



Ohio Cichlid
Association

Cichlids - Catfish

Buckeye Bulletin

May 2017



• Next Social Meeting: Friday, May 5, 2017 at 8:00 pm •



Ohio Cichlid Association

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If you have an article, photograph, or ad to submit for publication, please send it to buckeyebulletin@gmail.com. When submitting articles for publication in this bulletin, please remember to include any photographs or art for the article. The Ohio Cichlid Association is not responsible for any fact checking or spelling correction in submitted material. Articles will be edited for space and content.

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For membership info please contact Hilary Lacerda: hilarylacerda@gmail.com or visit the [OCA forum](#).



On the Cover

This month's cover photo depicts a new world cichlid (you'll have to ask Carl because I have no idea) and was once again provided by Carl Olszewski. Thank you for your monthly submissions Carl!

Do you want your picture on the cover of the *Buckeye Bulletin*? Please email photos to buckeyebulletin@gmail.com.

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About the Ohio Cichlid Association

The OCA is an organization dedicated to the advancement and dissemination of information relating to all aspects of the biology of cichlids and related aquatic life. Our purpose is to promote the interest, keeping, study, breeding, and the educational exhibition of Cichlids. Additionally, the exchange of ideas, meeting new people, and distribution of information concerning Cichlids is of primary interest.

The 2017 OCA Board

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* denotes appointed position

Get The Most Out of the OCA

The OCA's monthly meetings are free and open to the public. Feel free to invite a guest! There are many ways to get the most of your membership:

- submit an article, classified ad or photograph for the bulletin
- put a fish in the bowl show
- attend the OCA Extravaganza
- turn fry in for the BAP program
- attend the social meetings
- buy and sell fish during the winter auction
- join the board
- start a forum discussion
- visit ohiocichlid.com



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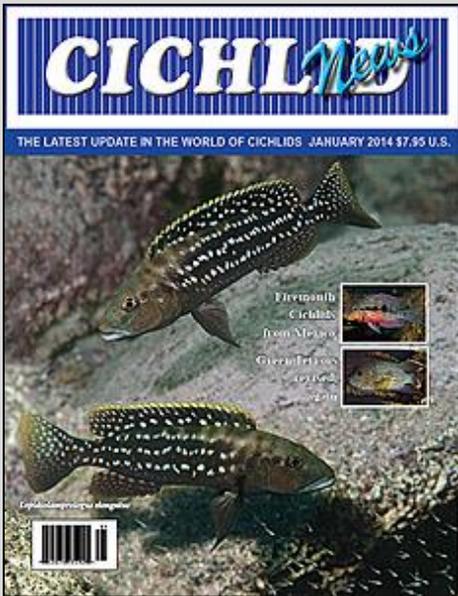
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Visit: Ohiocichlid.com



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LEW CARBONE: PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Scott Myers did a great job showing us how he prepares his outstanding show fish. It turns out that instead of “secrets,” it’s all about good husbandry practices and lots of patience. Thank you, Scott, for sharing with us your methods.

This month we focus (no pun intended, at least at first) on another aspect of fish keeping. Mo Devlin is probably the best-known cichlid photographer in the US hobby. He will show us some techniques and tips for improving our own aquarium photography. Mo also does commercial photography, along with work having a more artistic intent. For some of the latter, check out modevlin.zenfolio.com.

Extravaganza planning continues, and we’re working on a few twists that will, hopefully, enhance your experience. When these plans become fully worked out, we’ll let you know all about them.

As a reminder, the Medina County Aquarium Society will hold their Spring Auction on Saturday, May 13th. It’s at the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, on Rt. 18, just west of I-71, and begins at 11:00 AM. Check out mcas-fish.net and click on the auction flyer button for more details.

Finally, I hope you noticed that the prize table for the meeting raffle is back up to classic proportions. If you haven’t, you may be missing out on the chance to win some nice supplies, food and equipment for your fish room!

I hope to see you at the meeting!

Lew

Letter From the Editor

Hello OCA Members,

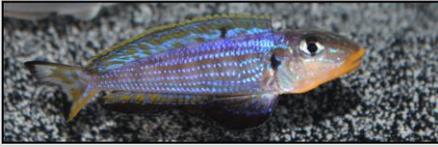
This month bulletin includes an article on *N. Buescheri* and I have republished some older catfish articles as well. In the meantime, I managed to finish installing air driven matten filters on all the tanks in my fishroom. This turned out to be about a two year project for me, because I am lazy and couldn't help but rearrange the tanks in my room.

Our own Scott Myers shared some tips on showing fish last month, so I expect another great showing in our bowl show. This month, Mo Devlin will present on aquarium photography. You are probably familiar with Mo's photos if you look at pictures of fish on facebook. I expect everyone to rush home Friday night and use their new knowledge to take some great photos for submission to the bulletin. I've seen a few members toting fancy cameras around the meeting, and I'm beginning to wonder what they use them for. As always, a big thanks to Carl for his contributions to this month's bulletin.



Until next month,

Andrew Schock
BuckeyeBulletin@gmail.com



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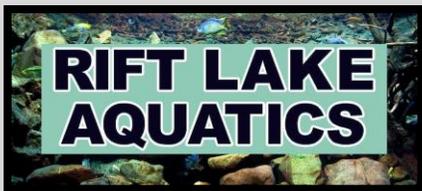
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SOCIAL MEETING INFORMATION

The Next OCA Social Meeting is Friday,
May 5, 2017 at 8:00 pm

[Middleburg Heights Community
Center, Room C
16000 Bagley Rd
Cleveland, OH 44130](#)



Meetings usually begin with a talk about cichlids or a related subject. The OCA is proud to bring world class speakers to Ohio, not only for our yearly convention, the OCA Extravaganza, but also for our monthly meetings. With Northeast Ohio being the hotbed for cichlid breeders that it is, we have discovered that there seems to be no shortage of world-class speakers locally, a number of which have used the opportunity to talk at OCA meetings to later tour the country with their fantastic presentations. After the talk we usually take a break for refreshments and some socializing among "cichlidiots". This also gives people a chance to look at bowl show entries, and after the break the bowl show winners are announced. Next, Breeder Award Program (BAP) awards are handed out. We have a Breeder Award Program for cichlids and one for catfish, turning our program into probably the largest one of its kind in the country. The entries are subsequently auctioned off, making some of the newest and rarest cichlids in the hobby available to our members at low auction prices! The OCA has had a number of first spawns in the United States and members have donated some very nice stuff to be auctioned off for the benefit of our Jim Smith Fund. Meetings end with a raffle, where we give away prizes that are set up on a huge table, which typically bends to the point of breaking under their load!

SOCIAL MEETING SCHEDULE

(All times approximate)

7:30	Doors Open
8:00	Social Time
8:15	Call to Order Announcements New Member Welcome & Speaker Introduction
8:30	Speaker
9:30	Break
9:45	BAP Awards Bowl Show Results
9:55	Mini-Auction
10:25	Raffle



The Ohio Cichlid Association Presents:
Mo Devlin
"Aquarium Photography" - Friday May 5



Mo "Aquamojo" Devlin has two genuine passions, photography and enjoying his cichlid fish. The two dovetailed nicely and for over thirty years he has shared aquatic photos with the online community. His website, Aquamojo.com, and Aquamojo Facebook page continue his photo blog, "Today in the Fishroom." His fish photos have been published in numerous publications, such as *Tropical Fish Hobbyist*, *Amazonas Magazine* and also *National Geographic*. On the internet he is known internationally for his photographic contribution to the hobby.

Mo has been the Publicity Chairman for the American Cichlid Association for over fifteen years and has served several terms on the Board of Trustees, including board president. He was instrumental in guiding the development of an online presence for the club and the revamping of the ACA Website.

"One of the things that continue to drive me forward and be active in the club is when I hear from someone that one of my photographic contributions inspired them to go out and get that fish, or led them to discover more about the species. I believe wholeheartedly that one of our missions isn't only to just grow the club, but also to reach out and engage the younger generation. They are the future of the hobby and we should do whatever we can to not only educate, but also involve them in keeping the mission statement of the ACA alive."

Mo will give a presentation on aquarium photography.

Next month, Ken Davis will be visiting from Georgia to talk about the fish of Honduras.

UPCOMING OCA SOCIAL MEETING PROGRAMS

2017

May 5

Mo Devlin

Aquarium Photography

June 2

Ken Davis

Honduran Cichlids

July

No Meeting

August 4

Kevin Carr

“King of Monsters”

September 1

Nick Zarzeczny

“Adventure on Lake Tanganyika”

October 6

Andreas Tanke

Germany

Cory Evolution/New Species in the Hobby

November 3

Greg Steeves

Victorian Cichlids

December 1

Christmas Party



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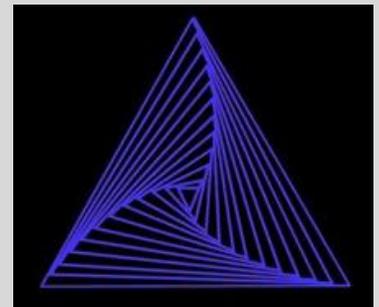


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APRIL CICHLID BAP

Listed below are the Cichlid BAP submissions for last month. Members successfully bred these cichlids and raised fry to a minimum of 1". Varying point values determined by spawn difficulty were given to members' total Cichlid BAP points.

Congratulations on these spawns and thank you for your participation.

Tom Evers

Sciaenochromis fryeri 15

David Hearn

Metriaclima zebra "OB" 10

Mark Kazanoff

Cyrtocara moorii 10

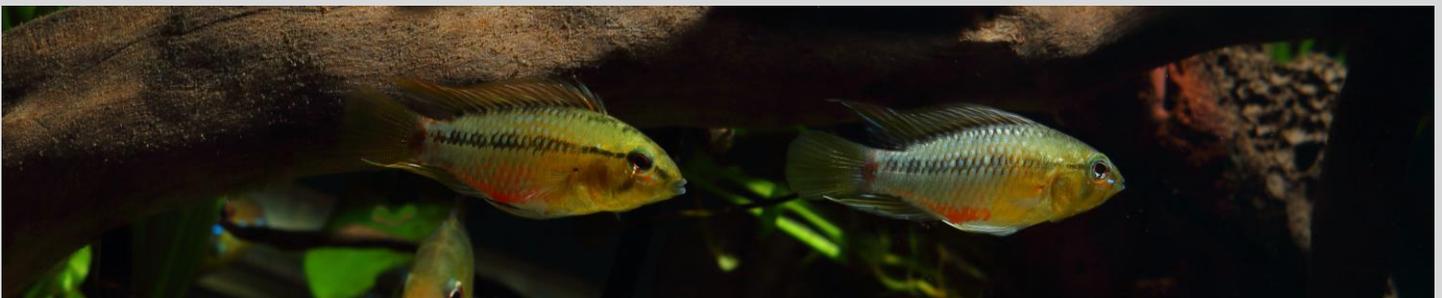
Dimidiochromis compressiceps 10

Metriaclima zebra 10

Jason Mylnar

Amphilophus festae 20

Cryptoheros panamensis 15



CICHLID BAP TOTALS

Listed below are the Cichlid BAP grand totals. The information is maintained by Mark Chaloupka. See Mark at monthly meetings for more information about the Cichlid Breeders Award Program. Thank you for your participation.

CURRENT B.A.P. STANDINGS

(4/7/17)

BREEDER	2017	TOTAL
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MASTER BREEDER 1000 POINT LEVEL

Lew Carbone	20	2875
Don & Marilyn Danko	-	2405
Dan Woodland	-	2070
Josh Cunningham	-	1505
Bryan Davis	-	1455
Bill Loudermilk	-	1200
Linda Wallrath	-	1130
Rich & Maggie Schoeffel	-	1065
Mark Chaloupka	-	1055
John Tesar	25	1045

900 POINT LEVEL

Dennis Tomazin	-	965
Tom Swiderski	-	905

800 POINT LEVEL

Hilary & Antonio Lacerda	40	870
Jeff Yadlovsky	50	855
Dustin Brummitt	-	840
Jonathan Strazinsky	35	815
Ken & Sue Galaska	-	800

700 POINT LEVEL

Gary Mendez	-	790
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600 POINT LEVEL

Jeff Natterer	-	690
Bill Schwartz	10	655
Charlie & Cathy Suk	-	615
Bob Blazek	10	610
Steve Zarzeczny	-	600

500 POINT LEVEL

Tim Craig	-	540
George Anagnostopoulos	-	515
Ron Georgeone	-	510

400 POINT LEVEL

Rick Hallis	-	495
Phil Hypes	-	475
Eric & Rhonda Sorensen	15	475
Kyle May	-	460
Bob Bina	-	435
Tyler Toncler	-	420

300 POINT LEVEL

David Hale	-	335
Tony Poth	-	335
Gary Zalewski	-	325
Greg Senn	-	315
Ken & Karen Grimmett	-	310
Jonathan Dietrich	10	300
Tom & Carolyn Evers	15	300

200 POINT LEVEL

Andrew Schock	-	280
Dennis Kuehn	-	275
James Shakour	-	275
Dave Esner	-	250
Ken Walker	-	240
Jason Mylnar	55	225
Justin Way	20	220
Mark Kazanoff	55	215
Paul Collander	-	205
David Hearn	10	205

100 POINT LEVEL

Marc & Dawn DeWerth	-	195
Ozeal Hunter	-	190
Chuck Carroll	-	185
Denis Rozmus	-	185
Andrew Subotnik	-	180
Charles Nowakowski	-	165
Frank Mueller	-	160
Bob Evers	-	155
Steve Heinbaugh	-	150
David Ayers	-	145
Bill & Janice Bilski	-	145
Greg Seith	-	145
Dan Ogrizek	-	140
John Griffith	-	135
Carl Oszewski	20	125
Joe Ring	-	120
Peter Nario-Redmond	-	115
Aaron Stevens	-	115
David Toth	-	115
Raymond Langer	-	110

BREEDER LEVEL

Mark Huntington	-	95
Steve Olander	-	90
Dolores Bacisin	-	85
Pete Gembka	-	80
Rick Wood	-	75
Bob Tillman	-	70
Matt Urbin	-	70
Dave Dimond	-	65
Anthony Scarton	-	65
Nicholas Zarzeczny	-	65
Jim Jensen	10	60
Paul Palisin	-	60
Chris Jaskolka	-	55
Dave Dimond	-	50
John Kahl	-	50
Alex Gorges	-	45
John Kaminski	-	40
Ethan Wiley	-	40
Matt Lacy	-	35
Christopher Sooy	-	35
Tom Tansey	-	35
Jason Gorges	-	30

Margaret Heifner	30	30
Paul Hutnyak	-	30
Adam Stallman	30	30
Wayne Corman	-	25
Fred Roberts	-	25
Andy Lacerda	-	20
Scott Meyers	-	20
Bill Sensor	-	20
Jason Webb	-	20
Roger Stark	15	15
Ken Carey	-	10
Jim & Amy Damm	-	10
Ron Drungil	-	10
Ben Jensen	-	10
Cory Knarr	-	10
Michael Meyer	-	10
Mike Trader	-	10

The points list for the Breeders Award Program has been updated to include only current members. If you are a current member and your name has been omitted, please see the B.A.P. Chairman at the social meeting so we can correct any errors.

Please remember: You may only turn in a species or strain of fish for B.A.P. points one time. If you need a list of what you have been credited with, see the BAP chairman at the social meeting.

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APRIL CATFISH BAP

Listed below are the Catfish BAP submissions for last month. Members successfully bred these catfish and raised fry to a minimum of 1". Varying point values determined by spawn difficulty were given to members' total Catfish BAP points. Congratulations on these spawns and thank you for your participation.

Breeder

Species

Points

BRING IN YOUR CATFISH FRY!

CATFISH BAP TOTALS

Listed below are the Catfish BAP grand totals. The information is maintained by Steve Heinbaugh. See Steve at monthly meetings for more information about the Catfish Breeders Award Program. Thank you for your participation.

NAME	2017	TOTAL
Dan Ogrizek		410
Steve Heinbaugh		365
Dave Ayres		290
Don & Marilyn Danko		285
Phil Ayres		230
Ken Walker		120
Eric & Rhonda Sorensen		110
Dan Woodland		100
Matt Urbin		90
Bob Blazek	10	80
Hilary Lacerda		80
John Kaminski		70
Tom & Carolyn Evers		70
Justin Way		60

Bryan Davis		60
Phil Hypes		60
Jeff Natterer		50
Ken Galaska		45
Tyler Toncler		45
Matt Lacy		40
Bill Schwartz		40
Josh Cunningham		40
Kyle May		40
George Aganostopoulos		40
Karen & Ken Grimmett		30
Lew Carbone		30
Andrew Schock		30
Bob Evers		30
Jason Mlynar	10	25
Tony Poth		20
Gary Mendez		20
John Tesar		20
David Toth		20
Paul Palisin		20
Jeff Yadlovsky		10
Dave Hearn		10
John Griffith		10
Carl Olszewski		10
Anthony Scranton		10
Jon Dietrich		10
Richard Shamray		10
William Zarzeczny		10
Wayne Corman		10
Mark Chaloupka		10
David Hale		10
Jonathan Strazinsky		10
Bob & Jennifer Tillman		10



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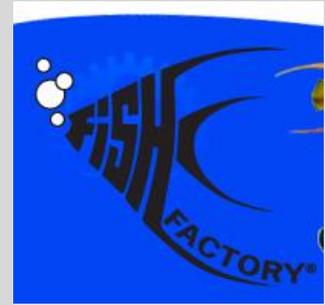


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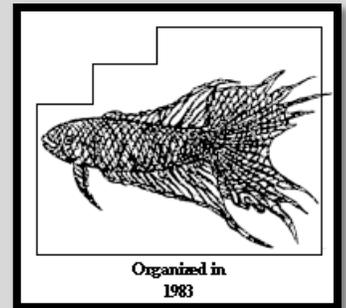
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Meets on the 2nd Friday
of the month at 8pm at
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Lutheran Church in
Medina, OH

OCA BOWL SHOW

Listed below is information about the monthly meeting Bowl Show. The Bowl Show is your opportunity to show off your fish. Each month different categories of Cichlids and Catfish will be judged. Points will be given and prizes will be awarded. All members are welcome to participate. This is great practice for our yearly Extravaganza show! See Carl Olszewski, at a meeting for more information.



This Month's Bowl Show Categories:

Tanganyikan Mouthbrooders – Exclude Frontosa

South Americans over 6”

Loricariids under 6”

1ST PLACE WINNER WILL RECEIVE \$40.00

2ND PLACE WINNER WILL RECEIVE \$20.00

3RD PLACE WINNER WILL RECEIVE \$10.00

**AND DON'T FORGET, EVERY MEMBER WHO ENTERS
WILL ALSO RECEIVE 5 FREE RAFFLE TICKETS.**

OCA BOWL SHOW

This Year's Top Contenders:

Scott Myers – 69 Points

David Hearn – 28 Points

Phil Ayers, Victoria Lacerda and Jonathan Strazinsky are tied with 7 Points

Let's make this a GREAT YEAR FOR THE OCA 2017 BOWL SHOW.

BRING IN THOSE FISH!!!



2017 BOWL SHOW SCHEDULE

January 6:

Tanganyikan Shell- dwellers
Central Americans under 6"
Loracariids (Pleco types) over 6"

February 3:

Victorian Basin
Angelfish
Synodontis and other Mochokids

March 3:

Pseudotropheus, Cynotilapia, Melanochromis
South Americans under 6"-- exclude Angels, Discus, Apistos
Catfish—exclude Callichthids, Loracariids, Mochokids (see other classes for explanations)

April 7:

Peacocks
Central Americans over 6"
Freshwater Crustaceans

May 5:

Tanganyikan Mouth- brooders--exclude Frontosa
South Americans over 6"
Loracariids under 6"

June 2:

Mbuna--exclude Pseudo, Cyno, Melano
Discus, Uaru
Open Catfish, limit 3 per participant (all Cats eligible)

August 4:

Old World—exclude Rift Lakes and Victorian Basin
Open New World, limit 3
Open Tanganyika, limit 3

September 1:

Frontosa
Open Old World, exclude Malawi, Tang.
Corys and other Callichthyids

October 6:

Malawi "Haps"
Apistos
Fish Photography

November 3:

Female cichlids, limit 3
Loaches and Botias
Telmatochromis, Chalinochromis

December 1:

Tanganyikan "Lamps"—exclude Shell-dwellers
Julidochromis
Open Malawi, limit 3



Willem Heijns

DVDS: “Mexico — a journey into the world of cichlids”

And

“Nicaragua — cichlids from the crater “



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My Experience with *Neolamprologus buescheri*

By: Andrew Schock

A few weeks back an OCA friend called and asked for tips on keeping and breeding *Neolamprologus buescheri*. He told an all too familiar tale of his group of young *buescheri* slowly killing each other off, and feared he may be left with a single survivor. I felt obliged to help this poor fishkeeper, who is an accomplished hobbyist that has shared many tips and tricks with me over the last few years. If you talk to this gentleman too long, you inevitably wind up talking about the best foods to feed to the various live food cultures he keeps.

Hopefully I was able to reverse his fortune as I shared what had worked for me in the past. I have made several attempts to keep a few variants of *buescheri* and have found it to be a challenging, yet extremely rewarding fish to keep. I have had both great success and also catastrophic failure while keeping this species. I have seen a group of six turn into a group of 1, slowly but surely. I will focus on my success below.

I obtained my first *buescheri* at an Extravaganza a few years ago. I purchased a young breeding pair of the “kachese” variant from a fellow hobbyist. I took them home and housed them in a 30 gallon aquarium. I decorated the aquarium with rocks, and eventually used a terra cotta saucer to create a cave where the female could hide.





I had some success with this setup and had a few spawns rather shortly. Spawns with these fish were typically small usually only yielding 6-12 fry each time. I think a key to my success was the fact that the male was unable to get up under the saucer, allowing the female to escape his aggression.



After a few successful spawns in this setup, I had to relocate. In my new home I set my *buescheri* up in a 40 breeder with rocks stacked on one side of the tank and shells on the other side. I housed them with *N. multifasciatus*. This set-up did not work, and I got fry from neither species. I ended up moving the shellies out and stacking the entire 40 gallon breeder full of rocks, and added a few breeding caves hoping the female would find one to be suitable. I found that the female preferred to lay eggs on the underside of rocks, and did not prefer the breeding caves, so the caves were eventually removed.



This was the most rewarding setup. My *buescheri* would continuously spawn, and many different batches of fry grew to an inch or more without needing to be separated. At one point, the male began spawning with a second female that had grown out in the tank, and I would often notice two brand new sets of fry on either side of the tank with their respective mothers. The fish are rather secretive and are not always easily observable in a setup like this, but it was neat to see all the various sizes of fry all growing out at once.







Due to the various sizes of fry in the tank, I fed healthy portions of finely ground pellet food. Overall I found *N. buescheri* to be a very rewarding species to keep. I have tried several other variants with limited success, but once you find a setup that works they are very low maintenance and easy to keep and breed!





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BLAST FROM THE PAST

While preparing for my new role as editor of the Buckeye Bulletin, one thing I did was examine a bunch of bulletins from prior years. I did this to familiarize myself with the bulletin, and discovered a lot of cool ideas and designs when doing so (you may have noticed that I have borrowed some designs from previous issues). I also discovered a lot of great content that our members have created over the years. I hope that our current membership will continue to submit great content for our bulletin. If you have had a successful spawn, have taken some photos of your fish, or have a cool tip or trick you want to share please email buckeyebulletin@gmail.com!

This month I will share two catfish articles published in earlier bulletins. The first is *My Experiences with Tatia intermedia* by CATBAP chair Steve Heinbaugh. This article is from the May, 2012 Buckeye Bulletin. *Tatia intermedia* is a wood cat, which we received a great education on courtesy of Jeremy Basch at a meeting earlier this year. Steve shares his own experience with these fish in his article.

The second article is an article I submitted a few years ago on Breeding *Synodontis lucipinnis*. This article was published in May, 2014 and is particularly pertinent to me at this time because I am once again keeping these fish, but struggling to raise the fry. Hopefully I steer myself in the right direction with some stellar advice.

Buckeye Bulletin
May 2012

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Cyrtocara moorii

Our next meeting is **May 4th at 8pm**

Buckeye Bulletin
May 2014

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In this edition of The Buckeye Bulletin...

- ✓ BAP Update
- ✓ "Breeding *Synodontis Lucipinnis*"
- ✓ EXCHANGE Article
- ✓ The Cunningham Corner!

Lepidolamprologus hecqui w/ eggs

Next Meeting on **May 2nd, 2014 @ 8pm**

My Experiences with *Tatia intermedia*

By Steve Heinbaugh (OCA Board)



There are many different types of catfish in the world. They inhabit mostly freshwater rivers and lakes over most of the planet, coming in many shapes and sizes, with a wide variety of feeding and breeding habits. The Amazon basin in South America is home to perhaps the widest variety of catfish, or any animal for that matter. From the small shoaling *Corydoras* catfish to the large predatory fish (and hundreds in between), the variety here is immense. Many of these species are available to the aquarium trade, but some are better fits for aquarium life than others. The most common aquarium catfish from South America are the pleco-type Loricariidae and small *Corydoradine* cats. There are a few other groups that can be found, like the Raphael cats from the family Doradidae and the highly predatory pictus, redbtail, and shovelnose cats from the family Pimelodidae. One group of fish you don't see often for sale are the wood cats from the family Auchenipteridae. This article will tell my experiences with one species from this group, *Tatia intermedia*.

I purchased an adult pair of *Tatia intermedia* at the Ohio Cichlid Association swap meet at the November 2010 monthly meeting. These fish were incorrectly labeled *Tatia galaxias*, which is a very common misidentification, as *T. galaxias* is a very rare import and not very widespread in the hobby. Both species have a black base with regular white spotting; however, *T. galaxias* has smaller spots and has a more slender body.

After getting the fish home, they settled into their tank very well. The tank was decorated with driftwood, PVC pipes cut in lengths of 10 to 12 inches, and a *Cryptocoryne* plant in a terra cotta pot. The majority of their time was spent hanging out in one of the pieces of PVC that was underneath a large piece of driftwood. I liked this spot for them because I could usually see them hiding there and could keep tabs on their health and growth. The fish would remain hidden at all times except feeding, when they would come out and zip around the tank in a frenzy. I found the pair not too picky about food. They had no problem eating anything that sunk to the bottom, from earthworms and spirulina sticks to Cichlid pellets as well as frozen foods like bloodworms and mysis shrimp. The only thing I found they didn't eat was live black worms, which actually worked out well for me. After trying to feed them a few times, a colony of black worms became established in the tank, which I could harvest and feed to my *Corydoras*!

For a little over a year, the fish did the same thing every day: hide, eat, and repeat. The female began to grow larger and wider with time. I had figured she was filling with eggs and I would soon be rewarded with eggs. For nearly six months, I would hope she was close and kept up meticulous care on the pair. Never did I find any fry or eggs. I was trying every trick I knew. I tried skipping a water change or two before doing a large one. I tried changing water when storms came through the area, trying to convince them it was raining with the pressure changes. I tried skipping a few feedings then feeding heavy with daily water changes. There was still no spawning activity from the pair.

In July, I moved my fish room to the other side of my basement. During the move, the fish all got nearly a 100% water change. Then in August, my wife and I had our first child, and my time in the fishroom was being taken by our new son. I would still get down there and feed most nights, but my water change schedule was not what it used to be. In fact, I can't remember if I had even changed water in this tank since the move. Finally, at the end of September, I was rewarded with a glob of eggs in the tank!



If you have never heard of or seen *Tatia intermedia* eggs, they are truly unique in the aquarium world. The word glob is about the only way I can describe it. What almost looks like frog eggs with white centers were laid in a mass in the center of the tank, resting on a piece of drift wood. I removed the parents, mostly out of precaution. I was not certain if the parents would bother the eggs or fry, but I did not want to take the chance. The eggs were left untouched, and were in a good position for me to watch their development. It was difficult to count the number of eggs, but 75 to 100 was a conservative guess.

After two days at 72 degrees, the white center of the eggs had grown thin, hair-like tails, which were constantly waving back and forth. Another two days and the spots had grown two tiny black eyes and the tails had begun to thicken. Two more days, and the spots in the eggs had formed into small fish and the cluster began to break up, scattering tiny white fish with yolk sacks still in their protective gel coating across the floor of the tank. It took another day for the fry to start swimming out of the gel covering, and after seven or eight days, all the fry were swimming. It seems that the hatch rate was very high, as I never saw any unhatched eggs. Losses were minimal, and the fry seemed very hearty. For the first week or so, the fry stayed a white color. Like their parents, they spent most of the time hiding; however, when they got hungry, they were constantly zipping just below the surface of the water.

Feeding the fry was fairly simple. I sprinkled decapsulated brine shrimp eggs over the surface and the fry would quickly consume it. I fed them three or four times a day and they seemed to do well on this schedule. I also tried to change out a gallon or two of water three times a week; however, this was not done on any set schedule. The fry grew fairly quickly and soon were ready to eat growth pellets, again sprinkled across the surface of the water to float. After a month, the fry were nearly a half inch and I started to drop sinking earthworm pellets in the tank. At first these were ignored, but soon the larger fish were starting to pick at them.

At two months, the fish were nearly an inch and I began to move some of the fry to a 40 gallon tank, just for more consistent water quality. Being netted and dumped into another tank seemed to have no real negative effect on them, but still I did it in small groups of 5 to 10 at a time. At this point, the majority of the fish were miniature versions of the adults, with more vibrant spotting. Sinking pellets made up the majority of the feedings, although I would still sprinkle growth pellets on the surface, which were consumed as quickly as they were before.

All in all, *Tatia intermedia* is a very unique species. It is shy and not the most colorful fish available, but has some very different characteristics that make it one of the most exceptional fish you can keep in an aquarium. Spawning this fish should be on every fish keeper's bucket list! 



All photos courtesy of author

Breeding *Synodontis lucipinnis* (aka *petricola*)

Andrew Schock



Synodontis lucipinnis* vs. *Synodontis petricola

Synodontis lucipinnis was distinguished from *Synodontis petricola* in 2006, but both fish are often sold as *Synodontis petricola*. The two look very similar, however *lucipinnis* are distinguished by the lack of an axillary pore, larger, more irregular spots, and a light colored "window" at the base of rayed fins¹.

After I purchased my group (labeled *Synodontis petricola*) at the 2013 Ohio Cichlid Association Winter Auction, I posted photos of some of the fish on the Planetcatfish.com "What is my catfish?" forum. They were unanimously identified as *Synodontis lucipinnis* by multiple board members. A little research on Planetcatfish showed that most board members believe that *lucipinnis* are more common than *petricola*, however both species spawn in a similar fashion, so this report should work for either species.

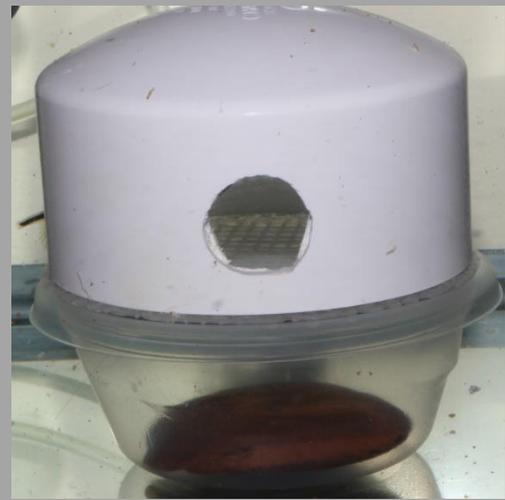
The Setup

I spawned a group of six adults in a 20 gallon long aquarium. I kept the water at about 78 degrees and used a couple air driven sponges for filtration. The tank had a bare bottom and the only décor were two homemade breeding traps. I was only successful breeding these fish when they were the only species in the tank. I attempted to breed

¹Wright, J.J. and L.M. Page. 2006 Taxonomic revision of Lake Tanganyikan *Synodontis* (Siluriformes: Mochokidae). Florida Mus. Nat. Hist. Bull. 46(4):99-154.

them in a 120 gallon aquarium with various mbuna, and was unsuccessful.

The traps consist of a PVC end cap, 5 inches in diameter, a piece of cross-stitching fabric, and a round Ziploc container. The PVC end cap has one small entrance drilled in the side and serves as a cave where the fish will spawn. The cross stitching fabric is placed between the cave and the dish, and acts as a false bottom, letting the fertilized eggs pass through it to the dish below. I place a good sized rock in the Ziploc container to weigh the trap down.



Once the traps are in place, I simply wait for a spawn to occur. I have found that conditioning is not necessary, but high-protein foods such as frozen blood worms, or live black worms, do seem to trigger more frequent spawns. When a spawn occurs, the eggs are easily visible through the sides of the Ziploc container. At this point I simply remove the entire container and put it in a fry box. The eggs can be transferred to the fry box using a pipette.



Caring for Eggs and Rearing Fry

I use a homemade fry box that consists of an old spinach container, a small sponge and a Hagen Elite sponge filter. I use the spinach container because it is 12" long, and fits perfectly inside a 20 gallon long aquarium, allowing the ends to hang on the front and back rim of the tank. First, I cut a hole in the container that is a little smaller than my sponge (the side works best, so that some water will stay in the box during water changes). I then plug the hole with the sponge, which will keep the fry in, but allow water to flow from the box to the tank. Finally, I set up the filter so that it pumps water into the box continually, while the sponge-filled hole allows excess water to return to the tank.

We go through spinach pretty quickly at my house, so I usually only use the box once, and re-use the sponges. When re-using the boxes, I have found that they get very dirty, and don't hold up well.



Once eggs are laid, I carefully place the dish in the fry box, hanging in the parents' breeding tank. I use a pipette to separate bad eggs from the good ones over the next 24 hours. The good eggs will be clear or honey colored, while bad eggs turn a milky white and start to fungus. I do not use an air stone or otherwise agitate the water, as it seems the hatch rate is better with the calm water. When I have used an airstone, I found that all the eggs will stick together, or settle against each other, making it easy for all of them to fungus.

In as little as 24 hours, the eggs will begin forming tails and swimming sporadically around the box.



Over the next few days, I continue to pull bad eggs and dead wrigglers from the box with the pipette. It is important to start feeding the fry within a few days. I feed baby brine shrimp and powdered pellet food right away. From here on out, all you have to do is keep them fed and keep the water clean. I try and feed 2-3 times a day and change about 30% of the water twice a week. You will have a lot of losses in the first few days, but after a couple weeks or so it is usually smooth sailing. In my experience, the fry have been somewhat slow growing, taking several months to grow the fry out to about an inch. I hope you have found this useful and good luck!

1 week from spawn:



2 weeks from spawn:



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