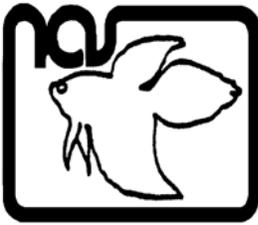


March / April 2007

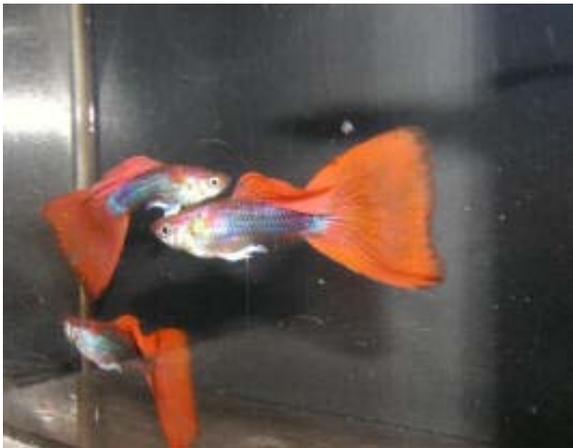


WET PET GAZETTE

VOLUME 56 / ISSUE 2



Leleupi - by allchiclids.com



Show Guppy - Deltatail

In This Issue

**HATCHING BABY BRINE
SHRIMP**

**BREEDING
NEOLAMPROLOGUS LELEUPI
IN A COMMUNITY TANK**

**THE JOURNAL OF THE
NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY
CELEBRATING 56 YEARS**

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Affiliations

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Acquired by Cathy Chapkovich



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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.

REPRINT POLICY

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GENERAL MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held the third Thursday of each month (except July & December) at Earth Place, The Nature Discovery Center, 10 Woodside Lane, Westport, CT. Each meeting includes a short business meeting, program or event, door prizes, raffle, auction, and refreshments. All regular meetings are open to the public to attend.



A VIEW FROM UP-FRONT

By:
Barry Lynch - NAS President

A VIEW FROM UP FRONT

By: **Barry Lynch**

The year 2007 is proving to be an upbeat year for the Norwalk Aquarium Society.

Holiday Party: The year commenced with the first holiday party held by NAS in several years. The party was hosted by Cathy Chapkovich at Earth Place and was a truly enjoyable experience for all attendees.

Officer/Director Elections: Next came the annual elections. Unlike 2006 when we were barely able to scrape up nine Board members, this year thirteen volunteered to serve on the Board. Just as important, all thirteen are proving to be very active and productive members.

Earth Place Benefit Auction: The auction conducted on February 25 for the benefit of our gracious host, Earth Place, The Nature Discovery Center, was a rousing success. (Clearly, our decision two years ago to move the auction from Super Bowl Sunday was a good one.) Attendance was great and the bidding was vigorous. It was with great pleasure that I was able to present to Peter Fraboni a check for \$2,000 to Earth Place.

Quincy Market/New England Aquarium Trip: The Board decision to establish a Special Events committee chaired by Dan McKercher and Ken Purcaro has provided quick dividends. For the first time in my six years as an NAS member, NAS (together with Aqua-Land) is hosting a field trip. Scheduled for Saturday, May 5th, the trip should prove to be a wonderful time for all members and their guests who choose to attend.

Programs: In my previous report, I advised that getting program speakers for our monthly meetings had developed into quite a challenge. This was particularly the case in 2006. What a difference a year makes! We've already had three excellent programs - Al Sabetta on "Discus raising Angel fry", Chris Baumgartner on "Basic Fish Anatomy", and Andre Carletti on "Killifish". Moreover, Sal Silvestri has already booked quality speakers for all the remaining general meetings this year! The program for the upcoming April 19 meeting will be Dr. Leo Buss on "Genetic Defects in Line Breeding".

The Wet Pet Gazette: Last year there were four separate issues of the Wet Pet Gazette. This is the second issue for 2007 and Cathy Chapkovich advises she has already received sufficient articles to shortly produce a third issue.

BAP: Last year, there were twelve different participants in the BAP program. In the six years I've been an NAS member, this was far and away the largest member participation I've seen in the program. In the first three months of this year alone, six participants (to include two first-time participants) have already submitted entries. When you consider that a number of consistent BAP participants have not yet submitted their first entries, it looks like we're in for a record year.

Annual Show & Auction: Prep work for the annual Show & Auction is already in full swing. This year there will be an added treat. The CT Betta Club will be hosting an IBC-sanctioned betta show simulta-



neously on premises. Two hundred to four hundred betta entries are anticipated. Additionally, the CT Betta Club will hold its own separate betta auction in the first floor show room immediately preceding our awards ceremony and auction in the main room - i.e. their auction will take place while we're setting up in the main room. It should be quite a weekend.

Yes, the year 2007 should be a great year for NAS.



Peter Fraboni of the Earth Place (also an NAS member) accepting the Norwalk Aquarium Societies donation check for \$2,000 from Barry Lynch (NAS President).



EDITORALLY SPEAKING

By

Cathy Chapkovich - Editor

Well I am glad to say, I have gotten another issue of the Wet Pet out. For those of you that don't know, it takes approximately 35 to 40 hours to put the Wet Pet fully together. This doesn't include the time involved in writing the articles. The time involved is updating all the relevant information, finding the pictures that go into it, making corrections where needed, printing and putting the pages together. Now if you want to add the time that I research my articles and research the information going into "Ask KC", I really don't think you want to know the time involved there.

As always, I am looking for new articles, comics, how-to's, and what not to do articles. I know there are some of you out there that can draw and do up some comics – so why not help me out and send something to me. I have set up a new e-mail account to make it easy or you can mail it through the regular mail. If you don't want to do that, give it to me at one of the meetings and I can either key it in or scan it. I am already helping a few people with their articles. I don't mind typing your article and revising it. Just give me something.

Okay, enough of my complaining here.

I would like to thank everyone who helped out at the Benefit Auction. The auction was a great success, and the paper system that we used on the recommendation of Dan McKercher & Ken Purcaro worked out great. Thanks guys for your help there.

Coming up is our Annual Show & Auction the last weekend of September. As always, we will need volunteers to set-up and tear down for the show. As chairman for the show this year, you can see me for more information.

We have an added bonus to the show this year. The Connecticut Betta Club will be hosting a International Betta Congress sanctioned show along with the NAS show. So if you really like Betta's, make a point to come and see them on Saturday, September 29. They will also be holding a separate auction from the NAS's on Sunday September 30. They will hold their auction from 10 am to 11:30 while the NAS is giving out the Awards from our show.

I am running a reprint of my article that appeared in the January 2005 issue of the Wet Pet, "The Trials and Tribulations of Guppy Breeding". I would like you to know that I am not the one who dubbed me as "The Exterminator". That honor goes to my husband – John. I had not seen the article after "he" did some revision work on it. Just to let you know – yes we are still talking. I just don't let him get a hold of my writing any more for revision work.

I'd like to thank John Krol for the two articles he gave me, and apologize for not being able to get them typed and revised for this edition. I will however have at least one ready for the next issue. Thanks John. Also John is handing over the membership chairperson to Ken Purcaro. John is getting ready to move down south. Go luck John, we will miss you.

Okay – here's my e-mail addresses and home address for those who would like to send me something for the Wet Pet.

cvsukas@snet.net or naseditor@snet.net

Home address: 4 Benanto Dr Derby, CT 06418

I am hoping to hear from some of you.

Cathy Chapkovich
Editor – Wet Pet Gazette



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUPPORT YOUR SISTER SOCIETIES

April

- 5 NAS Board Meeting
Location: John Krol
- 19 General Meeting
Speaker - **Dr. Leo Buss** : “Genetic Defects in Line Breeding”.

May

- 5 NAS & Aqualand - Trip to **Quincy Market & The New England Aquarium**
Talk with **Dan McKercher (203) 949-1149 dmchercher@npcomp.com**
- 17 NAS General Meeting
Speaker - **Ed Champigny**: will speak on either “KOI” or Ponds
- TBD NAS Show & Auction Committee Meeting

June

- 7 NAS Board Meeting
Location: Rich Weglinski
- 21 NAS General Meeting
Speaker - **Mo Devlin**: “Today in the Fish Room” or his “Mexico Trip”
- TBD NAS Show & Auction Committee Meeting

July

- NO GENERAL MEETING**
HAPPY 4TH OF JULY
- TBD NAS Show & Auction Committee Meeting

August

- 16 NAS General Meeting
Speaker - **Al DiSpigna**: “Saltwater”
- TBD NAS Show & Auction Committee Meeting

September

- TBD NAS Show & Auction Committee Meeting
- 19 NAS General Meeting
Speaker - TBD
- 26 & 27 NAS Show Set-up
- 28 Show Entries beginning to be set-up
- 29 NAS Aquarium Show
Judges Diner
- 30 NAS Annual Auction

October

- 17 NAS General Meeting
Speaker - TBD



HATCHING BRINE SHRIMP

By
Cathy Chapkovich

Many times I have been asked about how John and I hatch baby brine shrimp. While I can not take the credit for what John has set up, but at least I can write about it. I don't know where he found the set-up, but it is very simple that even I can do it.

Equipment needed:

1. 2 Liter Clear Soda Bottle with its cap
2. Air-line tubing
3. Air pump
4. Air stone
5. Wooden Rod (approx. $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ " dia.)
6. 5 gal aquarium
7. Submergible heater
8. Brine Shrimp eggs
9. Salt (either sea salt or you can use water softener salt)
10. Brine Shrimp Net Container

See drawing

Step 1:

Cut the bottom off the soda bottle and cut 2 holes directly across from each other approx. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the opening on the bottom. The holes should be big enough to allow the wooden rod to go through them.

Step 2:

Put wooden rod through the bottle and make sure that the bottle cap is tight. Place the heater on the bottom of the aquarium. Set the bottle in the aquarium so that the wooden rod is supported across the top of the aquarium.

Step 3:

Fill bottle approx. 1" or so below wooden rod. Fill aquarium approx 3" below the water line in the aquarium. Plug the heater in.

Step 4:

Place the air stone down in the bottle inside the cap.

Step 5:

Add to the water in the bottle:

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup of Salt

1 teaspoon of brine shrimp eggs

Step 6:

Let the brine shrimp eggs sit for approx. 24 hours. If you are not using a heater, the eggs will need to sit for approx. 36 hours before hatching. You will know when the eggs have hatched



because the water will look reddish / pinkish in color. These are the baby brine shrimp.

Step 7:

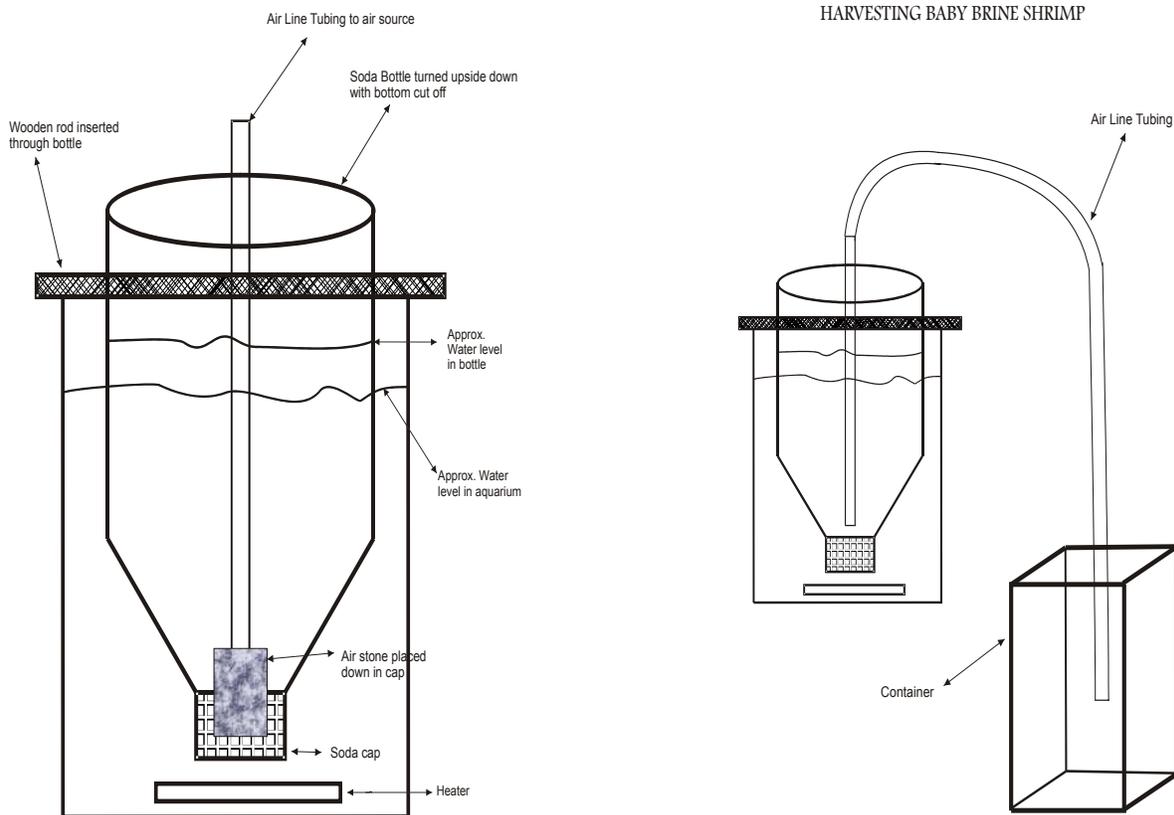
To harvest the baby shrimp, you will need another piece of tubing. The tubing needs to be long enough to go into the bottle close to the bottom and the other end needs to reach another container. Remove the air stone from the bottle and let sit for about 5 to 10 minutes. This will let the un-hatched eggs float to the top and the hatched eggs settle to the bottom. This will leave the baby brine swimming between the two. You want to siphon the baby shrimp out into another container. Siphon out only what you can use at one time. You can pour the water back into the soda bottle by pouring the water and shrimp through a brine shrimp net. This will put the water back into the bottle and the brine will still be in the net.

Step 8:

Rinse the brine with fresh water while still in the brine shrimp net. Invert the net into the container so the brine will fall into the container. Gently rinse the net over the container to get all the brine out of the net and into the container with the fresh water.

Step 9:

Let the baby brine settle to the bottom of the container. (Fresh water will shock the brine and they will settle to the bottom.) Once the brine settles, use a turkey baster to suck the brine off the bottom of the container and feed to your fish. (Yes -- all that pinkish color on the bottom of the container is brine shrimp.)





Breeding *Neolamprologus Leleupi* In A Community Tank

by
Steve Ng



About 6 years ago I was just seriously getting back into the hobby. I had a 46 gallon bow front tank. My goal was to have one of those beautiful planted aquariums that you see at some of the finer LFS. In my first incarnation in the fish hobby I was in love with cichlids. African cichlids to be exact, but being young and foolish, I did not do proper research on them, so I only purchased the pretty ones at 1 to 2 inches and placed them in the 10 gallon.

What I ended up doing was buying 4 *Melanchromis Auratus*, 4 Jack Dempseys, and 4 *Neolamprologus Leleupi*. Needless to say the *Auratus* made quick work out of the *leleupis* and Jack Dempseys in a hurry. Fast forward some 15 years later. I just finished my basement in my new home, and the wife was allowing me to have a corner of the basement for my fish.

My long and harrowed journey into the sadistic, agonizing and funny world of fish keeping is well documented in another story. In any case I had just purchased this huge 125 gallon tank (at the time anyway). And I was dying to try my hand with African cichlids again. This time however I was armed with knowledge, and fellow aquarist with whom I could lean on.

I purchased three bags of 50 lb white play sand from Toys R Us to be used as a substrate. I also had about 100 lbs of holey rock to help maintain the PH at the high levels. Plugged into three fluval 403 filters. Used about 20 gallons of water from my 46 gallon bow tank, which was set up for cardinal neons, and some apistos which I obtained from Sal Silvestri. Also took out one of the filter sponges from the existing filter on the 46 and placed that into one of the Fluvals to jump start the cycle period on the tank. Three weeks passed and it was time to go get my fish. So I went out to Long Island to my friend Les to get them. I had informed Les that I most definitely wanted to have some *Leleupi* in this tank, but was not sure what else to put in there with them, and told him of my first time with them. Yes he laugh and laughed at me when I told him about putting them with *Aratus* and Jack Dempseys. Les told me that I should probably get only one other egg layer in with them, even with a tank so big. The problem with getting too many egg layers is that there would be lots of fighting for territories. He suggested that I get some mouth brooders as they really only claim territory in the tank when spawning and they mostly build a nest in the sand when they do that anyway. Since they hold the eggs in their mouths they don't really have a defined territory to defend. Long story short I purchased about 8 *leleupi*'s along with some *Cyprichromis Leptosoma*, *Aulonocara* German red peacocks, *Julidochromis Marlieri*, and some *Pseudotropheus Saulosi*. All of these were about an inch to 1.5 inches in length. At this point I really wasn't ready to breed them anyway and I was quite content with all of the activity in the new tank. I was like a kid with a new toy always watching the new tank.

About the same time, I joined the Norwalk Aquarium Society, and was expose to a bunch of people that loved the hobby like me. The big difference was that they knew what the hell they were doing, or at least appeared to. About a year after that, I got more involved and started to see what people were bringing into the monthly meetings.

Well by now I was hooked, and what started with just 125 gallon tank in the corner of the basement soon turned into a rack with about 10 tanks in the corner. To date I have a tank in every bedroom, and have about 400 to 500 gallons worth of tanks throughout the house. But something was



missing. I had yet to have a spawn of any type. Everytime I would try to take out some target fish, they would either end up killing each other, or both of them would die. I was dumbfounded. I had killed all of the Julidochromis Marlieri and lost all of my male German Red Peacocks. At this point I dared not touch any of the Leleupi's. Good thing too. Lets fast forward again, it's about 6 months later, and by now I have rearranged the tank some. I took out all of the holey rocks, except for my huge show piece. I replaced them with a bunch of barnacle clusters on either ends of the tank. I also added about 8 clown loaches, 6 red Iranian rainbows, some yellow calvus, and some more Julidochromis Marlieri . Somewhere along the way I got into a habit of doing weekly water changes on all of my tanks of about 20 to 30 percent. I also stopped messing around with the water. My well water comes out of the tap at a ph of 7.6 Thru my new network of friends, I realized that is was more beneficial to maintain clean water at 7.6 than to mess around with the water, and trying to bring up the ph to 7.8 or 7.9 Plus it was cheaper to not have to buy all of those chemicals to put into the tank.

My fish were thriving now. They had great color, and no really big battles for territories. I think having the two huge barnacle clusters on both ends of the tank, and basically leaving the middle of the tank open helped to differ the fighting to minor battles that really did not last long. The Leleupi had paired off in the tank. One day I noticed one of the Leleupi's with her head sticking out of the barnacle cluster, while the male was hovering outside above her. I thought this to be interesting since I saw them both chase away any fish in the area. It took another two days before I could peek around her and saw that she had some wiggles in there. Since this was my first spawn with leleupi's I did not want to disturb them so I left them alone. About a week



later I saw free swimming fry in and around the barnacle clusters. I was so excited. But now came the hard part, I dearly wanted to save them for BAP points. But everytime I placed my hand in there to try to take out the barnacle cluster, the male would bite my hand. Plus I would have to move so many different pieces of barnacle clusters around just to get to that one. So what I ended up doing was taking an old airline tubing, and siphoning out the babies, but was only able to get about 15 of them. These fry were good at alluding me. There must have been about 50 fry left in the tank. I find it best to siphon out the fry about 4 to 5 days after hatching, while they are still wrigglers but not quite free swimming yet. It's saved a huge amount of skin on my hand from the male Leleupi. I ended up having 4 different pairs in the tank. Three of them in the barnacle clusters while the forth pair took home in one of the caves within my holey rock show piece. To date all of the fish in this 125 community tank have breed for me. I'm even able to breed the leleupi in the barnacle shells with all of those funny and pesky clown loaches out and about. I have also been able to breed all of the other fish within this tank, all except for the Clown Loaches that is.....but maybe that is a story that I can write about some other day. For me anyway I find that a community tanks can work. Now if I can only do it when they are in a tank by themselves.



February NAS General Meeting



February Benefit Auction



February NAS General Meeting





THE NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY
BAP REPORT
By: Barry Lynch, NAS

1st Quarter - 2007

Target: 100 Participants: The first quarter was highlighted by the entry of first-time participants **Cathy Chapkovich** and **Rich Weglinski** into the BAP program. This brings the total number of participants in the BAP program through its 34 year history to 97. I have set a target of 100 by year's end. History would say this is unlikely since the program averages only 3 new participants a year. However, I know of a number of NAS members who have not yet participated in the program; but, who are successfully breeding their fish. So, it is a reachable goal. Time will tell.

Breeder of the Year Competition - 2007. In the Breeder of the Year competition, the slate starts clean on January 1 for every participant. The participant who has provided the most entries over the course of the year earns the Breeder of the Year Award for that year. After three months, the standings for this year's competition are as follows:

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Barry Lynch | 4 entries |
| Ameca splendens | Butterfly Goodeid |
| Cichlasoma nigrofasciatum | Convict Cichlid |
| Girardinus metallicus | Metallic Girardinus |
| Nannacara taenia | Banded Dwarf Cichlid |
| Bob McKeand | 4 entries |
| Aphyosemion australe | Cape Lopez Lyretail Killy |
| Fundulopanchax gardneri | Steel-Blue Killy |
| Poecilia heterandria | Venezuela Molly |
| Rivulus geayi | Chevron Rivulus |
| Bob Alberino | 2 entries |
| Ameca splendens | Butterfly Goodeid |
| Poecilia wingei | Endler's Livebearer |
| Cathy Chapkovich | 1 entry |
| Xenotoca eiseni | Red-Tailed Goodeid |
| Charlie Sundberg | 1 entry |
| Haplochromis obliquidens | Zebra Obliquidens |
| Rich Weglinski | 1 entry |
| Julidochromis transcriptus | Masked Julie |

Awards: Two awards were issued in the first quarter. As reported earlier, my twenty entries in 2006 earned me the 2006 Breeder of the Year award. The second award was long overdue. **Bob McKeand** is the second most proficient breeder in BAP history. He has accumulated 1475 points and introduced 62 new species into the program. For years, he has been carried in the BAP records as a Grandmaster



Breeder. However, I recently learned that, through some administrative oversight, he had never received his Grandmaster Breeder award. It was accordingly with great pleasure and honor that I presented Bob his well-earned award at the March membership meeting. As evidenced by the four entries he brought to the meeting, Bob continues to make significant contributions to the BAP program.

BAP Points Standing: An updated BAP Point Standings for current NAS members (reflecting the above activity) follows this report.



Bob McKeand receiving the “Grandmaster” Breeder Award from Barry Lynch (NAS president).



BAP POINT STANDINGS - CURRENT NAS MEMBERS

Date: 4/9/07

| <u><i>Participant</i></u> | <u><i>Breeder Award</i></u> | <u><i>Species Pts</i></u> | <u><i>Bonus Pts</i></u> | <u><i>Total Points</i></u> |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Sal Silvestri | Expert | 1545 | 515 | 2060 |
| Bob McKeand | Grandmaster | 830 | 600 | 1430 |
| Don Barbour | Expert | 1040 | 170 | 1210 |
| Anton Vukich | Breeder | 545 | 250 | 795 |
| Barry Lynch | Master | 470 | 80 | 550 |
| Ed Katuska | Grandmaster | 470 | 40 | 510 |
| Anne & Mark Broadmeyer | Breeder | 280 | 25 | 305 |
| Rich Grenfell | Grandmaster | 260 | 45 | 305 |
| John Chapkovich | Senior | 250 | 10 | 260 |
| Dick Moore | Breeder | 165 | 90 | 255 |
| Steve Ng | Senior | 185 | 20 | 205 |
| Jack Adinolfi | Senior | 120 | 20 | 140 |
| Joe Masi | Breeder | 85 | 10 | 95 |
| Doug DeMent | Breeder | 70 | | 70 |
| Ed Schildnecht | Breeder | 70 | | 70 |
| Carl Addicks | Breeder | 60 | | 60 |
| Charlie Sundberg | Breeder | 60 | | 60 |
| Dan McKercher & Maryanne Naylor | | 35 | | 35 |
| Pete Izzo | | 20 | 10 | 30 |
| Bob Alberino | | 15 | | 15 |
| Rich Weglinski | | 15 | | 15 |
| Ira Friedman | | 10 | 10 | 20 |
| Ed Peters | | 10 | | 10 |
| Sue & Scott Reed | | 10 | | 10 |
| Cathy Chapkovich | | 10 | | 10 |



NAS BAP FISH CLASSIFICATION LIST

NOTE: An Asterisk (*) indicates some members of the family or genus are in a different class.

This list is for reference only. Please check with the BAP Chairperson for any changes.

Class A (5 points)

| | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|----------|
| Brachydanio | Carassius | Cichlasoma* | Gambusia |
| Goodeids* | Killies* | Laetacara | Limia |
| Poecilia | Tanichthys | Xiphophorus | |

Class B (10 points)

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Anableps | Archocentrus | Astatotilapia | Aulonocara |
| Barbs* | Belonesox | Betta* | Brachyrhaphis |
| Characins* | Chromidotilapia | Cichlasoma* | Colisa* |
| Copadichromis | Corydoras* | Cyntilapia | Enantiopus |
| Etroplus | Geophagus | Goodeids* | Haplochromis |
| Hemichromis | Heros | Iodotropheus | Killies* |
| Koi | Labeotropheus | Labidochromis | Lipochromis |
| Melanochromis | Melanotaenia* | Nannacara* | Nimbrochromis* |
| Pelvicachromis* | Phallichthys | Protomelas | Pseudotropheus |
| Pterophyllum | Telmatochromis | Thorichthys* | Tilapia* |
| Trichogaster | Trichopsis | | |

Class C (15 points)

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Altolamprologus | Ancistrus | Apistogramma* | Badis |
| Bedotia | Betta* | Characins* | Cichlasoma* |
| Colisa* | Corydoras* | Crenicara | Ctenopoma |
| Cyprichromis | Hypostomus | Julidochromis | Killies* |
| Lamprologus | Lepidolamprologus | Limnotilapia | Loricariidae |
| Melanotaenia* | Microgeophagus | Nannacara* | Monochromes |
| Neolamprologus* | Nicralestes | Nimbochromis* | Paracyprichromis |
| Pelvicachromis* | Thorichthys* | Tinfoil Barbs | Tropheus |

Class D (20 points)

| | | | |
|--------------|---------------|------------------|--------------|
| Anostomous | Apistogramma* | Apistogrammoides | Dermogenys |
| Dicrossus | Hoplosternum | Labeo | Lamprichthys |
| Loaches* | Megalechis | Neolamprologus* | Pantodon |
| Petrochromis | Rasbora | Sphaerichthys | Sturisoma |
| Symphysodon | Synodontis* | Taeniacara | Tateurndina |
| Tetras* | Tilapia* | Toxotes | |

Class E (50 points)

| | | | |
|-------------|----------------|--------|---------------|
| Arrowana | Biotodoma | Botia | Coius |
| Distochodus | Monodactylidae | Pangio | Scatophagidae |
| Synodontis* | | | |



ask KC



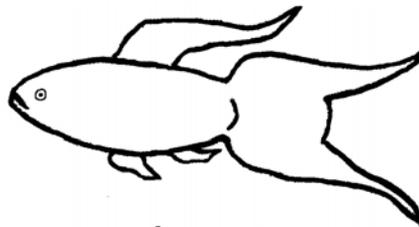
KC (aka Crazy Cat)

He will try to answer your questions to the best of his ability. If he can't, he will find someone with the answers. So if you have a question for KC, please E-Mail him in care of Cathy at cvscukas@snet.net — please refer your questions to KC of the Wet Pet. Thank You

Guppy Identification



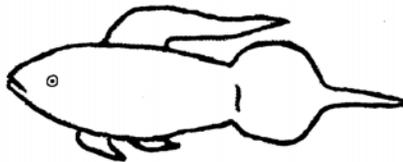
Crowntail



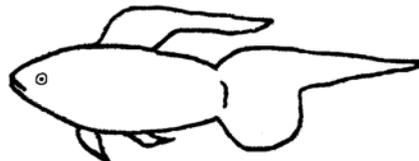
Lyretail



Double Swordtail



Pintail



Top Swordtail



Bottom Swordtail



Speartail



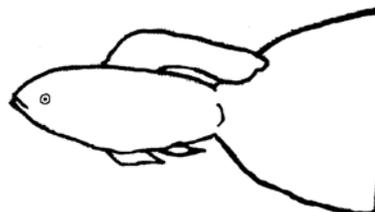
Flagtail



Scarftail



Veiltail



Triangletail (Delta tail)



Fantail



Roundtail



Spadetail



Cofertail (Coffertail)



Trials and Tribulations of Guppy Breeding Or What Happened to my Guppies????!!

by
Cathy “The Exterminator” Chapkovich



Growing up and even in my most recent re-introduction into the adventurous world of aquarium hobbyist, I loved guppies. No matter what type of environment I put them in they always added color and enjoyment to it.

But wait! What’s that floating at the top? No – it can’t be! It’s one of my guppies and he’s dead! What happened? Was he sick? Did he get beat up by some other fish?

It was a mystery what happened. But slowly one by one my guppies would be found floating at the top of my tank and every so often I might find some other fish up there also. The mystery would continue even with any new guppies that were added to the tank. There was a killer of guppies loose in my tank and I couldn’t find the culprit.

So with no leads or clues as to which fish in the tank was the murderer of the guppies I removed the one or two that survived. I put them in their own tank and rejoiced when after 3 days they were still alive. All was well in this little world of guppies, so I added a couple more.

What? Wait – what’s happening? Slowly they began to die off again. I talked to others and asked questions. “Why are my guppies dying?” I had good filtration, I changed the water and I was feeding them properly. So, what was happening? Well, I found out I was doing a few things wrong. First, when cleaning the tank do NOT mess with the filter Media. If the filter media needs to be rinsed, rinse it with the water from the aquarium. Don’t use tap water; it kills off the good bacteria. Secondly, when doing water changes, you not only have to add water conditioner (to make the water safe) but add aquarium salt and/or Bausman tonic to the water.

Okay great. I followed the recipe. Rinse the filter sponge out only when it absolutely needed to be and only rinse it with the water from the tank. When I did my water changes (at least twice a week if not more) I added 6 tablespoons of salt to 10 gallons of water and 1 teaspoon of Bausman tonic to 10 gallons. Ok, the water conditioner as well.

Look – I have guppies. They are doing great and they’re having babies. Okay, time to get serious about breeding soon. Let’s see. Separate all the females from the males so I don’t get mixed mutts. Setup a couple of spawning tanks and I’m set. Match up the green male with the green female, the snakeskin male with the snakeskin female and last but not least, the half-black male with the half-black female. Spawning season is in session. To top it all off, closer inspection of the female tank shows there are some females already pregnant and ready to have their babies. These little mommas I put in their own little 2 ½ gallon tanks with lots of java moss for the newborns to hide in.

In the meantime I have my planted tank to tend to. I like to sit back and enjoy my newly planted community tank. It has a nice variety of tetras in it, but no neon’s. I need to add a few neon’s for more color. I love to watch the small red and blue schooling fish. I need to get some.

I go out and buy about a dozen neon’s and put them in an isolation tank. I was told that’s the best thing to do when you purchase new fish. This way if they have anything wrong with them, you won’t spread it to your other fish. Two days later I do my water changes. I am paying no attention to the tank that I am siphoning the water out of or which tanks I am putting the end of the python in while



filling the tanks.

The next morning I check on my guppies. There are few dead ones floating on the top. Okay, acceptable casualties. Later that evening there are more floating at the top and the neon's are starting to die.

What happened??

Upon reviewing my maintenance procedures of the last few days – my husband informed me that I screwed up royally. “You don’t use the same siphon on the isolation tanks!!!! The purpose of the isolation tank is just that. To keep the new fish and any equipment you’re using “isolated” from the rest of your fish.

So the moral of the story is – if you want to be a terminator, as I became of some 75 to 100 guppies, spread the disease around. Otherwise – isolate, isolate, isolate.





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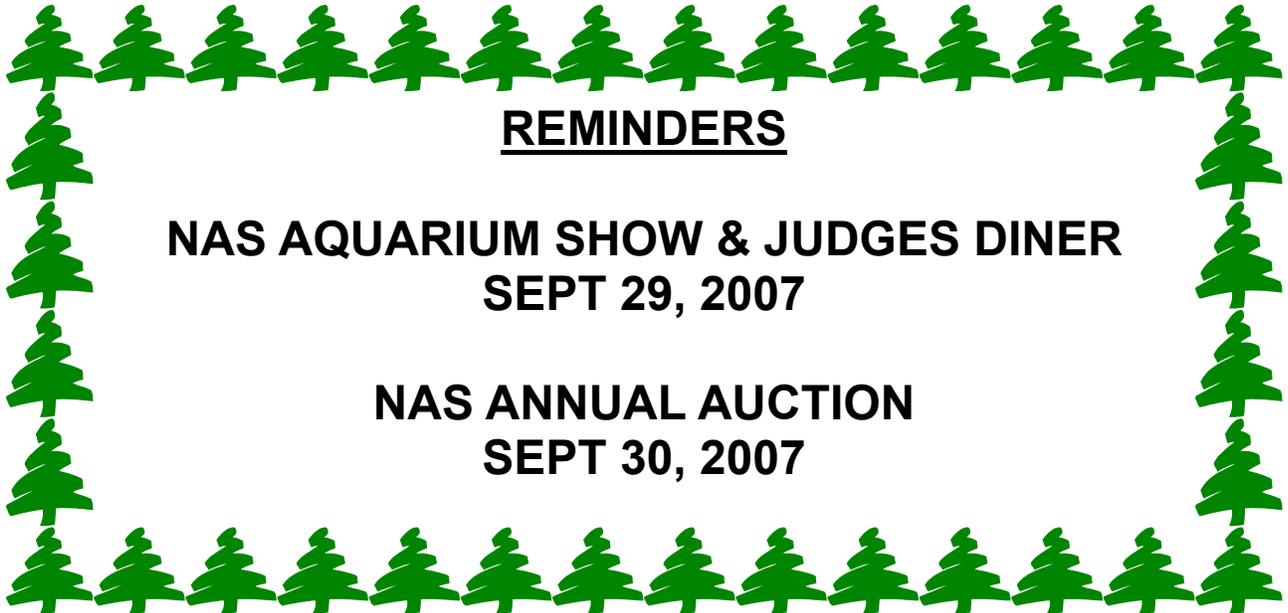
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