

# THE WET PET GAZETTE

March 1997



Volume 2 Issue 2

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The Journal of  
The Norwalk Aquarium Society

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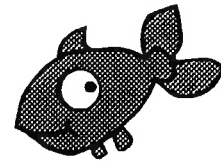
We reserve the right to reject any article which are in our opinion is offensive, and/or does not promote the hobby.

**WET PET GAZETTE EXCHANGES**

Norwalk Aquarium Society gladly exchanges its publication with other societies that send their publication to us. We publish nine issues a year. We send our exchange copies as bulk mail in March, June, and November

Requests and publications should be sent to:  
Exchange Editor  
Norwalk Aquarium Society  
P.O. Box 84  
South Norwalk, CT 06856

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### AFFILIATIONS

N.A.S. IS A MEMBER OF THE FEDERATION OF AMERICAN AQUARIUM SOCIETIES (FAAS) AND THE NORTHEAST COUNCIL OF AQUARIUM SOCIETIES, INC. (NEC)

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### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Norwalk Aquarium Society is a not for profit, all volunteer organization, dedicated to the advancement, and promotion of the Aquarium hobby

### REGULAR MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

There are regular meetings on the third Thursday of each month except July and December. Meetings are held at The Nature Center for Environmental Activities, 10 Woodside Lane, Westport, CT. Meetings start at 8:00 PM. Each meeting includes a short business meeting, program or event, door prizes, raffles, auction, and refreshments. All regular meetings



**A VIEW FROM UPFRONT**

**ED KATUSKA  
NAS PRESIDENT**

I would like to thank those that participated in our benefit auction last month, As you know this is this event is one of our biggest functions of the year with all the proceeds being donated to the nature center, The Nature Center staff is continually there for all our society needs and their facilities are always open to us. The Nature Center was presented with the proceeds at our February meeting and once again thank you to those who made it possible.

Speaking about the February auction I noticed many people in the room were members of other sister societies supporting our function. Somewhere inside the pages of our Wetpet is a list of upcoming shows and auctions of other local societies such as ours. Please support other clubs by attending and helping their event to be a success.

Our home show will be taking place at the end of this month. There is still time to enter your tank. This will be the first home show that has taken place in a few years and we are hoping for many entries, Tanks will be judged on March 29-30 1997. Anyone interested can contact Basil at (914)669-5930.

The Northeast Council of Aquarium Societies will be hosting the 22nd Annual Convention on April 11-13, 1997. As usual the convention committee has an impressive speaker line up, Ad Konings and Wayne Leibel to name a few, The NEC Convention is the largest fish event in New England. It would be great to see a large turnout from our organization. Hope to see you there.



**FROM THE DESK OF THE  
EDITOR**

**MARK BROADMEYER  
WET PET GAZETTE EDITOR**

This month we will be publishing part I of an article by Michael Krasilovsky. Michael is one of our junior members, and has already provided me with a number of articles for future issues of The Wet Pet Gazette. His first article is entitled "My Life as a Fishkeeper". Although I have been keeping fish at least twice as long as Michael has been on this Earth, it is refreshing to see things once again through younger eyes. Michael called me just the other day to let me know that his female platy is once again giving birth, and that one of his Discus wasn't eating. In a perfect world these are the only problems that our children should encounter. Michael has also volunteered to become the Refreshment Chairperson. Perhaps the youngest chairperson in the history of our organization. He did confess that he had an ulterior motive, he likes eating the refreshments at the meeting. Please give Michael any support you can in his new capacity.

Also this month you will find part II of Ed Katuska's NEC Judges Thesis paper on Corydoras. The final part will be in the April Wet Pet. Part II of Gene Harris's Article on Altum Angels is also here with Part III coming in April as well. From "DR. PETE" Schaumberg is an article to help get you surfing the net with the big boys, and Chuck Davis has some reminiscent thoughts on Killies.

I want to thank all of our writers for sharing their experience, and experiences.



MARK

# PROGRAMS, PROGRAMS, PROGRAMS

## ANNE BROADMEYER - PROGRAMS CHAIRPERSON

Here's the line up for the rest of the year

Thanks to Pete Schaumburg for his program on Fish Holistics. I gave Pete the wrong date so his Fix it Night program went to North Jersey. Sorry for the confusion but it was a great program!

- March 20, 1997**      **Collecting in South America** by Jim Carmark of Massachusetts. Jim has been collecting fish in South America for over ten years and has been keeping fish for over 30 years.
- April 17, 1997**      **Fishy Bingo.** This should be a fun night for everyone, even those non-fishy spouses. Everyone likes a good night of Bingo, great for socializing and win a few fishy items to boot.
- May 15, 1997**      The plans are for a **Pond program.** I will have more information for you next month.
- June 19, 1997**      Again, we are going to try something a little different. This will be a **CPR class.** Space will be limited so if you plan on bringing a friend, please let me know because we need a three to one ratio for the instructors.
- July**      **Happy Summer - No meeting**
- August 21, 1997**      **Fish Nutrition** by Shemya Bryant of Wardleys.
- September 18, 1997**      **Home Show Program and Results** presented by Basil Holubis. **October 16, 1997** **Discus,** by Ellen Halligan of Long Island Discus

## Swimming Through the Exchanges by Anne Broadmeyer

I would like to take this opportunity to say a special thank you to Gina Bill for a job all done these past years. Thank you !

For those of you who know me well, yes, my hand has risen once again. When I told Ed that I would take on this project, I also told him that it would be the last thing I volunteered for in a while. -- This you will HAVE to believe because my husband says so! Anyway, I will attempt to keep an accurate account of 'who is sharing what'. If there is something in specific you are interested in, please feel free to call me (203) 834-2228, fax me (same number) or E-Mail me (dfh@compuserve.com). Since I am just taking over I have not had the opportunity to review each publication, however, I would like you to know we have had a few reprints in our fellow societies' publication.

\*The December issue of *The Buckettee*, Bucks County Aquarium Society of Pennsylvania, reviewed Pete Schaumburg's article, **Hot Water.**

\*The January issue of *The Buckettee*, Bucks County Aquarium Society of Pennsylvania, reviewed Don Johnson's article, **12 "Myths" That Keep You From Saltwater Success.**

\*The January/February issue of *Reefrations* Windows To The Sea Marine Aquarium Society of New Jersey, reviewed Don Johnson's article, **12 "Myths" That Keep You From Saltwater Success.**

\*The February issue of *Tankquillizer*, The Tropical Fish Society of Rhode Island, reviewed Pete Schaumburg's article, **Beginner's Syndrome...Is there a cure?**

I am happy to say that we are exchanging with a new society, Honolulu Aquarium Society. To date I have not gotten all the past exchanges or listing from Gina. Once I have gotten the exchanges under my belt, I will give you an actual number of exchanges, but as you know, we exchange with approximately 200 societies throughout the United States as well as Canada. We even receive a publication in Spanish from Puerto Rica. Unfortunately, my Spanish is limited, maybe someone would like to review this publication.



# WHAT'S ON THE CALENDAR

1997

**MARCH**

- 23 WORCESTER AQUARIUM SOCIETY AUCTION
- 30 MAINE STATE AQUARISTS SOCIETY AUCTION

**APRIL**

- 11-13 NORTHEAST COUNCIL OF AQUARIUM SOCIETIES 22nd ANNUAL CONVENTION - HARTFORD MARRIOTT HOTEL, FARMINGTON, CT - 11 SPEAKERS - ANNUAL AWARD BANQUET - AUCTIONS - MFG'S DISPLAYS - CALL JANINE BANKS 802-482-3616
- 27 BOSTON AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL EVENT, WEYMOUTH ELK'S HALL

**MAY**

- 2-4 TROPICAL FISH CLUB OF BURLINGTON, ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION, BURLINGTON, VT CALL JANINE BANKS 802-482-3616
- 17 GREATER CITY AQUARIUM SOCIETY TROPICAL FISH SHOW
- 18 NORTH JERSEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL AUCTION
- 16-18 AQUALAND AQUARIUM SOCIETY 24th ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION, BONNIE ACRES, BRISTOL, CT

**JUNE**

- 1 NORTHEAST COUNCIL OF AQUARIUM SOCIETIES QUARTERLY GENERAL MEETING
- 6-8 JERSEY SHORE AQUARIUM SOCIETY 1st ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION

**AUGUST**

- 24 BLACK RIVER AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL AUCTION

**SEPTEMBER**

- 19-21 TROPICAL FISH SOCIETY OF RHODE ISLAND ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION
- 21 DANBURY AREA AQUARIUM SOCIETY

**OCTOBER**

- 3-5 NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION
- 26 LONG ISLAND AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL AUCTION

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For information, contact: Vincent Sileo (718)846-6984  
or the Greater City website - <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/greatercity>

## COMING NEXT MONTH IN THE WET PET GAZETTE

THE GENUS CORYDORAS PART III  
BY ED KATUSKA

RASBORA HETEROMORPHA  
BY CHUCK DAVIS

MY LIFE AS A FISHKEEPER PART II  
MICHAEL KRASILOVSKY

PTEROPHYLLUM ALTUM III  
GENE HARRIS



## ACA CONVENTION

JULY 10th to JULY 13th

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WYNDHAM NORTHWEST

CHICAGO HOTEL

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OR DON CAVE AT 630-980-5933

LEAVE NAME AND ADDRESS ON

ANSWERING MACHINE

## MACNA IX

SEPTEMBER 12th TO 14th, 1997

CHICAGO

WYNDHAM NORTHWEST CHICAGO

HOTEL

WRITE CMAS, 1455 NOTTINGHAM,

HOFFMAN ESTATES, IL 60195

OR EMAIL 73773.215@compuserve.com

## SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP RATES

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JUNIOR	5.00
FAMILY	17.00
NAME BADGE	5.00

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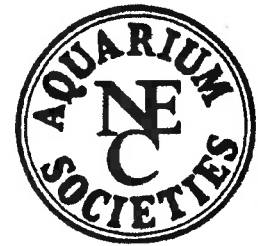
NAS MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

492 OAK AVE

CHESHIRE, CT 06410



The **NORTHEAST COUNCIL**  
of  
**AQUARIUM SOCIETIES**



PRESENTS THEIR

**22nd ANNUAL CONVENTION**

**April 11-13, 1997**

Hartford Marriott Hotel - Farmington, Connecticut  
Exit 37 off I-84 West of Hartford, in Farm Springs Park

**1997 SPEAKERS:**



Claus Christensen	Plants
Ginny Eckstein	Catfish
Charlie Grimes	Banquet Speaker
Ad Konings	Tanganyikan Cichlids
Wayne Leibel	Pike Cichlids
Oliver Lucanus	Cichlids of Madagascar
Steve Lundblad	Peacocks
Mike Schadle	Livebearers
Terry Seigel	Marines
Peter Unmack	Desert Fish
Kurt Zadnik	West African Dwarf Cichlids

- ☞ Friday night includes dry goods silent auction, social hour and specialty organization introductions, cichlid breeding discussion
- ☞ Saturday night banquet
- ☞ Giant auction Sunday 11:00am, open to the public. Live fish, plants, and drygoods. Viewing opens at 9:30am
- ☞ Raffles, Door Prizes, Manufacturers displays and vendor tables
- ☞ Discount Hotel Rates

This is a weekend devoted to the exchange of information among tropical fish hobbyists of all levels of expertise. Approximately 300 novice to expert tropical fishkeepers will gather together for the weekend to greet old friends, meet new friends, exchange ideas and information, and gain further knowledge, not only from the speakers, but also from other hobbyists who have a world of information to share. National manufacturers of aquarium products and equipment will be represented at the convention. Display booths will be set up with representatives there to explain their newest products, answer your questions, and discuss their product lines. Independent vendors will also be present selling their fishy wares - live aquatic plants, new and used aquarium books....Door Prizes.

**REGISTRATION INFORMATION AVAILABLE:**

**CALL:** Janine & David Banks (802)482-3616 or Penny & Al Paul (508)371-0593

or **WRITE:** Janine Banks - RR 3-Box 1548 - Hinesburg, VT 05461

or **EMAIL** us at [dbanks@together.net](mailto:dbanks@together.net).

**VISIT NEC's web page** at <http://www.cadvision.com/nolimits/nec.html>



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# MY LIFE AS A FISHKEEPER

by **MICHAEL KRASILOVSKY**  
JUNIOR MEMBER - NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY  
PART I

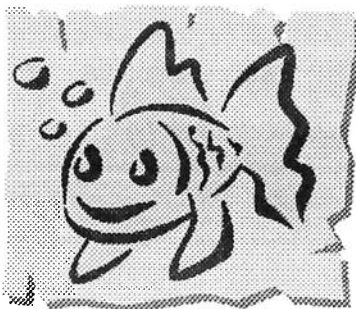
I have always been interested in fish, but I got my very first fish when I was little. I was in first grade, and my birthday was coming up. As a present, my Grandma took me to Pets Unlimited and bought me a fish bowl with purple triangle gravel, some pretty shells, and a small plastic turtle painted yellow with a green head. She bought me two comets for the bowl, which were gold and had black on the tops of their bodies. I kept the fish bowl in my room, but eventually put it in the kitchen because my room smelled like a lake. At least that was what my parents said. Personally, I think it smelled like fish poop! Unfortunately, the fish did not last very long, but had I not had the experience then, I probably wouldn't be an aquarist now. I got my first fish tank when I was in seventh grade. It was a ten gallon aquarium, with a Whisper E power filter, a Penn-Plax undertow undergravel filter, a Penn-Plax PC Plus heater, and of course aquascaping "things". I put lots of gravel in, mixing red, black, blue, and a tiny bit of yellow and green. I also put some glow in the dark plastic plants in and a small plastic piece of driftwood and a small plastic tree trunk. I also had a small treasure chest that opened its lid every nine seconds if you devoted a small supply of air to it from your air pump. This aquarium could not have been farther away from a fishes natural environment if I had tried! But it looked pretty and I put some fish in.

I put in a Dwarf Gourami, a Flame Gourami, two Paradise fish, two Congo Tetras, a male Red Wag Swordtail, an Irresdescent shark, and a small Pleco. I also bought a pregnant female Swordtail. The lady at the store said she would have the babies in about two weeks, so I bought her and a breeding trap. Later that night I decided that she was just too dark on her belly, so I put her in the breeding trap. Of course, she gave birth to a batch of 17 fry the next day. I was so excited! I had a plastic box in my aquarium with babies in it! They were so cute! I put the mom back into the aquarium, where she recovered peacefully while all the other fish kept trying to peck through the breeding trap and eat the babies. She started breeding with my male Swordtail immedietly, and continued to have a batch of fry every 30 to 35 days. I kept the babies in tupperware containers until I started giving them away because I had 80 fish in two tupperware containers and a goldfish bowl [yes, the goldfish bowl from first grade]. I called the Nature Center to ask if they new anything about what I should do with my babies, and somehow I got in touch with Anne Broadmeyer. She gave me some advice over the phone and told me about the Norwalk Aquarium Society.

Later that week, there was a monthly meeting, so I went. There was a program about preparing fish for a show given I think by Wally Bush. Excited, I went home and decided that some of my fish were good enough for the show. The fish that I entered in the show was my Dwarf Gourami whose name was Stripes, and I also entered my male Swordtail whose name was Joust. Joust didn't seem to like being in a 2 1/2 gallon tank without any of his friends, and he sat on the bottom of the tank refusing to eat for the whole show. Obviously, he didn't get an award. But I was proud of him because he was a fish that was in such good condition. Stripes, my Dwarf Gourami, did get an award though. He won second place in the catagory Anabantoids. I believe that the reason he won was because of his eating habits. When he eats a food that he likes, he darkens his colors intently, so instead of not feeding him during the two days of the show as recomended, I gave him some bloodworms, his favorite food. Of course, for two days he was in his best colors, and this is why he was given a medal. Everything was

going well, all I had to do as far as maintainance for the aquarium was a 25% water change once or twice a week, which I continue to do on all of my tanks. Of course, in the tupperwares with the fry, I did water changes every day because of how the fry food was polluting the water. Unfortunately, in late February, I had the worst week of my fish life. It all started the day after my birthday, the first day of our winter vacation. The first day, my Irredescent shark, Spunky, died. He simply died and turned white. Within the next week, every single other fish in the aquarium had died of different diseases except for Joust, my Swordtail, and one of my Paradise fish. I tried using anti bacterials, biocraft medications, and salt, but every day, another fish died. It was devastating. I lost almost all of my fish. I was left with two unaffected fish at the end of the week, and the next day, when I came home from school, I couldn't find my Paradise fish. I looked everywhere in the tank, and finally found him on the floor under the radiator, hard as a rock. The week was bad enough, I really didn't need this. So now I was left with only Joust. Joust was very sad, and so was I, and Joust didn't eat for a long time. To this day, I honestly have only seen him eat once since that week. He must be living off of scraps that he picks out of the gravel. The only time I have ever seen him eat was when the Norwalk Aquarium was having their anniversary sale a few months ago, and I got a free bag full of live brine shrimp. [ Note, Joust unfourtunately also refused the brine shrimp, and died last month.]

The aquarium now has more fish in it. I have another Colisa Liala, a Macropodus Operculari actually [just sold him to Sal Silvestri because he was too aggressive.], a "flame" gourami, a Hypostomus plecostomus, an albino Labeo Erythrus, and two female Xiphophorus Maculatus. It has taken me since March to find fish that were as good quality as the ones that I previously had. And believe me, I have done serious searching for them. I finally found a Colisa Lalia that was up to my standards at Tony's Pet Shop, so I bought it and got a free Macropodus Opercularis. Marty also gave me a free Blue Betta Splendans. So now I have my fish in my community tank. Garlic, the blue betta, is in a two and a half gallon tank and loves to eat HBH Betta Bites. I also have a betta named Pepperoni in a 5 1/2 gallon tank in my room. He has red fins and a green and purple body. I was happy when this years show came around, and decided that three of my fish had a fair chance of getting awards, my new Colisa Lilia, my plecostomos, and pepperoni, the betta splendans. The night before the show I went to the Nature Center and set up my Colisa Lalia and my Plecostomus. The next morning I set up my Betta. My five inch Pleco definately had no chance of getting an award because he just turned yellow and went into the corner of the tank, and my betta didn't show very well either. I really wasn't sure how my Colisa Lalia was going to do, because one of the fish he was up against was a Leopard Gourami interestingly marked fish that was in good condition, so I really didn't know how he would do. In the end, he did get first place, and like my fish last year was happy to have the ribbon to hide behind. He went home along with a very frightened pleco and my betta, and each went into their homes.





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# FISH AND THE INTERNET

BY PETE SCHAUMBERG - NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY

OK, I'll admit it. I'm addicted. Not just to fish, but also to our computer. My wife and I made the decision a little over a year ago to turn our business in a new direction and purchase a computer system and use it to keep track of business "stuff". We purchased it from a local ISP (Internet Service Provider) who also got us "on line". After a day or two of surfing around, I was hooked.

What blew me away was the amount of available info on the aquarium hobby. I did a search for fish and fishtanks and aquariums and found that I was not the only fish-nut on the web. There were thousands of articles, archives, websites, personal homepages and pictures. I was in heaven. Fish heaven!

But being the type of person who tends to jump into the deep end, I wasn't satisfied. I wanted to "talk" to these fellow fisheads... so I did a search for CHAT and downloaded a free version of mIRC, which is used to connect you to the IRC. IRC stands for Internet Relay Chat. This is a program that connects you via channels (some people call them rooms) to other people all over the world. And being that my internet provider is a local call to get on line, I could talk to somebody in Norway or Germany or anywhere for free. I was hooked, pardon the pun.

My first step was to list all the available channels. At the time, there were about 400 or so. (There are now over 5,000). For those of you that are a bit squeamish, yes, there are many sex or "perv" channels. But there are also many nice, friendly "clean" channels. So first stop was a channel called #irchelp. As the name implies, this channel is devoted to helping the person who's there for the first time. These people are affectionately referred to as "clueless newbies". I hung out in that channel for awhile, asked my questions and met some pretty cool folks. Then I learned how to do a search (for a topic). I entered fish as a topic...but what's this? No fishtank channels? Oh, sure, there were some fish channels...specifically fish-ing!! I'm not a fisherman. Nor do I want to be. I wanted to talk about aquarium fish. I was disappointed, and went to some friendly chat channels to just chat with some other folks... maybe I could just meet fellow aquarists by telling them about my hobby.

I did meet many nice people, and even a couple aquarists. But I wanted more. So back to #irchelp I went, and asked about starting my own channel. I got the information, and now own my own aquarist's chat channel, on the undernet. It's called #Fishtanks. Go figure!

On the undernet (IRC) people don't use their real names, they use nicknames, referred to as "nicks". The anonymity is nice. If you decide to visit me at #fishtanks or at #irchelp just look for someone with the nick of fishee or FishDr. I am always on-line in the early morning, at about 5 a.m. until 8 or 9 o'clock. I've met many really nice fellow fisheads.

But enough of my chatting addiction. Let's go surfing the World Wide Web! My favorite stop is a site called Aqualink, at <http://www.Aqualink.com> for those of you with internet access. This is a huge site, with archives of articles written by both hobbyist and professional. It also has "links" to mail-order aquarium supplies and livestock. Also a BBS (Bulletin Board Service) is there, so you can post questions to other fisheads and get answers quickly, or just chat. A BBS is not as good as the IRC, but it's still pretty cool. Aqualink also has several "help" teams. One for Marines, one for freshwater, one for discus, Cichlids and even ponds. You post your question or problem to the help team, and it gets e-mailed to all members of that team, who then respond. Team members are experienced hobbyists (you can read their bio's at the Aqualink site) who volunteer their time to help other hobbyists. Yes, I am on the marine



help team. I get about 10-30 e-mails a day from fellow fisheads in need of help. I love it.

Another good site, similar to Aqualink, is FINS at <http://www.actwin.com> and FINS stands for Fish Information Service. This site is geared more towards providing "links" to fish-related sites. Whatever it is you need to know, FINS can show you where to find it.

Of course, any aquarist would want to check out the "amazing fish cam" at <http://www.mcom.com/fishcam/fishcam.html> where you can see a live video of fish swimming around. I'll be honest, it's fun the first time you watch it, but loses it's appeal after a few visits.

There is an abundance of people's personal websites, most of them are excellent, some are humorous and some are just...well, lame. You must decide for yourself.

All the above surfing led us to change our business focus. We decided it was time to join the electronic revolution, and put our business site on the web. See it at <http://www.neca.com/~saltysoc> and let us know what you think. It's not as big as Aqualink, but we hope someday it will be. For now, we are accepting fish-related articles for our own archives, and we also have many great links to other fishy sites.

Well, that's just a small portion about fish and the internet. If you have a computer and are online, come chat with me and other hobbyists. You can download mIRC for free from <http://www.mirc.co.uk> and begin your journey.

If you don't have a computer, you don't know what you're missing. I could tell you, but I don't have time.

I'm goin' surfing! :)

DrPete  
The Salty Society

## AQUARIUM RELATED WORLD WIDE WEB SITES

The Internet World Wide Web has taken the world by storm. Each month we publish addresses of aquarium hobby related sites. Have you found an interesting site you would like to share? Send us the the address.

**AQUALAND AQUARIUM SOCIETY**

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/jmarinelli>

**GREATER CITY AQUARIUM SOCIETY**

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/greatercity>

**EXOTIC FISH SOCIETY OF HARTFORD**

<http://nw3.nai.net/~wmerc>

**TROPICAL FISH CLUB OF BURLINGTON**

<http://bionmr.med.uvm.edu/tfcb>

**BIRCH AQUARIUM AT SCRIPPS**

<http://aqua.ucsd.edu/>



# WHAT A KILLIE MEANT TO ME

by **CHUCK DAVIS**  
**NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY**

I have been into tropical fish since I was nine years old, when I had an empty fish tank because my anole lizards died. Back then if you said to me that a good fish to keep in the aquarium would be a killie, that is the common killie for our area - the mummichog, I might have listened. Years later, After I was 'knowledgeable' about tropicals, the mummichog became a lowly fish used to bait a crab trap. Then one day there came a great shortage of feeder goldfish, which in turn led to a shortage in other feeders like common guppies. Large cichlid and catfish people had to turn to 'angler baits' like shiners, minnows and worms. Soon they too were becoming harder and harder to find in fishing's off-season.

It was then that I decided to catch my own feeders - *Fundulus heteroclitus*. A killie that was common to most salt and marsh areas up and down the east coast, from the Gulf of Mexico to the shores of Nova Scotia. Specific to the New Jersey area is the subspecies *Fundulus heteroclitus macrolepidous*. Killie traps are cheap and work very well. Within a few hours, I had plenty of feeders for my fish. Now I just had to keep them alive. I brought them home in a five gallon pail and also brought along another five gallons of water from the salt marsh. These fish were greedily eaten by my cichlids and catfish. The killies were kept alive in the bucket for days with just some water changes and an air stone. What hardly little fish they were.

As regular feeders became available I discontinued my collecting of food for the pack of gooblers in my tanks, and returned to buying a couple of hundred goldfish a week.

Then one day while visiting a local pet shop, I saw a beautiful little fish that really intrigued me. It was a fish with a strong looking body of gold and green hues. The fish was specked with brilliant blue spots and had fins that were painted in a yellow pastel. These fish were very active and really livened up the tank they were displayed in. I had to have them. When I asked the proprietor what they were, he said they are called 'bullhead minnows', a species of killifish.

Duly impressed by the fish and the price - 99¢ each, I purchased a half dozen of the aquatic gems. I was quick witted enough to pick out three males and three females - what a prize. Boy that retailer didn't know what he had!

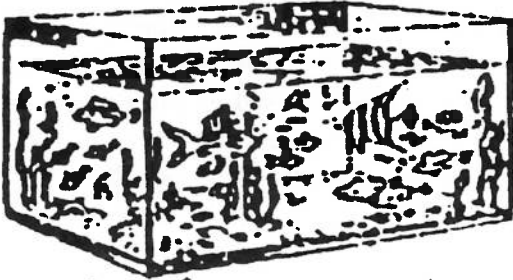
When I got home I set them up in a twenty gallon high, with some plants and a little salt because the retailer said he added salt to their water. Special care and special food was the order of the day; I had to spawn these great looking fish.

The following week I decided to research the honored fish of the month. Finally the light bulb in my head started to glow faintly. The special killies were *Fundulus heteroclitus* - mummichogs. I just never took a good look at the thousands of feeders I had caught, nor did I give them any TLC so they could sparkle. Natives killies, how can you figure?





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## NEW PRODUCTS UPDATE

Rainbow Lifeguard Aquarium Products has announced the new Lifeguard Automatic Fish Feeder. This unit looks familiar. 115volt 2.7 watt and an accessory food hopper is available. Accepts flake and pelleted foods.

Hagen announces its new Aqua Plus with P.H.E.(Pure Herbal Extract). This product neutralizes Chlorine/Chloramine/Heavy Metals

Eheim has announced that it now only sells its products through its authorized dealer network. The products will no longer be available through Pet Superstores. Their new pro line should be checked out, and the classic Eheim canister filters are still available.

LAST MONTHS  
WORD JUMBLE ANSWERS:  
ALTUM  
GOBY  
FISH



# THE NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY 1997 ANNUAL HOME SHOW COMPETITION

HERE IS YOUR CHANCE TO SHOW OFF YOUR HOME DISPLAY AQUARIUMS. ON MARCH 29th AND 30th, 1997 A SMALL GROUP OF JUDGES WILL COME TO YOUR HOME TO VIEW AND PHOTOGRAPH YOUR ENTRIES. YOU MAY ENTER ANY SIZE AQUARIUM.

## CLASSES

*ENTRIES MUST BE WITHIN A 50 MILE RADIUS  
OF WESTPORT, CT*

<b>FRESHWATER NATURAL</b>	EVERYTHING IN THIS AQUARIUM MUST BE NATURAL - NO PLASTIC PLANTS OR MAN MADE OBJECTS. THIS AQUARIUM CAN BE SPECIES SPECIFIC OR BALANCED COMMUNITY. THERE SHOULD HOWEVER BE A NUMBER OF FISH
<b>FRESHWATER ARTIFICIAL NATURAL</b>	IF YOU LIKE THE NATURAL LOOK BUT THOSE BIG CICHLIDS WON'T LEAVE THE REAL PLANTS ALONE. THIS CLASS IS FOR YOU. THIS AQUARIUM SHOULD BE NATURAL LOOKING
<b>AFRICAN CICHLID</b>	SINCE AFRICAN CICHLIDS AQUARIUMS ARE IN A CLASS OF THEIR OWN WE HAVE ADDED THIS CATEGORY
<b>MARINE NON REEF</b>	THIS TANK MAY CONTAIN FISH, NON LIVING CORAL OR OTHER DECOR
<b>MARINE MINI REEF</b>	MINI REEF AQUARIUMS CONTAINING LIVE ROCK, LIVE CORALS, AND OTHER REEF INHABITANTS
<b>ORNAMENTAL PONDS</b>	ORNAMENTAL WATER GARDENS HAVE BECOME VERY POPULAR- WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOURS- INSIDE OR OUT. THIS CLASS WILL BE JUDGED BY APPOINTMENT IN THE MONTH OF AUGUST TO ALLOW FOR POND MATURITY

### GENERAL RULES

1. NO ILLEGAL FISH WILL BE ALLOWED
2. APPOINTED JUDGING TIME WILL BE BASED ON THE BEST ROUTE FOR THE JUDGES. TIME WILL NOT BE CHOSEN BY THE ENTRANT. OUR BEST EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO ADHERE TO THE ANNOUNCED SCHEDULE.
3. ALL ENTRIES MUST BE SUBMITTED BY THE FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETING
4. THE ENTRY FEE IS \$ 5.00 FOR THE FIRST TANK, 3.50 FOR THE SECOND, AND THE THIRD IS FREE. THERE IS A LIMIT OF THREE ENTRIES.
5. TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE JUDGES, YOU MUST PROVIDE A MAP AND DETAILED DIRECTIONS TO YOUR LOCATION.

**SUBMIT ENTRIES TO: BASIL HOLUBIS, CHAIRMAN - C/O NORWALK  
AQUARIUM SOCIETY, P.O. BOX 84, NORWALK, CT 06856 OR CALL HIM AT  
914-669-5030**



# **Altum Times II**

**THE SAGA CONTINUES**

**by GENE HARRIS - NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY**

It is sad to report that of the 3 original Pterophyllum Altum described in the last article, all three have gone to that great tank in the sky. But not all is lost for I convinced Rose that the best Christmas gift she could get me was more super angel Altums. Somehow she went along with the plan. This group of 6 was from a source in the Boston area. These were wild caught from the Rio Negro, South America and had been in the U.S. for about 10 days before delivery to me. They had body sizes just over silver dollar size, with fins fully extended they were 6" to 8" fish. Much larger than the quarter body size on the prior group of 3. These new Altums had been treated with a variety of medications. There are differing opinions as to the ideal Altum size. Some say start with small fish and let them grow together, and the younger fish adjust and adapt to the American water better than larger fish. Others says to start with larger fish, like this new group, as they are not as intra-species aggressive by the time they have obtained this silver dollar plus size. They also have more body 'fat' reserves to sustain them during a period that they choose to not eat. Smaller fish are more intra-species aggressive and certainly don't have the body 'fat' reserves. I'm not sure which school of thought is right.

The new Altum group was placed into a seasoned 55 gallon tank comprised of 100% rainwater, at 88 degrees Fahrenheit, and pH of 5.5. Hardness was naturally negligible. The tank is in the low traffic furnace area and even has black paper taped to sides to further reduce sight stress for the fish. The tanks has some live plants but mostly some large, high plastic plants, and one piece of seasoned drift wood/root. Plenty of cover and hiding areas. Filtration was pretty basic, two large sponge filters. Other filtration was foregone until the medication period was complete. Aquatronics Paragon II anti-parasitic and anti-bacterial wide spectrum was added immediately and again for the next few days. This was my first experience using any type of medication as I am always adverse to using any chemicals or additives, and I generally believe that if the proper care and conditions are provided that there is no need to use artificial 'pollutants.' On the other hand, these were the first wild caught fish of any considerable 'investment' so I took the advice of the prior caretaker and used the meds.

Tank mates were 5 Cory Panda cats, and 10 shy Rummy Nose tetras, and a couple of smallish "Otto" cats. After transferring some water from the new home to the travel bucket, and waiting out the water acclimation period the group of 6 altums were introduced to the tank. They immediately went about checking out the new quarters and moved about which was a good sign, the date being December 26, 1996. I fed them live black worms, live brine shrimp, frozen Hakari blood worms, freeze dried blood worms, Wardley spirulina and OSI brand "Angelfish Flakes." The were not good eaters but some brine and black worms were consumed. Although I mention many foods, none was presented in large enough quantities to be bioload pile up hazard.

On December 28th I added a Whisper 2 filter with the carbon/zeolite for added filtration and to give the tank some currents. An airstone was added to increase water surface breakage and thus beef up

# THE WET PET GAZETTE

March 1997



Volume 2 Issue 2

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*MICHAEL KRASILOVSKY*
- **FISH AND THE INTERNET**  
*PETE SCHAUMBERG*



The Journal of  
The Norwalk Aquarium Society

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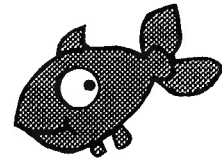
We reserve the right to reject any article which are in our opinion is offensive, and/or does not promote the hobby.

**WET PET GAZETTE EXCHANGES**

Norwalk Aquarium Society gladly exchanges its publication with other societies that send their publication to us. We publish nine issues a year. We send our exchange copies as bulk mail in March, June, and November

Requests and publications should be sent to:  
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Norwalk Aquarium Society  
P.O. Box 84  
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### AFFILIATIONS

N.A.S. IS A MEMBER OF THE FEDERATION OF AMERICAN AQUARIUM SOCIETIES (FAAS) AND THE NORTHEAST COUNCIL OF AQUARIUM SOCIETIES, INC. (NEC)

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### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Norwalk Aquarium Society is a not for profit, all volunteer organization, dedicated to the advancement, and promotion of the Aquarium hobby

### REGULAR MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

There are regular meetings on the third Thursday of each month except July and December. Meetings are held at The Nature Center for Environmental Activities, 10 Woodside Lane, Westport, CT. Meetings start at 8:00 PM. Each meeting includes a short business meeting, program or event, door prizes, raffles, auction, and refreshments. All regular meetings



**A VIEW FROM UPFRONT**

**ED KATUSKA  
NAS PRESIDENT**

I would like to thank those that participated in our benefit auction last month, As you know this is this event is one of our biggest functions of the year with all the proceeds being donated to the nature center, The Nature Center staff is continually there for all our society needs and their facilities are always open to us. The Nature Center was presented with the proceeds at our February meeting and once again thank you to those who made it possible.

Speaking about the February auction I noticed many people in the room were members of other sister societies supporting our function. Somewhere inside the pages of our Wetpet is a list of upcoming shows and auctions of other local societies such as ours. Please support other clubs by attending and helping their event to be a success.

Our home show will be taking place at the end of this month. There is still time to enter your tank. This will be the first home show that has taken place in a few years and we are hoping for many entries, Tanks will be judged on March 29-30 1997. Anyone interested can contact Basil at (914)669-5930.

The Northeast Council of Aquarium Societies will be hosting the 22nd Annual Convention on April 11-13, 1997. As usual the convention committee has an impressive speaker line up, Ad Konings and Wayne Leibel to name a few, The NEC Convention is the largest fish event in New England. It would be great to see a large turnout from our organization. Hope to see you there.



**FROM THE DESK OF THE  
EDITOR**

**MARK BROADMEYER  
WET PET GAZETTE EDITOR**

This month we will be publishing part I of an article by Michael Krasilovsky. Michael is one of our junior members, and has already provided me with a number of articles for future issues of The Wet Pet Gazette. His first article is entitled "My Life as a Fishkeeper". Although I have been keeping fish at least twice as long as Michael has been on this Earth, it is refreshing to see things once again through younger eyes. Michael called me just the other day to let me know that his female platy is once again giving birth, and that one of his Discus wasn't eating. In a perfect world these are the only problems that our children should encounter. Michael has also volunteered to become the Refreshment Chairperson. Perhaps the youngest chairperson in the history of our organization. He did confess that he had an ulterior motive, he likes eating the refreshments at the meeting. Please give Michael any support you can in his new capacity.

Also this month you will find part II of Ed Katuska's NEC Judges Thesis paper on Corydoras. The final part will be in the April Wet Pet. Part II of Gene Harris's Article on Altum Angels is also here with Part III coming in April as well. From "DR. PETE" Schaumberg is an article to help get you surfing the net with the big boys, and Chuck Davis has some reminiscent thoughts on Killies.

I want to thank all of our writers for sharing their experience, and experiences.



MARK

# PROGRAMS, PROGRAMS, PROGRAMS

## ANNE BROADMEYER - PROGRAMS CHAIRPERSON

Here's the line up for the rest of the year

Thanks to Pete Schaumburg for his program on Fish Holistics. I gave Pete the wrong date so his Fix it Night program went to North Jersey. Sorry for the confusion but it was a great program!

- March 20, 1997**      **Collecting in South America** by Jim Carmark of Massachusetts. Jim has been collecting fish in South America for over ten years and has been keeping fish for over 30 years.
- April 17, 1997**      **Fishy Bingo.** This should be a fun night for everyone, even those non-fishy spouses. Everyone likes a good night of Bingo, great for socializing and win a few fishy items to boot.
- May 15, 1997**      The plans are for a **Pond program.** I will have more information for you next month.
- June 19, 1997**      Again, we are going to try something a little different. This will be a **CPR** class. Space will be limited so if you plan on bringing a friend, please let me know because we need a three to one ratio for the instructors.
- July**      **Happy Summer - No meeting**
- August 21, 1997**      **Fish Nutrition** by Shemya Bryant of Wardleys.
- September 18, 1997**      **Home Show Program and Results** presented by Basil Holubis. **October 16, 1997** **Discus**, by Ellen Halligan of Long Island Discus

## Swimming Through the Exchanges by Anne Broadmeyer

I would like to take this opportunity to say a special thank you to Gina Bill for a job all done these past years. Thank you !

For those of you who know me well, yes, my hand has risen once again. When I told Ed that I would take on this project, I also told him that it would be the last thing I volunteered for in a while. -- This you will HAVE to believe because my husband says so! Anyway, I will attempt to keep an accurate account of 'who is sharing what'. If there is something in specific you are interested in, please feel free to call me (203) 834-2228, fax me (same number) or E-Mail me (dfh@compuserve.com). Since I am just taking over I have not had the opportunity to review each publication, however, I would like you to know we have had a few reprints in our fellow societies' publication.

\*The December issue of *The Buckettee*, Bucks County Aquarium Society of Pennsylvania, reviewed Pete Schaumburg's article, **Hot Water**.

\*The January issue of *The Buckettee*, Bucks County Aquarium Society of Pennsylvania, reviewed Don Johnson's article, **12 "Myths" That Keep You From Saltwater Success**.

\*The January/February issue of *Reefrations* Windows To The Sea Marine Aquarium Society of New Jersey, reviewed Don Johnson's article, **12 "Myths" That Keep You From Saltwater Success**.

\*The February issue of *Tankquilizer*, The Tropical Fish Society of Rhode Island, reviewed Pete Schaumburg's article, **Beginner's Syndrome...Is there a cure?**

I am happy to say that we are exchanging with a new society, Honolulu Aquarium Society. To date I have not gotten all the past exchanges or listing from Gina. Once I have gotten the exchanges under my belt, I will give you an actual number of exchanges, but as you know, we exchange with approximately 200 societies throughout the United States as well as Canada. We even receive a publication in Spanish from Puerto Rica. Unfortunately, my Spanish is limited, maybe someone would like to review this publication.



# WHAT'S ON THE CALENDAR

1997

**MARCH**

- 23 WORCESTER AQUARIUM SOCIETY AUCTION
- 30 MAINE STATE AQUARISTS SOCIETY AUCTION

**APRIL**

- 11-13 NORTHEAST COUNCIL OF AQUARIUM SOCIETIES 22nd ANNUAL CONVENTION - HARTFORD MARRIOTT HOTEL, FARMINGTON, CT - 11 SPEAKERS - ANNUAL AWARD BANQUET - AUCTIONS - MFG'S DISPLAYS - CALL JANINE BANKS 802-482-3616
- 27 BOSTON AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL EVENT, WEYMOUTH ELK'S HALL

**MAY**

- 2-4 TROPICAL FISH CLUB OF BURLINGTON, ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION, BURLINGTON, VT CALL JANINE BANKS 802-482-3616
- 17 GREATER CITY AQUARIUM SOCIETY TROPICAL FISH SHOW
- 18 NORTH JERSEY AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL AUCTION
- 16-18 AQUALAND AQUARIUM SOCIETY 24th ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION, BONNIE ACRES, BRISTOL, CT

**JUNE**

- 1 NORTHEAST COUNCIL OF AQUARIUM SOCIETIES QUARTERLY GENERAL MEETING
- 6-8 JERSEY SHORE AQUARIUM SOCIETY 1st ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION

**AUGUST**

- 24 BLACK RIVER AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL AUCTION

**SEPTEMBER**

- 19-21 TROPICAL FISH SOCIETY OF RHODE ISLAND ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION
- 21 DANBURY AREA AQUARIUM SOCIETY

**OCTOBER**

- 3-5 NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION
- 26 LONG ISLAND AQUARIUM SOCIETY ANNUAL AUCTION

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## Fish Show and Auction

Saturday May 17 and Sunday May 18, 1997

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BY ED KATUSKA

RASBORA HETEROMORPHA  
BY CHUCK DAVIS

MY LIFE AS A FISHKEEPER PART II  
MICHAEL KRASILOVSKY

PTEROPHYLLUM ALTUM III  
GENE HARRIS



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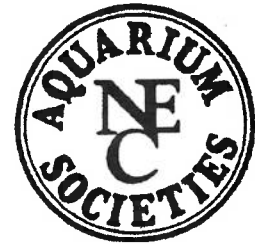
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# MY LIFE AS A FISHKEEPER

by **MICHAEL KRASILOVSKY**  
JUNIOR MEMBER - NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY  
PART I

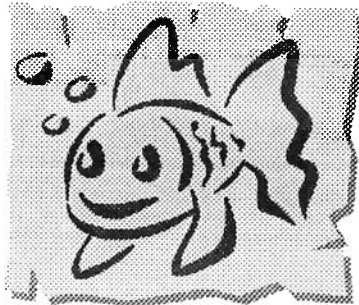
I have always been interested in fish, but I got my very first fish when I was little. I was in first grade, and my birthday was coming up. As a present, my Grandma took me to Pets Unlimited and bought me a fish bowl with purple triangle gravel, some pretty shells, and a small plastic turtle painted yellow with a green head. She bought me two comets for the bowl, which were gold and had black on the tops of their bodies. I kept the fish bowl in my room, but eventually put it in the kitchen because my room smelled like a lake. At least that was what my parents said. Personally, I think it smelled like fish poop! Unfortunately, the fish did not last very long, but had I not had the experience then, I probably wouldn't be an aquarist now. I got my first fish tank when I was in seventh grade. It was a ten gallon aquarium, with a Whisper E power filter, a Penn-Plax undertow undergravel filter, a Penn-Plax PC Plus heater, and of course aquascaping "things". I put lots of gravel in, mixing red, black, blue, and a tiny bit of yellow and green. I also put some glow in the dark plastic plants in and a small plastic piece of driftwood and a small plastic tree trunk. I also had a small treasure chest that opened its lid every nine seconds if you devoted a small supply of air to it from your air pump. This aquarium could not have been farther away from a fishes natural environment if I had tried! But it looked pretty and I put some fish in.

I put in a Dwarf Gourami, a Flame Gourami, two Paradise fish, two Congo Tetras, a male Red Wag Swordtail, an Irresdescent shark, and a small Pleco. I also bought a pregnant female Swordtail. The lady at the store said she would have the babies in about two weeks, so I bought her and a breeding trap. Later that night I decided that she was just too dark on her belly, so I put her in the breeding trap. Of course, she gave birth to a batch of 17 fry the next day. I was so excited! I had a plastic box in my aquarium with babies in it! They were so cute! I put the mom back into the aquarium, where she recovered peacefully while all the other fish kept trying to peck through the breeding trap and eat the babies. She started breeding with my male Swordtail immedietly, and continued to have a batch of fry every 30 to 35 days. I kept the babies in tupperware containers until I started giving them away because I had 80 fish in two tupperware containers and a goldfish bowl [yes, the goldfish bowl from first grade]. I called the Nature Center to ask if they new anything about what I should do with my babies, and somehow I got in touch with Anne Broadmeyer. She gave me some advice over the phone and told me about the Norwalk Aquarium Society.

Later that week, there was a monthly meeting, so I went. There was a program about preparing fish for a show given I think by Wally Bush. Excited, I went home and decided that some of my fish were good enough for the show. The fish that I entered in the show was my Dwarf Gourami whose name was Stripes, and I also entered my male Swordtail whose name was Joust. Joust didn't seem to like being in a 2 1/2 gallon tank without any of his friends, and he sat on the bottom of the tank refusing to eat for the whole show. Obviously, he didn't get an award. But I was proud of him because he was a fish that was in such good condition. Stripes, my Dwarf Gourami, did get an award though. He won second place in the catagory Anabantoids. I believe that the reason he won was because of his eating habits. When he eats a food that he likes, he darkens his colors intensely, so instead of not feeding him during the two days of the show as recomended, I gave him some bloodworms, his favorite food. Of course, for two days he was in his best colors, and this is why he was given a medal. Everything was

going well, all I had to do as far as maintenance for the aquarium was a 25% water change once or twice a week, which I continue to do on all of my tanks. Of course, in the tupperwares with the fry, I did water changes every day because of how the fry food was polluting the water. Unfortunately, in late February, I had the worst week of my fish life. It all started the day after my birthday, the first day of our winter vacation. The first day, my Irrescent shark, Spunky, died. He simply died and turned white. Within the next week, every single other fish in the aquarium had died of different diseases except for Joust, my Swordtail, and one of my Paradise fish. I tried using anti bacterials, biocraft medications, and salt, but every day, another fish died. It was devastating. I lost almost all of my fish. I was left with two unaffected fish at the end of the week, and the next day, when I came home from school, I couldn't find my Paradise fish. I looked everywhere in the tank, and finally found him on the floor under the radiator, hard as a rock. The week was bad enough, I really didn't need this. So now I was left with only Joust. Joust was very sad, and so was I, and Joust didn't eat for a long time. To this day, I honestly have only seen him eat once since that week. He must be living off of scraps that he picks out of the gravel. The only time I have ever seen him eat was when the Norwalk Aquarium was having their anniversary sale a few months ago, and I got a free bag full of live brine shrimp. [ Note, Joust unfortunately also refused the brine shrimp, and died last month.]

The aquarium now has more fish in it. I have another Colisa Liala, a Macropodus Operculari actually [just sold him to Sal Silvestri because he was too aggressive.], a "flame" gourami, a Hypostomus plecostomus, an albino Labeo Erythrus, and two female Xiphophorus Maculatus. It has taken me since March to find fish that were as good quality as the ones that I previously had. And believe me, I have done serious searching for them. I finally found a Colisa Lalia that was up to my standards at Tony's Pet Shop, so I bought it and got a free Macropodus Opercularis. Marty also gave me a free Blue Betta Splendans. So now I have my fish in my community tank. Garlic, the blue betta, is in a two and a half gallon tank and loves to eat HBH Betta Bites. I also have a betta named Pepperoni in a 5 1/2 gallon tank in my room. He has red fins and a green and purple body. I was happy when this year's show came around, and decided that three of my fish had a fair chance of getting awards, my new Colisa Lalia, my plecostomus, and pepperoni, the betta splendans. The night before the show I went to the Nature Center and set up my Colisa Lalia and my Plecostomus. The next morning I set up my Betta. My five inch Pleco definitely had no chance of getting an award because he just turned yellow and went into the corner of the tank, and my betta didn't show very well either. I really wasn't sure how my Colisa Lalia was going to do, because one of the fish he was up against was a Leopard Gourami interestingly marked fish that was in good condition, so I really didn't know how he would do. In the end, he did get first place, and like my fish last year was happy to have the ribbon to hide behind. He went home along with a very frightened pleco and my betta, and each went into their homes.





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# FISH AND THE INTERNET

BY PETE SCHAUMBERG - NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY

OK, I'll admit it. I'm addicted. Not just to fish, but also to our computer. My wife and I made the decision a little over a year ago to turn our business in a new direction and purchase a computer system and use it to keep track of business "stuff". We purchased it from a local ISP (Internet Service Provider) who also got us "on line". After a day or two of surfing around, I was hooked.

What blew me away was the amount of available info on the aquarium hobby. I did a search for fish and fishtanks and aquariums and found that I was not the only fish-nut on the web. There were thousands of articles, archives, websites, personal homepages and pictures. I was in heaven. Fish heaven!

But being the type of person who tends to jump into the deep end, I wasn't satisfied. I wanted to "talk" to these fellow fisheads... so I did a search for CHAT and downloaded a free version of mIRC, which is used to connect you to the IRC. IRC stands for Internet Relay Chat. This is a program that connects you via channels (some people call them rooms) to other people all over the world. And being that my internet provider is a local call to get on line, I could talk to somebody in Norway or Germany or anywhere for free. I was hooked, pardon the pun.

My first step was to list all the available channels. At the time, there were about 400 or so. (There are now over 5,000). For those of you that are a bit squeamish, yes, there are many sex or "perv" channels. But there are also many nice, friendly "clean" channels. So first stop was a channel called #irchelp. As the name implies, this channel is devoted to helping the person who's there for the first time. These people are affectionately referred to as "clueless newbies". I hung out in that channel for awhile, asked my questions and met some pretty cool folks. Then I learned how to do a search (for a topic). I entered fish as a topic...but what's this? No fishtank channels? Oh, sure, there were some fish channels...specifically fish-ing!! I'm not a fisherman. Nor do I want to be. I wanted to talk about aquarium fish. I was disappointed, and went to some friendly chat channels to just chat with some other folks... maybe I could just meet fellow aquarists by telling them about my hobby.

I did meet many nice people, and even a couple aquarists. But I wanted more. So back to #irchelp I went, and asked about starting my own channel. I got the information, and now own my own aquarist's chat channel, on the undernet. It's called #Fishtanks. Go figure!

On the undernet (IRC) people don't use their real names, they use nicknames, referred to as "nicks". The anonymity is nice. If you decide to visit me at #fishtanks or at #irchelp just look for someone with the nick of fishee or FishDr. I am always on-line in the early morning, at about 5 a.m. until 8 or 9 o'clock. I've met many really nice fellow fisheads.

But enough of my chatting addiction. Let's go surfing the World Wide Web! My favorite stop is a site called Aqualink, at <http://www.Aqualink.com> for those of you with internet access. This is a huge site, with archives of articles written by both hobbyist and professional. It also has "links" to mail-order aquarium supplies and livestock. Also a BBS (Bulletin Board Service) is there, so you can post questions to other fisheads and get answers quickly, or just chat. A BBS is not as good as the IRC, but it's still pretty cool. Aqualink also has several "help" teams. One for Marines, one for freshwater, one for discus, Cichlids and even ponds. You post your question or problem to the help team, and it gets e-mailed to all members of that team, who then respond. Team members are experienced hobbyists (you can read their bio's at the Aqualink site) who volunteer their time to help other hobbyists. Yes, I am on the marine



help team. I get about 10-30 e-mails a day from fellow fisheads in need of help. I love it.

Another good site, similar to Aqualink, is FINS at <http://www.actwin.com> and FINS stands for Fish Information Service. This site is geared more towards providing "links" to fish-related sites. Whatever it is you need to know, FINS can show you where to find it.

Of course, any aquarist would want to check out the "amazing fish cam" at <http://www.mcom.com/fishcam/fishcam.html> where you can see a live video of fish swimming around. I'll be honest, it's fun the first time you watch it, but loses it's appeal after a few visits.

There is an abundance of people's personal websites, most of them are excellent, some are humorous and some are just...well, lame. You must decide for yourself.

All the above surfing led us to change our business focus. We decided it was time to join the electronic revolution, and put our business site on the web. See it at <http://www.neca.com/~saltyoc> and let us know what you think. It's not as big as Aqualink, but we hope someday it will be. For now, we are accepting fish-related articles for our own archives, and we also have many great links to other fishy sites.

Well, that's just a small portion about fish and the internet. If you have a computer and are online, come chat with me and other hobbyists. You can download mIRC for free from <http://www.mirc.co.uk> and begin your journey.

If you don't have a computer, you don't know what you're missing. I could tell you, but I don't have time.

I'm goin' surfing! :)

DrPete  
The Salty Society

## AQUARIUM RELATED WORLD WIDE WEB SITES

The Internet World Wide Web has taken the world by storm. Each month we publish addresses of aquarium hobby related sites. Have you found an interesting site you would like to share? Send us the the address.

**AQUALAND AQUARIUM SOCIETY**

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/jmarinelli>

**GREATER CITY AQUARIUM SOCIETY**

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/greatercity>

**EXOTIC FISH SOCIETY OF HARTFORD**

<http://nw3.nai.net/~wmercer>

**TROPICAL FISH CLUB OF BURLINGTON**

<http://bionmr.med.uvm.edu/tfcb>

**BIRCH AQUARIUM AT SCRIPPS**

<http://aqua.ucsd.edu/>





# WHAT A KILLIE MEANT TO ME

by CHUCK DAVIS

NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY

I have been into tropical fish since I was nine years old, when I had an empty fish tank because my anole lizards died. Back then if you said to me that a good fish to keep in the aquarium would be a killie, that is the common killie for our area - the mummichog, I might have listened. Years later, After I was 'knowledgeable' about tropicals, the mummichog became a lowly fish used to bait a crab trap. Then one day there came a great shortage of feeder goldfish, which in turn led to a shortage in other feeders like common guppies. Large cichlid and catfish people had to turn to 'angler baits' like shiners, minnows and worms. Soon they too were becoming harder and harder to find in fishing's off-season.

It was then that I decided to catch my own feeders - *Fundulus heteroclitus*. A killie that was common to most salt and marsh areas up and down the east coast, from the Gulf of Mexico to the shores of Nova Scotia. Specific to the New Jersey area is the subspecies *Fundulus heteroclitus macrolepidous*. Killie traps are cheap and work very well. Within a few hours, I had plenty of feeders for my fish. Now I just had to keep them alive. I brought them home in a five gallon pail and also brought along another five gallons of water from the salt marsh. These fish were greedily eaten by my cichlids and catfish. The killies were kept alive in the bucket for days with just some water changes and an air stone. What hardly little fish they were.

As regular feeders became available I discontinued my collecting of food for the pack of gooblers in my tanks, and returned to buying a couple of hundred goldfish a week.

Then one day while visiting a local pet shop, I saw a beautiful little fish that really intrigued me. It was a fish with a strong looking body of gold and green hues. The fish was specked with brilliant blue spots and had fins that were painted in a yellow pastel. These fish were very active and really livened up the tank they were displayed in. I had to have them. When I asked the proprietor what they were, he said they are called 'bullhead minnows', a species of killifish.

Duly impressed by the fish and the price - 99¢ each, I purchased a half dozen of the aquatic gems. I was quick witted enough to pick out three males and three females - what a prize. Boy that retailer didn't know what he had!

When I got home I set them up in a twenty gallon high, with some plants and a little salt because the retailer said he added salt to their water. Special care and special food was the order of the day; I had to spawn these great looking fish.

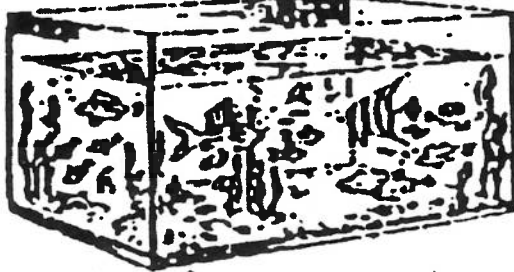
The following week I decided to research the honored fish of the month. Finally the light bulb in my head started to glow faintly. The special killies were *Fundulus heteroclitus* - mummichogs. I just never took a good look at the thousands of feeders I had caught, nor did I give them any TLC so they could sparkle. Natives killies, how can you figure?





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## NEW PRODUCTS UPDATE

Rainbow Lifeguard Aquarium Products has announced the new Lifeguard Automatic Fish Feeder. This unit looks familiar. 115volt 2.7 watt and an accessory food hopper is available. Accepts flake and pelleted foods.

Hagen announces its new Aqua Plus with P.H.E.(Pure Herbal Extract). This product neutralizes Chlorine/Chloramine/Heavy Metals

Eheim has announced that it now only sells its products through its authorized dealer network. The products will no longer be available through Pet Superstores. Their new pro line should be checked out, and the classic Eheim canister filters are still available.

LAST MONTHS  
WORD JUMBLE ANSWERS:  
ALTUM  
GOBY  
FISH

# THE NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY 1997 ANNUAL HOME SHOW COMPETITION

HERE IS YOUR CHANCE TO SHOW OFF YOUR HOME DISPLAY AQUARIUMS. ON MARCH 29th AND 30th, 1997 A SMALL GROUP OF JUDGES WILL COME TO YOUR HOME TO VIEW AND PHOTOGRAPH YOUR ENTRIES. YOU MAY ENTER ANY SIZE AQUARIUM.

## CLASSES

*ENTRIES MUST BE WITHIN A 50 MILE RADIUS  
OF WESTPORT, CT*

<b>FRESHWATER NATURAL</b>	EVERYTHING IN THIS AQUARIUM MUST BE NATURAL - NO PLASTIC PLANTS OR MAN MADE OBJECTS. THIS AQUARIUM CAN BE SPECIES SPECIFIC OR BALANCED COMMUNITY. THERE SHOULD HOWEVER BE A NUMBER OF FISH
<b>FRESHWATER ARTIFICIAL NATURAL</b>	IF YOU LIKE THE NATURAL LOOK BUT THOSE BIG CICHLIDS WON'T LEAVE THE REAL PLANTS ALONE. THIS CLASS IS FOR YOU. THIS AQUARIUM SHOULD BE NATURAL LOOKING
<b>AFRICAN CICHLID</b>	SINCE AFRICAN CICHLIDS AQUARIUMS ARE IN A CLASS OF THEIR OWN WE HAVE ADDED THIS CATEGORY
<b>MARINE NON REEF</b>	THIS TANK MAY CONTAIN FISH, NON LIVING CORAL OR OTHER DECOR
<b>MARINE MINI REEF</b>	MINI REEF AQUARIUMS CONTAINING LIVE ROCK, LIVE CORALS, AND OTHER REEF INHABITANTS
<b>ORNAMENTAL PONDS</b>	ORNAMENTAL WATER GARDENS HAVE BECOME VERY POPULAR- WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOURS- INSIDE OR OUT. THIS CLASS WILL BE JUDGED BY APPOINTMENT IN THE MONTH OF AUGUST TO ALLOW FOR POND MATURITY

### GENERAL RULES

1. NO ILLEGAL FISH WILL BE ALLOWED
2. APPOINTED JUDGING TIME WILL BE BASED ON THE BEST ROUTE FOR THE JUDGES. TIME WILL NOT BE CHOSEN BY THE ENTRANT. OUR BEST EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO ADHERE TO THE ANNOUNCED SCHEDULE.
3. ALL ENTRIES MUST BE SUBMITTED BY THE FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETING
4. THE ENTRY FEE IS \$ 5.00 FOR THE FIRST TANK, 3.50 FOR THE SECOND, AND THE THIRD IS FREE. THERE IS A LIMIT OF THREE ENTRIES.
5. TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE JUDGES, YOU MUST PROVIDE A MAP AND DETAILED DIRECTIONS TO YOUR LOCATION.

**SUBMIT ENTRIES TO: BASIL HOLUBIS, CHAIRMAN - C/O NORWALK  
AQUARIUM SOCIETY, P.O. BOX 84, NORWALK, CT 06856 OR CALL HIM AT  
914-669-5030**



# Altum Times II

THE SAGA CONTINUES

by **GENE HARRIS - NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY**

It is sad to report that of the 3 original Pterophyllum Altum described in the last article, all three have gone to that great tank in the sky. But not all is lost for I convinced Rose that the best Christmas gift she could get me was more super angel Altums. Somehow she went along with the plan. This group of 6 was from a source in the Boston area. These were wild caught from the Rio Negro, South America and had been in the U.S. for about 10 days before delivery to me. They had body sizes just over silver dollar size, with fins fully extended they were 6" to 8" fish. Much larger than the quarter body size on the prior group of 3. These new Altums had been treated with a variety of medications. There are differing opinions as to the ideal Altum size. Some say start with small fish and let them grow together, and the younger fish adjust and adapt to the American water better than larger fish. Others says to start with larger fish, like this new group, as they are not as intra-species aggressive by the time they have obtained this silver dollar plus size. They also have more body 'fat' reserves to sustain them during a period that they choose to not eat. Smaller fish are more intra-species aggressive and certainly don't have the body 'fat' reserves. I'm not sure which school of thought is right.

The new Altum group was placed into a seasoned 55 gallon tank comprised of 100% rainwater, at 88 degrees Fahrenheit, and pH of 5.5. Hardness was naturally negligible. The tank is in the low traffic furnace area and even has black paper taped to sides to further reduce sight stress for the fish. The tanks has some live plants but mostly some large, high plastic plants, and one piece of seasoned drift wood/root. Plenty of cover and hiding areas. Filtration was pretty basic, two large sponge filters. Other filtration was foregone until the medication period was complete. Aquatronics Paragon II anti-parasitic and anti-bacterial wide spectrum was added immediately and again for the next few days. This was my first experience using any type of medication as I am always adverse to using any chemicals or additives, and I generally believe that if the proper care and conditions are provided that there is no need to use artificial 'pollutants.' On the other hand, these were the first wild caught fish of any considerable 'investment' so I took the advice of the prior caretaker and used the meds.

Tank mates were 5 Cory Panda cats, and 10 shy Rummy Nose tetras, and a couple of smallish "Otto" cats. After transferring some water from the new home to the travel bucket, and waiting out the water acclimation period the group of 6 altums were introduced to the tank. They immediately went about checking out the new quarters and moved about which was a good sign, the date being December 26, 1996. I fed them live black worms, live brine shrimp, frozen Hakari blood worms, freeze dried blood worms, Wardley spirulina and OSI brand "Angelfish Flakes." The were not good eaters but some brine and black worms were consumed. Although I mention many foods, none was presented in large enough quantities to be bioload pile up hazard.

On December 28th I added a Whisper 2 filter with the carbon/zeolite for added filtration and to give the tank some currents. An airstone was added to increase water surface breakage and thus beef up

the oxygen which tends to be depleted by meds.

On December 26 we lost one of the Altums. The fish began to look upward and drift aimlessly all day, eventually settling on the bottom. The end was surely near and I removed the fish, placed it in a bowl of cool water and put it in the freezer. I have heard over the years that this the most 'humane' method of ending the suffering and life of the fish, as opposed to flushing which is the worst agony for the animal.

The remaining 5 Altums began to move about better after removal of their friend. Perhaps seeing a comrade down all day impacted the behavior of the other ones? I began to wonder what really caused the death? It has some fungus on the farthest edges of the fins but not really excessive and no other visible signs of a disease, not even white spot ich could be seen. I lowered the temp a few degrees to 85F as I began to think the water was too warm at 88F. Was there something harmful in the live black worms or brine? The black worms were fresh from a local store and the brine fresh and strained before entry to the tank. Some say that blackworms carry bacteria and infections much like live tubifex. My experiences in the past have always been good with black worms, in fact I think it causes spawning. Was it the Carbozeal on the Whisper filter or the current? Was our rainwater tainted? Perhaps this was simply the weakest of the 6 fish and a certain mortality is to be expected?

By evening December 29 the remaining 5 Altums were becoming reclusive and another one was starting to break away from the group and tilting a bit. Not a healthy sign. Later it developed a fungal spot on the mid body. I decided to treat the water with Paragon I rather than Paragon II. I also began to think I should only feed them freeze dried and flake foods. They could learn to eat it or starve. Why take further risks with live foods and wild caught fish. On the other hand the Altums don't seem to want to eat anything, what little they eat is the live stuff.

Upon returning home from work on December 30 I find only 4 Altums. There is no way the fish could have jumped, the tank has a glass canopy and just enough opening for the Whisper and airline tubes to the sponge filters. I looked several times and couldn't find the body. I had diner and came back and eventually found the dead altum and a dead Otto cat. These Ottos are pretty much bullet proof - so what is wrong. The rummy nose tetras were bland pink looking, not the usual red nose. (By the way, over Christmas I told the children these are 'Rudolph' tetras and none of them even thought I was kidding!) I did an ammonia test and found it in Tetras 'dangerous' level 1.5 ppm. I didn't bother with nitrite or nitrate testing since ammonia poisoning takes highest precedence. All the meds must have destroyed the nitrifying bacteria colonies in the sponge filters. Another contributor was some dropping and rotting fine plants leaves (I believe the meds contributed to this as well) and uneaten food. I vacuumed the bottom of the tank resulting in about a 15% water change which by the way wiped out my rainwater supply. I added two more Whisper filters with new packs of Carbozeal. I lowered the temperature setting on the Ebo half a notch which should drop it down to 83F.

I should have known better, I should have tested the water quality earlier. I am determined to not add any more meds, provide low infection risk foods, and test water more regularly on this tank.

To be continued ...



# **THE FAMILY CALLICHTYDE - THE GENUS CORYDORAS**

## **HISTORY, CHARACTERISTICS, GENERAL CARE, DISEASES, AND JUDGING - PART II**

### **BY ED KATUSKA - NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY**

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

Corydora catfish are members of the family CALLICHTYDAE. They share this with two other subfamilies, the Brochis and Aspidoras catfish. Corydoras being the largest genus of the Callichthyidae family with approximately one hundred and fifteen species described. Corydoras derived their genus name from the term Helmeted Doras (Doras is another genus of catfish).

A common trait of most Corys is they are found in large schools of hundreds or sometimes thousands at a time. Usually they prefer their own species per school, but sometimes others are seen mixing in.

Corys can be found in different size ranges. They average a size of two to three inches. The smallest species of Corydoras is the *C. pygmaeus* reaching only one inch in length and the largest being the *C. barbatus* reaching lengths of five inches.

The body of these catfish are armored with two series of overlapping plates. 22 to 26 of dorsolateral and 19 to 24 of ventrolateral scutes make up these plates. The dorsal fin has a spine and usually seven rays. The anal fin usually has six rays and the central fin, five rays. The pectoral fins have a spine with eight rays. Corys also have a forked caudal fin and an adipose fin. All callichthyid species have a single pair of short barbels on the lower lip and a barbel in each corner of the mouth called Rictal barbels.

Corys like most catfish are very sensitive to noises. Catfish have pores along the midline of the armored flanks, in other fishes such as most Cichlids these pores would be called the lateral line. They can sense vibrations in the water and transmit them to the central nervous system, they also have a link of tiny bones that connect the inner ear to the front of the swimbladder. The swimbladder in this case now works as an eardrum by which it responds to soundwaves and relays the vibrations through the link as tiny bones mentioned earlier which goes directly to the brain.

These linking bones are known as a Weberian ossicles or a Weber's apparatus. Some other fishes which have Weberian Ossicles are Characoids, Loaches, Carp, Knifefishes and Barbs.

All Callichthyids have the ability to breath atmospheric air. It is not uncommon to witness this in the Aquaria as your catfish is laying around the bottom probably scurrying up some food. Sometimes they will stop and swim to the surface and inhale oxygen. The air bubble which was taken gets trapped in a thin-walled enlarged section of the gut area. The oxygen is then removed in exchange for carbon dioxide. When the oxygen content is depleted the bubble is expelled through the anus and another bubble is able to be swallowed. This feature enables Corys to live in very oxygen depleted waters and also enables them to increase their oxygen content during times of stress. If the dissolved oxygen content in the aquarium is at very low levels and the tank is too high for the catfish to reach the surface it could result in suffocation. With this in mind, your Cory's behavior could be a determination of water quality. If the catfish are constantly returning to the surface for gulps of atmospheric air much more often than usual there might be a problem with the aquarium water. High ammonia levels or high temperatures, for example, are just two of the many reasons the aquarium could be at a low oxygen level.

Callichthyids also have the ability to walk across land for a very short distance if the water hole dries

up. The overlapping plates on the exterior of the body keep the moisture contained in the body of the Cory if it must be exposed to dry air for a short time. This enables the fish to hopefully find a new water hole before it is too late.

## **BREEDING**

Breeding Corys could be somewhat easy or on the other hand quite difficult depending on which specie, or species you are hoping to spawn. In nature Corys usually spawn right after the dry season. The rise in water levels make many more suitable spawning sites available and also a large variety of foods for the fry which is washed into the creeks and small rivers.

To breed Corys in captivity, naturally you first need boys and girls. To differentiate the sexes of adult Corydoras is not too difficult. If a school of Corys are viewed from a top view the females will be much heavier across the middle of the body. From a side view females have a deeper body and could have bulging in the ventral area when ripe with eggs. The males in some species have a longer and more pointed ventral fin. A longer dorsal and pectoral fin spines are also a possibility. In a few species the male is the larger of the two. In my experiences with the Corys I have bred, the females were always larger, not by much, but none the less larger. There may also be a difference in color intensity with the male being the more attractively colored of the two. If the catfish in question are not mature enough to differentiate between the sexes, it would be wise to start out with about a half dozen Corys. As sexual maturity closes, it should be evident which is which. Once the sexes have been determined, Corys will breed with a two to one ratio, that being two males to one female. Reports have stated that breeders have had great success with two trios per tank.

Callichthyids do not need a large tank for spawning. In fact a five gallon tank is fine for the cats that stay on the small side. I usually use a ten or fifteen gallon long tank. The substrate used is fine gravel of a darker texture. The aquarium is planted with heavy leafed plants such as Amazon swords, Java fern or Anubias plants. Various pieces of driftwood are also scattered about for shade and hiding places.

Due to the friendly nature of Corydoras cats I have not found it necessary to add a dither fish to distract an aggressor's attention. The Corys do fine in a species tank of their own with no problem. Corys will also spawn in community tanks. Usually when this happens the other tank mates will eat the eggs as they are being distributed around the tank. The fry have little chance of survival.

Good clean water quality is essential for fish health. The water should be adequately filtered and at least a twenty percent water change should be maintained weekly. The Corys should also be fed a good high protein varied diet. Live foods such as chopped earthworms, black or tubifex worms also work well for conditioning breeders. A good flake or pelleted food with a small amount of vegetable matter would be ideal for variation. The fish should be fed small amounts a few times a day.

Once the Corys are conditioned, the first sign that spawning will take place is that you will notice the cats activity increases. Usually, swimming at a fast pace around the tank. The next part of this courtship is the males following the female around the tank. This ritual could go on for quite sometime. It is not unlikely to see this chase be interrupted from time to time by the males who then precede with a kind of dancing motion in front of the female. As it draws closer to spawning time, the female will start cleaning potential sites to lay the adhesive eggs she is carrying. The females are not too fussy about the location



of the eggs. Anything in the tank including the glass walls and aquarium heater will be used. After spawning locations have been wiped clean, the male will start to get closer to the female. The male will nudge the females head area or use his barbels to sort of caress the area around the head. When the females are ready to commence spawning, the chase reverses. Then they will start chasing the male. When the mate is caught, the female assumes the famous "T" position. Callichthydaes are noted for their "T" position. The female will swim in front of the male. The males head will be about even with her pectoral fin The male will now attempt to lock on to a part of the female using his mouth. Rolling to the side the males pectoral spines grab and hold the females barbels. Locked in this position, both partners start a shaking motion. It is at this point the eggs and the sperm are released. It is not uncommon to see a cloud surrounding the breeders as this is taking place. From one to ten eggs could be expelled from the females body and then cradled in a pouch in her pelvic fins. Once the male has released her barbels the female will start depositing her eggs around the potential sites Perhaps cleaning the site one more time, she will then use the sperm that she has in her mouth to fertilize the spot she has chosen to set the eggs. She will then open her pelvic fins and press the eggs into place. Only one male is used per spawn, but another male could be chosen for the second spawn. It is estimated this spawning procedure could happen thirty to fifty times until the female exhausts her eggs. Spawning could take place every two to three minutes. The eggs are a yellowish-white color that becomes darker as the eggs develop. Some species lay about thirty eggs, other species are capable of laying about eight hundred Somewhere between two to three hundred eggs are average for most Corydoras. The eggs vary in size from 1.2 to 2.0 mm. When the spawning is over there are usually eggs scattered on various plants and objects throughout the tank in small clusters. At this time the adult breeders could be removed and put into another tank. Keeping in mind the eggs are adhesive, it is easier to remove the parents avoiding damage to the eggs. It is not one hundred percent necessary to remove the adults because it is not the nature of the Corydoras to eat their young, eggs, and small hatching embryos. They may accidentally devour the young while they are scurrying for food The eggs usually hatch as soon as two or three days, but some may take longer. The fry will begin wiggling in the egg and eventually break through the shell casing and fall to the bottom of the aquarium. The fry are very hard to see in the gravel bed In two to four days the yolk sac will be absorbed and the fry will start to be free swimming , then drain the tank water down to about a third of the way. If the small cats need to rise to the surface to gulp air the journey will not be as far for the small Corys. They should start eating immediately once the yolk sac is absorbed. Good starter food for the young fry are newly hatched brine shrimp, microworms and small fine dry food such as flakes or crushed pellets. The fry do consume a lot of food and should be fed at least three times a day. Maintain regular water changes to keep optimum conditions for the young Corys The fry will grow quickly and should be moved to larger quarters as growth continues.

As mentioned earlier in the breeding section, some Corydoras species are more easily spawned than others. Some species of fish such as White cloud minnows, Danios and Guppies breed easily in aquariums, catfish may require a little more time, conditioning, and patience. The Corydoras aeneus and the Corydoras paleatus (usually sold as the peppered Cory) are two species which spawn quite easily and are available in pet shops everywhere. Both species are usually found in their natural color form or man-made albino variety. The Corydoras barbados and Corydoras haroldshultzi are two examples of corys which are known to be quite difficult to spawn, but success can prevail if proper conditions and diet are met.



CONCLUSION NEXT MONTH

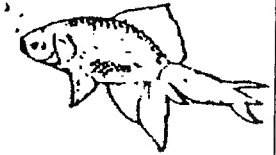




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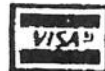


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