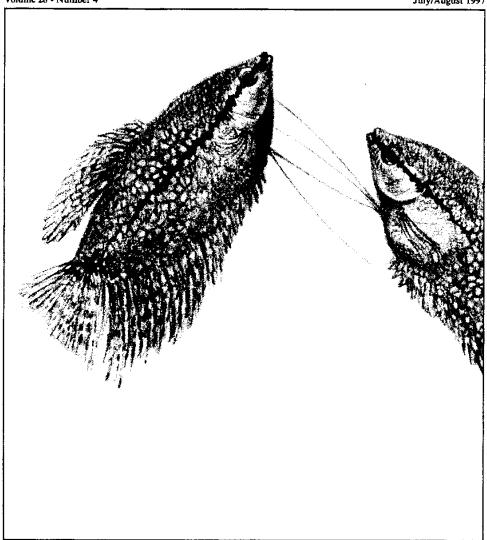
Official Publication of the Potomac Valley Aquacium Society

Volume 28 • Number 4 July/August 1997



DELTA TALE

Volume 28 • Number 4

July/August 1997

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 thru the dissemination of information and advice, and the promotion of good fellowship among the membership by organized activities and competitions.

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All correspondence to the society and to Delta Tale should be directed to:

P.O. Box 664 Merrifield, VA 22116-0664.

COVER: Pearl Gourami pair (*Trichogaster Leeri*) by Christopher F. Wright.

Printed by TOP CAT PRINTING, Manassas Park, Virginia

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PVAS Web site

http://www.erols.com/dsnell/pvas.htm

Frum the editor's desk

What did you think of our July auction? Did you like the location? All of the comments that I heard were positive, so unless we hear negative comments from people we are likely to use this site again sometime. One thing that I really liked was that there were ramps everywhere between the parking lot and our auction room so stuff could be wheeled in on a handtruck or cart if you have one. It sure beat risking your life carrying things up the broken steps at Howard Johnson's. Let the board know what you thought so they can plan for the future.

Another improvement has been added to *Delta Tale*, once again, thanks to the efforts of Christopher Wright. He has redesigned our masthead. Christopher will also, be taking over, on a trial basis, the job of "circulation manager". This will help take a big chunk of work off of my shoulders and give me more time to spend on putting things together. I could also use a few people to help with typing. Gene Moy has been doing some but the more people working on it the bigger backlog of articles I can build up. I could also use someone to be "exchange editor". This would involve keeping track of which other clubs we receive exchange bulletins from and keeping the mailing list up to date. You'd also get the chance to look through lots of other clubs publications. If you're interested in trying any of this, or anything else, let me know. Since I can't find anyone to take over the whole job of editor hopefully I can get rid of pieces of it instead.

Until next time...

WHAT'S HAPPENING!

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

Check out the PVAS Web site at http://www.erols.com/dsnell/pvas.htm

Aug. 11: PVAS Monthly Meeting. Program, door prize, raffles, bowl show, mini-auction, refreshments, and more. Everyone is welcome. Doors open at 7:30, meetings start at 8:00.

Sept. 8: PVAS Monthly Meeting.

Oct. 20: PVAS Monthly Meeting - check the next issue, or the hotline, to confirm this date. Our usual meeting night (the 2nd Monday of each month) is Columbus Day and the Wood Facility is closed. We <u>usually</u> reschedule for the following Monday but check to make sure.

If you know of any "fishy" happenings let me know and they can be included here.

Ma1-4980

TRADING POST

PVAS members may advertise in the trading post at no charge. Send ads to *Delta Tale*, c/o John Mangan, 12633, Oakwood Dr. Woodbridge, VA 22192

Wanted: Grindal Worm Culture. Must be free of mites or other contaminants. For Sale: backissue aquarium magazines. Many different titles. Send SASE for catalog. For Sale: Plastic fish bags. Standard thickness and 3 mil extra heavy. Several sizes of each will be available at PVAS monthly meetings.

John Mangan, 12633 Oakwood Dr., Woodbridge, VA 22192.

For Sale: Julidochromis marlieri 1 - 1 1/2 " \$3.50 each
Neolamprologus brevis (Sunspot) 1 - 1 1/2 " \$3.50 each
Convict Cichlids 1" \$1.50 each
Neolamprologus cylindricus 1 adult \$8.00.
Lorne Williams (301) 630-7674

Corydoras aeneus Bronze Cory

Gene Moy, PVAS

Corydoras catfish are among the perennial favorites at pet shops, fish auctions and in aquarists' tanks. And why not? Corys provide a needed service in eating excess food that sinks to the bottom of the aquarium, preventing possible fouling of the aquarium water. They are hardy, very active when young and can be kept with most fish. One of the more common is Corydoras aeneus, the bronze Cory. Also referred to as the green Cory, the normal coloration of these varies from a bronze to green. An albino version is also available. The literature states that the common Corys are easily bred. This would seem to be the case, as there are always Cory kittens available at the PVAS auctions. These are eagerly snapped up by the buyers.

I've kept Corys in my tanks ever since I had my first tank. There are numerous species of Corys, and some very nice ones are even available at the local shops. My preference leans toward the albino Corys.

Despite reading and hearing about the relative ease that *C. aeneus* are bred, I did not attempt this until earlier this year. I had kept three bronze Corys for about a year and a half. I noticed that one in particular was extremely rounder compared to the other two. I suspected that I had two males and one female. I placed the trio into a ten gallon tank with a thin layer of fine gravel. I look for eggs on the aquarium glass each day. After a couple of weeks, I gave up and return the trio to a community tank.

Later when talking to Jeff Burke, a friend at PVAS, about Corys, he informs me that I would have much better success with five or six than with three. I look for bronze Corys in my forays to the pet shops,

but find only smaller specimens. I decide to pick up some albino Corys instead.

I place bronze and albino Corys in a planted fifteen gallon aquarium. As the months go by, I add more plants and fish to the aquarium. The tank now includes a trio of Zebra Danios, a pair of gold sailfin mollies, *Anubias bartleri*, Java fern, a mess of Java moss, *Apongeton* sp., plus one or two plants that I don't remember. The fish became more relaxed as I added more Java fern and Java moss.

While feeding my fish one day, I discovered patches of eggs stuck to the aquarium glass. I decided to move the fish out of the tank as recommended in an article on Corys I was reading Sunday. Out came most of the Java moss, some of the Java fern and some leaves of *Anubias bartleri* that had detached from one of the plants. I remove the plants so as to catch the fish. After transferring all the fish to another tank, I noticed eggs on two leaves of *Anubias bartleri*. I place these back into the original tank. I count a total of 118 white translucent eggs. The eggs are scattered in small groups of five to eighteen. Most of the eggs were placed on the front glass near where the front meets the side glass. I do not know yet if these are albino, the regular bronze, or a mix.

As further preparation, I replace the corner filter with a sponge filter and place a sponge pre-filter on the power filter.

Two days later I find that most of the eggs have hatched, with 25% proving to be infertile. I look for the firy and find some sliver of fish about three millimeters long in the middle reaches of the tank. This did not make sense, as Corys are supposed to be bottom fish. One week later I determine that these slivers were baby Zebra Danios (*Brachydanio rerio*). One the third day, I do finally see a few "tadpoles" wriggling about on top of the gravel. The three millimeter fry have a big head and a tail very much the shape of tadpoles. As these fish are dark, they are probably the normal coloration variety or at the very least a cross between the normal and albino.

One week after hatching several of the fry are fairly large at about eight millimeters long. Most fry are still a smallish five millimeter. The larger ones are beginning to behave like adult Corys constantly skimming over the surface of the gravel. I think I can even start to make out fins and whiskers on the larger fry. I count only 15 or 16 fry. I'm not sure what happened to the remainder of the eggs.

As the young fry grow, some appear to have speckled pattern, instead of the more uniform green of the adults. After one month, the kittens look like miniature versions of the adults. The coloration of the larger fry are indeed bronze. The young grow fast on a diet of various prepared fry foods. The largest are approaching 15 mm. The adults have been returned to the same tank, and all seem doing well. I can now see the appeal in some of the new species of *Corydoras*.



Aphyosemion striatum

by David Snell, PVAS

I have been a member of the American Killifish Association since July 1996. I have not kept any killifish until just recently. I wanted to try an Aphyosemion species or a Fundulopanchax species since they have been described by the AKA Beginner's Guide (p46/47) as hardy species and they should be easy to breed. After bidding on several species of killifish at the Potomac Valley Aquarium Society 1997 Spring Auction, I was the lucky winning bidder of a pair of Aphyosemion striatum.

The male A. striatum is a brightly colored fish. It can be described as a green bodied fish, with a series of about 5 red stripes running the length of the fish. Therefore, it appears that the A. striatum has a series of alternating green and red stripes. The red lines fan out and break up in the caudal fin. The bottom of the caudal fin has a nice yellow stripe. The dorsal fin of the A. striatum has two red stripes running horizontally, one stripe on the top and one stripe on the bottom. The two red stripes are separated in the middle of the dorsal fin by a green horizontal stripe. The pectoral fin appears to be clear, yet shaded yellow on the bottom. The ventral fins are a light shade of yellow with a few red dots. The anal fin is mostly green with a series of dots that seem to create another red stripe. The bottom of the anal fin also has a nice yellow stripe.

The female A. striatum can be described as a gray bodied fish. Upon closer inspection, with the aid of a fairly bright light, the ventral fins and anal fin are outlined in a light blue color. Also noted on the dorsal fin and on the top part of the caudal fin closest to the caudal peduncle are a number of small red dots.

Both of the A. striatum measure about 2 inches in length.

The pair were reared in a 5 ½ gallon tank. Initially, no filtration was used, but after about two weeks I put in a small air powered sponge filter. The water conditions in the breeding tank were 72-75 degrees, a pH of 6.5 to 6.7, and approximate hardness of 4GH and 2KH. Water changes were done at approximately one week intervals using reverse osmosis water that was filtered

through peat for about one day before each water change. Also placed in the tank was a green nylon spawning mop, as outlined in the AKA Beginner's Guide (p.32). The adults were fed a combination of frozen bloodworms, Fry Feed Kyowa pellets, microworms, and Artemia nauplii.

During the first week there were no eggs found in the spawning mop. I continued to feed the fish twice a day. After the first week, a water change was done, then the A. striatum started to spawn.

Approximately 40 clear colored eggs were collected over the course of one week. The Aphyosemion striatum are capable of producing up to 30 eggs a day according to Hans Baensch (p.540). I believe if the A. striatum were better conditioned they could have produced a higher number of eggs per day.

The eggs were incubated in a small 2-cup plastic container with a loose fitting lid. At first, I didn't use any fungicide. After losing over half the eggs to fungus, I used a small diluted amount of Methylene Blue. After about 12-14 days, the eggs "eyed-up" and I expected them to hatch. Only four eggs had hatched on their own.

The remaining eggs still had not hatched after three more days. The eggs were artificially hatched as described in the AKA Beginner's Guide (p.36) by placing the eggs into a small vial and quickly capping the vial after blowing into it. Several of the eggs hatched within one hour. After two more hours, I gave up and returned the remaining eggs back to the small container. The following day, I used the same method of artificially hatching, this time with the addition of a small amount of pellet food added to the vial. The remaining eggs hatched within one hour. They were carefully transferred to the rearing container.

All totaled, there were 17 fry, of which, three died within the first week. The newly hatched fry measured about 4mm and they were put into a small clear plastic container that holds about a quart of water. A small amount of Java moss, two Malaysian Trumpet snails, and two adult Daphnia magna were also placed into the container. The container had no heater and no filtration. The water was changed 20-50% nearly every day. The water conditions were the same as the adults: 72-75 degrees, pH 6.5-6.7, and hardness of 4GH and 2KH.

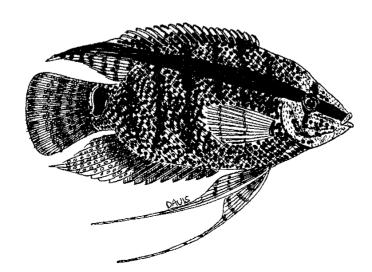
The fry were initially fed a variety of microworms and vinegar eels. After two weeks, I switched to mostly Artemia nauplii in addition to the microworms and vinegar eels. Over the course of two to three weeks the original Daphnia population grew in number from two adults to over forty Daphnia of various sizes. By the fourth and fifth weeks, the A. striatum fry were large enough to eat the smaller Daphnia. The Daphnia population has decreased to about eight mid-sized Daphnia. After a little more than five weeks, the fry have grown up to 12mm in length.

The fry will be transferred to a larger container in the near future. The A. striatum will likely be grown out in a plastic shoe box. Hopefully within the next six weeks or so the A. striatum will start to color up and I might be able to determine the sex of my fish. Perhaps by the Summer Auction, I will have a few pairs to auction off or give away.

If you are looking for an easy fish to breed and you want to try a killifish, I would recommend the Aphyosemion striatum. They have been the first pair of fish I have successfully bred.

Riehl R. and Baensch, H.A. 1991. Aquarium Atlas. Baensch, Melle, Germany.

Markis, A.C. and Langton R.W. 1990. The American Killifish Association's Beginner's Guide. American Killifish Association



Shy and Almost Forgotten

by Chuck Davis

Recently I did an article on Firemouths and in it I lamented how they were overlooked as one of the really great cichlids. Then I thought about a cichlid that was even more discounted - the Festivum

When I started keeping these fish they were *Cichlasoma festivum*, now I'm told the proper name is *Mesonauta festivus*. Festies, as I like to call them, are a very quite and peaceful fish, often shy and retiring. The best way to enjoy these gracious fish is in a large planted tank with community tankmates that will not offend their shyness. Then they will grow to a decent size (about 5 inches) and display their graceful attributes.

They move much like Angel fish, slow and deliberate unless a burst of speed is required. They are most often found near the top of the tank, in the upper third of the tank. Tilted at an angle to see what delicious morsel may fall to the waters surface. This angle usually makes their prominent and angled black line parallel to the surface. This line stretches from the rear of the jaw, through the eye, and on to the tip of the dorsal fin.

These fish are found in the Amazon drainage, up into the Guyanas. Gene Aldridge and I had collected quite a few of this species of cichlid by using a hand dragged seine net in the Peruvian Amazonas. We also caught a few on rod and reel using small hooks and bait. Which proves that healthy specimens of "festies" are not really picky eaters as so much of the literature states.

I do not know anyone who has bred these neat cichlids, that may be because it is very hard to sex young ones. The older fish are not that hard, the males are larger and slimmer with a pronounced hump on the forehead. This nuchal hump is not as obvious as a Red Devil or *Geophagus steindachneri*, but clear enough to discern the males from the females. Their choice of spawning site also resembles the Angelfish, as they like smooth vertical surfaces. The eggs are tended by the female and hatching occurs in three days. Tanks should be maintained at about 78 - 82° F and soft, slightly acid water is best, but neutral pH will do fine. Water quality is a little stringent. Water should be clean, well filtered and oxygenated. Festies are good parents and diligently raise their young. A good book will have much greater details for spawning these fish.

A not on color. Some specimens that I have had often changed color with the environment. Paled out when stressed by tank bullies or poor water quality, but maintaining a deep natural color when enjoying their surroundings. I often recognized maturity in these fish by observing the length of their ventrals like the angelfish.

If you have the right conditions, please try a group of these unique and interesting cichlids. A peaceful cichlid can be a real treat!

Changes

Gene Moy, PVAS

It seems that I've been in the hobby forever. Well, for most of my life anyway. I was introduced to the aquarium hobby by a childhood friend back in the early '70s.

My first tank was a 3 1/2 gallon stainless steel framed tank. I started with an assortment of livebearers. The filter was an inside box filter with charcoal and glass wool, powered by a noisy vibrator air pump. Subsequently I purchased an all glass 10 gallon. Over time I eventually acquired a 29 gallon, 20 gallon long, and a few 10 gallon all glass tanks. With the additional tanks, I acquired a diverse hodge podge of equipment and fish as well.

I felt the mid '70s was the heyday of the aquarium hobby. I had access to two fish stores, one pet shop, and a department store (with a fish and aquariums as part of their toy department) within four blocks of my house. By my recollection and estimation, the hobby was growing rapidly. I eventually wound up with a part time job a one of the fish stores. What a deal. The small shop had a diversity that would be envious to all but the largest shops today. The tanks usually contained lots of traditional beginners fishes, with several varieties of traditional livebearers, and more cichlids than most shops have today, including mbunas, discus, and large cichlids.

After graduation from college, and entering the "real" world, my interest in the hobby began to wane in the '80s. Sure I had fish for a few years, but they were neglected for the most part. Soon my tanks and equipment sat dry.

Around 1990, a friend convinced me to do something with the dry tanks sitting in my dining room. I cleaned the 29 gallon and 20 gallon long and the equipment. I found that most of my equipment still worked.

After visiting a few shops in the area, I suffered bit of sticker shock. I also was no longer familiar with the current manufacturers and their equipment.

With regard to the fishes, some of the staples of the industry were scarce, or in my mind overpriced. I remember dime size silver angels selling for around \$1 in the '70s. They were not to be found in the stores I visited. Occasionally I would find marble angels, but these were \$4 or \$5 or more. Wow! Inflation, I guess.

As some of my older pumps, filters and other equipment began to wear out, I had to look for parts or replacements. I suffered sticker shock here too. The discounts that I had in the '70s compounded the situation. Another surprise was the different manufacturers and their products.

I've since come to accept the current trends regarding fishes. My old time favorites are scarce. Some of them can be

found, but I've had to resort to visiting more shops. Subsequently, I discover the value of being part of an aquarium club, and know that I may pick up the fish that I'm looking for through the club auctions.

The equipment on the market today are a marked improvement from years past. Pumps and filters are quieter and more efficient. Submersible heaters were just coming on the market, but are more or less the standard today. More technology is available for the marine hobbyist or the specialist.

Well, I'm enjoying the hobby just as much as I used to. In some ways more, because some of the different aspects that I'm getting into.

PVAS MONTHLY BOWL SHOW

RULES:

- 1. Any PVAS member may participate.
- 2. Each participant may enter up to three (3) fishes per month.
- 3. Fish must be displayed in a clear container with at least two flat sides to allow easy viewing by the judge(s). The container should be of an appropriate size for the fish being displayed. Covers are strongly recommended. Some containers will be available on a first come first served basis.
- 4 POINTS:

Each participant will receive 1 point for each fish entered (up to 3).

First place will earn an additional 3 points.

Second place will earn 2 points.

Third place will earn 1 additional point.

Prizes will be awarded to the persons with the highest number of points at the end of the year.

Additions may be added to these rules as needed.

STANDINGS: as of June

Wayne Considine - 24

Gary Hostetler - 7

Rich Kahl - 13

Don Kinyon - 10

Gene Moy - 5

David Snell - 14

Alex Townsend - 7

Doug Worthing - 2

I'd like to encourage more of you to participate. If we can get enough interest generated in showing it will help convince the board to try having a "real" fish show again. If you need any advice just see Alex or John. Either of us will be glad to help get you started.

Breeder's Award Program

BAP Checkers:

Annandale/Falls Church area: Jeff Burke (703) 941-3230 Montgomery County: Ray Hughes (301) 424- 3531 Montgomery County: Wayne Considine (301) 977-5973 Mt. Vernon/Oide Town area: Gene Moy (703) 765- 0865 Oakton/Vienna area: Rick Mckay (703) 281- 1647 Occoquan/Lake Ridge area: John Mangan (703) 491-4980 Prince George's County: Lorne E. Williams (301) 630-7674 Springfield/Franconia area: Pete Thrift (703) 971-0594 Warrenton/Manassas area: Gerry Hoffman (540) 347-7486

We still could use some more checkers. There are a number of areas where we don't have anyone. Even if there is someone already listed for your area we could always use someone else to help spread the work around.

BAP Standings:

Breeders Award *
Intermediate Breeder **
Advanced Breeder***
Master Breeder****
Grand Master Breeder****

Jeffrey Burke 445***
Don Kinyon 180**
John Mangan 155**
Lorne Williams 75*
Gene Moy 75*
Gerry Hoffman 10 +
Dave Snell 10

Recent activity: Dave Snell joins the BAP with 10 points for *Aphyosemion striatum*. Lorne Williams receives 10 points for Pink Convict Cichlids, and 15 points for *Lamprologus brevis*.

A reminder to anyone participating in the program - make sure to keep a copy of the BAP report form for your records (at least until you are sure the points have been recorded) as I have been known to misplace them.

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

Application for Membership

Date:		
Name:		
Street:		
City:		
Telephone:		
Optional information:		
Occupation:		
Where did you here about PV	AS/get this appl	lication?
Number of aquariums:		ime in the hobby:
Special interests: (e.g., catfish		
Reason for joining:		
Membership dues for PVAS are:		
Individual/Family: \$12/yr		
Corresponding: \$ 9/yr Junior (under 18) \$ 5/yr		

Please send application and check to the address above.

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CREATURES 'N CRITTERS 9575 Braddock Rd. Fairfax, Va 978-0745

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PETS ETC-HERNDON 462 Elden St. Herndon, VA 22171 437-9667

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MARINE CARE SPECIALISTS 16065 N. Frederick Rd. Rockville, MD 20855 330-0720

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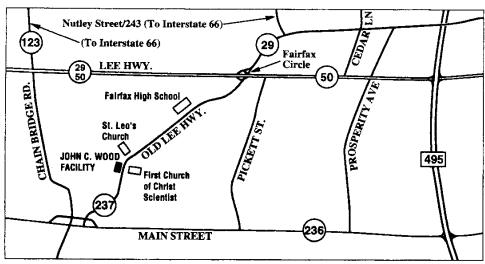
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David J Snell 14328 Artillery Court Centreville,VA 22020



MEETINGS are held at the John C. Wood Facility, 3730 Old Lee Highway (Route 237), Fairfax City, Virginia. We meet in room 6, which is located behind the police station. Doors open at 7:30 and meetings start at 8:00—EVERYONE IS WELCOME!