

* DELTA TALE *

November 1988

Vol. 19 #8

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potomac valley aquarium society



The Delta Tale is published for the benefit of the Potomac Valley Aquarium Society, Inc. (PVAS), a non-profit organization, was established in 1960 for the purpose of furthering the aquarium hobby by dissemination of information, encouraging friendly competition, soliciting participation in its shows, and promoting good fellowship. Correspondence should be addressed to PVAS, PO Box 6219 Shirlington Station, Arlington, VA 22206. Original articles and artwork may be reprinted by other non-profit organizations if credit is given to the author, Delta Tale and PVAS. Two copies of the publication should be sent to the Delta Tale c/o PVAS. Please place the author's name on one copy to ensure that it gets to him/her. PVAS and Delta Tale disclaim any responsibility for content or availability of advertised merchandise or services in these pages. Customer satisfaction is a matter to be worked out exclusively between the advertiser and the buyer. All material for inclusion in Delta Tale MUST reach the editor by the 18th of the month prior to publication.

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PROPOSED SLATE OF PVAS OFFICERS/BOARD OF GOVERNORS FOR 1989

President: Pete Thrift
Vice-President: John Stieringer
Treasurer: Gene Aldridge
Corresponding Secretary: Lea Spickler
Recording Secretary: Bob Pallansch

Board of Governors: 1. R&B Farmer
2. Kenny Warren

Additional nominations for these positions will be accepted from the membership during the November Club Meeting.

What's Happening in November

Program - A slide program of various types of salt water animals found in aquarium.

Election of 1989 officers - The slate is found elsewhere in this issue of Delta Tale.

Super Bowl Show - All the fish classes are in competition this month with double points.

Door and Raffle Prizes.

Mini Auction - The last one for the year.

December Happenings

The December meeting, 12 December 1988, will be our Annual Christmas Party at the J.C. Wood Facility, Lea Spickler is again acting as the Coordinator, and will attempt to reach each of you to coordinate the variety of dishes brought. Everyone is asked to bring a side dish, with the club providing the turkey and ham. You and your children are asked to bring, in addition to the side dish, a wrapped \$3.00 or less, hobby-related item. Please, nothing alive.

It would help Lea a great deal if you would talk to her at the November meeting or call her: Home - 691-0419,
Work - 471-1559

The party will be at our regular meeting place, the J.C. Wood Facility.

The doors will be opened around 7:00 PM to give everyone time to prepare. The evening will officially begin at 8:00 PM.

REPRINTS

NOTES ON SOME PERUVIAN CATFISHES by Lee Finley

[Editor's note: The original article, in the August '88 TANQUILIZER, has some very nice line drawings; mostly by Chuck Davis and Gian Padovani]

Last summer I had the extremely pleasurable experience of traveling with a group of friends to Peru and, with them, spent two weeks collecting fishes in parts of the Amazon basin. Our main destination was Iquitos and from there, traveling by and living on the Margarita, a 76 foot river boat, we were able to see and collect many of the fascinating fishes of this area. On the first week we traveled eastward on the Amazon and then westward on the second week. Very little collecting was done in the Amazon proper (although we did try a bit). The Amazon just served as an "expressway" to get up to the smaller rivers which then served as a base of operation to get into even smaller streams and lakes where collecting by net was feasible.

Articles by other members of the trip have seen print in the past year. These have encompassed a great amount of both "technical" and "popular" material, e.g. fishes caught and habitat information, an answer to the question "who had the largest bar bill?" (Hint - you might have seen my name mentioned), rambling and disconnecting thoughts on the possible effects of ayardiente (the local white lightning) and even possibly more on fishes. So I'll let most of this material slide and now lead into the main area of this report which is an overview look at the catfishes that were encountered in Peru.

As a starting point in the discussion of Peruvian catfishes (or for any freshwater fishes of that country) I would like to recommend to you a paper that was published in 1986. This paper is Annotated Checklist of the Freshwater Fishes of Peru" by Hernan Ortega and Richard P. Vari. (Smithsonian Contributions to Zoology, No. 437 PP. I-IV, 25.) I highly recommend this paper to anyone whose interests lie with freshwater fishes of South America. This paper lists a total of 56 families, 301 genera and 736 species of fishes known to occur in the freshwaters of Peru. Specifically with catfishes there are listed 14 families, 102 genera and 275 species. As we shall take note of later on there have been some additional species of catfishes added to the faunal listing of Peru.

So, for a jump off we shall now take a brief look at some of the catfishes of Peru. What follows is a listing of families with some general discussion of each. Where applicable I shall make comments base on the experiences of myself and my fellow travelers.

Family: Ariidae

The two Peruvian genera (each with one species) of this family are found on the Pacific slope of Peru and therefore were not encountered by our group. Hobby-wise this family is represented by the so-called tri-color cat or shark cat that is imported from Columbia. Most new world members of this family are generally associated with salt or brackish water although some pure freshwater forms are known.

Family: Doradidae

This family is listed by Ortega and Vari as consisting of 17 genera and 33 species in Peruvian waters. Although species identification was often difficult our group did encounter doradids which represented at least 10 different genera.

Popular aquarium species that we encountered included Amblydoras hancockii ("Talking Cat"), Platydoras costatus ("Striped Raphael") and Agamyxis albomaculatus ("Spotted Raphael"). Other genera encountered included Pterodoras, Doras, Andoras, Pseudodoras and Acanthodoras (This last genus is not listed in the Peruvian fishes paper).

Due to a general lack of water clarity in most areas collected it is difficult to comment in depth on habitat composition. Certainly when you are working a large seine and trip over a submerged tree you know that they are there. There are a few examples though (based on day collecting) that might be worth noting with particular species. (My comments are based on limited personal experience and these are by no means to be considered definitive habitat descriptions).

1) Amblydoras hancockii: Although these were captured generally in large seines, some hand netting in an area of relatively clear (to about 3 feet) water proved interesting in regards to this species. The collecting area was at the end of a long lake where the water went back under the tree cover for a distance of about 10 - 12 feet. The bottom of this area was covered with a layer of leaves that was at least 5 or 6 inches deep. Dip netting into these leaves provided many fishes including numerous A. hancockii. The leaves were generally 4 - 6 inches long and 2 or so inches wide. Most were curved or rolled up. In amongst this carpet, and especially in the rolled up leaves were literally hundreds of 1 to 2 inch talking cats. They were so numerous we just kept taking them out of the nets and tossing them back.

2) Platydoras costatus: This isn't really a report - just a note. As we were pulling into a shoreline of a small stream (in a small boat) I noticed a log sticking up just short of the surface. Sitting in a rotted out section just inches below the surface (water depth was around 3 feet) was a 3 inch raphael. I was able to reach down and pick it right out by its dorsal fin. This may not sound like great shakes but it pleased me.

3) Doras cf punctatus: This is one of the doradids that

has feathered maxillary barbels. Quantities of this species were taken by large (30 ft) seine in a small stream which was basically firmish mud bottomed (with an occasional large log or two). It was in this area that a Pseudodoras species was also taken.

But, if you want to see some real nice doradids (and other cats - more on this later) follow the next directions: Let sun go down; take one light or medium spinning outfit; connect with not so large hook and a spit-shot sinker or two; put following on hook - chunk of fish (any species), beef or chicken; cast out and let sink to bottom. Don't wait long - olah! a catfish (usually big) of some type. Doradids caught by this method included a number of 15 - 16 inch Pterodoras granulosus; a cf Pterodoras and a couple of forms as of yet unidentified.

A lot of us have probably had the annoying experience of getting our finger caught in the vice created when a raphael closes its pectoral spine against its body. Let me tell you from personal experience avoid having this happen with a 15 - 16 inch doradid. Hurts like hell!!

Family: Auchenipteridae (Driftwood cats)

A number of interesting members of this family were encountered in both the dip nets and seines. Of interest here is that one of the most commonly seen species (a Parauchenipterus that is seen in the hobby) is not listed in the Ortega/Vari paper.

Another species encountered which was quite stunning was Centromochlus cf heckelii. This was a beautiful light greenish two inch fish made all the more distinctive by pectoral and dorsal spines that look as if they belong on a fish twice the size. These were taken at night by Carl Ferraris of the American Museum of Natural History on (catch this) a tiny hook and line set up. I hope to illustrate this species (and many more) in an article that will hopefully be available early next year.

Family: Ageneiosidae (Gulper cats)

Catfishes of the genus Ageneiosus are not commonly seen in the hobby. As of late there has been some improvement in this situation but as of yet these fascinating cats are not widespread. We encountered at least two of the four species listed for Peru (two are classified in the genus Tympanopleura, which some ichthyologists feel in synonymous with Ageneiosus). A smaller species (4 - 5 in), T. nigricollis was taken by Ferraris using the same method as the Centromochlus mentioned above. Another large species (up to at least a foot) was taken bait fishing at night...and also on a yellow spoon during the day.

Family: Aspredinidae (Banjo cats)

These were fairly common in a number of areas and were seen

in association with both leaf litter and mud. Most that we saw appeared to be Bunocephalus species (flat head banjos) although at least one other genus was probably represented. Some very large (much larger than most commercial imports) individuals were caught.

Family: Pimelodidae

This is the second largest family of catfishes in Peru with 60 species listed. Genera encountered by us included Microglanis, Pimelodus, Pimelodella, Pseudoplatystoma, Pinirampus, Callophysus, Goeldiella, Rhamdia, Phractocephalus and Sorubim, among others.

The family is widespread and various species were found in most habitats. One of the most interesting collecting experiences was catching numerous Microglanis sp. in a smallish stream in a heavily forested area. The stream was shallow, moving slow to moderately and right around 70 degrees F. The Microglanis were usually encountered in amongst leaf litter which covered much of the bottom.

Large pimelodids such as Pseudoplatystoma (Tiger), Phractocephalus (Redtail), Pinirampus and Callophysus supplied a constant source of night time entertainment on spinning tackle. Line fishing in Peru is just as exciting as net fishing. I wish I could show you here some of the photos of these fishes. Many of these will hopefully be included in the article for next year that I mentioned.

Family: Hypophthalmidae

This is a family, as far as I know, that is unknown in the hobby. Two species are listed for Peru, Hypophthalmus endentatus and H. marginatus. These get to be fairly large (one species to two foot) and are mid-water cats that are known to be filter feeders in part. Although our party didn't take any of these we were able to see some fresh examples that were taken by local commercial fishermen.

Family: Cetopsidae (Whale Catfishes)

Another family not well represented in the hobby. One species from Ecuador is seen with some frequency usually under the exciting name of "Freshwater Shark". The Peru listing records 4 species in 3 genera. We encountered at least one of these in numbers. Practically all were taken in a minnow trap set at night (by Jim Carmark) which contained a chunk of fish for bait. Each time the trap was pulled up six or seven cetopsids would be present.

Family: Trichomycteridae

These are those little critters with the reputation of

swimming up certain parts of your body that you would rather they didn't. Actually most of the species don't have such bad little habits but a few rotten eggs spread bad news for all. This is a large family with almost 300 species known from South America. The Peru listing notes 24 species spread among 8 genera. Our luck with these was sparse but this was probably due to our collecting methods. Most are very small and would easily slip through most of the nets we were using. The one exception was a small (1 inch or less) mid-water swimming form that Chuck Davis discovered by using a fine-mesh aquarium net. They proved to be quite common by collecting with this method although they had gone undetected by a number of us who were using larger mesh dip nets. This species, most likely of the genus Tridentopsis, did appear to possibly be one of the potentially "nasty" ones. I did bring a group of these back and find them to be quite interesting.

Family: Helogenidae

Helogenes marmoratus, the only species from Peru, was not encountered. This was because we never got to prime habitat areas (very black water areas). This species is available from time to time in the hobby via shipments from Guiana.

Family: Loricariidae

The largest of all catfish families (around 600 species known) is well represented in Peru. Thirty one genera containing 89 species are listed by Ortega and Vari. This is no doubt conservative. We were able to catch quite a variety of this family. Very large quantities of Ancistrus (Bushnose "pleco") were taken in some areas. Fourteen species are listed from Peru so we no doubt encountered more than one species but identification beyond genus is for all practical purposes impossible. Many Ancistrus were taken in a stream with packed mud bottom with some thick reedy areas in shallower sections. In this area we had some local collectors showing us how to do it so we were quite successful. We caught way more of these than all of us together could bring home as we carried nothing else (and this was in only about an hour and a half).

Other loricariids encountered included some very large Pterygoplichthys species (Sail-Fin "pleco") that were taken in an area with a little water and a lot of mud; Hypostomus ("pleco"); Rinsloricaria (whiptails) species (more than one); Farlowella (Twig cats) as large as any I've ever seen, and what turned out to be my favorite, Hypoptopoma something or the other (5 species listed). This is a very interesting smaller flattened loricariid with large laterally placed eyes. These were taken by day in nets (seine and dip) and also at night from small boats by paddling around areas of downed trees, etc. and spotting them with a flashlight. They could then be fairly easily coaxed into

a waiting dip net. I also brought home a group of these which have adapted well to aquarium life.

Family: Callichthyidae

No doubt the best known (hobby-wise) of all catfish families mainly to its largest genus, Corydoras. From the point of the tropical fish trade from Peru it is extremely important. Fifteen species of fish account for around 82% of all Peruvian exports. Of these 15 species members of this family account for a total of 34.9%.

During the first week of the trip we encountered no Corydoras. We did catch some hoplos and some portholes (Dianema) but wondered where the corys were. The second week answered that. Being guided by a native collector we were taken into side streams off of the main river we were on. Almost immediately it looked like it was raining heavily - but no rain - only literally thousands of Corydoras and Brochis coming up for gulps of air. For all of the quick surfacing we saw there must have been unbelievable amounts of fish below. Seining the area proved fruitful and we caught uncounted numbers of Brochis splendens (Emerald green cat) along with some much rarer B. multiradiatus (long-nosed Brochis) mixed in. Also among these were some various species of Corydoras. Other areas in the general vicinity also proved good for some elegans-type corys. The Ortega and Vari paper lists 12 species of Corydoras but a subsequently published paper by other authors has raised that number to 30 known species. We encountered at least 5 or 6 different corys in addition to the two Brochis species.

Family: Astorblepidae

As these are catfishes of the higher elevations of western Peru (streams and lakes of the Andes) we encountered none. They are not really known in the hobby but might make interesting aquarium inhabitants for the specialist.

Family: Scoloplacidae

One species, Scoloplax dicra, is the sole representative of this poorly known catfish family. It was not encountered.

Although it is brief, I hope that the above has given you some general feeling for the catfishes of Peru. A great many interesting species are available there and I hope that someday you might have a chance to go and see for yourself.

TRADING POST

For Sale:

- Brand New O'Dell 29 gal woodgrain tank, sliding glass top, and matching fluorescent strip light. Wooden stand with shelf for second tank. Brand new Aquaclear filter. 150 watt submersible heater. Asking \$75 for all, or \$55 for tank, top, and light along.

- Used black-trim 29 gal tank with glass cover. Good condition - \$20.

- Used 2.5 gal tank with plastic cover. Good condition - \$5.

- DISCUS - I have several brown discus, all about 15 months old. No history of disease, healthy, not picky eaters. I have raised ten of these fish from the size of a quarter, and now have too many. \$15/ea

**BOWL SHOW REPORT FOR
October**

CICHLIDS

New World Mouthbrooders

No Entries

Pseudotropheus

No Entries

Open

No Entries

EGGLAYERS/LIVEBEARERS

Goldfish & Koi

No Entries

Characins

1st R&B Farmer - Cardinal Tetra*

Open

1st T. Fitz - R. xiphideus

2nd T. Fitz - C. constanciae

3rd T. Fitz - C. whitei

* Judge's Choice

Totals through August 1988

	<u>Month</u>	<u>Quarter</u>	<u>Annual</u>
K. Muller	-	-	1
R&B Farmer	-	-	25
G. White	-	-	33
R. Hammond	-	-	6
J. Hoffman	-	-	6

	<u>Month</u>	<u>Quarter</u>	<u>Annual</u>
T. Fitz	12	12	109
R. Hughes	-	-	9
K. Muller	-	-	5
R&B Farmer	6	6	52
T. Williams	-	-	1
J. Stieringer	-	-	34
T. Hetzel	-	-	11
J. Mangan	-	-	29
R. Hammond	-	-	2
B. Pallansch	-	-	23
J. Hoffman	-	-	23

November: Egg/Live: Livebearers, Characins, Catfish, Sharks & Loaches, Anabantoids, Open
Cichlid: Angelfish & Discus, New World, all other Mbuna, Haplochromis, Riftlake (non-mouthbrooder), Open

December: Christmas Party - awards - no bowl show.

VIRGINIA

PETS-N-THINGS
Pan Am Center
3081 Nutley
Fairfax, VA 22031
(703) 573-4400

TYAU TROPI-CARE
6905 Duke Drive
Alexandria, VA 22307
765-6713

ANNANDALE PET SHOP
7406 Little River Turnpike
Annandale, VA 22003

AQUARIA INTERNATIONAL
1180 Pendleton Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
683-4811

BAILEYS PET CENTER
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3527 S. Jefferson Street
Baileys Crossroads
Falls Church, VA 22041
931-1400

BEACON MALL PET CENTER
Beacon Mall Center
6776 Richmond Highway
Alexandria, VA 22306
660-6100

DISCOUNT PET CENTER
Manassas Shopping Center
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Manassas, VA 22110
361-7769

NATIONAL PET & AQUARIUM
Willston Shopping Center
6168 Arlington Blvd.
Falls Church, VA 22046
533-7828

OAKTON PET SHOP
Oakton Center
Rt. 123 & Hunter Mill Rd.
Oakton, VA 22124
281-9622

PET MART TYSONS
8417 Old Courthouse Road
Vienna, VA 22180
893-8181

WILSON'S PARROTS & MARINE LIFE
Shirley Edsall Ins Park
Build America 5
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Alexandria, VA 22312
922-7358

SUNSHINE PETS
7395H Lee Highway
Falls Church, VA 22042
573-6946

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Stuart Centre
462 Eiden St.
Herndon
VA 22171
437-0381

Sterling
Hechinger Jamesway Plaza
243C Harry F Byrd Hwy
Sterling
VA 22170
430-9667

Alexandria
Mt. Vernon Plaza
7688B Richmond Hwy
Alexandria
VA 22306
768-2200

MARYLAND

Animal Exchange
765-A Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD 20852
424-PETS

Aquarium Center
Randallstown Plaza Center
Liberty Rd. at Offutt Rd.
(301) 521-4529

Fish Factory Aquarium
582 N. Frederick Ave.
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
(301) 977-7500

Gaithersburg Pet Center
642 Quince Orchard Rd.
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
(301) 948-1133

Glenmont Tropicals
Glenmont Shopping Center
12345 Georgia Ave.
Wheaton, MD
949-0344

Pet And
White Flint Plaza
5268 Nicholson Lane
Kensington, MD 20895
(301) 231-5216

Rick's Fish & Pet Supply
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Frederick, MD
(301) 694-9664 831-6868

Pet Mart Rockville
2230 Veira Mill Rd.
Rockville, MD 20851
762-3505

Showcase Aquarium
11248 11250 Triangle Lane
Wheaton, MD 20902
942-6464

Tropical Lagoon
9439 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910
585-6562

Congressional Aquarium
Congressional Plaza
152 Congressional Lane
Rockville, MD 20852
881-6182

Montgomery Tropicals
7845-G Airpark Rd.
Gaithersburg, MD 20879
(301) 670-0886

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THEY HELP SUPPORT US

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Date: _____ 19 _____

Name: _____

Street: _____ Apartment: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Telephone H: _____ W: _____

Occupation: _____

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

What fish do you keep/topics are you interested in?

CICHLID LOVERS: COMBINE YOUR HOBBY & FAMILY FUN

American Cichlid Association
Public Relations Committee (9/88)

August 1989 will offer an extraordinary opportunity for aquarium enthusiasts to wallow for four days in the subject nearest to their hearts, covered from A to Z ... while also pleasing their families in a BIG way.

The American Cichlid Association (ACA) is presenting an "International Cichlid Conference" (ICC) August 10-13, 1989 in Orlando, Florida.

Speakers are coming from all over the world. Tony Ribbink, one of the most respected researchers on the cichlids of Lake Malawi. Ad Konings from Holland, who has just finished a book on Lake Tanganyikan cichlids. Fish nutrition presented by Drs. Ford and Klonz. A video of diving in Lake Tanganyika by Walter Dieckhoff. A symposium on angelfish. And, that's just a sampling.

Orlando is one of the most sought after vacation spots in the United States. The Hyatt Orlando is offering special rates, \$68 a night - both for the conference and for several days before and after. It is located close to Disney World and EPCOT Center. The Hyatt itself has swimming pools, tennis, playgrounds ... more than enough to keep any non-fish lover in the family happy and amused while others are "fishing".

On Wednesday the 9th there will be a special tour of Sea World at reduced rates, including a behind-the-scenes tour for ICC folks only, as well as the opportunity to see all of the exhibits and shows, catch a meal, and see the end of the day fireworks.

Friday there will be tours of two Florida fish farms. Ekk Will Tropical Fish and Segrest Farms. They are not open to the public, so it not something the casual tourist could see. The ICC will provide buses for the 90 minute trip, and the farmers will be glad to answer questions. Friday evening's meal will probably be at one of the farms.

The ACA is calling it an "International" Conference because fish and cichlid lovers from all over the world are being invited ... and have already shown real interest in attending. Enthusiastic response has been heard from England, Japan, Holland, Germany, as well Canada.

You are urged to make reservations as early as the first of the year. The Hyatt Orlando will hold a block of rooms for the ICC, but it is an enormous complex ...almost 1,000 rooms ... and they want to fill them all. If they don't hear from ICC attendees early they will sell the rooms out from under us.

It's a great opportunity to combine family fun, hobby learning and getting acquainted with new people and new fish. The big auction on Sunday will offer fish you may never have seen before. Make your plans NOW to attend. For information: ICC, 419-A Hidden Brook Dr., Glen Burnie, MD 21061 USA

POTOMAC VALLEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY



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The Potomac Valley Aquarium Society will meet on the following dates in 1988:

11 Jan	11 Apr	11 Jul	17 Oct
8 Feb	9 May	8 Aug	14 Nov
14 Mar	13 Jun	12 Sep	12 Dec

Meetings are held at the John C. Wood Facility, Rt. 237 (Old Lee Highway),
Fairfax City, VA. Doors open at 7:30, meetings start at 8:00.

Everyone is welcome!!!