

# FISH TALES

ISSUE 136

NOVEMBER 2006

FREE

AMECA SPLENDENS  
SEE PAGE 13 FOR DETAILS



16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TROPICAL  
**FISH SHOW**

Saturday, November 18th, 2006  
Bermuda Aquarium Museum and Zoo

**9am to 4:30pm**

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BERMUDA FRY-ANGLE AQUARIUM SOCIETY

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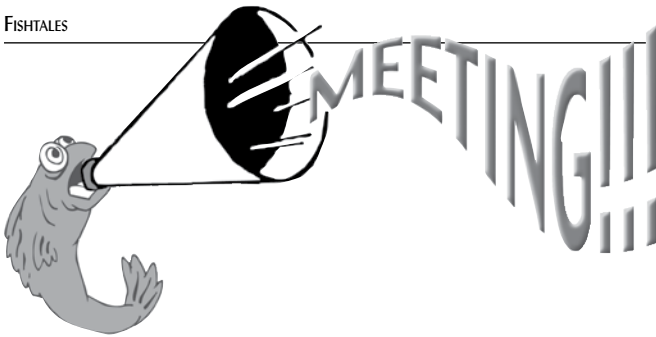


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## NOVEMBER – ANNUAL FISH SHOW & BANQUET

- **November** – Annual Fish Show and Banquet,
  - **Weds 15th** – Set up stands, tanks and blower etc
  - **Thurs 16th** – Accept show entries 5pm - 10pm (volunteers needed)
  - **Fri 17th** – Morning judging by Spencer Jack Evening Banquet and Presentation at the BAMZ Main Hall (7pm until)
  - **Sat 18th** Show 9am to 4:30pm - volunteers needed for various time-slots.

**We need assistance to set the stands and tanks up on Wednesday evening, volunteers needed for various time slots during the show, and finally Saturday evening take down and clean up**

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

- **December** – Annual Xmas Party – Details to Come

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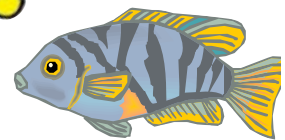
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**NEED YOUR HELP!!!!!!**

Need your articles, comments, book or equipment reviews for future issues of Fish Tales



## Bermuda Fry-Angle Society



If you are interested in joining the Bermuda Fry-Angle Society, just come along to our next meeting to see what we are about. Meetings are held on the third Friday of every month either at the Police Recreation Club or the Lecture Rooms, behind the Bermuda Aquarium, Museum & Zoo, or contact Walter Welch., Membership Coordinator at 292-3828(w) or email: wally\_da\_kid@hotmail.com. He will be happy to provide any further information or just sign you up. Application forms are also available at Noah's Ark (just ask at cashier's desk.) You can also download an application form from our website: [www.fryangle.com](http://www.fryangle.com)

Membership fees are \$20 for the year, and payable to Bermuda Fry-Angle Aquarium Society.

# PRESIDENT'S PODIUM



Our visiting speaker for October was Dr. David Schleser, a former curator of the Dallas Aquarium and current onboard biologist for Margarita Tours Peruvian Amazon tropical fish collecting expeditions.

On his first trip to Bermuda, Dave gave a powerpoint presentation of diseases that affect tropical fish and he provided recommendations on treatments for those diseases. Following the talk, an accompanying document was sent to members on the e-mail list. The document lists the various diseases and treatments. If you are a member and have not received a copy of this document, please contact me.

Dave donated some interesting fish for auction, including some rare species of Apistogramma dwarf cichlids, hard-to-find Dicrossus maculatus, a pair of attractive killifish and some interesting colour varieties of half-moon Bettas. Society meetings continue to be the place for anyone who is interested in finding unusual fish species – provided they are willing to shell out a few dollars and out-bid the other members who are also interested in the great fish that we have on auction.

Our attention now turns to our Annual Tropical Fish Show that will be held at the Bermuda Aquarium, Museum & Zoo (BAMZ) this month. Entries will need to be in place by Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> as judging takes place on Friday 17<sup>th</sup>. The results will be announced at the member's banquet on Friday night when the various trophies will be presented. The show will then open to the public on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November.

The annual show is a great opportunity for Bermuda's fish-keepers to show off their best fish and I hope that many of you will enter something in the show. Full

information on the show and how to enter is included in the show rules, which are available at Noah's Ark, together with entry forms.

This year's judge will be Spencer Jack from Winnipeg, Canada. Spencer will also be giving a presentation at the Friday night banquet. The presentation will cover one of Spencer's collecting trips to Bolivia. He will also be donating some fish for auction at the banquet. With food, drinks, presentation of awards, a visiting speaker and a fish auction, the Friday night banquet promises to be a great night. If you are not currently a member of the Society, there is still time to join before the banquet so that you can come out and enjoy a great evening.

Noah's Ark will again be donating a nice door prize for the show as an added incentive for people to come along and see the fish on show. Simply by walking into the show you will be eligible to win a nice aquarium, courtesy of Noah's Ark. So, I hope that you will all mark the 18<sup>th</sup> November on your calendars and will come out to see some of Bermuda's best tropical fish.

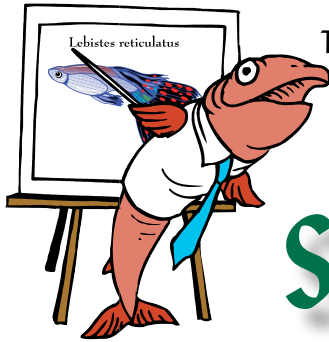


## Need more information on Your Fish or Plants?

Well check out our library, we have some great books for you to borrow and its free to members.

Call Carol at 236-1533  
Mon-Fri between 9:30 & 6pm

*A complete list is available on our web site: [www.fryangle.com](http://www.fryangle.com)*



THIS MONTH'S

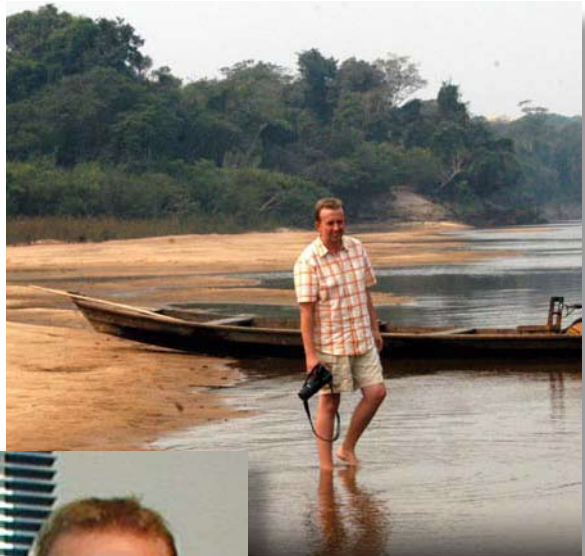
**GUEST SPEAKER...**

# SPENCER JACK

Spencer has been active within the aquaria hobby since the age of five. A true “cichlidiot”, he had been working exclusively with cichlids over the last twenty years. He has since expanded his horizons to include all types of tropical fish. Spencer has been an active hobbyist within Winnipeg for a number of years. Some of his roles within the fish hobbyist community include; Co-founder of the Aquarium Society of Winnipeg (1989), Founder and President of the Canadian Cichlid Association (2000).

Spencer now owns and operates a tropical fish wholesale business, The Afishionados, and is still an avid fishkeeper and breeder.

Spencer's enthusiasm, humour and dedication towards the aquarium hobby is easily witnessed through his lectures. All of Spencer's lectures are full multimedia presentations using PowerPoint, and almost all of the pictures in use are original pictures taken by Spencer during his years in the hobby and travels across North, South, and Central America. Spencer is a part of the American Cichlid Association speakers program.





# 16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TROPICAL **FISH SHOW**

Saturday, November 18th, 2006  
Bermuda Aquarium Museum and Zoo

**9am to 4:30pm**

**COME AND SEE  
BERMUDA'S MOST**

**BEAUTIFUL**

**AND UNUSUAL**

**FISH ON DISPLAY**

**AND IN COMPETITION**

- Tropical Fish Show
- Door Prize

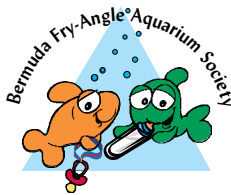
## **SHOW YOUR OWN BEST FISH**

**Anyone can enter the show  
Showing your fish can be satisfying,  
fun, and easy to do**

*Entry forms are available on  
[www.fryangle.com](http://www.fryangle.com) or at Noah's Ark*

**All entries for the show must be in before 9pm  
Thursday 16th November, 2006**

For information regarding showing or visiting  
contact Craig Morfitt at [morefish@transact.bm](mailto:morefish@transact.bm)  
or Peter Marsh at 238-1406, [pmarsh@northrock.bm](mailto:pmarsh@northrock.bm)



The Bermuda Fry-Angle Aquarium Society is a group of dedicated fish hobbyists that meets monthly for informative presentations on fish keeping, including presentations from overseas speakers and fish auctions.

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THIS ARTICLE REPRINTED FROM

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Lecture presented by Dave Schleser on Friday, October 20th, 2006

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# Some Selected Fish Diseases and My Favourite Treatments

*By David M. Schleser*

Included in these notes are lesser known treatments for several potentially serious and frequently mismanaged illnesses of aquarium fish. I am NOT including the use of common and effective commercially available treatments for easily recognized and treated diseases such as ich.

## PROTOZOANS

**SLIMY SKIN DISEASE:** Caused by external protozoa [Ichthyobodo (Costia), Chilodonella, Tetrahymena, etc.]

Symptoms: Blue, slimy mucous often starting on back and slowly or rapidly progressing to cover fish. Depending upon causative agent there might be reddening of the skin with sloughing and fin deterioration (the most obvious sign of Tetrahymena infections of guppies). Once gills are involved breathing becomes labored and fish quickly dies from suffocation.

Treatment: Formalin (37% formaldehyde). 2 drops per gallon repeated twice at 2 day intervals. No water changes needed between or after treatment.

Special considerations: Formalin reduces dissolved oxygen. Provide good aeration and do not use at water temps. over 80F. Do not use if gill inflammation or open sores present.

**BROOKLYNELLA:** A marine ciliated protozoan related to Cryptocaryon (marine ich) but much more resistant to treatment.

Symptoms: Small, pale, mucousy areas that increase in severity until skin starts to peel away; labored breathing.

Treatments:

1. Once or even twice daily freshwater dips for 1 - 5 minutes, depending on species.
2. Formalin; 2.6 ml. in 10 liters (2.6 gallons) of seawater in separate container for 30 minutes. Repeat as needed daily.

## WORMS

**INTESTINAL NEMATODES, CAPILLARIA, TAPEWORMS, ETC.:** Symptoms may include emaciation, refusal to feed, stunted growth, belly area slightly swollen as if fish had eaten a large meal. etc. Definitive diagnosis requires analysis of a stool sample or necropsy.

Treatments:

1. There are several fairly effective medicated foods and medications available at pet stores. "Disco-Worm" is one of the better.
2. Fenbendazole (Panacur): 1% active ingredient incorporated into a gel diet, or 100 mg/kilogram fish weight mixed with food given by stomach tube.

**Comments:** Must be obtained from a veterinarian. Comes as 10% suspension. Extremely effective. One treatment generally suffices. Used widely by public aquariums. DO NOT USE ON ICTALURID CATFISH.

3. Levamisole. Generally available as an injectable solution of 135 mg active ingredient per ml. Use at dosage of 10 mg/kg of fish weight in intramuscular injection.

**Comments:** Good for fish not feeding

but not as safe as Panacur.

4. Praziquantel (Droncit). Must be obtained from a veterinarian.

**Dosage:** 10 mg per kilogram of the injectable form of this drug is effective against tapeworms and many other internal parasitic worms, as well as external flukes (see “flukes”, below).

## FLUKES:

**Note:** All external fluke infections are easily diagnosed from a mucous smear examined under a low power microscope.

Eye flukes (*Neobenedenia*) can destroy the cornea of marine fish's eyes and seem particularly common on marine angels, butterfly fish and Moorish idols. May mimic appearance of a bacterial eye rot. These flukes are large enough to see with the naked eye and appear like rather transparent skin tabs on the surface of the eye.

### Gill and Body Flukes

Both these flukes are major, and often unrecognized problems in both marine and freshwater aquarium fish.

1. Gill flukes (*Dactylogyrids*) can be a serious problem in many South American cichlids, particularly discus and angelfish, and goldfish. Symptoms include spitting and coughing motions, refusal to eat, and breathing alternately through one gill and then the other. Left untreated, the gills will start to deteriorate, become secondarily infected with bacteria and fungus, ultimately resulting in death by suffocation.
2. Body Flukes (*Gyrodactylids*). It is said that “gyros” on goldfish and koi are as common as fleas on dogs! I have found these flukes on numerous species of wild caught native and exotic fishes. Symptoms include twitching and scratching, pin point red dots on fins and body, and lethargy from blood loss. Left untreated, fins can start to slough and secondary infections invade injuries.

### Treatments:

1. Probably the best and safest is Praziquantel (Droncit). Unfortunately not available at pet stores and must be obtained from a veterinarian, or on-line from a veterinary supply house. <[www.Goldfishconnection.com](http://www.Goldfishconnection.com)> offers it in a less expensive generic form.

Also comes in an injectable form and in a canine and feline size pill. Each feline contains 34 mg active ingredient. One pill dissolved in one gallon water equals 9 parts per million.

Use as a 8-10ppm bath for 3 hours. For slimy fish such as goldfish, koi and wrasses 2 parts per million for 24 hours seems to work better.

Can also be used as an injectable drug at rate of 10 mg per kilogram of fish weight. This will also eliminate tapeworms and many other internal parasitic worms.

### Special considerations:

\* Drug is relatively expensive and therefore not practical to use in an already infected aquarium.

\* Gill flukes are egg layers and this drug does not kill the eggs.

**Note:** Since flukes are so cosmopolitan and relatively difficult to notice until they become a major problem. I strongly recommend that all new fish - particularly wild caught marine fish and goldfish and koi that are known to almost always harbor flukes - be treated with praziquantel while in quarantine

2. Dylox (Masotin, trichlorofon, etc..) is the most commonly used drug for the treatment of external flukes of aquarium fish and is the active ingredient in nearly all over-the-counter remedies such as Life Bearer, Dyacide, Fluke tabs. Unfortunately many flukes have developed total resistance to this drug. It is also toxic to quite a few fish, including all piranhas and their relatives, darters, and some primi-

tive fish. Follow manufacturers' instructions carefully and never overdose as its therapeutic dose is quite close to its lethal dose. Do not get drug on hands, mucous membranes, or inhale as it is a very toxic material. Deactivates in aquarium within 24 hours so no water change is required after treatment

### EXTERNAL FUNGUS (*Saprolegnia*, etc.)

There are many proprietary remedies sold in pet stores. I will mention my favorite 2 treatments.

1. Salt: 1 tablespoon per gallon.  
**Note:** Will kill plants and snails
2. Potassium permanganate: 1/8 grain per gallon, or use a proprietary formulation and follow manufacturer's treatment recommendation. Will turn water wine purple, but this fades in a few days.  
**Note:** best to treat affected fish in a separate clean container free of excess organic matter. Kills plants and many invertebrates.

Can also be used at a concentration of 1 to 5.00 as a 5 minute bath.

Other treatments sometimes recommended include methylene blue, and various copper formulations. Both have severe drawbacks. Methylene blue rapidly destroys biological filtration and can result in a rapid rise in toxic ammonia levels, and copper (Aquari-sol® and Freshwater Copper Safe®) can be dangerously toxic when used in soft water. Both copper and methylene blue will kill plants.

Treatment of advanced cases can be attempted by using the antifungal Griseofulvin (Fulvinex) at the rate of one 500mg Fulvinex tablet in 50 liters (13.2 gallons) of water.

### BACTERIAL INFECTIONS

Antibiotics should ONLY be used in the treatment of bacterial infections!!! You should never mix antibiotics. If one does not work, before trying a different one remove the first with activated carbon and a 50% water change.

Most bacteria that cause fish diseases are of

the group referred to as Gram-negative. Unfortunately, many of the most commonly sold antibiotics for fish are active against Gram-positive bacteria. The aquarist should also be aware that many antibiotics will kill nitrifying bacteria in a biological filter resulting in severe decrease in water quality.

In addition, when antibiotics are added to a freshwater aquarium's water most are not absorbed from the water into the fish's body (Note: In salt water this is partially negated because marine fish are constantly drinking sea water to maintain their body fluid balance). This limits their usefulness to superficial external infections. Exceptions are the nitrofurans, naladixic acid, and to lesser degrees chloramphenicol and terramycin.

Another problem is that many disease-causing bacteria have developed a resistance to many of the antibiotics.

Suggested treatments for severe bacterial infections of particularly valuable fish:

1. Ceftazidime (Fortaz). An injectable, expensive antibiotic that must be obtained from a veterinarian. After reconstitution of the powder give an intramuscular injection of 0.1 ml. per kilogram of fish weight. Repeat every 3 days for 3 treatments. While I served as curator/aquatic biologist at the Dallas Aquarium we accomplished some truly remarkable cures in almost moribund freshwater and marine fish with this drug. Can be used in conjunction with nitrofurazone in the water.
2. Chloramphenicol succinate: Must also be obtained from a veterinarian. Comes as 1 gram of powder in a vial that is reconstituted with sterile water. Must be handled carefully because it can cause blood dyscrasias in humans. Do not put hands in aquarium being treated with this drug. Do not dispose of aquarium water into sewer system - better to siphon outside to be absorbed by earth where it will be broken down.  
Will not destroy bacterial filtration. Safe in freshwater and marine aquariums.

**Note:** It is easier to figure dosage for small fish if stock solution is diluted to 10% of its strength by adding 9 parts sterile water to one part reconstituted drug.

**Dosage:** 1 gram/50 gallons. Repeat in one week if needed after 50% water change and/or placing 12 hours of activated carbon in filter. Can also be used as an injectable at 40 mg reconstituted powder per kilogram of fish weight once daily for 6 days. I have had some fish, including Centrarchids develop skin ulcers at injection site.

3. Amikacin. Must be obtained from a veterinarian. Comes in strength of 50 mg/ml. Expensive. Easier to figure dosage for small fish if stock solution is diluted to 10% of its strength by adding 9 ml. sterile water with one ml of drug solution. Dosage: 2.5-5.0 mg/kilogram fish body weight. Repeat every 3 days for 3 - 5 treatments.
4. Antibiotic foods: An excellent way to get the drug into a fish without running risk of affecting biological filtration. Only useful

if fish are feeding. Use twice daily for 7 days. There are recipes for making such foods in most good fish disease texts, such as those by Untergasser and Noga (See suggested Reading, below).

A very simple medicated food can be made by mixing one capsule of "Furan-2" with one pound of thawed proprietary or homemade gel diet and refreezing the mixture.

### SUGGESTED READING

*These are listed in decreasing order according to my own personal preferences but all have much useful information. Photographs are particularly good in Untergasser and Andrews et al.*

- Noga, Edward J. D. V. M. . *Fish Disease; Diagnosis and Treatment*. Mosby. 1996
- Untergasser, Dieter. *Handbook of Fish Diseases*. TFH. 1989
- Andrews, Chris, E. Adran, N. Carrington. *The Manual of Fish Health*. Tetra Press. 1988
- Fairfield, Terry. *A Commonsense Guide to Fish Health*. Barron's. 2000



## ACA 2007 Annual Convention

The 2007 Annual Convention  
will be held in Sacramento, California,  
*hosted by the*  
**Sacramento Aquarium Society (SAS)**

**Thursday, July 19 - Sunday, July 22, 2007**



Go to <http://www.cichlid.org/ACA2007Convention.html> for more details

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# The Lighter Side of Tropheus

by **Dave Ball**

*President of the Southern Colorado Aquarium Society*

**T**ropheus. Hmmmm? A tough fish to raise some say. Maybe so, maybe not. I had my share of problems with my first serious attempt. They still spawned after nine months of caring for them. I kept them wet and fed. Gave them plenty of room and places to hide, let alone the number of various spawning sites I made for them. Yet, they still managed to be a frustrating fish to get to spawn. I am still hoping for them to spawn with my *Synodontis multipunctatus*. Yes, I know this is reaching a bit, but how many people out there have tried this combination? A Lake Tanganyika catfish with a cichlid from the same lake. I am asking for a long, slow, and .... It's called self-inflicted torture. I asked for it. I've got it. This is not why I am writing this article. I have to in order to get my B.A.P. points. I like writing, so this is not a problem. The problem is what category do my fish fall into?

The names of Tropheus are changing again. Nothing major, but it still causes some confusion. I'll try to explain this as best as I can. Some of the Tropheus moorii complex has been broken up into two different groups. T. moorii and T. sp. "Black" are now the current groups. The main difference is, those that have a dark body with color in certain areas fall into the T. sp. "Black" group. These fish are, just to name a few, "Orange Flame", "Red Saddle", "Kaiser II", "Lime Spot" and "Cherry Spot". The latter is the main subject of this article. This is just too much to handle. I have to keep track of all this and it became time to call in some help.

I spent a lot of time tracking down the person

who could help me out. Yes, you guessed it. The man himself. The one who started this whole mess. The one, the only, Dr. Trofayyus Morereeye. Yea, the one the fish was named after. Who else can one go to when you need help? I found his number in the local telephone book, the yellow pages that is. It's listed under pets. He has a toll free number also. Its 1-800-933-7465-34789-3474- 92837. That's 1-800-WEDRINK DIRTY FISH WATER, if you have a problem remembering telephone numbers.

After many hours of discussion about the keeping of the hardy, but trying Tropheus, I came to the conclusion that my Tropheus are an entirely different group all by themselves. I have proof on this. Tropheus create their own sub-species in the aquaria. There are many people out in the fish-keeping hobby who have gone through this intra-speciation, but it was unknown to them. I shall explain. They used to be called T. moorii "Cherry Spot". They come from Bulu Point (you called it right, Doogie). It's simple enough. Now they are called T. sp. "Black". What has happened to the color? Some have red, some yellow, and some have orange. I am in the dark, so to speak, on this. I know it will get organized some day. What I want to inform the other hobbyists of is this change within a confined group. I know this goes on and I just want to clear some things up.

My T. sp. "Black" "Cherry Spots" are not black. They are a different color. They should be called T. sp. "Dark Chocolate Brown with Two Red Patches on Both Sides". Of course that changes with the mood of the fish. See what I mean, they've changed already. It gets worse from there. I bought

these “Cherry Spot” Tropheus at our club auction. This was just what I was waiting for. A chance to get a group started and take the plunge. Things went great at the start. The first eight were doing fine. I knew I had to increase the number of the group, so I bought eight more from Doogie. Things couldn’t have been better. Young Tropheus growing up with the catfish. It should work out just fine, I thought to myself.

That’s when they decided to go through this confined group change syndrome. A few of them got together and went on a hunger strike. Some people call this “bloat” but it’s not, I later found out. Normally you treat this problem with “Clout” and things get better. I called my friend Jon Kelley to see if he had any and he loaned me half a bottle. This is why you have to have fish friends. They give you half a bottle and you buy them a full bottle to replace that half a bottle. Then you call Doogie to find out if double dose is the right measure. It is if you don’t have scaleless catfish in your 125-gallon tank. I just about went into cardiac arrest when I found that out. I had already put some medicine in the tank. Those 22 *S. multipunctatus* survived the whole thing. They are very hardy little animals. I still have nightmares about that.

This is when I first noticed that this lack of eating is merely a change in the sub-species. The fish undergo a cranial fluid deprivation brought on by gastro-intestinal blockage. This in turn causes the genes to modify themselves. The new species is documented under the name, *T. sp. “Dead”*. A very common variant found in many aquariums around the world. Most often seen or found in the early morning hours right around breakfast time. After the medication process is over, the tank returns to a pseudo-normal state. It looks OK, but you never know for sure until they spawn.

Mine finally spawned. It took almost nine months, but they managed to make babies. Keep in mind I wanted catfish fry. I’ll settle for the cichlids, *S. multipunctatus* babies are still the main goal. Here is where they changed again. This one female would not eat. Everyone else did. I wondered if it was going to start all over again, this not eating thing. It didn’t. She was being stubborn. She didn’t look like she was holding. This has turned out to be next in line of the new sub-species.

They are called *T. sp. var. “Let’s Mess With The Owner’s Head Until I Start To Show”*. This change lasts about 10 days. After that another change occurs. Around the 21st day the metamorphosis is complete. The female in question has evolved into one of two hypo subspecies. Which are *T. sp. var. aff. “Nah Nah! You Can’t Catch Me”* and/or *var. aff. “I’m Not Gonna Release My Babies Until I’m Darn Good And Ready”*. This has a way of getting under the skin of the owner, namely me.

I had had enough of this at the 29th day. I tore the tank down, caught the female in question and proceeded to strip the fry. Mind you, this is not fun. The fry came out rather easy. They should. They’ve been in there long enough. No catfish. Just little Tropheus. Five to be exact. The magic number to get B.A.P. points. This is when I found out about the other sub-variants of this fish. The fry turn out to be the same fish described under two names. They are *T. sp. var. “Very Small and Striped”* and *T. sp. var. “Oh! They’re So Cute”*.

If there are any of you who read this article and still want to raise some Tropheus, if you haven’t tried already, give it a whirl, IT’S WORTH EVERY MINUTE OF IT!

Reference: Konings, Ad (Editor), (1993) *The Cichlids Yearbook*, “Speciation, DNA, and Tropheus”, Cichlid Press; Vol. 3; pp. 24 - 27. St. Leon-Rot, Germany.

## Hints/Tips/Tricks

### General

When coarse-textured filter pads or sponges are no longer usable in the filter, don’t throw them out. Rinse them thoroughly and use them as scrubbers to clean tanks, ornaments and other aquarium equipment.

– Al Priest

GREATER CITY AQUARIUM SOCIETY – NEW YORK

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THIS ARTICLE REPRINTED FROM  
AQUARTICLES.COM

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*Ameca splendens. Male top left, female front centre*

## Ameca splendens

by **Gerry Hawksby**

*of the Ryedale Aquarist Society, England*

Generally speaking, the group of fish we know as live bearing tooth carps have always been easily identified by the fact that males do not have an anal fin; instead this part of their anatomy is modified to form what is correctly known as the gonopodium. However, in the mid 1970s another family of livebearers was discovered in Central America, and more particularly Mexico, in which both sexes had an anal fin, albeit the first two rays of which in males were much shorter and formed what some biologists call the andropodium, whilst others refer to it as the spermatopodium.

This family is collectively known as the Goodeidae, of which there are perhaps upwards of 50 species, one such member being *Ameca splendens* (butterfly goodeid) - an attractive and very

brightly coloured fish which sadly, because of its size, would not, in my opinion, make an ideal community tank inmate; this is not because of any aggressive nature, for I have found it quite peaceful in that respect, but at a mature size of 8 to 12cms (that's almost 5 inches in old money) its boisterous and hyperactive behaviour could be rather intimidating to its smaller cousins. In all other respects it would be a good fish for the novice aquarist, being quite hardy and tolerant of most tap water. It seems to prefer a vegetable diet and is a great browser on algae, which is easily cultivated by strong light. Good filtration will prove beneficial.

The fish are ready breeders, but the number of fry will be small, perhaps only one or two and never more than 25-30. Compared with other live-

bearers this may seem very few, but when each fry is almost 2cms long at birth one begins to realise that even 20 is an almost impossible number. Little wonder the female appears quite hollow bellied after the event.

Sexing fry in the early stages is not the easiest undertaking until such time as the observer's eye becomes practiced at discerning the minute extra lobe like appendage on the anal fin of males. As the fry mature so the task eases. Once sexual maturity has been reached then there are no problems in sorting males from females. The body colour patterns remain similar with multi-speckled glittering dots of olive, yellow, silver and black. The black dots become more numerous along the centre of the body, creating what appears to be a solid lateral line, but on closer inspection it is seen not to be the case. However the caudal fin of the male does have two vertical bands of colour, the inner being black and the outer yellow. The female caudal fin remains clear.

As mentioned earlier, most of the goodeid species originate from Central America and Mexico. *Ameca splendens* is found throughout this area and ironically one of its main locations is the Rio Ameca (Rio meaning river). I think I am right in saying that this is the only instance where a fish's location has been used to form its generic name. There are of course a great many examples of a species' name being a derivation of its site of discovery i.e. *amazonensis*, *brasiliensis*, *cameronensis* etc. (from the Amazon, Brazil or Cameroon). The species name in this case being *splendens* which translates as bright or glittering.

My first experiences with *Ameca splendens* was around the mid 1980s. Sadly I don't appear to have kept a complete record of when and where I obtained them. My card index system only refers to the fact that one pair of *Ameca splendens* along with one pair of *Xenotoca eiseni* had been purchased. Perhaps it was my intention to fill in the details later, and it got put off and put off until it was overlooked completely.

Thankfully I can be more precise about my current specimens. On 18th May 2005 my 'old friend' David Marshall called to see me bearing a

jar of six *Ameca splendens* (one semi-mature pair and four immature fry). It was nice to be reunited with this specie again. The fish settled quickly and, to my amazement, began to consume the duckweed which completely covered the water surface. After four months not one piece remained which resulted in me having to replenish supplies from other tanks.

I don't know whether the additional diet of duckweed has been responsible in any way for conditioning my fish, but offspring have been produced at frequent intervals, for example, 11th July 11 fry, 25 September 5 fry and, more recently, 7th October 18 fry. In each case the fry were born under the cover of darkness. Could this be nature's way of protecting the fry from predation by other species? Unlike most other livebearers, the parents do not have predatory tendencies towards their own young; for one thing the newly hatched fry are too large to be swallowed by them anyway.

Finally, recent environmental tragedies in Mexico have made me contemplate what may have happened to colonies of river fish, such as *Ameca splendens*, which have been washed out of their environment to end up who knows where? Disasters of such magnitude and unnerving frequency make one realise just how fragile the ecology is and that the aftermath of such conditions may well be responsible for causing the extinction in the wild of species endemic to this region.

## Hints/Tips/Tricks

### General

Use white toothpaste (not the "gel") to remove surface scratches on an acrylic aquarium

– *Bernard Harrigan*

GREATER CITY AQUARIUM SOCIETY – NEW YORK

# BERMUDA FRY-ANGLE AQUARIUM SOCIETY

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## Society Membership

Membership to the Bermuda Fry-Angle Aquarium Society is open to any resident of Bermuda who has an interest in tropical fish. The annual membership fee is \$20. The Society's financial year runs from April 1st to March 31st.

Meetings are held on the third Friday of every month. Meeting place is either the Police Recreation Club or the Lecture Rooms, behind the Bermuda Aquarium, Museum & Zoo. Occasionally meetings are held elsewhere. Check the "meeting" column in this newsletter for details of upcoming meetings.

If you would like further information please contact:

Walter Welch., *Membership Coordinator*  
at 292-3828(w) or email: wally\_da\_kid@hotmail.com

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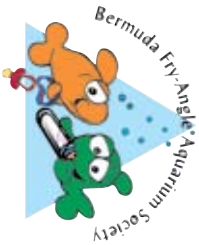
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# FISH TALES

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AQUARIUM SOCIETY

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## 16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TROPICAL FISH SHOW

Saturday, November 18th, 2006  
Bermuda Aquarium Museum and Zoo

**9am to 4:30pm**