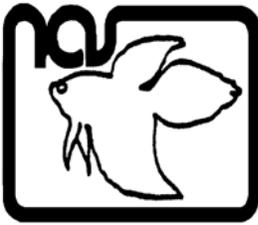


Nov/Dec 2007



WET PET GAZETTE

VOLUME 56 / ISSUE 6



**Neolamprologus
multifasciatus**



Heros severus



**Neolamprologus
similis**

In This Issue

**HEROS SEVERUS - GOLD &
GREEN SEVERUM**

NAS MEMBER SPOTLITE

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

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Affiliations

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Cover Photographs

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.

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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.



EDITORALLY SPEAKING

By

Cathy Chapkovich - Editor

This issue of the Wet Pet is a month behind because John and I were enjoying the warmth and sunshine in Hawaii last month.

We have a new feature section starting in this issue – *Member Spotlight*. The contributor for this section is Oscar Fishington whom is a good friend of Doug Kneissl. He has volunteered his time and effort to contribute to the Wet Pet and if you are contacted by Mr. Fishington to be featured, please give him your time. It only takes a few minutes and it will help other members to get to know you. I hope you enjoy getting to know the members of the club a little better.

Dan McKercher is in charge of special events and he would love to have some in-put on what people would like to do. The club helps to pay for these events. Is there a special place you would like to go to, or maybe you would like to do something special that the whole family would enjoy? He is looking for some ideas and welcomes all. I know he was thinking about the Mystic Aquarium and possibly a family/club picnic. What do you think? Let him know.

Barry Lynch's article on his severums is pretty interesting and will probably cause some controversy discussions. Read through it and let the rest of the club know what your experience is or has been with these fish. It's always nice to have some additional input from others that have also raised and breed the fish that our contributors have done.

Ah, last but not least – It's time to start thinking about our Annual Show and Auction in October again. I know... we just got done with this years, but we need to start thinking about it again. As most know, I have stepped down from being chairman of the Show and Auction but this doesn't mean that I will not be active in it. I will probably be as active as I was chairing last years, but I am not taking on the title. As always, we need people to help out with preparation. This does not mean just the set-up, we need people to help out making the show bulletin, flyers, the judges diner, etc. So why not donate a few hours in helping with the things that need to be done before hand.





A VIEW FROM UP-FRONT

By:
Barry Lynch - NAS President



The Year 2007: In my first “View From Up Front” column last year, I expressed great optimism for NAS for the upcoming year. The principal reason for that optimism was the anticipated increased participation by many NAS members in all facets of NAS matters. For the first time in several years, all positions on the Board were filled. This included five first-timers, namely **Doug Kneissl, Dan McKercher, Maryanne Naylor, Ken Purcaro** and **Rich Weglinski**. When **John Krol** had to step down for personal reasons, a sixth first-timer, **Bob McKeand**, immediately stepped in to fill the void.

Quite frankly, I expected this new Board infused by “new blood” complemented by “seasoned veterans” to provide direction and impetus to NAS throughout the year. I was not disappointed. The year 2007 was a great year for NAS on all fronts. **Sal Silvestri** put together the best schedule of speaker programs I’ve witnessed in my six years with NAS. **Cathy Chapkovich** published 5 issues of the Wet Pet Gazette - doubling the production of the previous year. I can take some credit for administering a record-setting BAP program which broke all standards with 14 participants and 75 entries. As Chairman of the newly-formed Special Events Committee, **Dan McKercher** produced two very special events, a deep sea fishing trip and the wonderful New England Aquarium day trip.

Other success stories included the holiday party, the benefit auction conducted for Earth Place and our annual Show & Auction. Regarding the latter, special thanks go to **Cathy Chapkovich** who did incredible work as Show Committee Chairperson and **Doug Kneissl** who was responsible for the separate Connecticut Beta Club Beta Show. And, very special thanks go to the 22 volunteers who showed up and made the Wednesday night Show set-up a piece of cake.

The Year 2008: I express that same optimism for 2008. Once again, the Board is fully manned with the same active and vibrant members. BAP got off to a good start with 9 entries at the January meeting. This Wet Pet Gazette is but the first of many scheduled for 2008. Adequate funds have been budgeted for more special events yet to be determined. Given the work already put in, I expect the forthcoming benefit auction for Earth Place (February 24) to be a good one. I fully expect **Sal Silvestri** to, as usual, put together another fine speaker program schedule. Very shortly, work will commence on this year’s Show & Auction. I thank all of you in advance for your contributions to this ever-challenging undertaking.



Butterfly Koi



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUPPORT YOUR SISTER SOCIETIES

January

- 3 NAS Board Meeting - Hosted by Bob McKeand
- 17 NAS General Meeting
Speaker - **Rit Forcier**

February

- 7 NAS Board Meeting - Hosted Amin Rubirosa
- 10 PVAS Auction
- 21 NAS General Meeting - **Bob Mulvey** - "The Marine Aquarium"
- 24 NAS Benefit Auction

March

- 16 Jersey Shore Aquarium Auction (JSAS)
www.jerseyshoreas.org
- 20 7pm - NAS Show Committee Meeting at the Earth Place
8pm - NAS General Meeting

April

- 3 NAS Board Meeting
- 11 - 13 NEC 33rd Annual Convention
Sunday April 13 - Auction
www.northeastcouncil.org
- 17 NAS General Meeting

May

- 15 NAS General Meeting
- 18 Aqualand Aquarium Society Auction (ALAS)
Bristol Clarion Hotel, 42 Century Dr., Bristol CT





NAS Member Spotlight

By
Oscar Fishington

This month the Member Spotlight shines on Douglas Kneissl. Doug lives in West Haven Connecticut with his wife Cheryl and two children, Dayna 7 and Sean 4. He works for A&E Television Networks in Stamford CT.

Oscar Fishington: Hello Doug, just to let you know this is a new column for the Wet Pet Gazette, in each issue I will have a short interview with a NAS member to let the club learn more about its members, and to give the members a place to brag about themselves and their fish.

Douglas Kneissl: Sounds like a good idea; I'm honored to be the first subject of your column.



OF: So the first question is always, how did you get started in the hobby?

DK: Well, as a kid our first fish was a fair goldfish, which of course died soon after coming home. Sometime shortly after my dad set up a 10 gallon community, that was joined by a 5. Eventually the family lost interest and the tanks were torn down. About six years ago we decided to get a fish for my daughter and came home with a betta and a 1 gallon bowl.

OF: And then...

DK: Well, one betta became two, then three. It's hard to argue against getting more since they don't take up a lot of room

and are fairly cheap and low maintenance.

OF: So you only have three bettas?

DK: (laughs) No, I have quite a bit more than that.

OF: So how did that happen?

DK: I was talking to a coworker one day, turns out he keeps a 125 saltwater setup and he had an old 20 long that he offered me for free. We set that up with a few Serpea Tetras and gouramis, sword-tails and that was it, a 20 gallon with a community setup, and a few bettas.

OF: Well that doesn't sound to bad, sounds manageable.



DK: It was for about 4 years, until tragedy struck.

OF: What happened?

DK: I still don't know, the 20 crashed. Within four days all the fish were dead.

OF: I feel your pain, I do not think there is one hobbyist who has not had the mysterious crash.

DK: My wife decided we should take a break from fish, so I tore the tank down, but I didn't like looking at the empty spot.

OF: So the tank went back up?

DK: Not exactly, I bought an Eclipse 6, I figured it was small, take up just a small place, and I would have my fish back.

OF: Those are nice, but I sense a 'but' coming.

DK: But, after a 20, the 6 seemed so small, so I bought an Eclipse 12. So two table top tanks. But after a short while, this also proved too small, so the 20 came back out.

OF: How did this change happen? Going from one 20 gallon tank to three?

DK: I still don't know. Something happened to me after the crash, the hobby just became more important. It was after the crash that I joined NAS.

OF: You were not in a club until then?

DK: Nope. No magazines, no clubs, no real friends that were in the hobby. Just me and my family and the fish. After the crash, I dove head-first into the hobby and became one of the obsessed.

OF: How long have you been in NAS?

DK: This is my third year.

OF: You are a member of the Board of Directors, why did you run for a seat on the board?

DK: After joining the club I liked the people, and the club in general, I wanted a voice in how it was run. I see myself as "Joe Club Member" and try to make suggestions to the officers and the rest of the board as to what I feel most members would like out of the club regarding speakers, events and such. My first year with the club I joined the Show Committee. That was fun. It's a lot of work, leading up to the show; I never realized all the details that need to be addressed prior to a show. I couldn't understand why the first committee meeting was in February if the show was in October, now I know. One plus from working the show and auction is that you are too busy to bid on a lot of fish so I don't go home broke. That is also a drawback; you miss a lot of fish so you don't get a chance to snag that great deal, of pick up that fish you were looking for.



OF: So how is your obsession now? How many tanks do you have, and what are you keeping? Breeding?

DK: Well, as in school, I'm still trying to pick a major. My largest tank is a 29, the smallest is a quart jar with a betta in it. I grew up with community tanks so a species tank is a hard concept for me; I have a lot of 'likes' but not enough tanks. I have some angels, gouramis, killies, Apistos and of course a lot of bettas. As for how many tanks, my answer is "define tank." If a tank is anything with water and a fish, about 30, if it has to have a filter and a heater, five. Gotta love killies and bettas!

As for my breeding program, I'm really a beginner. I've bred corys, angels and kribbs. I had a breeding pair of kribbs that would not stop throwing eggs, over the last year I raised five spawns from them, I recently gave them to a co-worker, and I hope he has the same luck with them I did. I have some killie fry I am raising (*Fundulopanchax gardneri*) and hope to turn in for BAP as soon as they are big enough. I have some *A. viejita* that I hope will breed soon. They did lay some eggs a few weeks ago but ate them two days later. I also want to breed my bettas, I have not had much luck getting them to breed or raising the fry, but every try is a learning experience. I hope to have some in time for our show in October.

OF: And finally how many clubs do you belong to?

DK: In addition to NAS, I am a founding member of the Connecticut Beta Club [a chapter of the International Beta Congress] the IBC, the New England Cichlid Association, and the American Killifish Association.

OF: Thanks for your time Doug.



Doug's love of bettas shows through as he hosts the First CT. Beta Clubs show



THE NORWALK AQUARIUM SOCIETY BAP REPORT

By:
Barry Lynch

I. The Year 2007 in Review:

The year 2007 was a banner year for the NAS BAP program. Both the number of members who participated and the number of entries submitted were unparalleled in the 35 year history of the program. Membership participation ran the gamut from wizened veterans to a number of first-timers. The entries were marked by their wide diversity and included many species never before entered in the program. Highlights of this remarkable year are detailed below.

The Participants: In recent years there has been a consistent trend of increased member participation in the BAP program. Membership participation has increased from 5 in 2004 to 7 in 2005 to 12 in 2006 to an all-time record high of 14 in 2007! Of note are the six members who participated for the first time in 2007. These were **Steve Capelle, Cathy Chapkovich, Peggy Heckler, Doug Kneissl, Ryscard Krzynowek** and **Rich Weglinski**. **Ryscard** received a special BAP award for being the 100th different member to participate in the program. Shortly thereafter, **Steve** became the 101st.

The Entries: In 2005, a good BAP year, members contributed 39 BAP entries. In 2006, an excellent BAP year, the number of entries increased to 53. In the record-setting year of 2007, a benchmark total of 75 entries was submitted. Remarkably, there was very little duplication. As a result, 62 different species were made available to meeting attendees.

Thirteen of the entries were species which had never previously been submitted in the program (earning bonus points for the entrants). It certainly came as no surprise that **Bob McKeand**, our all time leader in first-time entries, led the way with five, namely *Poecilia heterandria*, *Poeciliopsis monacha* and three *Rivulus* species - *cylindraceus*, *geayi* and *xiphidius*. **Cathy Chapkovich** contributed two - *Neolamprologus similis* and *Rivulus holmiae*. The team of **Dan McKercher & Maryanne Naylor** likewise contributed two - *Ancistrus dolichopterus* and *Otopharynx tetraspilus*. Contributing one new species each were **Steve Capelle** (*Melanochromis cyaneorhabdos*), **John Chapkovich** (*Pytochromis* sp "Hippo Point Salmon"), **Slawomir Konrad** (*Geophagus iporangensis*) and **Barry Lynch** (*Carlhubbsia stuarti*).

Before leaving the subject of entries, the August general meeting must be highlighted. Seven participants brought in an astounding total of 21 entries. While records in this regard are not maintained, I am certain no previous meeting ever generated this many entries.

Breeder of the Year - 2007: In the three years since its official inception, the Breeder of the Year competition has produced three different winners. **John Chapkovich** won the first in 2005. **I** won in 2006. While the competition was fierce for the first half of 2007, the team of **Dan McKercher & Maryanne Naylor** pulled away in the second half to win with a total of 17 entries - the 6th highest yearly total in the 35 year BAP program.

BAP Awards: The following BAP awards were issued/earned in 2007:

Grandmaster Breeder:	Bob McKeand
Senior Breeder:	Dan McKercher & Maryanne Naylor
Breeder:	Cathy Chapkovich
Breeder:	Dan McKercher & Maryanne Naylor



100th BAP Participant: **Ryszard Krzynowek**
Breeder of the Year - 2007: **Dan McKercher & Maryanne Naylor**

II. The Year 2008 - A Good Start:

We had our first general meeting the other night - a meeting poorly attended due principally weather concerns. Nevertheless, BAP got off to a good start. The following nine entries were brought in to the January 17, 2008 meeting.

Barry Lynch:	Heros severus	Green Severum
	Poecilia petenensis	Peten or Swordtail Molly
	Poeciliopsis monacha	Monacha Topminnow
	Trichogaster leeri	Pearl Gourami
	Zoogoneticus tequila	Tequila Goodeid
Bob McKeand:	Celestichthys margaritatus	Celestial Pearl Danio
	Limia garnieri	Garnier's Limia
	Poeciliopsis baenschii	Baensch's Mosquitofish
Doug Kneissl:	Pterophyllum scalare	Marble Angelfish

Four of the entries were the first ever of the particular species - all three of Bob's entries and my Peten Molly entry. Of special note was Bob's submission of the Celestial Pearl Danio (for a short period known as the Galaxy Rasbora). This recently discovered beautifully colored species was the cover story in the July 2007 issue of Tropical Fish Hobbyist.

III. The Year 2008 - A Look Ahead:

As I look forward to 2008, I see a number of questions which intrigue me. Will the 2007 record of 14 participants be broken? Will the 2007 record of 75 entries be broken? Will there be a fourth consecutive different Breeder of the Year award winner? Will the approximate ten participants who are on the threshold of winning BAP awards cross the thresholds and earn those awards? While I hope the answer to all these questions is a resounding "yes", I must admit I have my doubts that any of these daunting challenges may be met. Prove me wrong.

The situation which most interests me is the competition at the top of the BAP points standings. From the time I joined NAS (6+ years ago) and for years before that, **Sal Silvestri** has been the unchallenged all-time BAP points leader. His 2000+ point total has seemed insurmountable. That may no longer be the case. In recent years, **Bob McKeand** has relentlessly closed the gap. I certainly don't expect **Bob** to catch **Sal** in 2008; but, I don't consider **Sal's** point total to be beyond reach any longer. **Sal** may have to consider revving up his breeding program! This would be one of those "win win" situations for the NAS BAP program

I look forward to another good BAP year in 2008 and possibly a great one.



BAP POINT STANDINGS - CURRENT NAS MEMBERS

Date: 1/17/08

Participant	Breeder Award	Species Pts	Bonus Pts	Total Pts.
Sal Silvestri	Expert	1545	515	2060
Bob McKeand	Grandmaster	925	720	1645
Don Barbour	Expert	1085	170	1255
Barry Lynch	Master	565	100	665
Ed Katuska	Grandmaster	470	40	510
John Chapkovich	Senior	325	20	345
Anne & Mark Broadmeyer	Breeder	280	25	305
Rich Grenfell	Grandmaster	260	45	305
Dick Moore	Breeder	165	90	255
Dan McKercher & Mary- anne Naylor	Senior	215	20	235
Steve Ng	Senior	185	20	205
Jack Adinolfi	Senior	120	20	140
Cathy Chapkovich	Breeder	95	20	115
Slawomir Konrad	Breeder	95	10	105
Joe Masi	Breeder	85	10	95
Charlie Sundberg	Breeder	80		80
Doug DeMent	Breeder	70		70
Ed Schildnecht	Breeder	70		70
Ryszard Krznowek		45		45
Steve Capelle		30	10	40
Pete Izzo		20	10	30
Doug Kneissl		30		30
Bob Alberino		20		20
Ira Friedman		10	10	20
Rich Weglinski		15		15
Peggy Heckler		10		10
Ed Peters		10		10
Sue & Scott Reed		10		10
Gina Bell		5		5



NAS BAP PROGRAM
BREEDER OF THE YEAR - 2007
Final Standings

Dan McKercher & Maryanne Naylor**17 entries**

Ancistrus dolichopterus	Big-Fin Bristlenose
Aphyosemion australe	Lyretail Killy
Aulonocara maleri	Sunshine Peacock
Aulonocara stuartgranti	Ruby Red Regal Peacock
Dermogenys pusilla	Malayan Halfbeak
Iodotropheus sprengerae	Rusty Cichlid
Julidochromis ornatus	Ornate Julie
Labidochromis sp "Blue/White Tanzania"	White Lab
Lamprologus ocellatus	Ornate Shell-Dweller
Mesonauta festivus	Festivum
Microgeophagus altispinosa	Bolivian Ram
Neolamprologus caudopunctatus	Caudopunc
Nimbochromis venustus	Venustus
Otopharynx tetraspilus	Mloto Yellow Princess
Poecilia sphenops	Balloon Molly
Pterophyllum scalare	Angelfish
Xiphophorus montezumae	Montezuma Swordtail

Barry Lynch**11 entries**

Ameca splendens	Butterfly Goodeid
Carlhubbsia stuarti	Banded Widow
Cichlasoma nigrofasciatum	Convict Cichlid
Corydoras caudimaculatus	Tail-Spot Cory
Gambusia affinis	Mosquitofish
Girardinus metallicus	Metallic Girardinus
Nannacara anomala	Golden Dwarf Cichlid
Nannacara taenia	Banded Dwarf Cichlid
Neoheterandria elegans	Elegant Poeciliid
Poecilia heterandria	Venezuela Molly
Trichogaster trichopterus	Opaline Gourami

Cathy Chapkovich**10 entries**

Corydoras aeneus	Albino Aeneus Cory
Corydoras paleatus	Hi-Fin Peppered Cory
Limia tridens	Tiburón Limia
Melanotaenia boesemani	Boesemani Rainbow
Neolamprologus similis	
Poecilia wingei	Endler's Livebearer
Pseudotropheus zebra	False Zebra Mbuna
Pterophyllum scalare	Black Marble Angelfish
Rivulus holmiae	Golden-Tailed Rivulus
Xenotoca eiseni	Red-Tailed Goodeid

**Bob McKeand**

Aphyosemion australe
Fundulopanchax gardneri
Labidochromis caeruleus
Poecilia heterandria
Poeciliopsis monacha
Rivulus cylindraceus
Rivulus geayi
Rivulus xiphidius

John Chapkovich

Cynotilapia afra
Julidochromis transcriptus
Limia tridens
Neolamprologus brevis
Pseudotropheus zebra
Pytochromis sp "Hippo Point Salmon"

Ryszard Krzynowek

Apistogramma cacatuoides
Gambusia holbrooki
Limia melanogaster
Nannacara anomala
Pterophyllum scalare

Bob Alberino

Ameca splendens
Poecilia wingei
Xiphophorus helleri

Don Barbour

Cyprichromis leptosoma
Nannacara taenia
Neolamprologus splendens

Steve Capelle

Labidochromis caeruleus
Melanochromis cyaneorhabdos
Pseudotropheus socolofi

Charlie Sundberg

Haplochromis obliquidens
Neolamprologus brichardi
Poecilia reticulata

Doug Kneissl

Corydoras aeneus
Pelvicachromis pulcher

Slawomir Konrad

Geophagus iporangensis
Tateurndina ocellicauda

Peggy Heckler

Pterophyllum scalare

Rich Weglinski

Julidochromis transcriptus

8 entries

Lyretail Killy
Steel-Blue Killy
Yellow Lab
Venezuela Molly
Orange-Finned Topminnow
Cuban Rivulus
Chevron Rivulus
Band-Tailed Rivulus

6 entries

Dogtooth Cichlid ("Blue Reef")
Masked Julie
Tiburón Limia
Brevis Shell-Dweller
Nyassa Blue Cichlid (long pelvic)

5 entries

Cockatoo Dwarf Cichlid
Holbrook's Mosquitofish
Black-Bellied Limia
Golden Dwarf Cichlid
Pearl Angelfish

3 entries

Butterfly Goodeid
Ender's Livebearer
Red Wag Swordtail

3 entries

Bright-Finned Slender Cichlid (Blue Flash)
Banded Dwarf Cichlid
Neolamprologus helianthus

3 entries

Yellow Lab
Electric Blue Maingano
Eduard's Mbuna

3 entries

Zebra Obliquidens
Albino Brichardi
Half Black Red Delta Tail Guppy

2 entries

Green Aeneus Cory
Kribensis

2 entries

Peacock Goby or Gudgeon

1 entry

Black Lace Angelfish

1 entry

Masked Julie



NAS BAP PROGRAM BREEDERS OF THE YEAR

AWARD WINNERS:

YEAR	WINNER	# OF ENTRIES
2008		
2006	Barry Lynch	20

YEAR	WINNER	# OF ENTRIES
2007	D. McKercher / M. Naylor	17
2005	John Chapkovich	13

*UNOFFICIAL WINNERS:

2004	Barry Lynch	15
2003	Anton Vukich	19
2002	Anton Vukich	13
2001	Anton Vukich	8
2000	Sal Silvestri	6
1999	Ken Balog	9
1988	Don Maloney	7
1997	Gene Harris	7
1996	Mark Keitel	15
1995	Mark Keitel	18
1994	Tony Skojee	23
1993	Don Barbour	10
1992	Sal Silvestri	9
1991	Kevin Cyr	22
1990	Don Barbour	6
1989	Sal Sivistri	13

1988	Sal Silvestri	12
1987	David Quinn	10
1986	B. McKeand / T. Tilles	5
1985	John Stankevitch	9
1984	Griffin Kessler	9
1983	John Stankevitch	13
1982	John Faucett	11
1981	Bob McKeand	9
1980	B. Mckeand / T. Tilles	4
1979	B. Mckeand	9
1978	Bob Mckeand	8
1977	Tom Tilles	3
1976	Tom Tilles	5
1975	Lee Finley	7
1974	Don & Joan Johnson	16
1973	Joe Bellantoni	

**Note: The Breeder of the Year Contest was not inaugurated until 2005.*



HEROS SEVERUS - GOLD & GREEN SEVERUM LARVOPHILE MOUTH-BROODERS

By:
Barry Lynch, NAS



Background: Virtually all hobbyists are familiar with the green severum and its more highly marketed albino form, the gold severum. Anyone visiting a pet store which has gold severum in stock will immediately notice the fish. It's an eye-catcher - a large cichlid with magnificent finnage and striking color - predominantly gold with some red in the fins and on the face. In my 50+ years in the hobby, I have periodically kept severum - usually with other large cichlids in large tanks. They have proved to be welcome additions - stand-outs with their color and demeanor (relatively non-aggressive for cichlids).

In recent years, however, my hobby focus has shifted from simply keeping fish to breeding them - typically livebearers, corys, dwarf cichlids and other smaller fish. So, it had been some time since I kept severum. Then, in early 2006, I learned that fellow NAS members Dan McKercher and Maryanne Naylor had bred gold severum. This re-kindled my interest and I eagerly awaited their BAP submission. In June of 2006, I successfully bid on the BAP lot of 8 beautiful two month old gold severum. At the time, I didn't realize that I had embarked on a roller coaster ride lasting over a year and a half and resulting in my breeding green severum fry and, quite unexpectedly, my first mouth-brooder.

Raising the Gold Severum: Raising the fry proved rather straightforward and uneventful.

Aquarium Decor: The decor consisted of gravel, rocks and artificial plants.

Water: The water temperature was maintained at 78 degrees. The PH was 7.0.

Thirty percent water changes (gravel siphoning) were effected weekly.

Diet: The fish were fed three times a day. They proved to be voracious eaters and would take everything offered. This included flake food, live brine shrimp and various frozen foods - bloodworms, daphnia, brine shrimp, mosquito larvae, etc. When they got larger, they feasted on pellets, freeze dried krill and frozen prawn. Although I never tried it, Maryanne told me their parents loved romaine lettuce. I'm not surprised.

Growth: To my mind, their growth rate was phenomenal. The ½ inch fry were initially housed in a 20 gallon high tank. Within a month, they had to be moved to a 37 gallon high tank. Two months later, a 75 gallon tank was required. By this time they were 4 inches long.

Breeding Aspirations: I had read that it is difficult to sex severum. Sometimes (but not always) the fins on males may be more pointed. Sometimes (but not always) markings on the faces may differ between the sexes. I had also read that sexual maturity is usually not reached until the fish are at least a year old. I accordingly decided to wait them out - i.e. to let them pair up on their own at their own pace. So I waited and waited.

Eventually, I lost my patience. The fish were now 16 months old and I had seen nothing to suggest that breeding would occur. I had noted that one of the fish was somewhat smaller than the others and had rounder finnage than the others. I decided this might be a female and moved "her" to a 37 gallon tank with a selected "male". This experiment unfortunately did not work. The fish were now about 18 months old and showed no signs of pairing off. I came to fear that, against all odds, all the fish were the



same sex - presumably male.

The Fortuitous Trade: As my frustration grew, I remembered that, a couple of months earlier, my good friend Tony, the proprietor of the Fish Bowl pet store in Stamford, had called to tell me he had acquired a proven breeding pair of green severum and wondered if I'd be interested. At that time I told him I would have been interested but for the gold severum I was hoping to breed.

I later had viewed the pair on several occasions - a really nice pair which, in fact, produced fry twice in the pet store tank. I would not, however, have bought them under any circumstance. The asking price was too high - \$199 for the pair. This was simply out of my range. (As an aside, I note the price was an aberration. The Fish Bowl is known throughout the area for its very reasonable fish prices.)

The thought occurred that, while I couldn't buy the pair, perhaps a trade could be arranged. I broached to Tony a straight up trade of my gold severum for his breeding pair. I pointed out that he had had the pair for some time with no takers. I also suggested that he could sell the gold severum individually at a price where he could at least recoup his costs. After some thought, he agreed and the trade was done.

Before I get to the subject of my breeding pair, I should add that both Tony and another store employee later confirmed to me that all of the gold severum were males.

Potential Problems: Before closing the deal, Tony was very open about two problems I might face with the pair. First, while the pair had on two occasions produced free swimming fry in the store, in both instances the fry disappeared within days - presumably eaten by the parents. Second, those spawns had occurred in the first month. In the second month, the pair had to be separated by a tank divider due to vicious attacks on the female by the male.

The first potential problem didn't really concern me. At the first sign of parent predation, I would rescue the fry. The second was more problematic. Had the pair bond been irretrievably broken? We ultimately decided that moving the pair from a bare 30 gallon tank to a 75 gallon tank filled with hiding places could make the difference. I am happy to say this proved to be the case. Within four hours of their introduction into the 75 gallon tank, the pair was peacefully exploring the environment with no aggression whatsoever.

Spawning Activity: For the first month, there was no spawning activity. Over the next month and a half, there were three attempted spawns. The process was virtually identical in each instance. The female selected a smooth area upon which she deposited her eggs - the first two times it was the rear aquarium glass - the third time was an inclined rock. As she deposited her eggs, the male followed closely behind fertilizing the eggs. Thereafter, both fish closely guarded the eggs. The only time they left the site was to eat. They took turns eating so there was always one fish guarding the eggs. The eggs appeared fertile - i.e. there were no white eggs or fungus. However, in each instance, after about three days of being vigilantly guarded, all the eggs suddenly disappeared. Each time I carefully scanned the tank looking for signs of eggs, wrigglers or fry to no avail.

Several days after the eggs had disappeared for the third time, I decided to thoroughly clean the tank. Before commencing, I carefully double checked the tank for any signs of fry. I saw nothing other than the pair peacefully swimming around the tank. I then proceeded to remove both sponge filters and all the rocks and artificial plants. Next, I gravel siphoned every square inch of the tank. I did siphon into buckets which I scanned for fry - nothing.



Two mornings later, as I approached the tank to feed the fish, I saw something I never expected to see. The female approached the surface and, without warning, spit out a small dark cloud of free swimming fry. I couldn't believe it! I called my sister to view the scene. As she neared the tank, the female repeatedly opened and shut her mouth and all the fry disappeared within. I said to Barb: "Severum better be mouth-brooders - otherwise, I just lost all the fry". Fortunately, this pattern of periodically emerging from and disappearing into the female's mouth continued for one more day. After that, the fry schooled outside under the watchful eyes of the parents - mostly the female.

Are Severum Mouth-Brooders? This question had actually occurred to me about two years earlier. In preparation for obtaining some of Dan and Maryanne's gold severum, I researched various sources to learn whatever I could about severum. One book said severum were mouth-brooders. This puzzled me. None of the other books had indicated this. Dan and Maryanne had never mentioned it. Likewise, other NAS members who had previously bred severum had never included this in their BAP forms.

About the same time, Horst Gerber conducted a program at an NAS meeting on constructing home aquariums. He showed slides to include one in which his gold severum were tending their fry. I mentioned I had read in a book that severum were mouth-brooders. I will never forget Horst's response. He stared at me in utter disbelief. He said in no uncertain terms: "The book is wrong. Severum are not mouth-brooders". To me, that ended the matter. If an experienced hobbyist such as Horst (who had clearly bred severum) said they weren't mouth-brooders, then they weren't.

But, I saw what I saw. For at least a day, the female was alternately holding and releasing the fry. Exercising hindsight, I am certain the only way the fry could have remained undetected while I thoroughly cleaned that denuded tank was by being held. I am equally certain this was likewise the case during the two days preceding the cleaning. I watched that tank like a hawk. If the severum had simply moved the eggs or wrigglers to a different location like some cichlids tend to do, they would have guarded that site. To the contrary, the pair simply meandered through the tank.

In short, I either had some form of mouth-brooder or, at the very least, fish with mouth-brooder tendencies. It was time to hit the books again. I found a small treatment of mouth-brooders in the first volume of the Baensch's World Atlas. It explained that the scientific community had separated mouth-brooders into two groups, namely (1) ovophile mouth-brooders and (2) larvophile mouth-brooders. The first group, typified by certain *Haplochromis* and *Pseudotropheus* species, take the eggs into their mouths when laid. The second group (examples provided were certain *Geophagus* and *Gymnogeophagus* species) lays their eggs on rocks and "take the brood into their mouths only after or just before the eggs hatch". From what I had witnessed, my severum clearly fell within the larvophile mouth-brooder group. To double-check this, I went back to the original book excerpt (Staeck's American Cichlids II - Large Cichlids) which had put me onto the notion that *Heros severus* might be mouth-brooders. Sure enough, Staeck places them squarely within the larvophile mouth-brooder group.

Are All Heros Severus Mouth-Brooders? Throughout this experience, one thing which bothered me was that so few breeders had noted that *Heros severus* is a mouth-brooder. After all, *Heros severus* has been in the hobby for a long time and bred by many hobbyists and professional breeders. I considered the possibility that people had simply missed it. I almost did. When the eggs suddenly disappeared, I assumed the parents either had eaten the eggs or moved the eggs/wrigglers to another location. It didn't occur to me that the new location was the female's mouth. Nevertheless, I ultimately did observe the



mouth-brooding phenomenon. And, if I saw it, I would think many other breeders would have too.

Logically, there was only one answer to the question. It must be that not all *Heros severus* are mouth-brooders. Fellow hobbyist, Larry Jinks, confirmed this. While some breeders have clearly witnessed the *Heros severus* mouth-brooding phenomenon, many other breeders have just as clearly observed *Heros severus* spawn and raise their fry with no mouth-brooding whatsoever. I suspect that, in this differentiated behavior, what we are seeing is evolution at work. I am not qualified to speculate where it will end.

Raising the Fry: It was my hope that the pair would prove to be good parents. They had certainly gotten off to a good start. Both had tirelessly guarded the eggs. Then came the mouth-brooding. (I am unaware of what role, if any, the male played in that - other than perhaps serving as the protector of the female.) After the female released the fry, their roles were rather well-defined. The female herded the fry around the tank in a tight shoal. The male generally was on the periphery. Occasionally the male would swim amongst the fry - without incident.

About a week later, however, I saw the male dash in and snatch a fry. This did not appear to me to be some act of mouth-brooding. Nor did it appear that way to the female who immediately attacked the male and chased him around the tank. Although the female was vigilant and active in guarding the fry, I saw no way in which she could ultimately prevent the male from picking off the fry one by one.

In short, I had to step in. If I had a tank to which I could move the male, I would have done so - leaving the female to care for her young. As this was not the case, my only alternative was to move the fry. I moved 45 fry into a 10 gallon tank set up with water from the birthing tank. (As I had seen only 50 to 60 eggs, It doesn't appear the male snagged many fry.) As was the case with the gold severum fry, these fry rapidly outgrew their tank and were moved to a 30 gallon tank. At two months of age, all were approaching one inch in length. At that point, I sold them.

Summary: Nearly two years ago I set out to breed *Heros severus*. I succeeded. I didn't expect it to take so long. I certainly didn't expect to start out with gold severum and end up with green severum fry. Along the way I learned several things. I learned with the gold severum that, while the odds may be high that you will get both sexes out of a group of eight fry, there is no guaranty. I learned that there is a group of fish species characterized as "larvophile mouth-brooders" and that some but not all *Heros severus* are so characterized.

I also had one of the most exciting moments in my fish-keeping experience. When the eggs disappeared for the third time, I marked it down as yet another disappointment. It did not occur to me that the fry were being held by a mouth-brooder. The surprise and exhilaration I felt when that small cloud of fry first emerged from the female was utterly unbelievable. Two years may be a long time; but, it was well worth it.





A Thank You to Barry Lynch and the Norwalk Aquarium Society from The Connecticut Betta Club

**Submitted By Douglas Kneissl
Secretary/Treasurer, CBC**

As some of you know I am the secretary / treasurer of the Connecticut Betta Club, Amin Rubirosa is the Vice-President and Dan McKercher is also a member.

The CBC is a local chapter of the International Betta Congress. The local chapters are small regional clubs that are an integral part of the IBC, they make an International club feel intimate. It gives betta people a local club to join that has an emphasis on bettas.

The backbone of the IBC is the show circuit. Shows are held worldwide, year-round, with the local chapters putting on the shows, and the entrants earning awards and points that are accumulated throughout the year. A Grand Champion is crowned at the annual convention in June.

As a new club we wanted to get into the show circuit and host a show, but as you know, new clubs have no money, so we approached NAS and proposed a joint show. The joint show would give us a chance to host a show and not have to pay for the space, though we did agree to give NAS 10% of our net auction proceeds after the show – because even free space is not free. Both clubs thought a joint show was a great idea, more fish equals more visitors. The CBC gained 3 new members and I know of two IBC members who stayed for the NAS auction and bought some items.

So we are here tonight to thank Barry Lynch and the NAS Board of Directors and members for agreeing to let us hold our show with you. A big Thank You also goes to Peter Fraboni of Earthplace for all of his help with both shows. As a club we made almost \$200 from our auction and originally agreed to present 10% of those proceeds to The Norwalk Aquarium Society, however, we've decided that was not an adequate thank you. Instead we voted to give you 25% and would like to present you this check for \$50.

Thank you all once again.

The Connecticut Betta Club

The CT Betta Club's First Annual Show



Doug Kneissl



Amin Rubirosa



Neolamprologus Similis

By
Cathy Chapkovich



The *Neolamprologus similis* is a small shell dwelling cichlid native to Lake Tanganyika in east Africa. It derives its name from its “similarity” to the *N. multifasciatus*. While the *multifasciatus* has dark strips on a light body, the *similis* is a coppery brown color with light vertical strips; it also has strips over their necks and heads. Care should be taken not to cross the two. The thing to remember is that the *N. similis* is a coppery brown with white strips extending over their necks and heads while the *multifasciatus* is white with brown strips that do not extend over their necks and heads. The *similis* is also known as “Big Eyed Multi”, and “Zebra” shell dweller.

The *similis* is a relatively small cichlid getting no longer than approximately $2\frac{3}{8}$ " (6 cm) and will do well in a community tank where its tank mates are no larger than 4". The *similis* shouldn't be kept with other shell dwellers. They are monomorphic (males & females are essentially of the small body type and coloring), though the males tend to get bigger.

Tank set up can be very basic. A sandy bottom with some shells scattered around the bottom will give the *similis* a good habitat. The shells used should range in size from about $1\frac{1}{8}$ to 2" in size. The *similis* like to arrange the shells to their liking and will dig trenches around their selected shells. They are not a very picky eater. They will eat flake food and even seem to like some black worms once in awhile.

Breeding the *N. similis* is very easy. Using a 20 gallon tank (\approx 80 liters), a pH level around 7.8 with a temperature around 78.8°F (26°C) will work great. Watch for the dominate male, as he will create a harem and beat up on the other males. Remove the sub dominate males from the tank.

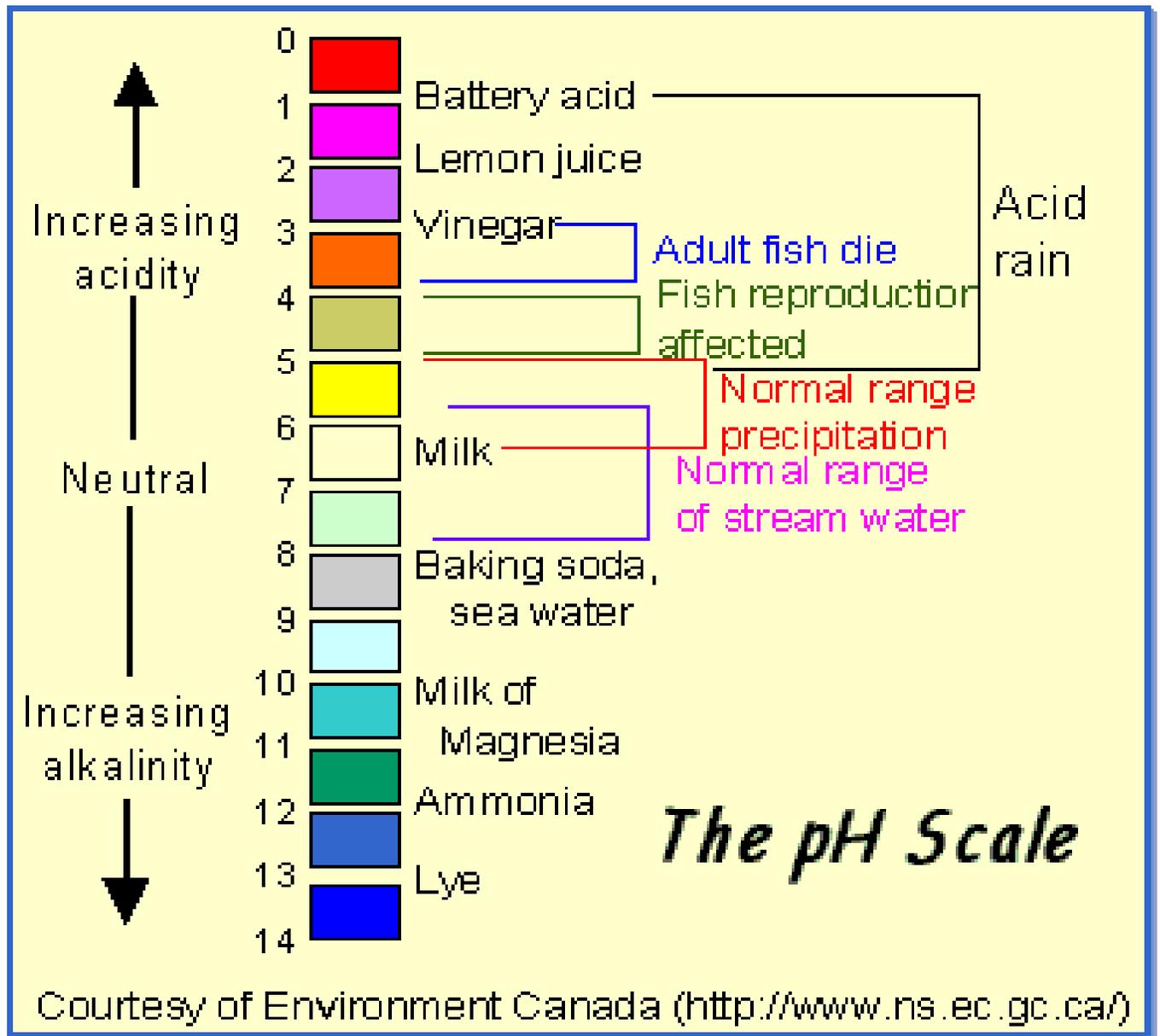
To help induce spawning, skip a water change now and then. The females will lay their eggs in the shells. The male will hover over the top of the shell and spurt his sperm in to the shell to fertilize the eggs. After which the female may stay inside the shell for hours or days depending on her dedication and obsession fanning fresh water over the eggs. The eggs usually hatch within a day or two, but the fry may stay in the shell for as long as a week feeding on the bacteria and infusoria in the shell.

Growth of the fry is slow and it may take a few months before the fry reach a size of around $\frac{3}{8}$ " (1 cm).





A Look At The pH Scale





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*	Brachyrhapsis
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*			



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## **REMINDERS**

**NAS Benefit Auction  
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