

Program Preview

February, 2017

By Lew Carbone

Dr. Suzanne Gray grew up in Nova Scotia, Canada. She developed an interest in fish, not from fish-keeping, but from fishing, which she started as a 3-year-old.

As an undergraduate at the University of Guelph, in Ontario, Dr. Gray studied local sticklebacks, but then had an insight: “(I) realized warm water is much more fun to work in, so I did my PhD research on the island of Sulawesi, in Indonesia, studying telmatherinid fishes found only on that island.” (Telmatherinids superficially resemble tetras, but are more closely related to Rainbows.)

After receiving her PhD from Simon Fraser University, in Vancouver, Dr. Gray traveled to Cape Maclear, on Lake Malawi, to study how cichlids that evolved in clear water deal with the turbidity caused by increased human activity. While doing further post-doctoral work at McGill University, in Montreal, she did similar studies with *Pseudocrenilabrus victoricae*, both in the lab and in Uganda.

Since 2013, Dr. Gray has worked at The Ohio State University’s school of Environment and Natural Resources, teaching high level courses in Ichthyology and Physiological Ecology. The graduate students in her lab are studying environmental stress on cichlids, and how well Lake Erie Walleyes can see through those nasty algal blooms that we hear about. During the summer, some of this work is done at Stone Laboratory, on Gibraltar Island, in Put-In-Bay. (If you’ve ever taken the Jet Express, or another ferry, to Put-In-Bay, Gibraltar Island is on your right as you approach the docks.)

Dr. Gray’s talk will be a distillation of much of her career’s work, geared down for us hobbyists. It’s entitled “Sexy Males in Muddy Water: How Cichlids Respond to Increased Turbidity in the Wild”.

Next month, Mike Drowdy, of Imperial Tropicals, and a regular at the Extravaganza, will talk about “Florida Fish Farming”.