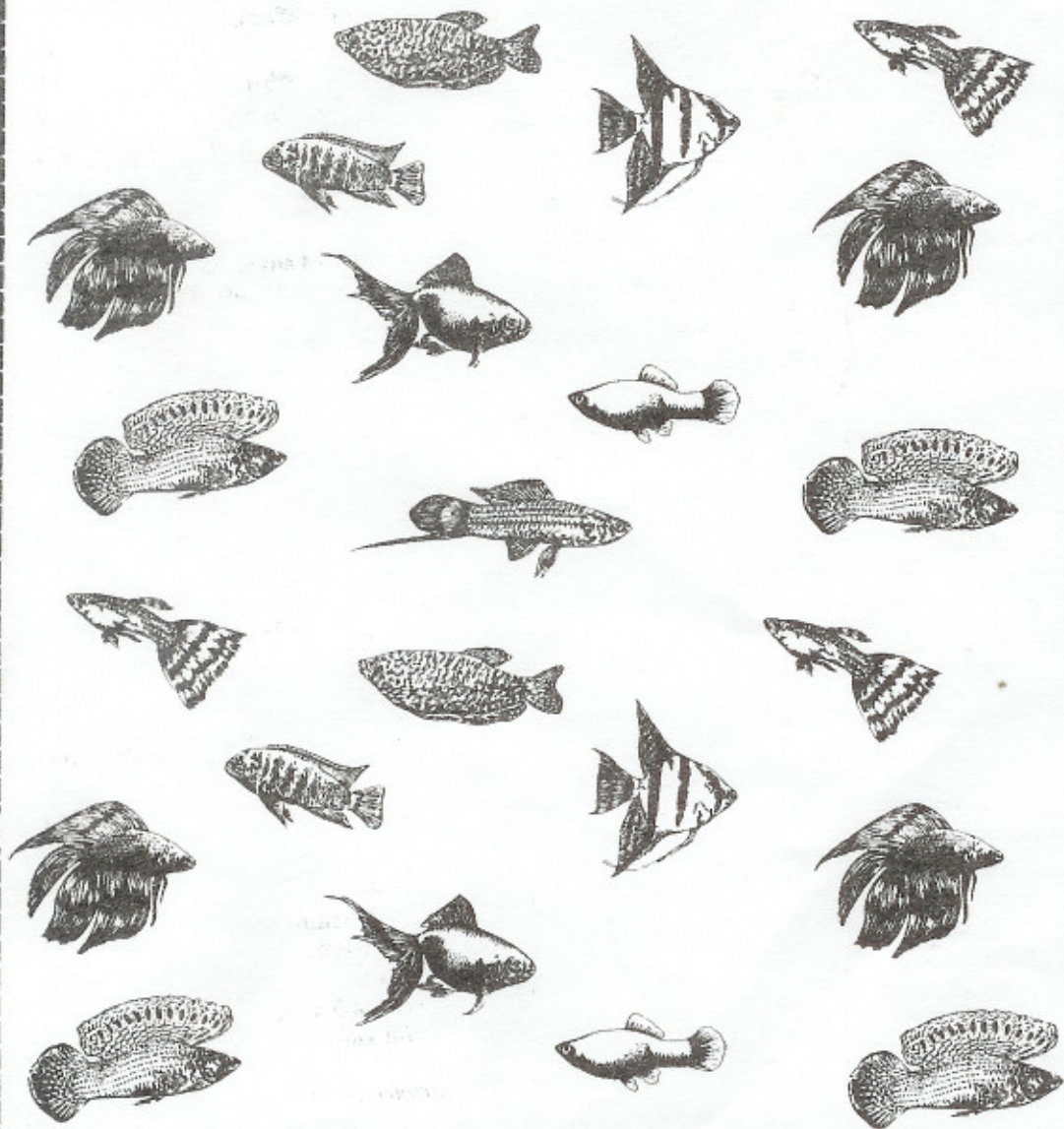


* DELTA TALE *

Jan./Feb
1995
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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF

potomac valley aquarium society



The *Delta Tale* is published bimonthly for the benefit of the membership of the POTOMAC VALLEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY INC. , a non-profit educational and social organization . The society was founded in 1960 for the purposes of furthering the aquarium hobby by the dissemination of information and advice, and the promotion of good fellowship among the membership by organized activities and competitions.

All correspondence to the society and to *Delta Tale* should be directed to P.O. Box 664, Merrifield, VA 22116.

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Frum the editor's desk


I'm going to be very brief this time. I've basically fallen a whole issue behind and I'm trying to get caught up by putting together two issues one right after the other. So, this issue will be very late, but the march/april issue should be only a little late, depending on the printer. I'll do my best to keep back on schedule after that, **HOWEVER**, I need your help to do it. I can't get an issue out if I don't have anything to print. I have recently received a batch of articles from Jeffrey Burke, the first of which is in this issue, and I'm very grateful to him. I don't like to print more than one article by the same author per issue though if I can help it. So how about sending me some article, artwork, puzzles, games, poems, in other words anything I can print. The best way to send stuff is directly to me rather than to the PO Box. My **NEW ADDRESS** is 12633 Oakwood Dr., Woodbridge, VA 22192. You can also try to give me things at the monthly meetings, although those of you that are there every month may have noticed that I don't manage to make it every month like I used to. As a matter of fact I think I've missed three out of the last four.

That's enough for now.

Until next time (very shortly)....

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John".

WHAT'S HAPPENING!

 For up to the minute information on what's happening call the free PVAS hotline anytime. (703) 352-3365.

March 3-5: "Carolina Aquarium Workshop XI". Raleigh Aquarium Society's workshop and auction weekend. Speakers will include: Carl Ferraris, David Keller, Ray Lucas, Patrick McMillin, Mike Paletta, Peter Thode, and Mike Trzonkowski. For information contact Carl Singer (919) 662-5208, or Gary Held (919) 387-0833. This group always puts on a great workshop and auction. Try to go if you can. I'm going to.

March 13: PVAS Monthly Meeting Program, raffles, door prize, mini-auction, refreshments, plus a chance to socialize with other aquarists. Everyone is welcome, Republican or Democrat. Meetings begin at 8:00 pm, doors open at 7:30. See back cover for directions.

April 10: PVAS Monthly Meeting. All the same great stuff listed above. Well, maybe not all the same there will be a different program, different raffle and door prizes, different stuff in the mini-auction, and mostly different refreshments (hint, don't eat the green cookies, they aren't mint). O.K. so it's almost none of the same stuff. Come anyway. It'll be more fun than staying at home trying to remember where you put all those receipts you need to finish filling out your income tax forms.

TRADING POST

PVAS members may advertise in the trading post at no charge. Send ads to Delta Tale, PO Box 664, Merrifield, VA 22116. Deadline for the next issue is Oct. 10.

For Sale: Perfecto 65 gal. plate glass tank (36w x 24h x 18d). Glass Canopy. Strip light with Triton bulb. Furniture quality cabinet stand. Tank is in excellent condition and come with gravel. Delivery possible. Asking \$140.

Eheim 2213 canister filter w/media. New condition. \$45.

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Several adolescent and adult turquoise discus. Really nice fish! \$20-25.

Pete Thrift. (703) 971-0594 evenings and weekends

**Corydoras Similis
Violet Eye Corydoras**

by

Jeffrey A Burke

I have been trying to breed Corydoras since I bought a set of Corydoras Pandas a few years ago. The Similis are the fourth set of corydoras I have own and attempted to spawn over the last few years.

In all my pet shop wanderings I have never seen these attractive corydoras before. The fish were about 2 1/2 inches each, the eyes are violet in color, the fins are clear of any markings, the front 2/3 of the body is a light tan with dark brown dots and the rear 1/3 is a metallic green.

These fish commanded a high price which only falls short of Corydoras Barbatus and a few others, my birthday was a week away so the better half took me back to the pet shop and I purchased all six Similis which were located in three different tanks.

I took the six catfish home and put them in a heavily planted 30 gallon tank with a PH of 6.5, temperature of 82 and low hardness. The Filter was a Aquaclear 300 and a sponge filter backup. The tank mates were 5 Rosy Barbs and a pair of Crenicara Filmentosa.

After a couple weeks I went back to the pet shop were I bought the catfish and while talking to the salesperson she mentioned she still had one of the catfish left. The salesperson took me a tank

which was several tanks away from the original three tanks and sure enough there was one in the tank. This one was larger than the rest and was plump, I figured this was a female and I just had significantly increased my chances of breeding success.

Now with seven fish and a positive female I started feeding them heavy on black worms. To prevent the worms from burying themselves in the gravel I placed a four inch diameter clay dish with a layer of gravel and put the worms in it. It did not take long before the corydoras got accustomed to feeding from there. After five months I was sure I had a total of three females and maybe a fourth. However there was no spawning activity at all.

I wanted to lower the tank temperature but, did not want to stress the crenicara so I moved the Similis to a 20 long tank located just below their original home. The new home was a bare bottom tank with a large piece of driftwood on the left, a plastic grate on the right, a floating plastic plant and their feeding trough from their previous tank. Filtration was accomplished by a seasoned sponge and Whisper 2 power filter, also a new sponge and corner filter. The hood used a fluorescent light and no heater was used.

Even with 2 seasoned filters and 10 gallons of water from the original 30 gallon tank their ammonia shot up in their new home. I came home the next day from work and to my pleasant surprise to find the large female had almost completed spawning. I found over the next 2 months spawning occurred at a temperature between 72 and 78 degrees, PH values from 7 to less than 6.2, it seemed when they get in a spawning cycle very few

things can slow them down or stops them.

It is hard to figure out how many eggs and spawns there was but, if I had to guess I would say 15-20 spawns and 200-300 eggs with only 21 making it to adulthood. the difficulties with keeping track of spawns and egg numbers begins with as many as three females would be spawning at the same time. The females would prefer to lay eggs were previous eggs were laid. their spawning window was no earlier than 2 PM and no later than 7 PM, so their spawn would sometime be over before I got home from work.

It was very interesting to watch them spawn, The male would chase the female till she stopped, then he would get close to her and once in a while place himself in the typical T position, but most of the time she would move her nose to his belly area and after a few nudges in his belly he apparently release sperm and she would release 1-4 eggs but, usually 2. After the eggs were released she would pick them up in her pelvic fins and start swimming up an down the glass usually with her mate following her and sometime another male would also follow her but, the outsider would give up after 2 or 3 trips up and down the glass, the mate would quit following after 2 minutes or so. After she would ditch the males and only then would she deposit the eggs. After the eggs were deposited she would swim to the bottom and rest for 5 minutes and wait for her mate, if another male would come close she would swim away and wait for only her mate then the sequence would start all over.

From the beginning to the end of the spawning cycle the number of eggs per spawn went from 30-40 to 15-25. The eggs were always

without exception laid on the bottom of the tank and deposited within 1 inch of the surface. the female preferred to lay most of the their eggs on the leaves of a floating plastic plant and near the corners of the tank except the corner nearest the power filter. A few of eggs were laid on a breeder net, the input tube of the power filter, the glass of a thermometer and even on a ammonia alert pad.

The fry are difficult to raise because of how easy they fungused. The moment one of the fry fungused usually the complete batch would die in a few days. The fry grow quite fast. When they reach a month old they are pretty hardy and you are able to move with out worry of high casualties. At five weeks their colors begin showing.

These are one of the most attractive Corydoras I have ever seen. These little fellows are quite prolific, but the fry are very unforgiving when it comes to water conditions. With all the ups and downs of this experience I would do it all over again (and probably will).

FRY FEEDING TIP
Pete Thrift, PVAS

In the past, when feeding older fry not yet ready for adult foods, I have usually fed frozen daphnia and powdered flake food to supplement baby brine shrimp. Here is a feeding tip which I have used over past year with great success.

Frozen veal and beef heart is my staple food for all my carnivorous fish. I trim and grind the heart myself, and freeze the ground heart in patty form. To feed, I slice a portion from the edge of the patty using a serrated knife and a "sawing" motion. I then "saw" or chop the portion into the appropriate size for the fish being fed. Before feeding, I rinse the results in a coarse fish net to remove excess blood and small particles of heart.

My tip is simply to use these very small particles of heart to feed older carnivorous fry. As you rinse the chopped heart, just hold a brine shrimp net under the coarse net holding the chopped heart. The brine net will then trap the small particles which otherwise would be rinsed away. Dropping a pinch or two from the brine net into a tank will produce a shower of food perfectly sized for older fry. Excess particles can be refrigerated or refrozen.

Give this suggestion a try - I think you will be pleased with the results!

SPAWNING "AU NATURAL"

by H.R. "Doc" Diller, ACLC

You've read of many ways to spawn fish. However there is one way not often discussed. This method is not applicable to all types of fishes but can be done with more species than you may think. It's often been said that one of the easiest ways to begin spawning egglayers is to begin with the white cloud. All one needs to do is put them in a tank with a lot of fine leafed plants and soon you'll be rewarded with a spawning. I have done this with white clouds and more.

The key to this procedure is "many fine leafed plants". The plants are important for several reasons. First they serve as a medium onto which the eggs adhere. Secondly they provide a hiding place for the eggs and newborn fry. Thirdly they provide a source of food for the fry. Small organisms also live among the plants which are relished by the fry. Plants also keep direct light off of the eggs reducing the chances of them becoming fungused. Dry or live foods will be held in concentrated areas where the fry hide for protection. The plants will use the uneaten food to a point and naturally filter the water as they convert nitrates into food for themselves.

The following fishes can be spawned in this manner, I know because I've done it with each of them. As previously mentioned white clouds are prolific in the "Au Natural" setting. I age water in a 55 gallon plastic tub in our yard and then introduce about 10 adult white clouds. No heater, no filter, the fish, water, and plenty of hornwort. In a few weeks I noticed the presence of fry. I allowed all of the fish to remain in the tub for the duration of the summer. With the white clouds it is best to do this in the early summer before the water heats up. White clouds originate from the mountain streams of China and are used to cooler water than most of our so-called tropicals. At the end of the summer I had a tub full of white clouds. The same procedure can also be accomplished in an indoor aquarium, just remember to keep the water temperature below 70 degrees. Also remember when using an aquarium it is advisable to utilize a filter that won't trap the fry. To obtain a higher yield of offspring remove the parents.

I have had similar results in a 20 gallon tank with Australian rainbows, dwarf Australian rainbows, red New Guinea rainbows, and turquoise rainbows. Once again, use plenty of floating plants covering the entire surface of the tank. Use an undergravel or sponge filter to protect the youngsters.

After one introduces a group of adult fish, preferably using more females than males, carefully observe the actions of the fish after a week or so, allowing them time to become accustomed to their new surroundings. You may or may not see them scattering eggs in the "grass". Look carefully at the tanks surface for the small fry. When fry are seen it is time to remove the breeders. Remove them even if you do not see a lot of fry because there are sure to be many still unhatched, as many of the fish scattered their eggs over the period of a few days or so.

One time I accidentally spawned a group of *Corydoras panda* catfish in a tank with livebearers, which also enjoy the "Au Natural" environment. I had a few clumps of java moss in the tank which grew in size much larger than I was aware. The young pandas were about 3/8 inch long before I had even noticed them. I figured that if they had survived to this stage I might as well let them mature in the same tank, and so I did, and as a result continued to discover young pandas emerging from the java moss 5 or 6 at a time over a period of several months until the catfish numbered 45-50. I added liquid-fry and baby brine shrimp to the java moss. So the tank set up to spawn livebearers also produced catfish. I always have a lot of plants in my livebearer tanks so there is no need for a breeding trap.

If you want to try this with your outdoor containers as I did with the white clouds, you'll find out as I have after 20 years, on an average temperatures are tolerable from June 15 to Sept. 15. Check the temperature prior to introducing the fish and acclimate them remembering which fish like which temperatures. Ponds do not change temperatures very quickly but above ground containers are apt to change rapidly. I've found fish can accept water temperature changes better outdoors than they can in the indoor aquarium. Maybe this is because they have all that live food outdoors and are stronger because of it. I have had livebearers exposed to temperatures as low as 60 degrees for short time periods with no ill effects.

So if you want to try spawning "Au Natural" use your imagination and discover fishes other than those mentioned. Killifish can also be spawned in this type, but keep the water level low as they are great jumpers.

Reprinted from *Tank Tales*, Aquarium Club of Lancaster County, June 1994 issue.

PVAS 1994 INCOME AND EXPENSES

Bank Book Balance 2018.91
 1 Jan 1994

Income
 Auction 14477.48
 Membership 519.50
 Monthly Auction 5.00
 Monthly Raffle 135.00
 Raffle 983.00
 Workshop
 Miscellaneous
 TOTAL INCOME 16119.98

Expenses
 Auction 9088.62
 Auction Expense 1309.60
 Insurance 161.00
 Meeting Expense 211.95
 Membership 30.00
 Phone Bill 573.50
 Postage 1004.84
 Printing 977.64
 Raffle Expense 1408.85
 Speakers 87.50
 Supplies 14.02
 Taxes 35.00
 Workshop 1149.92
 Miscellaneous 68.95
 TOTAL EXPENDITURES 16121.39

BANK BALANCE 12/31/93 2017.50

CASH INCREASE 1994 (- 1.41) LOSS

POTOMAC VALLEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY
PO BOX 664, Merrifield, VA 22116

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Date: _____

Name: _____

Street: _____ Apt. _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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Optional information:

Occupation: _____

Where did you here about PVAS/get this application? _____

Number of aquariums: _____ Time in the hobby: _____

Special interests: (e.g., catfish, cichlids, etc.) _____

Reason for joining: _____

Membership dues for PVAS are:

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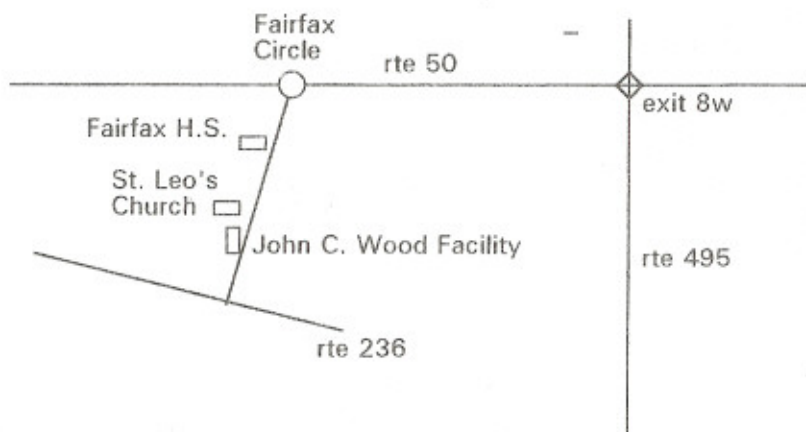
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Meetings are held at the John C. Wood Facility, 3730 Old Lee Hgwy. (rte 237), Fairfax City, VA Room 7 (in the rear of the building) Doors open at 7:30, meetings start at 8:00. Everyone is welcome.