



Tank Topics

The Official Publication of
The Greater Akron Aquarium Society



June/July 2009

In this issue:

- *Goodeids*
- *Nandopsis hatiensis*
- *Otopharynx tetrastigma*



THE GREATER AKRON AQUARIUM SOCIETY

WHO ARE WE? We are a local group of aquatic enthusiasts. Formed in 1952, the Greater Akron Aquarium Society is a non-profit, non-commercial organization. Our membership ranges from the beginning hobbyist to the advanced aquarist with many years of experience. The goals of our club are to promote the care, study, breeding and exhibition of aquarium related aquatic life and to promote interest in the aquarium hobby.

MEETINGS: Our meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at 8:00 p.m. at the Mogadore Community/Senior Center, 3857 Mogadore Road, Mogadore, Ohio. It is located East of Route 532 across from McDonald's in the former post office building (see map on inside back cover) Visitors are always welcome, it costs absolutely nothing to attend a meeting and look us over.

MEMBERSHIP: The cost is only \$750 for adults, \$10 for a couple or a family (includes children under 10 years of age) and \$5.00 for a junior membership (10 to 17 years) Membership provides an opportunity to socialize with other that share your interests, a subscription to our bi-monthly magazine, library usage and more.

AGENDA: Our meeting agenda is simple and informal. The meeting will begin at 8:00 p.m. with a short business meeting. Immediately following is the program for the evening which usually lasts about 45 minutes. Our programs consist of a speaker, slide program, movie or perhaps a panel discussion always on a particular subject related to the hobby or various species of fish. Following the program is a short refreshment break. After which the winners of the Bowl Show are announced, the Breeder's Award Program fish are auctioned and tickets are drawn for the equipment and book raffles.

THE BOWL SHOW: Each month members can bring in fish for specific classes to compete for first, second and third place awards. The charge for each entry is only \$.25. Members also compete for annual awards by accumulating wins throughout the year.

BREEDER'S AWARD and HORTICULTURE AWARD PROGRAMS: members can receive recognition for spawning species of fish or propagating aquatic plants. All that is required is to turn in a minimum of six fry from the spawn that are between 30 and 90 days old. Members earn certificates for each species and can work towards plaques in different categories.

LIBRARY: At the library table are a number of books and other publications covering all areas of the aquarium hobby. Members may borrow the books for a month at a time. Also each month several books are raffled off.

EQUIPMENT RAFFLE: The raffle table has such items as tanks, fish food and aquarium accessories that are donated by national manufacturers, area dealers or purchased by the Society. Tickets may be purchased by anyone attending the meeting. Save your losing tickets for the Christmas Party raffle.

ANNUAL SHOW: The Ultra-Aqua show is held the first weekend of August at the Tallmadge community Center. This has become one of the largest all-species tropical fish shows in North America. It is an international gathering of hobbyists to display their fish in class competition, talk fish and to learn about the hobby from each other.

TANK TOPICS: is published on a bi-monthly basis for the members of the Greater Akron Aquarium Society. Articles and comments for this publication are welcome and encouraged. Such articles are to be submitted no later than the board meeting prior to publication. All articles may be reprinted as long as the author(s) and GAAS are given proper credit and two copies of the publication containing the reprint are sent to GAAS. Please send any correspondence regarding this publication to:

Editor/Tank Topics
P.O. Box 494, Akron, OH 44309-0494
Or email to G_A_A_S@hotmail.com





Table of Contents

President’s Message Bud White 4
 Editor’s Message Dave Williamson..... 5
 Bowl Show/Special Activities Ken McGill..... 6
 BAP/HAP Report Wayne Toven..... 8
 Meeting Notice 10
 Coming Events..... 11
 Exchange Report Wayne Toven..... 12
Otopharynx tetrastigma Joe Reich 14
 The Goods on Goodeids..... Wayne Toven..... 18
Nandopsis haitiensis..... Bob Miller 20
 Swap Meet 22

Tank Topics Production Staff:

Editor	Dave Williamson
Exchange Editor	Wayne Toven
Artists	Pat Maloney, Becky Sosenko, Steve Tyleshevski, Dan Frase

This issue’s cover: A male *Xenotoca variata* (jeweled goodeid) For more info on this interesting family of livebearers, see Wayne Toven’s article on page 18.

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Vice President	Jeff Plazak	(330) 854-5257/jeff@gaas-fish.net
Treasurer	Rich Serva	(330) 650-4613/rich@gaas-fish.net
Secretary	Open	
Editor	Dave Williamson	davew@gaas-fish.net
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Publicity	Amy Mullens	amy@gaas-fish.net
Program	Dan McMonigle	(440) 476-4663/danm@gaas-fish.net
Web Master	Ron Mullens	ron@gaas-fish.net
50/50	Christina Biederman	christina@gaas-fish.net

Check out our web site at: www.gaas-fish.net

President's Message



Bud White

Hello Folks,

Well it is official, we have 66 classes in our show this year and we need to get sponsors for them. This will be a tough year for doing that and on top of it all, we have one month less to get it done, since the show is July 11 & 12 instead of August., This is due to the American Cichlid Association Convention that is being held in Cincinnati on our usual dates. This will be the first time we have not had our show on the first weekend of August in at least 20 years, so make sure you let people know.

If you can help with the sponsors please let Rich or me know. We are also looking for someone to help keep track of the sponsor list. If you want to help with that, let me know. Ron is also going to list the classes on our website and mark them off as they are sold. That should help make it easier to find out if a class is available.

So far we have Ray (Kingfish) Lucas confirmed to be at the show. We are working on a couple of other vendors also.

That's all folks, Bud

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Editor's Message

Dave Williamson

Well here I go again, putting out the Spring edition of Tank Topics. As usual, this has been the hardest one of the year to get going on. This year has the added issue of changing jobs during the time that I'm supposed to be working on getting this put together. Well, at least I'm finally free of the "Dungeon of Doom" as I liked to call it. I'm back to schlepping feeder golds and trying to keep people from doing dumb things in their fish tanks (you know, things like why Oscars and guppies don't make good tank mates!) But anyway, the hours and days off may not be as good, but I don't think I'll be developing an ulcer anytime soon!

I hate to have to bring this up again, but we're in some real need of some new articles! I know, you've heard it all before about how easy it is to write an article and how I can help with spell checking and grammar. It just seems that it's always the same handful that contribute anything. Now come on, I know that some of you have got to have something interesting going on in your fishroom that you need to tell the rest of us about!

I feel that I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't mention at this time that the show is drawing near. I'm sure by now that you all know that we had to move this year's Ultra Aqua Show to a different weekend due to the ACA Convention being in Cincinnati over our regular weekend. It really would have hurt us to try to go against a national convention like that, and besides some of our members may want to actually attend the ACA. It would be a shame to miss one that is this close. All that being said, it is time to really start thinking about what fish you've got swimming around your tanks that you would like to show off to the rest of us. Fish shows really can be a lot of fun, what are you waiting for? Come out and give it a try this July!

We've got some really great programs coming up in the next couple of months. It's easier to get out of town speakers when they're on vacation and don't have to get up for work the next morning - but I wouldn't know about that seeing as I work retail again and I never know what days I'll have off from week to week. So even though our Summer meetings usually don't get the attendance the Winter ones do, try to drop in to one soon. I'll see you at the meeting and the Show, July 11 & 12!

Bowl Show & Special Activities

Ken McGill



April

Female Guppies:

- 1st Place - Jeff Plazak - Yellow guppy
2nd Place - Dave Williamson - 3/4 Black guppy
3rd Place - Dick Westmeyer - Blue dot Dorsal & tail guppy

Platies:

- 1st Place - Jeff Plazak - platy
2nd Place - Dave Williamson - orange female platy
3rd Place - Dave Williamson - blue peppered plumetail

Aquatic Invertebrates:

- 1st Place - Ken McGill - Red Crayfish
2nd Place - Wayne Toven - Blue marble Crayfish
3rd Place - Ken McGill - Blue Crayfish

May

Goodeids:

- 1st Place - Wayne Toven - Skiffia multipunctata
2nd Place - Wayne Toven - Xenotaenia resolanae

Rift Lake Cichlids:

- 1st Place - Dave Williamson - Sunspot Brevis

Aquatic Plants:

- 1st Place - Dave Williamson - Java Fern
2nd Place - Dave Williamson - Cryptocoryne siamensis

How the Point System works:

- 1st - 4 points
2nd - 2 points
3rd - 1 point
1 point per entry,
maximum 12 points per class



Totals

<u>Name:</u>	<u>Total:</u>
Amy Mullens	2
Bill Koleszar	4
Bob Miller	7
Dave Williamson	61
Denny Bechtold	2
Dick Westmeyer	2
Jeff Plazak	35
Ken McGill	8
Phil Hypes	1
Wayne Toven	29



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Tank Maintenance
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2009 Bowl Show Schedule

January:

Goldfish, Male Guppies,
Minnnows Danios & Rasboras

February:

Suckermouth Catfish,
Swordtails, Characins

March:

Barbs, Mollies,
Corydoras Aspidoras & Brochis

April:

Female Guppies, Platies,
Aquatic Invertebrates

May:

Goodeids, Rift Lake Cichlids,
Aquatic Plants

June:

Native Fish, Rainbowfish,
Male Bettas

July:

Synodontis Catfish, Killifish,
Angelfish & Discus

August:

AO New World Cichlids,
Amphibians, Bog Plants

September:

Gouramis & Anabantoids,
Sharks & Loaches,
Photography

October:

Arts & Crafts, Marine Fish,
All Other Old World Cichlids

November:

All Other Livebearers,
All Other Egglayers,
All Other Catfish

BAP/HAP Report



Wayne Toven

The BAP/HAP year is half over already, and we are close to topping last year's complete total of spawns turned in. Let's keep this trend going!! I would have awarded the first one pound can of brine shrimp eggs this year, for 10 spawns submitted, but I forgot to take it to the monthly meeting, so in June it will be awarded to Phil & Tiffany Hypes. We have a second member closing in on a can with 8 spawns, only 2 to go. I want to offer congratulations to Phil & Tiffany for adding a new member to our club, their baby girl Zoe!! Sorry to say but you need 6 to qualify for the Breeder's Award Program, so this one won't count toward the Breeder of the Year Award contest, keep working.

Almost time to get the outdoor tubs and ponds stocked, and it will be summer before you know it. The show is rapidly approaching also, so get those fish spawning so the fry will be old enough for you to have an entry for the family class. There are a few more auctions to get new breeder stock so keep an eye open. **Keep on spawnin'!!!!**

April 2009

<u>Species</u>	<u>Common name</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Points</u>
Bap			
David Girard			
<i>Neolamprologus cylindricus</i>		Cichlid s.s.	15
Phil & Tiffany Hypes			
<i>Aulonocara stuartgranti</i>	Blue neon peacock	Cichlid m.b.	15
Russ Kirkendall			
<i>Cryptoheros sp.</i>	Honduran red point	Cichlid s.s.	5
Ken McGill			
<i>Procambarus alleni</i>	Blue crayfish	Aquatic animal	10
<i>Procambarus sp.</i>	Blue marble crayfish	Aquatic animal	10
Bob Miller			
<i>Archocentrus nigrofasciatus</i>	Convict cichlid	Cichlid s.s.	5
<i>Nandopsis haitiensis</i>		Cichlid s.s.	10

Wayne Toven
Lamprologus multifasciatus Cichlid s.s. 15

Dave Williamson
Pseudotropheus acei Cichlid m.b. 15

HAP

Nick Rezac
Cryptocoryne wendtii Red wendtii C – Vegetative 15

May 2009

<u>Species</u>	<u>Common name</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Points</u>
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BAP

David Girard <i>Xenotoca eiseni</i>	Red tail goodeid	Livebearer	10
<i>Astatotilapia burtoni</i>		Cichlid m.b.	5

Phil & Tiffany Hypes
Neolamprologus cylindricus Cichlid s.s. 15

Wayne Toven
Procambarus sp. Blue marble crayfish Aquatic animal 10

Dave Williamson
Archocentrus myrnae Topaz cichlid Cichlid s.s. 5
Tateurndina ocellicauda Peacock gudgeon A O Species 10

<u>2009 Spawn & Point Totals</u>	<u>BAP</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>HAP</u>	<u>Points</u>
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Phil & Tiffany Hypes	12	150	8	85
Bob Miller	8	45	-	-
Dave Williamson	5	40	1	15
Bruce Fraley	4	20	-	-
David Girard	3	30	-	-
Todd Mayo	3	40	-	-
Denny Bechter	2	10	-	-
Ken McGill	2	20	3	50
Rich Serva	2	10	-	-
Wayne Toven	2	25	-	-
Russ Kirkendall	1	5	-	-
Dan McMonigle	1	20	-	-
Bud & Cathy White	1	10	-	-
Nick Rezac	-	-	2	20

Meeting Notice

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Program: Updates on the Amphibian Extinction Crisis, Kathy and Tim Krynak

Kathy and Tim work to preserve rain forest frogs in captivity that are extinct in the wild due to the disease wiping out amphibians around the world. They have traveled to the habitats of endangered tropical frogs and will speak about the latest developments since Kathy's last presentation to us.

Bowl Show: Native Fish, Rainbowfish, Male Bettas



Thursday, July 2, 2009

Program: Cryptocorynes, Christopher Newell

Chris has one of the most extensive collections of this family of fully aquatic plants, with many species blooming for him and reproducing. Cryptocorynes are related to the woodland plant Jack-in-the-pulpit which many of us recall seeing in the spring and summer in many parts of the US.

Bowl Show: Synodontis Catfish, Killifish, Angelfish & Discus



All general meetings begin at 8:00 p.m.
at the Mogadore Community/Senior Center

Coming Events

June 28, 2009 – SCALES - Summer Auction

Perry Grange, Richville Dr. SW, Massillon, Ohio

For more information: Cal (330) 448-0084, John (330) 452-9027

(tbaad@neo.rr.com), or Don (330) 833-7194

June 20, 2009 – Great Lakes Cichlid Society - Summer Auction

Masters Church, 771 East 260th Street in Euclid. Registration starts at 9 AM, auction starts at 11. All species, plants and dry goods.

Contact Dean at Merspaining@netzero.net, 330-656-0079,

Marty at 330-650-0237, Bill at 216-692-9296 or

Ron at 440-944-3245.

web site: <http://www.greatlakescichlidsociety.net>

July 11 & 12 – Greater Akron Aquarium Society - Ultra-Aqua 2009 Show and Auction

Tallmadge Community Center, 80 Community Rd., Tallmadge, Ohio

For more information:

Bud White (330) 848-3856 (bwhite@neo.rr.com),

Wayne Toven (330) 296-6322 (wtoven@hotmail.com) or

Rich Serva (330) 650-4613 (rjserva@juno.com)

July 30 through August 2, American Cichlid Association Convention

Sheraton Cincinnati North, Cincinnati, Ohio

www.acaconvention.com



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sat. 10-6

sun 12-5 (330) 374-6765

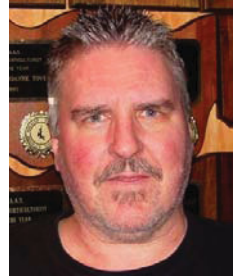


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Exchange Report



Wayne Toven



First things first, there are lots of informative articles being written by members of clubs across North America. If you would like to read any of the articles below, let me know and I will get a copy of it to you, via email or a hard copy at a meeting. We have a few articles written by our own club members reprinted in other club publications. First is "*A Fairy Tale*" by author unknown in the Youngstown Area Tropical Fish Society's Youngstown Aquarist Mar/Apr issue, guess it sounded kind of familiar and hit close to home. In the Greater Detroit Aquarium Society's Tropic Tank Talk: Apr issue was Rich Serva's *Breeding the Not-So Common Guppy*. The Cleveland Aquarium Society's The Wet Thumb: May/June issue was Joe Reich's *Keeping Macrobrachium Sp. "Red Claw" Shrimp*.

Durham Region Aquarium Society, Tank Talk: Mar 09
Eyes on Oddballs: A Whale of a Nasty Fish, by Derek P.S. Tustin

Durham Region Aquarium Society, Tank Talk: Apr 09
Limia nigrofasciata; the Humpback Limia, by Jim Brown
Cryptic Emersion Part 10(of 10), by Derek P.S. Tustin

Greater Cincinnati Aquarium Society, Fincincinnati: Mar/Apr 09
My First Betta Breeding, by Al Winstel
Aspidoras albater- Reidentified After a Decade Here in the GCAS, by Eric Jacobsen

Kitchener Waterloo Aquarium Society, Fins-N-Tales: Mar 09
The PlantEd Tank: Cryptic Bio-Types, by Ed Koerner
Avoid Being a Nervous Fish Keeper, by Phil Maznyk
Breeding Tateurndina ocellicauda, by Geoff Money

Pacific Coast Cichlid Association, Cichlidae Communique: Mar/Apr 09
Cryptoheros myrnae, by Rolf Mader
Don't Believe Everything You Read (or hear) – Cyathopharynx fã oi, by Jim Ellenberger

Kitchener Waterloo Aquarium Society, Fins-N-Tales: Apr 09
More Than a Hole in the Ground, by Ed Koerner
PlantEd Tank: Backyard Aquariums, by Ed Koerner
From Beginner to Planted Tank Specialist, by Phil Maznyk

Sarnia Aquarium Society, Aqua Antics: Mar 09
Breeding Glossolepis incisus, the New Guinea Red Rainbows, by Bruce Hart
Corydoras napoensis, by Peter Melady

Sarnia Aquarium Society, Aqua Antics: Apr 09
Madagascar Rainbows, by Jack VanderAa
Breeding Barbus oligolepis, the Checker Barb, by Wayne Cole

St Catharines & Area Aquarium Society, The Scat: Apr 09
Hyphessobrycon colombianus, the Colombian Tetra, by Dave Furness
Blue-Green Algae, by Dave Unruh
Neolamprologus sp. "Daffodil", by Dave Furness

St. Catharines & Area Aquarium Society, The Scat: May 09
Xiphophorus alvarezi, by Dave Unruh
Crossocheilus siamensis, a Truly Remarkable Algae Eater, by Tom & Pat Bridges

Greater Pittsburgh Aquarium Society Inc., Finformation: Mar 09
Cyprichromis leptosome 'Utinta', by Roberto Prati

Michiana Aquarium Society, Michiana Tropical Times: Mar 09
Steatocranus tinanti – the Slender Lion Head Cichlid, by Scott Tetzlaff

Hamilton & District Aquarium Society: May 09
Breeding the L-183 White Seam Pleco, by Charles Drew

Kitchener Waterloo Aquarium Society, Fins-N-Tales: May 09
The PlantEd Tank: a Rolling Stone, by Ed Koerner
Corys: a Second Helping, by Ed Koerner

Missouri Aquarium Society Inc., The Darter: Jan/Feb 09
Beautiful Fish in Burkina Faso, Part 1: African "Whales" & Other Ouagadougou Wonders, by Lawrence Kent
Pantanodon stuhlmanni (East coast Lampeye) & Pseudomugil cyanodorsalis (Blue back Blue-eyes) Or Two in a Ten, by Charley Grimes

Missouri Aquarium Society Inc., The Darter: Mar/Apr 09
Tips on Shipping Aquatic Plants, by Harold Walker
The Value of Emerged Growth: Identification of Polygonum persicaria, by Andy Walker
The HAP Chairman's Perspective on the Value of Emerged Growth, by Mike Hellweg

Sarnia Aquarium Society, Aqua Antics: May 09
The Life and Times of Pseudotropheus polit, by Wayne Cole
Breeding the Celebes Rainbow, by Peter Melady
Anubias "Frazeri", by Jack VanderAa

Otopharynx tetrastigma

Joe Reich



If you're reading this article then more likely than not you belong to a local fish club. And, more likely than not, you've probably attended the local club auction. And if you've ever been to an auction then you've probably seen the bag that goes up for bid that no one wants to bid on. I acquired these fish as a "pity bid". What was the reason for such a low price? A couple of answers come to mind, but I think that in the case of these fish it was more because no one seemed to hear of these fish. No one knew what they would grow up to look like.

So it was that I took home a bag of fish that I had no idea of what they were. I thought, "no problem, I'll just Google them on the internet". Well, I did find some info, but it was very sparse. Wikipedia had the best info via links, but after keeping these fish I found it to be somewhat lacking. The German club sites seemed to have a little more info, but then it depended on whether the web translator was working for that page or not. Definitely left me feeling that I wish I knew more German. But they had some totally awesome pictures!

Based solely on photo I.D., I'd say that the fish I was keeping was indeed *Oto Tetrastigma*.

So what about *Otopharynx Tetrastigma*? Well for starters they're from Lake Malawi, no surprises there. Mostly on the southern end of the lake. They're also found in the Shire River and Lake Malombe. This fish is listed on the IUCN red list as threatened. The red list means it is of least concern. They inhabit areas of marshy-swampy habitat and have a mouth that likes to dig in the substrate for invertebrates. I think of them as African eartheaters. They also seem to be quite fond of veggies, as mine like to nibble algae a great deal and French cut green beans won't be turned away. Mine have also picked at najas grass until it died. For this reason I would be hesitant to put them in a planted tank. Oddly, they don't bother my duckweed. In the aquarium they have yet to act finicky toward ANY kind of pellet or flake. Feeding these guys wasn't a problem or issue in any way what so ever! Both the male and female seem to grow to the same length of around 5 inches or 12.5 centimeters.

These fish like to change color a lot, depending on their mood. So I'll start with describing the "basic" coloration...silver with 3 black dots starting with one from behind the gills, another about mid body and the last on the caudal peduncle. Of course if the mood changes they can be just plain silver or have a horizontal black line from just behind the gills to the caudal peduncle. As the fish mature the female will get some red and a little bit of yellow on the edge of her dorsal fin. The male is just spectacular because he doesn't stay silver overall. When he gets mature he turns metallic blue-green with a lot of red and yellow coloration on all fins except the pectorals. Let's not forget to mention the typical yellow egg spots on the anal fin.

When summer came I set these fish outside in a 300 gallon Rubbermaid container, but they didn't do so well. They were very shy and never came up to the top for food what so ever. They never came out to get sinking pellets either. I added rainbow fish to help them settle in, but I would rarely see them. By the end of summer when it was time to bring them in it looked like maybe only 2 or 3 were still alive. They were quite the challenge to bring in. For starters if you've ever kept fish outside for the summer then you'll know what I'm talking about when I mention bottom muck. I would catch a fish or two and let the muck settle so I could see. But I would never see any Oto's. My logic on this was that they must be good at camouflage and I just didn't see them. It took about another year for me to discover their little trick. In the end, five Oto's in five Oto's out. But they weren't much larger than when I set them out in the beginning of summer. I was disappointed to say the least.

They were then put into a 70 gallon with a ton of turquoise rainbows and after about three months started to color up. I ended up with 2 males and 3 females. The less dominant male was nearly constantly harassed by the

dominant male, but I think a couple of things saved him from being killed out right. For starters as I mentioned the tank was HEAVILY populated with rainbows, and that many fish in the tank had him looking everywhere. Secondly, the less dominant male took on the coloration of a female, only he had egg spots. Thirdly the tank was 4 foot long and the dominant male would stay close to his pit which he dug next to the side wall. By spring the dominant male was digging pits and dancing in front of females. By this time I'd had these fish for a year and a half. I had read in one of the German translated web sites that these fish were slow to come to maturity, well they were right. After about 2 months of watching these dances I finally ended up with a female carrying eggs in her mouth. She carried for about 3 and a half weeks before I netted her, fully expecting her to spit out the fry in the net. But she wasn't about to release them so I moved her to her own tank. It didn't take too long, I went up to retrieve a cool malt beverage and when I returned there was a swarm of fry searching for food all around her. I expected maybe 20-30 fry but 50 easy ended up being the norm. But she apparently didn't like my presence as she made some kind of signal that I couldn't pick up on and all the fry went back into her mouth. Definitely one of the coolest things I ever witnessed. After two days she absolutely refused to let any of the fry back into her mouth and it was then that I put her back into the 70.

The next spawn happened about 2 months later with the same female which was earlier than what the German web site had mentioned. Apparently after a female spawns she will rest for about 3 months before spawning again. In my tanks it was closer to a month and a half to two. Soon after the second spawn the other females spawned and the next thing I knew I was putting a female into a fry tank about every three weeks. It didn't take too long before I had a 30 gallon two 29's and a 10 full of fry. The females would only release the fry if she felt comfortable. If she was put into a tank with fry in it already, she would only release fry if the fry in the tank weren't too big. After I ran out of room to put the females in a tank for them to spit out the fry, I would catch the fry in one tank and add them to a tank that already had fry in it. It was at this point that I learned the Oto's secret hiding trick. A couple of the tanks had sand bottoms and while I was netting the last couple of fry I would see the sand swirl from a fish that was darting away. The only problem was I didn't see where it went. I lifted out the sponge filter and no fish. The tank was bare except for sand so I thought maybe it jumped out of the tank. Well after some searching I just couldn't find any fish anywhere, not even on the floor and gave up. But wait, in my empty tank was two more fry that I had somehow missed. I started wondering if I needed my eyes checked. Okay no problem, just net them and we'll be done. Again there was the swirling sand and no fish. I checked the floor again and came up empty. So I went back to the tank and started watching everywhere for these fry. After about 10 minutes the sand swirled where I had

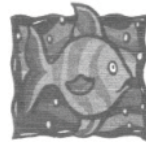


last seen it swirl, and bingo, one scarred Oto fry was watching my next move. So that was their little magic trick! I had only seen those sand diving tricks on one of the learning channels, but here it was happening in my own tank, COOL! I have since changed substrate in those two tanks, but I've have had a chance to witness sand diving several more times before it was changed to a more coarse gravel.

These guys might be on the threatened list, but not in my tanks! I think I got quite the interesting buy for a pity bid!

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The Goods on Goodeids

Wayne Toven

In the early years of my 20 year span of fish keeping I concentrated mostly on cichlids, and Joanne kept the livebearers. As the fish room slowly grew thanks to club auctions, garage sales and yard sales, I branched out into some oddball fish and catfish. The fish room, which some people would say has kind of gotten out of control, actually controls three rooms. The basement has the majority of the aquariums, everywhere you turn there are bubbling tanks with too many fish to count, then went the family room, which contains only five tanks, but the smallest is 120 gallon, the largest 265 gallons. Then the laundry room was the next to get hit, with 15 tanks, four 20 gallon longs, four 40 gallon breeders, four 55 gallons, a 75 gallon, a 90 gallon, and a 180 gallon. I think I have almost reached my limit. Inside that is, outside are seven in ground ponds, and ten 110 gallon tubs. For the last two summers, since I got the tubs from Eric Bodrock, they have been stocked with a variety of livebearers, they also contained various pond plants, marginal plants, and water lilies. The livebearers did quite well and spawned, I guess the live foods, sunlight, algae, and whatever else Mother Nature provided, was just the ticket for success. This year I am trying a few different species, Gold and checkered barbs, not in the same tub of course, Red Irian rainbows (*Glossolepis incisus*), *Geophagus* Red Bahia cichlids, to see if they do as well, and some livebearers. Over the last seven years my fish keeping interests have leaned more towards livebearers, but not that many are of the common varieties, platys, mollies, guppies, and swordtails, out of the 34 species of livebearers I have gotten to spawn, 21 species have been Goodeids.

You might ask, what is a Goodeid? Well I'm, going to try and explain the basics. First of all Goodeids are a family of viviparous freshwater fishes endemic to Mexico. Viviparous means the bearing of live young developed from eggs that have been fertilized internally. In the females womb the developing fry receive all or most of their needs for nutrition and respiration directly from the mother through a trophotaenia. Trophotaenia are out growths from the embryonic fry that intermingle with folds in the vascularized lining of the female's womb to form a placenta. As the embryonic fry mature, the trophotaenia is largest at mid – gestation, then gradually shrinks in size until the Goodeid fry is born, at which time it can be seen still attached for a short time until it is shed. This is one of the specializations that set Goodeids apart from other livebearers, other unique features are the tooth structure, chromosome structure, and a mus-

cular anal fin structure known as an andropodium, which functions as a primitive copulatory organ.

The common name for goodeids is the split fins; the shape of the andropodium resembles a mitten. The first 6 – 8 rays of the anterior (front) section of the fin are crowded, shortened, and separated from the rest of the fin by a notch. This andropodium does not penetrate the female, but is used by the male to pass sperm bundles to her. Female goodeids cannot store sperm like female poeciliids, so the act of copulation is necessary for each pregnancy. Sexual dimorphism is fairly obvious, males are usually smaller than females, and only males have an andropodium.



The family Goodeidae currently has 17 genera containing 37 species. They inhabit warm and cool springs, marshes, lakes, creeks, rivers, canals, and other artificial habitats. Except for a few darter like and big river species, most prefer shallow waters not more than 3 feet deep, with quiet or slow moving currents. These habitats are mostly limited to the Rio Lerma basin located in the central high plains of Mexico, west of Mexico City, at elevations between 1000 – 2300 meters. There is however some species found in brackish water on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Goodeid populations have noticed significant decreases mainly due to pollution and habitat destruction. Because of the low importance of Goodieds to the Mexican fisheries and industry the family is basically ignored by conservation efforts. Several species are on the threatened, endangered, and extinct in the wild lists, and one species is completely extinct. You will not find Goodeids in pet shops; at least I don't recall ever seeing any. About the only ways to obtain some is through fish club members, club auctions, or go to an American Livebearer Association annual convention. You can talk to other aquarist, hear speakers, and get some of those hard to find endangered fish, and help to keep them from going EXTINCT! There's no going back from extinct...yet. Th... Th... That's all folks!

References:

Freshwater Fishes of Mexico
By Robert Rush Miller with the
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Steven Mark Norris

Livebearing Fishes By John Dawes

Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



Nandopsis haitiensis

Bob Miller



The “Haitiensis” or Odo as they are called in their native habitat are quite large and are considered food fish. As a home aquarium pet they require at least a 75 gallon tank for a single large specimen or a 125 gallon or larger tank for a sizeable pair.

The pair that I currently have is housed in a 40 gallon breeder tank (42x12x18). The male is about 5.5 inches long and the female about $\frac{3}{4}$ ” smaller. When not in breeding dress they look similar at this size – both have a silver background color with irregular black spots, much like a crappie for those of you who fish. The males dorsal, anal and caudal fins have a yellow tinge to them, the females are clear.

This pair is left of a group of six I acquired in the springtime when they were about 1” in length. They did fine together until they reached about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches and they began to reach fish puberty. That’s when the problems began. They were all together in a 50 gallon tank with several flower pots and a handful of small *Cryptoheros cutteri*. One day I found the remains of one of the “haitis” on the tank floor being picked at by the other fish. Thinking nothing of it, after all it was a tank full of Cichlids, I removed the fish and life went on. A couple of days later the scene was repeated with another body on the bottom of the tank. Checking the tank a little more closely, I noticed one fish, the largest of the remaining four, was very silvery with contrasting black spots and the others were black, a velvety black from head to caudal peduncle. The fins were absolutely clear causing the fish to look finless at first glance. One of the black fish was inside one of the flowerpots and shining a flashlight on it revealed about 75-100 eggs inside.

As I was in the process of moving my fish from one room to another, I decided to take the flowerpot out of the tank and just place it into an empty 10 gallon I had setup several days before. Lo and behold, several days later I noticed that the eggs were all fungused. The remaining 4 fish were moved to the 30 gallon breeder tank but one of them didn’t take to kindly to the move and died a few days later.

Several weeks later the silver one and one of the black ones laid eggs inside of one of the flowerpots again. Again the eggs fungused but I didn’t touch them. This time the silver male and the black female fought like crazy. Eventually I decided I better separate them tomorrow. Unfortunately, tomorrow was a little too late. The male had killed the female and she was floating belly up. The other female had also taken a few hits and had a few minor injuries. To try to keep from losing this female, I divided the two in the same tank with a piece of

ceiling light grid. This worked fine keeping them separated yet able to see each other. After a few days they both began moving the gravel. I was hoping maybe they would spawn even though separated as I have read about and been told by other cichlid breeders that this may happen. Well, that's exactly what happened, sort of. They spawned all right but the female laid eggs in the flower pot about eight inches away from the divider. Obviously, these eggs were not fertilized and I don't know if the male even knew they existed.

So, we try again. A few days later I asked my wife if she had noticed the male was on other side where the female was and she said "no". Not knowing for sure how he got where he was, I figured if they were getting along reasonably well then I would let them alone and see what developed. I watched them carefully over



the next few days ready to replace the divider if need be but eventually I saw what I was hoping for.....eggs. They had laid eggs again just inside the mouth of the flowerpot in almost a 360 deg. pattern. There were about 200 eggs, large in size about 1.2 mm to 2 mm in length and amber in color. At 76 deg. they hatched in about 72 hours and after about 6 days they were free swimming.

I began feeding them the de-encapsulated Brine Shrimp and they grew pretty quickly. At about 3/16th of an inch in size, I could see a horizontal stripe on the sides of the fry, probably a pattern used for keeping the school together as in the wild. The "haits" are primarily a vegetarian despite its size and large mouth. The adults love zucchini and are always picking at the vegetation in the tank and even the algae on the rocks and glass. I noticed the female exhibiting a peculiar habit one morning which I have never seen before. There is Najas Grass lying on the tank bottom and a fairly thick layer of algae on the gravel, rocks and glass. The female would get down on the gravel and "scuttle" across the bottom gathering plant and algae material in her mouth and "spit" it into the fry cloud. She did this a number of times appearing to deliver food to the area of the fry.

Well, they are still growing and by the time you read this, I will probably be flooding the market with "Odo's". I had originally hoped to get a pair, spawn them at a small size and get rid of them before I needed an Olympic sized pool but, they are pretty interesting and I may just keep the pair and see what happens from here.

Although I have heard they can lay up to 1000 eggs when they get bigger, I am sure I can depend on all of you to help me out when it comes time to thin the herd.



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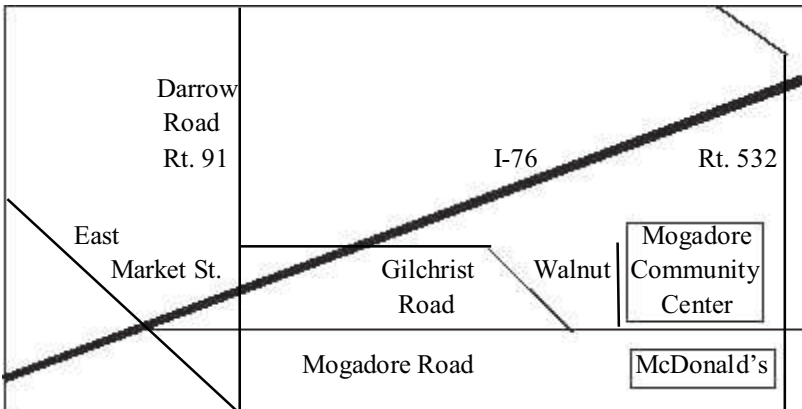
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