In Seine Menu

Champaign Area Fish Exchange, Inc.

Members Educational News Update

August 2008

Champaign Area Fish Exchange

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Auction	Art Pesch	217-356-7090	capesch@soltec.net
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Meeting Date and Location: Saturday, September 6, 2008, 1125 Plant Sciences Laboratory, Dorner Dr., Urbana, IL. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for registration and social activities. Meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. Bring any fish-related items for the monthly auction, and fish, plants, or art-work for an informal "Bowl Show".

PROGRAM: We will view a DVD entitled *Starting a Planted Aquarium* with Carson Passey.

COVER PHOTO: Cories. Photo by Jerry Montgomery.

CAFE Website: www.champaignfish.com

To submit articles and classified ads to the newsletter, email Carie Nixon at dragonfly@illicom.net
or mail to Carie Nixon, 381 County Rd 1300 E, Tolono, IL 61880
You may also bring material for the newsletter to the monthly meeting.

Calendar of Events

Aug 31 **Circle City Aquarium Club Fall Auction** at Holiday Inn, Beech Grove, IN for more info contact Bill Flowers at ccacauction@gmail.com or visit their website at: http://www.circlecityaqclub.org/

Sept 6 **CAFE Meeting**, Plant Sciences Lab at the University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois.

Nov 18 **Missouri Aquarium Society Fall Auction** at the Stratford Inn, 800 S. Highway Dr., Fenton, MO. Viewing at11:00 AM, Auction at NOON. For more info contact John 618-604-7228 or Johnsfishy@att.net or visit the Website at: www.missouriaquariumsociety.org

Classified Ads

(free to CAFE members)

Fish for sale: Recently purchased some juvenile *Lamprologus ocellatus* 'Gold' (i.e. Lake Tanganyika shell dwellers) and have too many for my own good. I have only a few for sale and I'm asking $12 per fish. Make me an offer I can't refuse. These small fish have plenty of character and do best in a tank with a sandy bottom. Call Gene at 217-390-3321 or send e-mail to gene_heitman@hotmail.com.

Koi Angelfish. Photo by Phil Nixon

Breeding Corydoras

by Eric Naus
of Amsterdam Holland, from his website:
www.aquaworld.biz/catalog
Aquarticles

Corydoras paleatus

When one is trying to breed Corydoras, a special breeding tank will usually give better results than waiting for them to spawn in the community tank. Even if they do spawn in the community tank, it is very likely you will not notice it at all. The eggs are well hidden by the fish, and even if the eggs survive the hungry attentions of the co-inhabitants of the tank and the parents themselves, the larvae coming out of the egg are extremely vulnerable. The first thing they have to do when emerging from the egg is to go up for air to fill the swim bladder. Still, some may occasionally survive this, and after a month or three the owner will be in for a surprise when the first 2 cm long juvenile calmly cruises the tank for food.

Let's assume you plan to breed a particular species of Corydoras. The general tank setup will be described below.

The following information is not a must, but are things that have worked for me, or which I've read. By no means expect your fish to start breeding immediately, even after you've invested a lot of money to copy the described tanks, materials and fish.

The tank
A Corydoras breeding tank should be long enough. As a rule of thumb, length of the tank should be at least ten times the maximum size of the adult fish. There have been numerous reports about full grown paleatus spawning in a 30cm. tank or even smaller, but of course no-one reports the failures. Take it from me that the bigger the tank, the higher the success rate.

Height of the tank should not exceed 30cm. (The tank could be higher, but then simply do not fill it up over this height).


Corydoras paleatus albino form

The fish
This is one of the most important issues, although it's hardly ever mentioned in any set-up information. Of course the fish have to be healthy. And yes they should be fed well. But that is about all that is mentioned.

First things first. A group of fish should be selected, and they should be mature enough. The best way is of course to buy full-grown wild-caught fish. If you buy wild-caught fish, the first thing to do is to make sure they are disease free. During transportation the fish are usually treated really badly. Some medications used on fish will render them temporarily infertile, which is one of the reasons why so many first spawns go bad. (Although some people theoretisize this to be a learning process for the fish - nicely thought of by humans, but in free-laying species there is no feedback to the parents that the eggs are not fertilised, so how could they learn?)


Corydoras sp.


Corydoras sp.

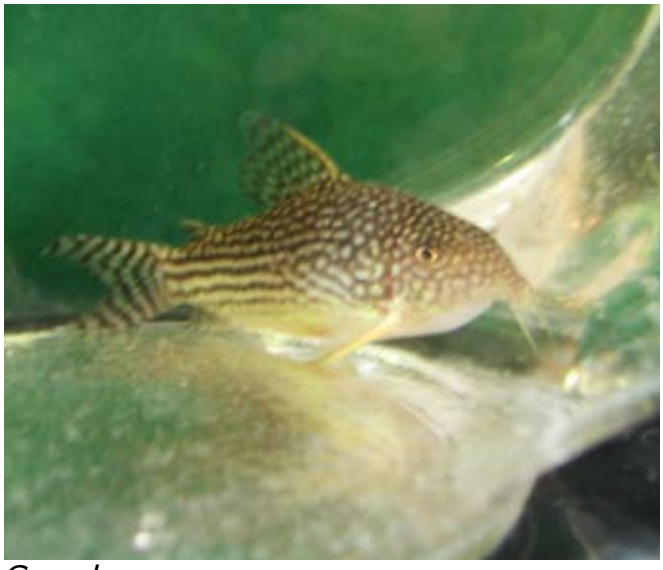
Large fish (the ones we want) are usually more expensive because of the higher death rate during shipping (lower water to bodyweight

ratio) and because the shop owners know. Do not believe shop owners, they will try to get as much profit from sales as possible. Prices tend to skyrocket for the people they know will buy this or that new or rare cory. Send your friends, and jeez, half price for them. Basically it's whatever the fool will give, they will charge.

Do not under any circumstance buy only three fish because they are expensive, and another three in a month's time. There is no guarantee they will be the same species, or type locality.

Small fish will also grow big, although for most species it takes a minimum of two to three years to reach a reasonable size, and growth rate is reduced in tanks when compared to nature.

The decor
If you'd like a nice looking tank, you are not going to like this part. Don't worry, the fish tend to breed in those as well. Hiding places: one will suffice - a coconut shell, or better yet create a cave with multiple exits by placing a flat stone on some smaller stones. Plants are optional, but not essential.



Corydoras sp.

The lighting
Twelve to thirteen hours of light, preferably subdued light, or no light at all if the tank is near a window.

The substrate
Should be sand, approx. 0.5-1cm. layer.

The filtration
Strong filtration, especially in one area of the tank. But there should be areas where there is little or no current, so the fish can rest.

The temperature
24-26°C.

Water changes
Daily 50% water changes with pre-treated water, approximately 5-10°C colder than the water in the tank. Be careful when changing the water - if a part of the glass is directly exposed to 10°C colder water, it may break!

Feeding
Feed the fish well, as much as they like and more. (You're doing daily water changes, so any left overs are no problem). Feed them with red mosquito larvae (bloodworms), daphnia, artemia, chopped earthworm and tubifex.

If you keep this up for a week or two (or longer) most Corydoras will spawn. Some require more attention, and should be kept in soft, acidic water for a while. Then change the water with soft, neutral water, to get both a rise in pH and a drop in temperature.

Eggs
Be very careful when handling the eggs. The best thing to use is spawning mops, which will enable you to remove the eggs from the tank

without handling them. Place the eggs in water taken from the spawning tank into a small holding tank. Still, many eggs may fungus, and most of the times the fish have a mind of their own as to where the eggs should be laid. If you have to remove the eggs by hand, wash your hands thoroughly before removing the eggs (making sure that no soap remains on your fingers). Some people use a razor blade to remove eggs from the glass, but I've never been able to do that right. Corydoras eggs are extremely hard, and you cannot squash them by handling them.

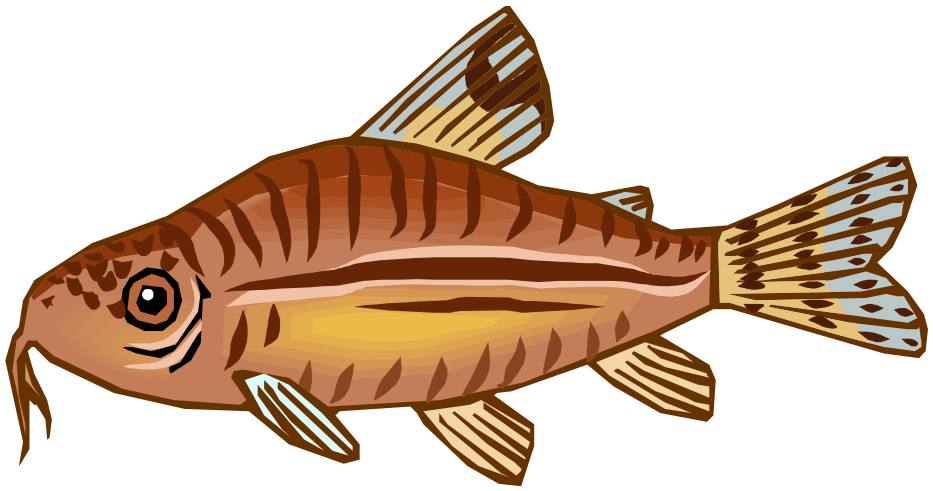
Back to the eggs fungusing. Eggs fungus as a result of bacterial attacks, which results in the shells being damaged. The fungus is the second infection, because it attacks damaged eggs. Most of the times that I tried to raise the eggs in a separate raising tank, 60-80% of the eggs fungused. Adding a preventive medicine like methylene blue helped a bit to increase hatch rates.

Later I started using breeding nets, which hung from the side of spawning tank. Hatch rates raised to around 90-95%. I keep the fry there, feeding them artemia, for a week or two, and then I transfer them to a raising tank.

Using a pure glass bottom in a raising tank may seem to be a good thing to do, since it's easy to clean. But in my case the fry often developed fungus. In a glass-bottom tank a thin layer of bacteria will always be present, which may cause this. After I added a thin layer of sand, the fry stopped developing fungus.

It's a really nice sight, having an 80 cm tank filled with over 100 juvenile Corydoras (in my case panda). You can observe some natural schooling behaviour, and watch them eat and grow. They can grow quite fast up to 2-3 cm. (depending on the species), but after that growth comes to a halt, and it may take up to a year before the fry are the same size as the juveniles you mostly see in the shops. It will take at least a year more for them to become fully grown.

Photos by Jerry Montgomery



A Visit to the NATIONAL AQUARIUM in Baltimore

by Don Zilliox
First published in Some Things Fishy, Newsletter of the Tropical Fish Club of Erie County, N.Y.
Aquarticles

The Inner Harbor is a place where all cities like Buffalo, NY would like to copy. It is a bustling area where thousands of people congregate daily where the main attraction is The National Aquarium. Shopping and eating are the next most important parts of this rejuvenated waterfront. We spent two days meandering through all the sites but we both enjoyed the aquarium the most.

My wife and I have visited at least eight such aquariums and each has it's own signature attraction that one takes home and remembers the most. From Belle Isle Aquarium in Detroit, the oldest running aquarium that opened in 1904 which is dedicated to many tropical freshwater fishes to the Tennessee Aquarium in Chattanooga, TN which opened in 1992 and displays mostly fresh cold water species, none impressed as much as the National Aquarium in Baltimore. Entering the first floor you find yourself standing above a gigantic tank with dozens of three-foot sharks and stingrays. On to the second floor we find fishes of "Maryland: Mountains to the Sea" which exhibits aqua life from the freshwater ponds to the Atlantic shelf off the coast of Maryland. Level three shows the electric eel, giant Pacific octopus, tiny jawfish, sea urchins, anemones, lionfish and clownfish to name only a few.

On level 4 is the Aquarium's newest permanent exhibit which recreates a section of a blackwater Amazon River tributary and the forest that it seasonally floods. Along a 57-foot long acrylic wall, visitors can see schools of dazzling tropical fish as well as giant river turtles, dwarf caimans, caiman lizards, pygmy marmosets - the smallest species of monkey in the world - and a giant anaconda. Interactive computer stations explain the ecology of this unique rainforest habitat and how human activities can protect or damage it. This floor kept our interest as I recognized

almost all the fishes as ones that I had either maintained myself or have seen at our local fish stores. Of all the public aquariums, we found before us more of this type species than any other four combined. Upward to the fifth and last level we emerged in dense tropical foliage that contained colorful birds, golden lion tamarinds (monkeys), two-toed sloths, red-bellied piranhas, iguanas and other lizards, and even poison dart frogs.

Beginning our descent back to another fourth floor area we were accompanied by hundreds of vividly colored tropical fish, schooling and swimming in a 335,000 gallon tank which surrounded us on our trip along the downward ramps. Divers can be seen hand feeding the fish several times a day. At the end of this journey we came face to face with the sharks and stingrays that we viewed from above upon entering the aquarium a few hours earlier. Of all the public aquariums we have seen, this one is recommended for having the most fishes we maintain ourselves.

As a sidelight, I must say that my wife is an avid book reader and we continued on to the Barnes & Noble Bookstore just a few steps from the aquarium itself. It's a huge store with two floors connected by an escalator on which upon nearing the second floor you come face to face with a fish tank. Those of you who have already seen it are now beginning to chuckle because as we know, it is gigantic! It contains many large show quality angelfish, discus and many smaller fishes such as Cardinal, Rummy-Nose and Rosy Tetras. Just to give you an idea about the size of this tank, I happened to meet the young lady who is an employee of the National Aquarium and is the custodian of this tank. It is 15 feet long and 6 feet high and contains 3000 gallons of water! There aren't just a few fish here as she told me there are about 175 cardinals alone! And if necessary, she dons her wetsuit to enter it and rearrange or remove items, as the situation requires. If you are in the area, don't miss this free exhibit!

Visit the National Aquarium website at:
http://www.aqua.org/