My classes included Bettas, Africans, Catfish, and Breeding Pairs and Fry. So I started with the Bettas. There were six of them, or so the form said. I located all six and all six looked nice. Then I started to look closer, and judged them against the ideal of how the points were allotted on the form. It took ten minutes on the first betta and twelve on number two (a beautiful red - the eventual winner) but then I caught on - judging isn't so hard. My fears went away as there weren't hundreds of faultless fishes, only four or five entries and none perfect -- except for a gorgeous lionhead oranda. To my mind, this was one of the prettiest fishes I've ever seen. I'm not a goldfish freak, but this was a super fish. But except for this fish everything could be faulted in some way on a relative basis. Maybe I don't judge the right way, taking points off from a perfect score for faults, rather than adding them up for good points, but that's how I did it. In fact, I liked judging, not for an ego trip, but because I got to see many good fish and an occasional perfect one, such as the lionhead oranda.

I'm glad TAS gave me the chance to judge. I'd like to do it again sometime, and sometime soon.

MEMBERSHIP & THINGS

The "things" for this month are PVAS Membership Cards. Do you have yours? Is it up to date? Are you still a member?

If you are a member of PVAS but your card has been lost or destroyed, please mail a written request for a new card to our P.O. Box. New cards will be issued as soon as possible.

If you have renewed your membership but the back of your card does not indicate the correct "Paid To" date, please present the card to me at the next general meeting.

If you have never received a card, see me at the next general meeting.

Now let us discuss membership and dues.

The following memberships are due for renewal in November:

| | |
|-------------|---------------------|
| Ruth Brewer | Steve Siska |
| D.M. Fisher | Chuck & Genny Story |

The following memberships expired in October and I have no record of receiving renewal applications or dues:

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Pinchos Andreen | Craig Tingen |
| Gudrun Droege | Mr. & Mrs. Larry Wilson |
| Bob & Dee Smith | |

See you at the elections in November.

Mike Sprague
Ass't Corresponding Sec'y.

NOTICE

The Nominating Committee has met and nominated the following slate of candidates for 1977.

| | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| President | Pete Tietjen |
| Vice Pres. | Dave McInturff |
| Recording Sec'y. | Susan Sprague |
| Corresponding Sec'y. | Mike Sprague |
| Treasurer | Gene Aldridge |
| Board Members | Heinz Lenzen |
| | Steve Siska |

Additional nominations may be made from the floor on election night, November 15.

GENE'S A GRANDFATHER!

By: Dave McInturff, PVAS

Well, almost. Eleven months after buying six of his "tadpoles" at auction during our last Fall Show, Gene's baby plecostomus grew up and spawned. We have three males and two females (the other one bit the gravel early on). They have been housed in a 100 gallon tank ever since we got them. They share the tank with several clown loaches, red-tailed sharks, discus, and up until three days before they spawned, twenty-seven Nannacara, which were probably responsible for getting them to spawn.

It seems that after the Nannacara spawned the first two times, I put the two adult pairs in the 100 gallon tank figuring that if they spawned again, all of the fry would be eaten. So I thought. After the new spawn of Nannacara was about four months old, I decided to remove them and put the Apistogramma kleei in there to spawn. The only way to catch all the Nannacara was to remove every plant and every piece of rock. While I was at it, I did a 50% water change, which may or may not have actually triggered the spawning instinct. Our other pair of plecospawned in very old, hard, alkaline water.

Anyway, three days after the tank was cleaned, relandscaped, and replanted, we noticed a pleco apparently trapped under a piece of rock. There had been quite a bit of gravel being thrown out from under one particular rock cave and I figured one of the rocks had collapsed on the pleco. I lifted off the offending rock and out scurried three or four plecospawned. Hey, we thought! Could it be? I replaced the rocks in a more stable configuration with a very tight slot between two of them. A little while later they were back at it. The next night I got a flash-light and looked down the slot and found a male pleco guarding his nest of eggs. So, Gene, you're almost a grandfather!

bap REPORT

| <u>NAME</u> | <u>POINTS</u> |
|----------------------|---------------|
| Susan & Mike Sprague | 155** |
| Ruth Brewer | 170** |
| Gene Aldridge | 80 |
| John Jessup | 55* |
| Diane Nixon | 70* |
| Pat & Pete Tietjen | 15 |
| Jan & Dave McInturff | 275** |
| Jerry Donnelly | 10 |

* Breeder Award

** Intermediate Breeder Award

Brewer - Intermediate Breeder Award this month

Gene Aldridge
BAP Chairman

By: Edwin (Bud) Welty
(Reprinted from Youngstown
Aquarist, Youngstown Area
Tropical Fish Society,
March, 1976)

If you keep fish, there will come a time when you must catch them for one reason or another. When catching cichlids (or any other fish) people don't give any thought to it other than grab a net, dip, chase them all about, snatch them up and dump them wherever they're going. This rough treatment (90% of all hobbyists don't consider it rough) can do damage to a fish even to the point of killing it. Almost every hobbyist has experienced a fish dying soon after it was caught and moved. Yet, they never think that it was possibly killed by the rough treatment while being caught. Believe it or not being caught is a traumatic experience for fish. With this in mind, try to catch your fish with as much care as possible.

Some fish can be caught and go through the experience without showing any distress, but some, like Monos (*Monodactylus argenteus* or *M. Sebae*) are very excitable and don't catch well. Since it's impossible to know every fish's temperament, then it is best to get into the habit of catching all fish the same way: slow, cautious and gentle.

A number of things can happen when netting your cichlids. A fin ray may be broken, scales are very often knocked off (especially fish like Tinfoil barbs or Silver dollars) which may scar the fish for life rendering it useless for show competition. A rough net may scratch the surface of the eye thus causing eye cloud and if damaged bad enough, eye fungus can result which is probably one of the toughest ailments to cure in tropical fish.

Many times the metal frame of the net is used as a murder weapon. The poor fish is pinched between the net's frame and the glass thus crushing some vital organ which in turn will almost instantly kill the poor fish. I've also witnessed gills being damaged whenever part of the gill is caught in the net and is either torn or bent outwards away from the body thus damaging it to the point that it is unable to close completely. This either renders that gill unoperative or it reduces the amount of oxygen taken from the water.

Not as common an injury but one that will occur with the larger mouthed fish that have larger teeth is the breaking or damaging of the lower jaw. Cichlids' jaws are not hinged together (like a human's) but are actually two bony plates, one above the other that are connected by skin and muscle. Much like a snake, this enables the fish to open its mouth to enormous sizes thus allowing it to swallow very large chunks of food. What happens is that the teeth on the lower jaw get caught in the net and either by poor handling or the fish thrashing about, the mouth is forced open unnaturally. This may damage the ligaments or muscle which leaves the mouth partially open unable to be closed completely. This makes obtaining food difficult or if damaged badly enough, impossible.

Many times rough handling will rupture the air bladder. Once ruptured the fish is unable to keep its balance and it twists and rolls about. Only

rarely will the bladder heal and usually death is slow and may prolong into weeks. I've noticed that air bladder damage is more common in your compressed fish: angels, silver dollars, etc.

Another thing I've witnessed is the poor fish trying to bury itself in the gravel to elude the net. Depending upon the species, the amount of damage will vary. Such "tuffies" as Jack Dempseys will mark up only slightly but if a discus gets down into the gravel, the marks on the body will be too numerous to count. The thicker the body slime, the more the fish will mark up. Although it may not seriously damage the fish it is unsightly and could possibly develop into more serious problems.

Trying to catch good jumpers like Tri-colored sharks and Tinfoil barbs can also be an interesting experience. As soon as the net touches the fish their natural instinct tells them to head for the top and leave the water. If the top is still on the tank, the fish will come to a sudden and abrupt stop. If you took time to remove the top, the fish will almost always end up bouncing on the floor. The sudden stop of the tank top or the floor may just be enough to end your problems. If the fish is dead you don't have to catch it.

By now you may be saying to yourself that I've caught fish a thousand times but nothing like this has ever happened. Well, all I can say is that you are the exception and not the rule.

When selecting your net, some thought should be given to it. First rule: buy two large nets. When I say large that is exactly what I mean. The larger the net the easier and quicker it is to catch your fish. Six, eight or ten inches preferred. I've seen people catch fish in a net that the net was smaller than the fish. Second: you should buy a fine mesh and a coarse mesh net. The fine mesh is used for the fish that don't have barbs or hard bony fin rays: livebearers, Danios, small tetras, etc. The large coarse mesh should be used with the fish that have bony fin rays or barbs: catfish, cichlids, scats, etc.

Before catching the fish, everything that is removable (rocks, ornaments) should be removed from the tank. This makes the fish easier to catch because of less hiding places. Also there are less items for the fish to hurt themselves on during the chase.

When catching, it's much easier and less dangerous to use two nets (one to catch and one to chase) especially if you're catching in a tank that has plants or other hiding places.

Jim and Nancy White of the Akron, Ohio club came up with a good idea for catching their show fish. They took a frame from a large net and attached heavy plastic to the frame making in a sense a "plastic net". I would imagine that this would be hard to drag through the water but it would not mark the fish when caught.

For catching larger fish, a plastic bag may be used. You can either chase the fish with the bag or you can use a net to chase the fish into the bag. If the tank size permits, a plastic bucket may also be used in catching the larger fish. These methods usually enable you to catch your fish without marking them up at all. After catching the larger fish, I like

to take the fish from the net, bucket, or whatever with my hand. Because of their larger size it eliminates the thrashing about that is so capable of a large fish such as an oscar, etc.

When chasing fish about, great bursts of speed are used in their efforts to escape. All muscles work to the fullest and a great deal of oxygen is used to energize their muscles. This unnatural chase or movement causes waste products to develop in the muscles. One of these by-products is lactic acid which if not absorbed by the blood can actually kill the fish. Although this may be rare, it can happen. This might be the cause of fish like Monos to die soon after being caught. For this reason the fish should be caught as quickly as possible and released just as quickly.

Anyone who has ever touched a fish knows that it is covered with a slime or mucous coating. This body slime is its protection against fungus infections. The taking away of this slime makes the fish more susceptible to all types of disease. How many times have we picked a fish up off the floor. It was once thought that the hands must be wet to pick up the fish but it has now been suggested that dry hands be used. It has been found that the slime coating is eliminated whether a dry or a wet hand is used. The advantage of a dry hand is that the fish doesn't have to be gripped as firmly.

When a fish is handled, do so gently because you don't want undue pressure on the internal organs. At no time should you touch the eye sockets or put your fingers in the gills. Both areas are extremely delicate. Remember, no matter what the size, all fish are relatively fragile animals and MUST BE HANDLED DELICATELY.

0 - 0

BOWL SHOW SCHEDULE FOR BALANCE OF 1976

The Bowl Show Schedule for the balance of 1976 is reprinted here for the benefit of those who may have misplaced their copies. We have not yet published the Schedule for 1977 since the categories are under study for possible revision. As soon as the 1977 categories are firmed up, they will be published in the Delta Tale.

| | <u>Guppies</u> | <u>Cichlids</u> | <u>Other Egglayer/Livebearer</u> |
|--------|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Nov 15 | Multi 2 match males AOC | Mouthbrood New World Other Africa/Asia Open | Tetra Characins Open |

NOVEMBER IS FOR DOUBLE POINTS!

Dec 13 CHRISTMAS PARTY -- NO BOWL SHOW -- CHRISTMAS PARTY

0 - 0

AS ALWAYS -- WE NEED HELP FOR ARRANGING AND SETTING UP THE CHRISTMAS PARTY -- WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP? PLEASE VOLUNTEER YOUR SERVICES.