

Bluegrass Fishkeepers Association



The Splash is a quarterly publication of the Bluegrass Fish Keepers Association. The views and opinions contained within are not necessarily those of the editors and/or the officers and members of the Bluegrass Fish Keepers Association.

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The Splash submission guidelines for articles and art:
Please submit all articles, photos and art in electronic form. We can accept most popular software formats and fonts. Email to bluegrassfishkeepers@gmail.com. Photos and graphics are encouraged with your articles! Please remember to include the photo/graphic credits. Graphics and photo files may be submitted in any format, however uncompressed TIFF, JPEG or vector format is preferred, at the highest resolution/file size possible. If you need help with graphics files or your file is too large to email, please contact me for alternative submission info.
Next deadline..... February 01, 2023

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Upcoming Important Dates

All Dates are subject to change or be canceled due to local regulations and conditions of the pandemic please watch the Facebook group for up to date information on changes.

If you know of an event you would like added or want more information contact the editor.

Jan 21	General Meeting
Feb 4	GCAS Swap Cincinnati
Feb 18	General Meeting
Mar 18	General Meeting
Mar 24-26	Carolina Aquatic Workshop Raleigh NC.
April 15	BFKA Spring Swap
May 20	General Meeting
June 3	BFKA Cookout and native collecting
July 13-16	ACA Convention & Catfish Cataclysm Madison WI
July 15	General Meeting
Aug 19	General Meeting
Sept 16	BFKA Fall Swap
Sept 22-24	Keystone Clash Morgantown PA
Oct 21	General Meeting
Nov 18	General Meeting
Dec 16	Awards Banquet

President's Message

Well our summer tubs are put away and the year is drawing to an end. It was a great year for fish and BFKA. It seems as things began opening back up conventions and fish events started popping up left and right. Our club has grown its membership and attendance this year, we have welcomed some great speakers, and taken part in some amazing activities. I love seeing the club grow and expand what it does. I love seeing more and more people getting involved and working together to make the club better and better with each step.

This year we made our presence known at 4 national conventions (the Triple Crown) to the point that one of the speakers asked in front of a full room "Bluegrass fish keepers, who are they?" We also had representation at the Aquaticon convention in Knoxville and the Mammoth Cave Aquarium Expo. I want to thank all of you that traveled to these events wearing your BFKA apparel. I know there's requests for more and we are working on that also.

We took members to visit Rusty Wessel's fish house and native collecting in Georgetown. So many great things from 2022 and I look forward to the things coming in 2023. If you have ideas for 2023 or want to help with anything please just reach out. We want this to be as much your club as anyone's.

John Tyler
2022 President

Bluegrass Fish Keepers Association meets monthly.

We are currently hold monthly meetings each 3rd Saturday of the month at 5pm. Special events may be held at other dates or times

Keep an eye on the Facebook group for changes or special events.

Special Thanks to our speakers

**September – No Speaker
Rusty Wessel Fish House Tour**

October – Stacey Smallwood

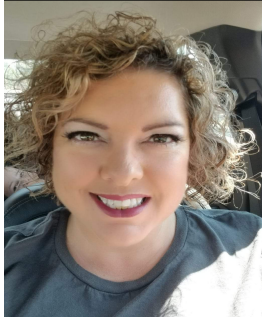
November – banquet



Just a reminder January starts a new year to be a member

Meet The Board

2022

	President John Tyler		Vice President Stacey Smallwood
	Treasurer TBD-		Secretary Donna Fetters
	Director at Large Will Branham		Director at Large Laurin Howard

Breeders Award Program Standings

	2021 points		2022 points	Total points	Title
Michael Gray	115	Ameca splendens	10	220	Intermediate Breeder
		Puntius titteya	20		
		Pelvicachromis taeniatus	20		
		Xiphophorus domestic swordtail	15		
		Hemichromis exsul	20		
Stephan Kalbli	40	Rasbora vulcanus	30	70	General Breeder
Donna Feters	60	Poecilia reticulata	5	65	General Breeder
John Tyler	40	Ameca splendens	10	65	General Breeder
		Limia melogastner	15		
Brandon May	50			50	General Breeder
Scott Breidert	35			35	
Laurin Howard		Ancistrus sp. bristle nose common	10	10	
Will Branham		Neocaridina davidi	5	25	
		Neolamprologus multifasciatus	20		
James Phillips	25			25	

Want to share your experience? Submit an article by contacting the editor. We want to hear your stories

Breeding *Corydoras sterbai*

By Joe Murchison

It is 1962, I am twelve years old, and my dwarf gouramis are moving around their fifteen-gallon aquarium like they want to spawn. I will need live baby brine shrimp to feed the fry so it is time to construct a brine shrimp hatchery. When I was a kid there were no such items as clear plastic bottles. To make a hatchery we used one-gallon glass jugs that were common at the time. My family's next-door neighbor drank wine from clear gallon jugs, so I swiped a few of them out of his garbage can. Making the hatcheries required cutting off the bottom of the jug. To do this, a glass cutter was used to scratch a line one inch from the bottom around the circumference of the container. Next, a string was tied around the jug that straddled the scratched line. The string was soaked with lighter fluid and ignited. After burning for a few seconds, the glass jug was plunged into a pail of ice water. If lucky, the expansion and contraction of the glass broke off the bottom of the container in a neat even piece. It was necessary to build a stool out of plywood with a hole to hold the jug upside down. With a cork in the neck and a rigid piece of airline through the cork, attached to an airline, you were ready to start hatching shrimp.



It was now 2020 and I wanted to breed some cory cats. I procrastinated because I knew I needed to construct a brine shrimp hatchery. Although, I didn't need a gallon glass jug, my brine shrimp hatchery setup was going to be a little cumbersome. My fish room is in the garage and while insulated it still gets cold in the winter, so the shrimp water required heat. I decided the most dependable solution was to keep my DIY one-liter hatcheries submerged in a heated five-gallon tank. Installing the hooks and chains to support the bottles was not complicated, but the final apparatus seemed like a messy way to raise shrimp. Using the eggs I ordered from Brine Shrimp Direct, aside from the watery mess created each time I collected shrimp, my hatching set-up worked pretty well.

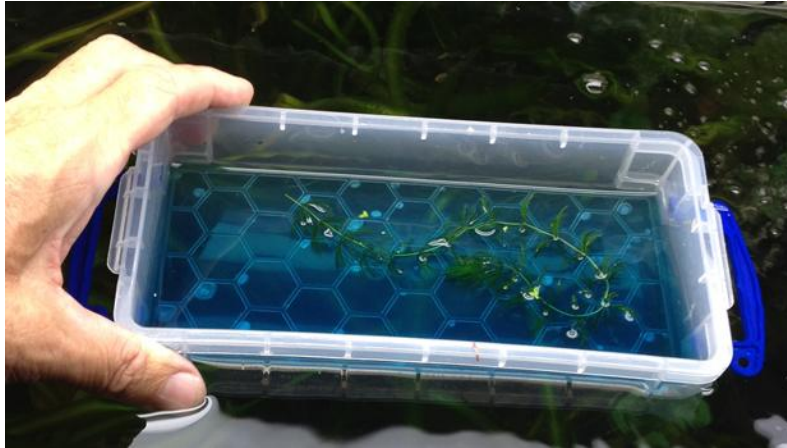
Lee's Feed is the nearest store to my house that carries fish. About eighteen months ago I purchased six *Corydoras sterbai* from there. I housed them in a fifty-five gallon tank with some bushy nose plecos and a group of glow-light tetras. My water comes from El Dorado Irrigation District with a general hardness and carbonate hardness both less than 30 ppm. The pH from the tap fluctuates between 7.4 and 7.6. There is not much in the water to buffer the pH and it dips well below 7.0 after a few days following my weekly 50% water changes. I eventually added a box filter, half-filled with crushed coral, to keep the pH more stable.

One morning, about six months after bringing home the sterbais, I discovered about 30 eggs stuck to the front glass of the aquarium. I was unprepared for this exciting event and didn't have a plan for dealing with eggs. I decided to do some research and take action the next day. The following morning, no action was needed; all the eggs were gone. YouTube is where I surf for information on just about everything. While searching my favorite blogs I came across a clip produced by Aquarium Coop. It was an interview with Cory's friend Dean. Dean uses plastic trays he floats in aquariums to raise fish fry. Using Dean's idea, I purchased some shallow plastic trays that were four inches wide, eight inches long, and one and half inches deep.

A few weeks after the first spawn, the sterbais laid another batch of eggs, again on the front glass. Initially, I used a single-edged razor blade to scrap the eggs off the glass but discovered that it was easier to brush them off with my finger. I put the sticky eggs into two of the plastic trays filled with an inch of aquarium water, a drop of methylene blue, and a sprig of hornwort. I placed the tops on the trays and floated them in the fifty-five gallon tank. Four days later the eggs started to hatch. A couple of days after that most of the fry had used up their egg sacs and I started feeding them micro worms. I fed micro worms for two weeks then switched to live baby brine shrimp and Tetramin flakes that I ground up in a mortar and pestle. Every day I used a pipette to suck out any uneaten food, any fungused eggs and a portion of water to be replaced by fresh aquarium water. When the sterbai fry was two months old I let them loose in a twenty-gallon grow-out tank.

Since that first group of eggs I saved, the corys have spawned several more times, but on each occasion, there were only ten or twelve eggs on the glass. I assumed any additional eggs had been eaten. I used the plastic trays for two more of the spawns, but another YouTube clip described the use of a breeder box to raise fry from eggs. I ordered an ISTA outside hanging breeder box from Amazon. I didn't use methylene blue dye in the breeder box, but I found it just as effective and much simpler to use than the plastic trays.

The fifty-five-gallon aquarium that houses the adult sterbais is heavily planted with hornwort, Vallisneria, and Java moss. I hadn't seen any eggs for several months, but one day I discovered several sterbai cats that were less than a half-inch long. I was surprised to see that some of the eggs and fry were surviving with the other fish in the tank.



I think sterbais are one of the more attractive corys and breeding them was done with little help from me. I feed the adults twice a day. I use Tetramin flakes in the morning and sinking shrimp pellets in the evening. Every three or four days I replace the morning flake food with a mixture of frozen shrimp and frozen blood worms. I have never fed the adults any live food. I think my water chemistry is comfortable for the corys and the 50% water changes might give them the encouragement they need to spawn. At least four times, when it rained, there were eggs on the glass the next day.

Do you want to sell at the Spring Swap in April?

Members can get tables for \$20 but we only have so many. Reach out to John Tyler or a Swap Committee member today to reserve your place.

Our Swap Meet Committee is working out details to bring you the best swap meet we have seen. If you want to help with any aspect of the club let us know.

Members Tour Rusty Wessel's Fish House

On Sunday September, 18 members of the Bluegrass Fish Keepers Association traveled to Louisville to tour Rusty Wessel's fish house. There we were joined by some of the staff from the Aquatic Triple Crown event for a wonderful fishy time.



So first, for those of you that aren't familiar with Rusty and his fish house, let me give you a little background information. Rusty Wessel is a prolific author and photographer, with pictures and articles appearing in Aquarium Fish Magazine, Aquarist and Pondkeeper, Buntbarsche Bulletin, Tropical Fish Hobbyist, and others. With decades of experience and participation in the aquarium hobby, Rusty is an active solicitor for the Guy Jordan Endowment Fund which funds cichlid research, a participant in the ACA/ZooMed Speaker's Program, a board member of the American Cichlid Association, American Livebearer Association and Louisville Tropical Fish



Fanciers. Rusty maintains 8,000+ gallons of freshwater aquariums in a dedicated fish house at his home. His 90+ aquariums contain predominantly cichlids and livebearers, mostly from Central America. Rusty has made 150+ collecting trips successfully collecting fish from around the world. Theraps wesseli, a cichlid native to Honduras, is named after him. In August 2022 Matt Pedersen, senior editor with Amazonas Magazine wrote, "Rusty Wessel



has what can only be described as a world-class, and nothing short of enviable, fish house".

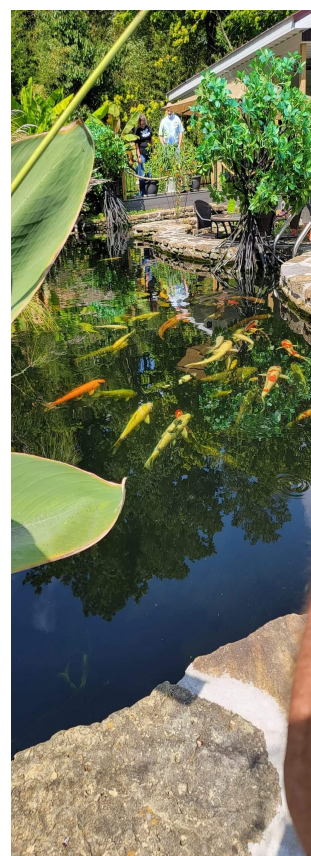
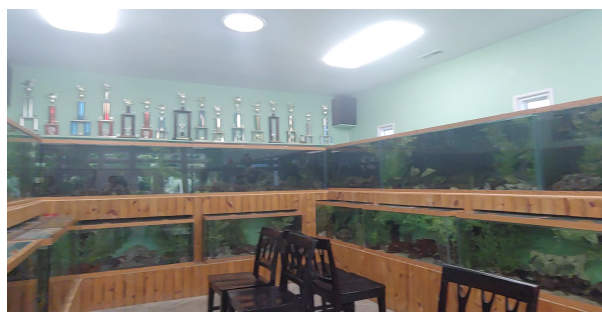
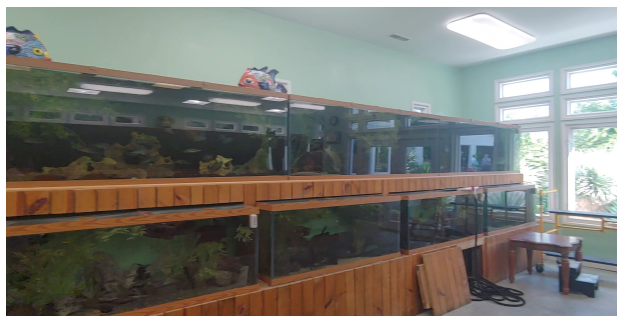


Rusty was not only generous in welcoming us to his home and showing us around his amazing fish house and ponds but he also had a wonderful meal of barbeque and turkey ribs prepared for us. Together amongst the fish tanks or over the wonder food the members of BFKA and the members of LTFF who had helped at the Triple Crown got to know each other a little better. Then wrapping up the evening Rusty donated rare fish species to the auction from his own collection including pygmy swordtails, Platy species on the CARES



list of threatened and endangered species, koi potentially worth \$500, mollies like none I've seen before and many more. A number of dry goods were also donated from the ACA convention for the auction. By the end of the day we had all had a good time and walked away with at least one story to tell.

Thanks again to everyone that came out for the event and a special thankyou to Rusty Wessel for having us over.





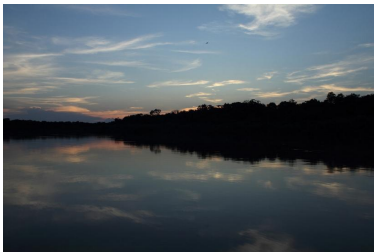
A Look at a Fish Threatened with Extinction

Bandit Cory

Corydoras metae



When we think of fish threatened with extinction our mind usually goes to cichlids or goodeids or even rainbows or killifish but there are a number of Corydoras that are facing this struggle as well. With its masked appearance the bandit cory aka *Corydoras metae* is one that could steal your heart. With the black banding across its eyes *C. metae* has picked up a number of common names including masked cory and bandit cory. But be careful when selecting this fish from a lineup there are a few species that look very similar and are often mislabeled as *C. metae*. *Corydoras melini* is the most common identity theft of *metae*, but if you look closely you can spot the fake. The *metae* will have a solid black stripe running along its back and no color on its caudal fin whereas the *melini* will have a black stripe that will split to the two sides of its back.



Corydoras metae was initially described in 1914 and subsequently named after Río Meta, the river where it was first found. The Río Meta is a major tributary of the Río Orinoco in eastern Colombia and western Venezuela. This fish is known from several tributaries within the upper basin including the ríos Humea, Ocoa, Guatiquía (including its two branches the ríos Negrito and Guayuriba), Manacacias, and Metica (the name given to the upper Río Meta above its confluence with the Río Humea). It appears to be absent from the lower Meta and has not been recorded in Venezuela.

These little fish like neutral water, 6.5-7.5 for the pH, the water being soft and the temperature being about 71.6 - 75.2°F (22-24°C). They come from the rivers of Columbia and Venezuela. So they prefer a well planted tank that has lots of hiding places. Their home should be at least 20 gallons for a school of just six cories. These fish, if cared for properly, will live to around 3 to 5 years.

Since the bandit cory is a social little fish, they like to be in a school of at least 6 of the same species. These fish have such a peaceful nature, the *C. metae* can be put with many different fish, except larger cichlids, and any other fish that are big enough to eat the cory.

Easy to please, the bandit cory will eat a wide variety of foods. Flake food and sinking pellets or tablets are the most common diet. Brine shrimp, daphnia, and bloodworms should also be included in their diet, either freeze-dried or frozen. Whenever possible supplement with live foods.

Remember the bandit cory is a bottom-feeding fish, and will only eat food that sinks to the bottom or is delivered to that depth via tongs and lodged. They also tend to be nocturnal feeders, as that is when they are most active. Give them a meal just before turning out the lights for the day.

To breed, use a ratio of two males per female if possible. When the females are visibly full of eggs perform a large (50-70%) water change with cooler water, and increase oxygenation and flow in the tank. Repeat this daily until the fish spawn.

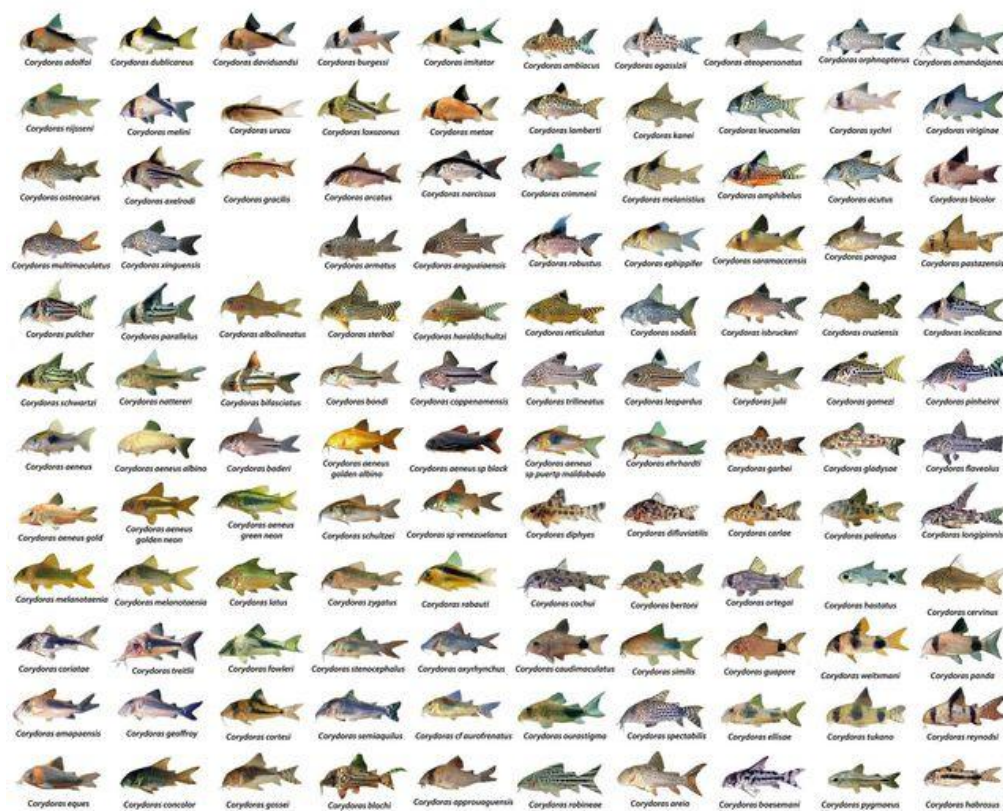
Eggs are normally deposited on the aquarium glass, but it is recommended to provide alternatives in the form of fine-leaved vegetation or fine spawning mops. Once spawning is complete either adults or eggs should be removed; the latter can usually be rolled gently up the glass with a finger. The new container should contain the same water as the spawning tank and be similarly well-oxygenated. Most breeders add a few drops of methylene blue, or an alder cone or two at this point in order to prevent the eggs developing fungus..

They are facultative air breathers and possess a modified, highly vascularised intestine which has evolved to facilitate uptake of atmospheric oxygen and aid survival in oxygen-deprived environments. In the aquarium you'll occasionally see them rising to the surface to take in gulps of air.

The stiffened pectoral-fin spines are capable of piercing human skin and a 'sting' can be very painful indeed, so care should be exercised when handling them. It is thought that secretions from the axillary glands at the base of each spine may even be mildly toxic or venomous.

Corydoras metae are listed as vulnerable to extinction as recently as a survey done in 2020. The primary threat is harvesting for the ornamental fish trade and there are a best estimate of two locations based on this threat. It is inferred to be leading to a continuing decline in the population size. Pollution is also a threat to the species, and this is inferred to be leading to a continuing decline in habitat. Captive breeding has been reducing the harvesting of these fish but pollution and agricultural products still poses issues for the species. With our help maybe we can keep these little bandits in our hobby for a long time and get things improving for them in their wild habitat.

Nearly 200 named Corydora species with over 100 not yet named





Bluegrass Fish Keepers Association

GROW OUT **3rd** **ANNUAL** ***COMPETITION*** ***2023***

Who can grow the best fish in a year?

Open to members in good standing

\$5 entry fee

Prizes to include \$50 Amazon gift card



Featuring Pelvicachromis pulcher
aka Rainbow Kribensis

Contest to run January to October



New to 2023 is the Bring a Friend Competition. Share the club with others and earn points toward a great prize. This years prize will be a 10 gallon tank setup.

How to earn points

Bring someone to a meeting that is at least 18 years old and has never been to a meeting before. This gets you 1 point.

When the guest of yours becomes a member within the year you will get 5 additional points.

The member with the most points at the end of the year will win the competition and prize.

Election Results for 2023 Officers

President - John Tyler
 Vice President - Stacey Smallwood
 Secretary - Donna Feters
 Treasurer - Mike Busch
 Director at Large - Laurin Howard
 Director at Large - Will Branham

2022 Awards

Bowl Show Champion - Greg Cobham
 Breeder of the Year - Mike Gray
 Grow Out Competition Champion - Greg Cobham
 Rookie Breeder of the Year - Will Branham
 Aquarist of the Year - Greg Cobham

Did You Know?

The Club has a Band Page for selling fish and similar classifieds?



**Bluegrass Fish Keepers
 Association**

Aquarium Club in central Kentucky, United
 States of America. Come together here

[Scan this QR code and join!](#)

The club has a YouTube channel?

<https://youtube.com/@bluegrassfishkeepers3632>

