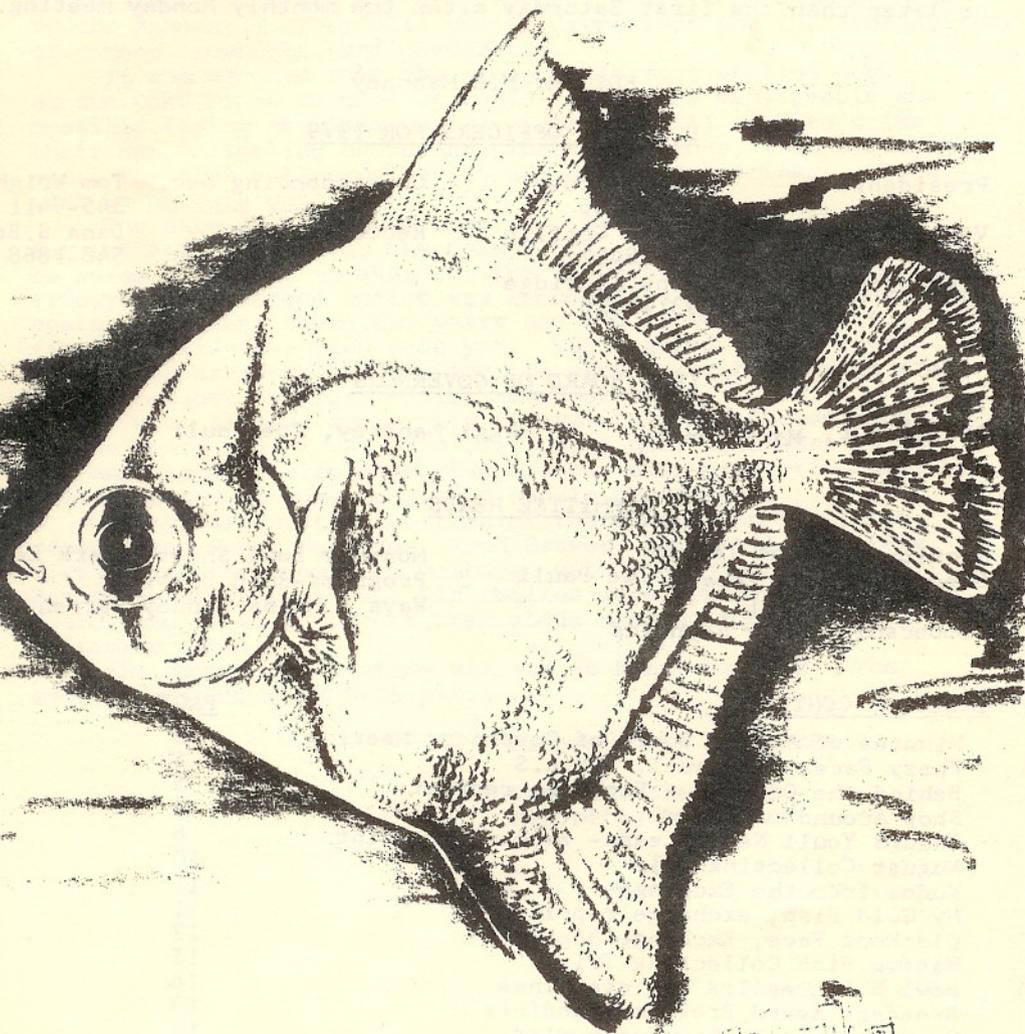


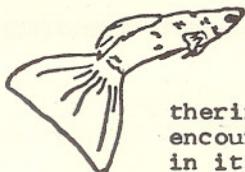
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1979 BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Bill Trout, Mark Lenzen, Maggi Mahoney, Joe Paull

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MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The meeting of the Board of Governors of Potomac Valley Aquarium Society met at Dana Best's home on August 2, 1979. It opened at 8:22 p.m. with Tom Wright, Pat and Maggi Mahoney, Bill Trout, Kenny Warren, Joe Paull, Bev Fazil, Woody Griffin, Nancy Reynolds, Ruth Brewer, and Dana Best present.

The proposed collecting trip was discussed in the light of the gas situation. The alternative destination of Lake Occoquan was chosen, and the date was changed from the 12th of August to the 19th (both are Sundays) so that a dry run could be made by the Mahoneys. They will verify directions and the availability of canoes, rowboats, and powerboats.

It was decided that the group would meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Coke Plant so that we could carpool as many people as possible. (bring stationwagons!) Everyone will need to bring their own collecting equipment, lunches, drinks, swim suits, etc. The club will provide ice and stryos for drinks. There will be no rain date.

The date of Sunday, October 21, 1979 has been confirmed for the Fall Auction at the Coke Plant. Rosario LaCourte will be asked to be our speaker for the banquet. The Mt. Vernon Inn's Friday night seafood buffet was recommended for the banquet once again. (We went there two years ago and it was excellant.) No final decision has been made yet. Maggi asked if she could invite the artists who have made so many contributions to PVAS to the banquet and this motion was approved.

A new, simpler membership renewal form was passed around to the board and it was OK'd for future use. Business cards for members were also discussed and our ever-productive artists will be asked to come up with a couple of designs.

Kenny Warren, the chairman of the nominating committee, recommended Nancy Reynolds, Ruth Brewer, Bev Fazil, and Pete Tietjen for the committee members, with Pinchos Andreen and Ken Reese as alternates. His choices were approved by the Board, and he will contact them about meeting sometime before September 15th.

The next Board meeting will be at Kenny Warrens. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana Skibbie Best
Recording Secretary

FUZZY FACE

Joe Paull, P.V.A.S.

For those of you with an algae problem, I can not recommend the bristle nosed plecostomus as the solution. Try snails instead. These fish are easily spoiled by flake food and only clean up the algae when the "easy" foods are missing. However, for those with a taste for the bizarre, the bristle nose is ugly enough to make a fascinating pet. No other aquarium fish is quite so ugly.

Correctly identifying a "plecostomus" is a task for the taxonomist, especially the bristle nosed gang. At least four genera (maybe more) sport bristles in varying degrees and they all resemble each other closely. Unofficial guesstimates place my fish in the genus *Ancistris*, probably *A. lineolatus*. Anyway, mine is a small species, only reaching six inches in the tank and is colored a dull mottled grey and black. They have lots of bristles and an abundance of ugliness. I like them. Unfortunately they don't seem to like me, because they are always hiding unless exceptionally hungry, but then that is typical behavior for the whole family.

Care is simple and spawning easy. Plecostomi (?) are extremely hardy and tolerate a wide range of water conditions. However, they should have well aerated water because they come from fast moving streams with a higher oxygen content than ponds etc. But, they will adapt to almost anything. They will eat any flake food, worms and sometimes algae. (In the wild they live on algae for the most part, but there they don't have much choice.)

As for breeding, place a male (many bristles) and a female (no bristles) in a tank and cross your fingers. Provide caves for homes, plants or rocks for security, a minimum of company and lots of food. A happy, secure couple will probably spawn for you but it is hard to say when. It took a year for my two pairs to begin spawning and it seems they don't want to stop. Batches of eggs are laid every four weeks unless I disrupt the routine by rearranging the tank or add new inmates. Sometimes it takes two or three months for spawning to resume.

Eggs (40 to 75) are laid in caves or holes excavated under a rock and the male guards the batch until hatching. The large (1/8 inch) yellow eggs form a messy clump, usually on the roof of the cave. Incubation seems to take eight days and while the fry can swim at hatching, they are nothing more than tails on the yolk sacs for six more days. Often the first indication of spawning is small fish chasing the fry about. Newly hatched bristle nose fry are excellent food for other fish. Assuming the fry survive, flake food makes a good starting diet but it should include some vegetable matter. The fry grow slowly, reaching one inch in two and a half months, and three to four inches in a year. Spawning age seems to be one and a half years. Ugliness starts immediately and is permanent.

BEHIND THE ODDBALL

Kerry Teats, Plecostomus,
Blackhawk Aquarium Soc., Inc.
May, 1979 (1st in a series)

For the first article I want to write on a fish that I have kept and on three of its cousins. There are the *Osteoglossum birrhosum* or silver arrowana; the *Osteoglossum ferreirai* or black arrowana; the *Arapaima gigas* or piracu; and the *Scleropages formosus* or Asian arrowana. The silver and Asian arrowanas are the most commonly kept but the black is also popular when it can be found. The *Arapaima* is rarely kept because of its size.

These fish have several things in common. They are all members of the sub-order Clupeoidea or bony tongued fishes. All but the *Arapaima* are mouthbrooders. They all are voracious eaters and need a good supply of live foods. They will rapidly outgrow their aquatic homes unless you provide them with a very large aquarium from the start. Many times they are referred to as "living fossils" as they have changed very little over the ages. All of these fish are banned in many Southern states and Western states because of their predatory nature and the fact that they can survive in local waters of these states. From what I have read they are banned from importation by the Lacey Act and when they are imported they are listed as something else on the import manifest.

ARAPAIMA GIGAS:

Range: Amazon basin
Habit: Predatory
Water: Temperature of 70 to 90° F, Dh and PH not critical
Size: To 13 feet in nature. I have read of them getting over 6 feet in the aquarium. When available they are 8 to 12 inches.
Food: Live foods and they can be trained to take chunks of beef heart, frozen fish, etc.

This fish is not recommended for the average aquarist but if you are into oddballs and have the room (like a 500 gallon tank) it may make an interesting addition to your collection.

OSTEOGLOSSUM FERREIRAI, Black Arrowana

Range: Northern Amazon Basin
Habit: Predatory
Water: 75 to 82° F
Size: About 16 inches
Food: Small live fish
Color: Deep black with yellow-gold lateral stripe when young, washing out to dull chocolate with age.

The black arrowana is somewhat sensitive to water changes and should be moved as little as possible. It does not grow as large as the silver arrowana. Its habits are similar to the silver arrowana.

SCLEROPAGES FORMOSUS: Asian arrowana:

Range: Malaysia
Habit: Predatory
Water: 75 to 85° F
Size: 24 plus inches and 15 plus pounds
Food: Prefers live food but will take frozen fish and beef heart

This fish looks like a compressed South American arrowana, that is it is shorter and has a deeper body and more pronounced fins. It looks awkward in appearance. It is prized as a food fish in its native range. To me it is downright ugly and not nearly as sleek as the silver arrowana.

OSTEOGLOSSUM BICIRRHOSUM: Silver arrowana:

Range: Guianas and most of the Amazon basin
Habit: Predatory, it has a nasty disposition to other arrowanas
Water: Clean at 76 to 78° F (move as little as possible.)
Food: Small live foods but can be easily taught to take dry and frozen foods.
Size: To 3 feet in the wild, about 2 feet in the aquarium.
Color: Silvery white with large, iridescent scales.

This attractive fish dates back to the Jurassic Age and has not changed since that time. It grows to three feet in nature and is a graceful swimmer. Its silver-white body with the iridescent scales makes it appear to shimmer in the aquarium. Its mouth is deceiving and has often been referred to as a landing barge or a trap door. The two barbels on the upper lip give this fish a personality all its own. Much has been written about the silver arrowana but since experience is the best teacher, it is easier to tell how my wife and I raised our silver arrowana.

In December of 1976 we were in one of the local aquarium shops and she saw this small 2-1/2 inch arrowana. He had absorbed his yolk sac and the dealer said that he was eating small chunks of freeze dried krill. So that little arrowana ended up as my Christmas present. When we got home, the only empty tank we had was a ten, so in he went. True to the dealers word the little guy ate krill, enormous amounts of it. In four months he had reached 6 to 7" and raised so much hell in the ten that we moved him to a breeder 40 (18x18x36 inches.) At this time we switched him to Kordon Superba Plankton as it was cheaper than krill and we could buy it by the pound. He also had learned to take freeze dried tubifex chunks that measured $\frac{1}{2} \times 1$ ". As this prepared food was getting quite expensive we started buying him minnows. The bait shop in Carbon Cliff knew what I was buying them for and when I bought 2 dozen minnows I usually ended up with about 8 dozen. The arrowana thrived on these and by the time we had had him a year he was up to a foot or so in length. He was extremely tame and would take minnows from my fingers. At this time he also took a dislike to the short breeder tank so we moved him and two 5-inch Synodontis cats to the 55 gallon aquarium. Right after the move he developed a mouth fungus and lost

Among the multitude of no-no's which periodically tempt us is biting off more than we can adequately chew. I know a guy who bought a pacu big enough to feed a family of eight, knowing that the only available aquarium was an empty 15 gallon. On top of that, the tank was a leaker. How could he pass up this once-in-a-lifetime buy?

Not all of us will try to buy a killer whale for the bath tub, but you'd be surprised how many folks who should know better can convince themselves that a mated pair of 8-inch Tilapia will do just fine in a 15 gallon tank.

Another periodic miscalculation to which we are, if not all, for the most part susceptible is to get once more involved with 'bad news' fish. Perpetual troublemakers which are so handsome, streamlined, graceful, or perhaps just innocent looking, that we convince ourselves that we must have misjudged them previously.

My own misfortunes have been for the most part with characoids, which in certain forms I still can't resist. I've sworn off Leporinus and Anostomus more times than W.C.Fields swore off booze.

When I see a new specie, however, I can't resist, especially the urge to fatten them up and photograph them. As always, the new ones, like their predecessors, grow quickly on their diet of fish foods and the fins of their tankmates.

The unbelievable innocence of 'expression' which they can assume after just having made a fish five times their own size almost leap out of orbit is reminiscent of the words of the jazz era song: "... how can you look so nice and act so dirty?"

Taking fish home under the assumption that 'it won't take long to set up' a specialized tank for them is another stumble. It is rather shattering for the skilled and experienced keeper of fishes to find once more that setting up a tank properly requires just as much time of an expert as it does of a novice.

Having a tank already prepared for new arrivals is the only sensible approach to freshwater fishkeeping. It is the ONLY way for saltwater, although there are folks who should know better who buy new all-glass tanks along with the salt and fish to go in them all on the same day. A fool and his money

There are several other things which come up periodically which would seem so basic as not to cause any problems. After all, the words of warning to rank beginners about using either aged water or carefully removing chlorine, which everyone knows is deadly to fishes, numerous instances occur in which fish are lost through water changes by the owner underestimating the amount of sodium thiosulfate needed. This usually happens during major changes of large aquarium, running water in through a garden hose, and guessing 'about' when it's time to add more remover.

Hanging onto old heaters and other accessories which didn't work properly to begin with, thinking they might come in handy in a pinch has caused numerous frustrations. When the pinch comes, you don't have time to patch them up and piece them together, and if you do finally get something going you're likely to lose the whole tank because of a malfunction instead of spending a few bucks on a new, good, safe heater.

Aquarists with experience suffer from the same major afflictions which invariably strike politicians; the inability to admit to themselves or to others that they don't know every answer. The strange part is that what so often gets an aquarist in trouble is not that knowledge is lacking after a long period of reading and practical experience, but not having enough horse sense to use what we know - every time.

That's pure wisdom. I hope I remember.

(Reprinted from a reprint in Plecostomus, Blackhawk Aquarium Soc., Inc. May 1979.)

AUGUST COLLECTING TRIP OR 300 MILES VS. 10

August 19 - a Sunday in 1979 when the Potomac Valley Aquarium Society had scheduled a 1st annual collecting trip. Because we had originally published Occoquan as the destination, your editor went over to the Coke plant to meet anyone who had not been at the August 13 general meeting and learned that Donaldson's run was going to be it. No one showed up.

Ruth Brewer, Pat and I took off from our home at about 9:00 am or a little after and went on over to the new rendezvous point at the Arlington area park. We met Ed Smith and the Fromms on their way out - having been there since 8:30 and finding no one else.

They turned back in and we decided to forge ahead. That made a total of six of us. Three from the area -- two from Cherry Hill, New Jersey -- and Ed who lives more than half way to Baltimore.

The weather cooperated in that the temperature was comfortable, not too hot, and it didn't rain - at least not on Donaldson's Run while we were there. We toted nets and coolers down to the run, staked out a main equipment area and went several ways. Pat, Dan and I walked clear down to where the Run runs into the Potomac. Beautiful, very rocky (My legs didn't recover til Wednesday) while the others walked some up stream, some in the woods or puttered around at the main point. Not much in the way of fish. Had been too cool and rainy, we speculated. Much in the way of beautiful flora -- even some fauna, unfinned. Did catch several dace -- watched some spawning in the shallows. Found several handsome eels. We tossed them all back except for one 3-inch eel which Pat and Dan took home with them.

But I ask you -- if they could come 300 miles, why couldn't some of you more hardy members come the 10?? So much for annual collecting trips. We can't collect the people to do the collecting.

both barbels but in less than a month they had grown back.

By now he was eating 18 minnows a day and a pound of Superba a month. In July of 1977 we noticed something wrong with the sides of the Synodontis cats. They had scratches all over their sides. Upon closer examination, I could see that there were teeth marks that ran from their horns to their tails. The arrowana had tried to eat them, and they were 7 inches long. Time to feed more minnows, now he was up to 36 per day. In August 1977 something spooked him and he went out of the 55. I put him back and all went well until September.

Collating of the Plecostomus was at our house and he got spooked again. Out of the 55 he went, taking the top and fluorescent light with him. I put him back but decided that either he got a new home or he had to go. After pricing a 130 gallon tank I decided that he was going. I sold him to Exotic Pet Center and if you want to see him, he's in the 300 gallon display tank in the rear wall of the fish room.

From December of '76 to October of '78 my cute 2½ inch baby arrowana had grown into an 18" monster and if you stop in and see him you'll notice that he's still growing. We may not have used the 'proper' way or the 'book' way to raise an arrowana, but it worked for us and it was quite an experience.

Some people say that Oscars have a personality, others say it is the Discus with personality, but I feel that if you are looking for a large fish that has loads of personality, try the Osteoglossum bicirrhosu, the SILVER ARROWANA.

FOR SALE:

Heinz Lenzen has some hard to get Cichlids and Synodontis catfish for sale. He also has 50 gallon tanks. There are some past years collection of hobby related publications he's willing to give away, too. If you're interested call Heinz at 528-1486 and talk about specifics and price.

THINGS YOU'LL NEVER LEARN

Braz Walker, Aquarium News
Journal, August, 1975

It looks like after 15 or 20 years in the aquarium hobby, a person would pick up at least enough basic procedure not to violate the very rules he or she would set down for a beginner. You might be surprised at some of the 'accidents' which happen to experts.

Show me a dyed-in-the-wool fish keeper of 15 or 20 years and I'll show you someone who has, within the last couple of years, lost at least one valuable and irreplaceable fish from overfeeding and polluting the tank.

Strangely, this is aquarium keeping's First Commandment. But it is one which even the best and most experienced of fishkeepers never secure themselves against violating.

Pushing a show fish for a little faster growth, trying to get that finicky but rare new fish to eat enough to get it acclimated and to make sure the fish had enough variety of offering to find something it likes, can lead to disaster. So can catering to a favorite's enthusiasm as it cons you into providing more than can possibly be consumed.

In making sure your potential show specimens get 'enough', scraps which seem insignificant can get by, and with today's super filtration systems, the 'look' of the water can fool even experienced eyes.

Everyone loses an occasional fish, so when even one of the apparently healthiest fish in the aquarium suddenly sets its sails for that great fish bowl in the sky, we chalk it up to it just 'being his time.'

When, the next day a couple of the others keel over without warning, the dawn finally crashes through, along with the realization that we haven't learned much through our mistakes.

Another one that gets us all sooner or later is believing that our eyes have become so incredibly sensitive to symptoms of disease that after careful scrutiny of newly acquired fish, there's really no need to quarantine them, because they're obviously pure.

They go into your favorite tank because they compliment its other occupants so well; huge cardinals, bleeding hearts with dorsals that reach beyond their tails, other fish which took years to reach their present magnificence, plus a couple of unidentified oddballs you've been meaning to photograph for six months but haven't gotten to it. And, a few days later the only healthy thing in the tank is the thriving epidemic of some weird new bacterial disease for which no modern drug seems effective and to which only fish that sell for under a dime are immune.

My own experience has shown that one large size airstone type corner filter will provide adequate filtration for a tank up to 15 gallons. In a 20-or 29 gallon tank two of these filters are needed. This type filtration has the added benefit of allowing for the use of a tight fitting cover for the tank top. Only a very small space should be cut or drilled to allow the air line to bypass the cover. The power filters require a large space in which to operate. This will result in dead fish, as they will jump out. Undergravel filters may cause a harmful build up of waste products, causing the water to become very acid.

Gravel is unnecessary, and I do not recommend its use. The only functions of gravel is to root plants and increase maintenance. Plants do poorly as they are constantly uprooted or eaten. Interior design of the tank must provide numerous hiding places. Caves can be formed by large rocks, shale or driftwood. Clay flower pots and inert plastic pipes are also excellent.

Any constant temperature between 72-84 degrees F. will provide healthy living conditions. While pH and hardness are not important, extremes should be avoided. My fish are kept at 7.0 pH and 150ppm dh. These levels are easily maintained by the use of marble chips in the corner filters. The marble chips, available at most garden supply stores, also serve to weight down the filters. They are easily cleaned and are inexpensive. A 50 pound bag costs about \$4.00 and seems to last forever.

Weekly or semi-monthly water changes of 20% stimulates appetite and growth. There is no danger of chlorine poisoning when this amount of tap water is used. One very strong word of caution must be expressed. DO NOT USE ANY chlorine removing products. All of this type product will kill *Synodontis*, as well as all scaleless fish in a matter of minutes. Crepuscular (preferring twilight) in nature, the dimly lit or dark tank is favored. One 7 watt incandescent lamp for the 10-to-20 gallon tank is sufficient. Omnivores, they accept a wide range of foods. Frozen brine shrimp, tubifex worms, earthworms, and beefheart are preferred to dry and freeze dried foods. An occasional feeding of the best brand of canned very early young peas is relished. I skip one feeding a week, and feed the peas for the next meal. This serves to rest the digestive system and to increase appetite.

The smallest adult is *Synodontis multimaculatus* approximately 3 inches, while the largest, *Synodontis guttatus*, grows to approximately 30 inches. The average for the group is 8 to 10 inches. The only published spawning that I have been able to locate occurred in 1959. *Synodontis nigriventris*, upside-down catfish, were successfully spawned accidentally by Helmut Pinter of Stockholm, Sweden. He states that "females are larger and somewhat stronger than males, and their markings are different". The size of his breeding pair was 3 inches for the male and 4 inches for the female. They were at least seven years old, possibly eight. Before the spawning occurred the pair were fed live mosquito larvae "for sometime". The fish would swim on their backs and eat the mosquito larvae from the surface of the water. The surprise spawning took place in the temporary lodging of a three gallon glass tank. A flower pot which had a piece

broken out of the rim stood inverted on its rim. A few branches of cabomba were also in the tank. It was assumed that the eggs were placed on the inside of the flower poy, since they were not seen. The water temperature was between 74 to 78 degrees F. and hardness "about 6 ppm". The exact incubation period was unknown, but the parents were in the tank 11 days, when "my first inkling of what had happened was when I saw the youngsters swimming".

LIST OF IDENTIFIED SPECIES OF SYNODONTIS

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| S. acanthomias | S. melanopterus |
| S. afro-fischeri | S. membranaceus |
| S. alberti | S. multimaculatus |
| S. angelicus | S. multipunctatus |
| S. batensoda- formally S. melanogaster | S. nebulosus |
| S. batessii | S. nigrita |
| S. brichardi | S. nigriventris |
| S. budgetti | S. nigromaculatus formally |
| S. caudalis | S. melanostictus |
| S. caudovittatus | S. notatus formally |
| S. clarias formally S. macrodon | S. maculatus |
| S. coureteti | S. nummifer |
| S. decorus | S. obesus |
| S. depauwi | S. ocellifer |
| S. eupterus | S. omias |
| S. filamentosus | S. ornatipinnis |
| S. flavitaeniatus | S. pardalis |
| S. frontosus formally S. citernii | S. pleuropus |
| S. fuelleborni | S. polydon |
| S. gambiensis | S. resupinatus |
| S. geledenis | S. robbianus |
| S. granulatus | S. schall, formally S. arabi, |
| S. greshoff | S. maculosus, S. smithii |
| S. guttatus | S. serratus |
| S. haugi | S. smiti |
| S. humeratus | S. soloni |
| S. labeo | S. sorex |
| S. longirostris | S. tholloni |
| S. macrostigma | S. vaillantii |
| S. marmoratus | S. victoriae |
| | S. woosnami, formally |
| | S. jallae, S. leolardinus |
| | S. xiphius |
| | S. zambesensis formally |
| | S. puntulatus, S. nyassae, |
| | S. zanzibaricus |



KUDOS FROM EXCHANGES

Two of our members articles got mentioned -- both in the same two exchange publications. "The Whiptailed Cat, Loricaria Something or other" By Joe Paull and "Corydoras aeneus (Albino)" by Pat Mahoney were mentioned as "must" reading by Ross Brock in Shark Shenanigans, Middle Georgia Aquarium Society, May Issue.

The Same two articles were listed by Bernard Ramsay in Kitsap Aquarian, Silverdale, WA. - in the June issue.

Our April cover also got a mention in Shark Shenanigans, don't know whether he noticed the name - "April Fool" spelled backwards.

Kitsap also listed Barb Langione's "Learning to Live with Cynolebias "alexanderi" which I reprinted in the March Delta Tale, from the White Rose publication.

SPEAKING TO EXCHANGES

Instead of about them, I'd like to make a request -- please put your issue date on your publication cover or masthead. I log in all exchanges by month of publication and sometimes have to guess. Not all -- but some -- simply don't have a date anywhere to be seen.

Also - Delta Tale is now mailed, in case you hadn't noticed - on a tri or bi-monthly basis, 3rd class mail, in order to save on postage. I've been using my publication-received log to drop some clubs from whom we have not received an exchange for up to 6 months, also. A few didn't come for a long while-- then I got a batch all at once. Doing the same as I am, mailing less frequently, I guess. So some of you came off, then went back on again.

MY GOLDFISH

Heather Altland, reprint

My godfish is pretty. His name is Skipper. He was little when I got him. Now he is 11 inches long. I was only 3 years old when I got him. I will be 7 on April 30.

My goldfish can swim. He can't sing. He eats fish food from my fingers. He cleans rocks. He won three blue ribbons so far. I took them to school for show and tell.

Skipper is a nice pet. Even a little kid like me can have fun with fish.

(Reprinted in Wet Tales, Susquehanna Aquarium Society, Harrisburg, PA - in memory of Skipper, who went to that great fish pond in the sky) The editor goes on to express a sentiment which your editor heartely endorses -- "More importantly, for those of you who say you can't write an article ... if my six year old could, WHY CAN'T YOU?" In this issue I print my last available article by a member.

'Nough said? *maggi*

Old Root Face -

The Synodontis

by Stephen Hockman , Pisces Press,
Nassau Count Aquarium Soceity, May 1979

No longer are catfish being relegated to a secondary class as stepchildren of the aquarium world. The past several years have seen a remarkable increase in the number of aquarists keeping catfish. Aquarium societies' annual show here in the New York City area confirm this trend. For example, of the 35 classes of entries in the 1971 Greater City Aquarium Society (Flushing, L.I.N.Y.) annual show, 58 of the 602 entries in this show were catfish. The 1969 annual show of this same group saw a catfish, *Synodontis angelicus*, win the highest award: BEST FISH IN THE SHOW. The 1970 Norwalk Aquarium Society of Fairfield County annual show sponsored 33 classes of entries. Of the 524 entries 40 were catfish. The 1971 annual show of this same group sponsored the 1st International Catfish Championship.

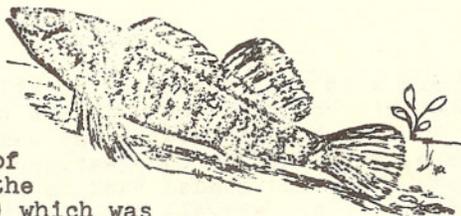
Comprising 25 to 30 different families, there have been more than 2,000 different species of catfish identified. One of the most interesting and beautiful of all these fish is the genus *Synodontis*. The name is derived from the Greek language: Syn=with, odontis = teeth. While these teeth are very small they range between 20 and 60 in groups of rows. Entirely scaleless, these completely naked catfish originate from most of Africa. They are easily recognized by their three pairs of barbels (whiskers), at least one pair of barbels feathered (resembling a branch root). These barbels function as extremely sensitive tasting organs.

Many of this genus posses the unusual habit of swimming on their back. The most common, and most consistent, performer of this habit is *Synodontis nigriventis*, commonly known as the upside-down catfish. Although scientific explanations of this odd behavior are lacking, most *Synodontis* exhibit this trait at one time or another. My observation is that backswimming is a method of feeding from the surface of the water.

In nature these fish gather in large shoals and inhabit lakes and slow moving rivers. In captivity they are easily kept. Longevity of beyond eight years is not uncommon. When provided with their own home eight to ten young (3 inches or less) can be kept in a 20-gallon (long) tank. Many different species can be kept together in this manner. New acquisitions should be of the same size as the older tank members. Larger older specimens over 6 inches will require their own tank as they are normally very dominant. I suggest a 10-gallon tank for this size fish. A smaller tank does not provide ample swimming room. *Synodontis* do very well in large community tanks of 29 gallons or larger. I have maintained them in 50 gallon cichlid breeding tanks (*Labetropheus fuelleborni*) with no apparent loss of young fish.

A NATIVE FISH COLLECTING TRIP

by Harry W. Faustmann



This past Memorial Day weekend of 1978 was the Annual Convention of the American Killifish Association (AKA) which was held at the Holiday Inn at North Bergen, N.J. One of the features of the convention was the field trip on that Memorial Day, Monday, led by John Brill Jr. to the Pine Barrens of southern New Jersey. I was fortunate to be able to partake in this event and assisted by driving my car loaded down with passengers and collecting equipment. Riding with me were Dale and Barbara Weber, Sandy Binder (from California) & Michele (John Brill's wife). We followed John and his passenger, Gherhart Schrieber (from Germany), and we were followed by three other hobbyists from Ohio, Ed Kray, John Chapek, and Al Danis. Upon reaching the Asbury Park toll booth of the Garden State Parkway, we were joined by Mrs. Joan Glasscock and her son who had been staying with friends prior to returning from the convention to their home in Washington, D.C.. They followed in their car, adding a fourth to our caravan. (That makes it a Convoy, good buddy).

After dropping Michele off at her Mother-in-laws house where she would be safer than with us, (she was due at anytime) we continued through the town of Tom's River, where John had grown up as a boy. He knew all the streams and ponds like the back of his hand. He has led many a collecting trip into these Pine Barrens to explore the waters that are far from the beaten path. Our first stop was at Horicon Lake, near Lakehurst, N.J. This placid lake had such a rich humus bottom that caused the water to be a rich brown color with a pH of less than 4.8. We were unable to test below that with our test kits. The water hardness had a dh of zero.

The water was about four feet deep just off the edge of the lake so we wore chest wadders and carried long handled nets. After the first few sweeps that netted a few small specimens of fish that I will list later on, we began to operate the two-man held seine which is four feet high and 15 feet long. Weighted down on its bottom and equipped with floats on the top, we swept the waters toward the shore and then the other collectors would assist us in lifting the seine out of the water and onto the bank. We would then search amongst the vegetation dragged up in the seine to find many assorted species of fish native to this part of the country. After a few hours of collecting at the lake, we packed up the equipment and buckets of fish, and headed down the road to another part of the Tom's river.

This second location was a deep fast moving stream, very dark in color with a slightly higher pH than Horicon Lake. Here we were able to catch several more species of sunfishes and freshwater eels. From this stream location we drove to an outlet of the Tom's river system that formed an estuarine bay where brackish water fish were to be found. Although we found some sunfish that had been swept downstream, most of the fish caught were killifish that many of us had been seeking. Here were killifish that salt water anglers would trap or buy, to use as baitfish.

There were four varieties of killifish here, plus the common "shiners" that are commonly found in the bait shops.

This brackish water bay was our last stop, and after some time here, we packed up our gear, sorted out the fish that we all wanted to take home, and headed back to North Bergen and the Holiday Inn. After saying farewell and dividing up the fish, I returned home here on Long Island and immediately began to set up my first "native" tank. By slowly adding my aged tank water to the ten gallons of "Black water" that I had transported the freshwater fish in, I was able to establish those fish in a 20 high tank with a box filter. The brackish water killifish were placed into a 20 long with a box filter. I mixed my aged water with some Instant Ocean sea salts and was able to provide them with a suitable water change. They soon were acclimated to freshwater containing only one tablespoon of salt per gallon.

Feeding the killifish is no problem at all as they will eat just about anything and flake food is eagerly accepted. The freshwater sunfish are mostly predatory and required live food which is supplied by using culls from my breeding killies as well as some of the larger White Worms that I normally feed to my other fish. The following is a list of the many species of fish that we collected that day. I wish to thank John Brill Jr. for his assistance in the identification of these fish that he was able to perform right there as they were being caught. When we first stopped at Horicon Lake, we caught many ENNEACANTHUS OBESUS, which is a small sunfish sometimes called the blue-fin or the blue spotted sunfish. These were about 1" to 2" in size. The second sunfish species caught was ENNEACANTHUS CHAETODON, known as the Black Banded sunfish. They were very abundant and ranged in size from 1" to 2". I believe them to be the nicest looking of all the sunfish caught. A minnow collected and now quite well established in my tanks is the UMBRA PYGMAEA. This little mud minnow is about 2" in length and seems to cling to the bottom along with another fish also collected in the same habitat. This is the Swamp Darter, ETHEOSTOMA FUSIFORME, which hops along the bottom of the tank in search of food. This fish is all of 1½" in length. This darter has a nice reddish brown coloring with a slight horizontal stripe along its body length. Perhaps the most interesting fish collected at Horicon Lake was the Pirate Perch, APHEDODERUS SAYAMUS. This is a nocturnal predator that seems to loaf around during the tank lighted hours. The odd thing about this fish is that as it grows older, its anal opening moves from where it seems it should be, to a position just below its throat. This position is believed to aid in its reproduction cycles.

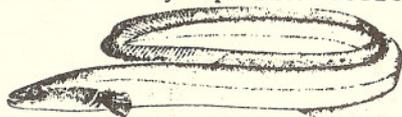
After moving to our next location on the Tom's River, we caught small specimens of ENNEACANTHUS GLORIOSUS, another sunfish common to this area. A few pickerels of the species EXOS, that are predatory game fish similar to the ones found right here on Long Island, were caught and released. Game fish can only be taken according to state regulations and these were too small, being about 3 to 4 inches in length. The eels that we are most familiar with in brackish water were present here in the Tom's river. ANGUILLA ROSTRATA was found here in great numbers as it makes its migratory trip upstream to live and mature. We kept the smaller ones of 3 to 4 inches in length and they seem to have done quite well in my tanks. They can often be seen burrowing through the gravel in search of food and looking somewhat like a Moray Eel.

Our third and last collecting location was at the brackish water

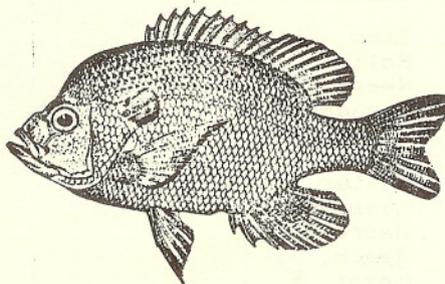
estuarine bay where we killifish conventioners were anxious to collect the native American killifish. Here we collected CYPRIODON VARIEGATUS in their breeding colors of greens with orange pectorals. This chunky fish is of the same family as the well known "Devils Hole Pupfish", although not endangered at all judging by their abundance at this location. LUCANIA PARVA is related to the Goodei of Florida and although reported to be plentiful in this area, we were not able to collect very many at all. The few that we did collect were rather small being about 2" in size, and were dark red in color. I never did get to collect any of these fish on this trip, but I was able to collect quite a few on a later collecting trip to this same area.

The most recognized "bait fish" was of the Fundulus genus, the FUNDULUS HETROCLITUS and FUNDULUS DIAPHANUS. The young of both species look quite similar, but the adults were in good breeding condition and their coloration was their distinguishing factor. The males were just brilliant in their dark greens and orange hues, while the females were quite heavy with roe. These were caught in great numbers and we were all able to get a good choice of what was available. It was interesting to observe the paling of their coloration after remaining in the collecting buckets for a short while. Their colors faded to a golden bronze speckled with dark green where the darker colors were upon capture. These fish proved to be quite hardy in my brackish water tanks although they never again displayed their first seen colors.

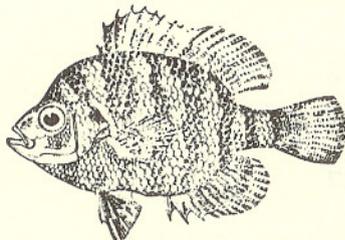
Most of the fish collected on this trip have done quite well in my tanks, although some are more predatory than others. Any ones that may become sickly are quickly attacked by the others, and among the sunfishes, the pecking order is very obvious. Looking back at that time, I remember the new friendships made, the new places visited, and the realization of the many collecting locations so near to our own home towns. One doesn't need to travel to other continents to find colorful aquarium inhabitants, nor does one have to rely on what is available at the pet shops. Since this trip, I've made several other collecting trips that I intend to write about in other articles. One trip was made right here in our local waters. This should be of interest to our local club members. Anyone interested in local collecting trips should get acquainted with other club members and make plans to collect together as it proved to be a great time for me. (Reprinted from Pisces Press, Nassau County Aquarium Society, May, 1979).



AMERICAN EEL *Anguilla rostrata*



BANDED SUNFISH *Enneacanthus obesus*



BLACKBANDED SUNFISH *Enneacanthus chaetodon*

PVAS BOWL SHOW RESULTS AND STANDINGS, AUGUST, 1979

CICHLIDS

New World, dwarf

no entries

Riftlake, non-Mbuna

- 1 - Porlchardi - Reece
- 2 - Julii marlieri - Reece
- 3 - A. nyassae, Neese

Open

- Chupoke - Neese
- 2 - pink convict - Kent
- 3 - S.A. Rainbow - Neese

Judges: Pat Mahoney
Bill Trout

EGGLAYER/LIVEBEARERS

Killifish

- 1 - A. gardneri, Ed Smith
- 2 - A. gardneri, Ed Smith
- 3 - Aphyo. stratium, Ed Smith

Catfish, non-Corydorus

- 1 - Pseu. niger - Neese
- 2-line Pimodella, Kent
- 3 - Porthole, Vince Elko

Open

- 1 - Cory punctatus - Hollman
- 2 - Red tus guppy - Hollman
- 3 - Silver dollar - V. Elko

Judges: Ken Warren
Darrel Hollman

STANDINGS, AUGUST, 1979

CICHLIDS

Neese, Garland
Kent, Bill
Reece, Ken
Griffin, Woody
Prendergast
Mahoney, Pat
Hollan, D.

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>QUARTER</u>	<u>ANNUAL</u>
10	26	68
5	17	23
12	30	30
0	0	22
4	4	16
0	0	12
0	0	2

EGGLAYER/LIVEBEARER

Elko, Vincent
Hollman, D.
Neese, G.
Prendergast
Kent, Bill
Mahoney, Pat
Guiler, Chryss
Andreen, P
Herrell, L.
Reece, J.
Meyer, P.
Reynolds, Nancy
Smith, Ed

6	42	69
11	27	59
6	18	43
14	14	35
4	18	25
0	0	15
0	0	13
0	0	10
0	0	6
4	4	4
0	0	4
2	2	2
12	12	12

NAME	POINTS
Joe Paul	505****
Jan & Dave McInturff	415****
Ruth Brewer	280**
Garland Neese	180**
Bev Fazil	170**
Gerry Hoffman	170**
Pat & Maggi Mahoney	135*
Kenny Warren	90*
Gene Aldridge	80
Diane Nixon	70*
Woody Griffin	70*
John Jessup	65*
Pat Fromm	15
Jerry Donnelly	10

bap REPORT

* Breeders Award
 *** Advanced Breeders Award

** Intermediate Breeders Award
 **** Master Breeders Award

Recent spawnings:

Garland Neese: Red top coblat zebra, Pseudotropheus zebra
 Haplochromis moorii
 Melanochromis johanni
 Labeotropheus trewavasae (gold)

BOWL SHOW CATAGORIES FOR SEPTEMBER:

CICHLIDS

Anglefish & Discus
 Non-riftlake African
 Open

EGGLAYERS/LIVEBEARERS

Livebearers, non-guppy
 Sharks & Loaches
 Open

PROGRAM, SEPTEMBER MEETING:

Our old and good friend Sue Liebetrau will be with us again, speaking on her fish room this time. I'm sure we'll get some good tips from an old hand on air systems, set up and what have you. Undoubtedly well documented with slides by Al. It's always interesting and a pleausre to have Sue and Al come down from Baltimore. Be there to welcome them again in September.

AUGUST MINI-AUCTION A SUCCESS:

We grossed about 1/3rd more than recent such events at this one. Had a good turn out of both fish and people and had a nice chance to visit on the lawn, when the key didn't turn up on time. It was a nice evening, though, and noone minded much. Just put the timing back a bit. No harm done and some new friends made.



**Potomac Valley
Aquarium Society
Presents the 1979
Annual Fall Banquet
& Auction, Oct. 19-21**

POTOMAC VALLEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY
1979 ANNUAL FALL BANQUET
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19

THE MOUNT VERNON INN, MOUNT VERNON, VIRGINIA
(At the end of The George Washington Parkway)

Register for door prize as you come in.

Cash cocktail hour--6:30-7:30 p.m.

Dinner promptly at 7:30 p.m. (See reservation blank below)

Anyone interested in the hobby is invited to attend. Seating is limited to fifty, so reservations will be accepted on a first received basis. Don't miss out by waiting too long.

Our guest speaker this year is the internationally famed author, collector, explorer, and breeder, Mr. Rosario LaCorte of Elizabeth, New Jersey. Rosario will be speaking to us on his most recent collecting trip to Brazil and Venezuela.

One of the leading technicians in the breeding of aquarium fishes in the United States, Rosario has made many trips to South America under the auspices of the National Geographic Society. The man who brought the Blue Tetra to the hobby, Rosario has had two fishes named for him.

Rosario is a member of the American Killifish Association and has spoken to regional and national conventions. He was among the principal speakers at the 1979 American Cichlid Association convention in New Jersey this past July.

1979 PVAS BANQUET RESERVATIONS

Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ person(s) at \$10.00 each.

Name: _____ Street Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Sea Food Buffet, with Bar-B-Q ribs or chicken for non-seafood eaters.

There is a tremendous salad bar and bread--and its ALL YOU CAN EAT!

Return reservation, completely filled out, with check or money order no later than Monday, October 15 to: PVAS, c/o The Mahoneys
3011 Aspen Lane
Falls Church, VA 22042

POTOMAC VALLEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY
1979 Fall Auction
Sunday, October 21, 1979

Coca-Cola Hospitality Room
5401 Seminary Road
Baileys Crossroads, VA
(map on back page)

Rules of Registration for Sellers:

1. 15 bag or item limit per person--fish, plants, or hobby related items. Anyone may sell--not just PVAS members.
2. Registration will commence at 10:00 a.m. and will terminate promptly at 1:00 p.m.
3. Auction will start immediately after registration closes.
4. Each item may be assigned a minimum bid. If none is assigned, it will automatically have a \$1.00 minimum.
5. Bags will be offered as is. Contents may not be split into two or more transactions.
6. No payment will be made to sellers on the day of the auction. Payment will be mailed within ten (10) days.
7. 75% of the selling price goes to the seller, 25% to PVAS.

Rules of Bidding:

1. All persons wishing to participate shall sign in with their name (and address if not a PVAS member) and receive a bidding card, whose use will be explained before the auction begins.
2. Bags may be inspected before the auction begins.
3. All bidding raises will be in minimum increments of 25¢ up to \$5.00. After that, minimum raises must be 50¢.
4. Successful bidders will have their items brought to them, at which time they must pay for them.
5. In all instances the decision of the auctioneer is final.
6. All persons, except auction officials, will remain seated during the auction.

There will be occasional breaks for drawing raffle prizes and/or relaxing, getting soft drinks, etc.

POTOMAC VALLEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 6219
SHIRLINGTON STATION
ARLINGTON, VA. 22206

FIRST CLASS MAIL

1979 MEETING DATES

JAN. 8
FEB. 12
MAR. 12

APR. 9
MAY 14
JUN. 11

JUL. 9
AUG. 13
SEP. 10

OCT. 8
NOV. 19
DEC. 10

MEETINGS ARE HELD AT THE COCA-COLA BOTTLING PLANT, 5401 SEMINARY ROAD, BAILEY'S CROSSROADS, ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA. MEETINGS START AT 8:00 P.M., BOWL SHOW REGISTRATION STARTS AT 7:45 P.M.