

**The**

# **SCAT**

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# Club Notes

**Our Mission Statement:** Meetings of the St. Catharines & Area Aquarium Society are held on the first Monday of each month, 7.30 p.m., at the Seafarers & Teamsters Union Hall, 70 St. Davids Rd. E. Thorold, ON. No meetings are held on Mondays that are holidays. Those meetings are held on the second Monday. There are no meetings during the months of July and August. *The Society, established in 1958, is a non-profit, educational organization dedicated to the task of promoting interest in the breeding, raising, maintenance and study of tropical fish, both at the beginner and advanced levels.* The St. Catharines & Area Aquarium Society is a charter member of the Canadian Association of Aquarium Clubs Inc.(CAOAC) <http://www.caoac.ca> .SCAAS is also a member of the Federation of American Aquarium Societies (FAAS) <http://www.faas.info/> .More news and information about St. Catharines & Area Aquarium Society can be found at <http://www.scaas.info>

**Our next meeting will be held on April 05 at the Seafarers & Teamsters Union hall, 70 St. Davids Rd. E. Thorold. Start time is 7.30 pm ALL ARE WELCOME**  
**This month's program will be by Pam Danyluck on Applesnails**

## 2009 – 2010 Executive

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Programs – Pam Danyluck - [danyluck@sympatico.ca](mailto:danyluck@sympatico.ca) &  
- Tom Hillier - [tom.hillier@hotmail.com](mailto:tom.hillier@hotmail.com)  
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## Membership Dues:

Family :\$ 25.00  
Single - \$ 20.00  
Junior - \$ 10.00 (under 16)  
Seniors - \$ 10.00 (over 65 )

## Inside This Issue

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Cover photo of a Microgeophagus ramirezi male Photo © by DAve Unruh

## Next month:

- the final installment of *Crypt Emersion*  
- Breeding *Aulonocara stuartgranti* & Breeding 3 species of *Julidochromis*  
- Keeping *Anubias* Part 2

**The Way I See It:**

We had a nice mini auction at our March meeting with a variety of fish and plants with a few less common species just to make it even more interesting. We also had some much appreciated visitors from a couple other clubs. Thanks for coming. Even more good news was we had a few non club members that came to check us out. Some have already joined up. It's very important that we welcome everyone and I want to thank the members who took time to answer questions and say hello to welcome new members and guests.

As we grow, and we are growing, we have more and more individuals with great ideas and opinions. It's a necessary part of the process to get us all working on common goals and be part of the team. The important message is that no one member is more important than another and that it's always important to pass any ideas or concerns around to the executive and other committees no matter how unimportant or obvious they seem. The real benefit to ideas and hard work is to spread out the duties and share the ideas. We really need your input. We will need a lot of sharing and cooperation to make our goals, such as the fall show and auction, a success. So, my message is keep everyone informed as communication is the foundation of all understanding.

Looking forward we have set class sponsorship amounts and will soon have a completed class list for our show on October 31. Also, by the time you are reading this, we should have demonstrated a new software package for auction management compliments of the Hamilton club. Thanks to Albert for all his help on this.

**Please keep your suggestions coming.**

*Ken*

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**CAOAC Minutes** Sunday, March 21, 2010.

CAOAC asked for a volunteer or two from each club for the Fish Rescue program. They would be called if a local person needs to find a new home for their fish and the volunteer would contact the CAOAC fish rescue committee for direction. The volunteer would be responsible for pick up and housing of the fish until a new home was found for it/them. Contact [tmason@torontozoo.ca](mailto:tmason@torontozoo.ca)

Annual committee reports are due at the April CAOAC meeting. Check the CAOAC calendar for upcoming events at [www.caoac.ca](http://www.caoac.ca). Also check the same website for directions to get convention tickets and rooms for the 2010 CAOAC convention in May at Sheridan College, Oakville. There are deadlines.

The Hamilton club will be going to Moore's Water Gardens in Port Stanley on Sunday, June 27. Everyone is welcome. Check the Hamilton website for contacts at [www.hdas.ca](http://www.hdas.ca)

The convention committee stayed on for a meeting after the general meeting was over.

Thanks to the volunteers who brought baked goods in for the refreshment table!

submitted by

Pat and Tom Bridges

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## **AMECA SPLENDENS/BUTTERFLY GOODEID**

By: Tom Hillier

**Ameca Splendens** can be found in Rio Ameca and Rio Teuchitlan east of Ameca Jalisco, Mexico. I keep them with *Girardinus falcatus* or Goldbelly top minnow and longfin albino pelcos and *Xenotoca variata* location Jesus Marie.



*Male Ameca splendens* photo© by Tom Hillier

**The** Ameca are brown with silver to white on their stomach. The males have scales on their flanks that reflect yellow blue and green. The males have a dark lateral line and the caudal fin is edged in yellow with a black band behind it .The males are about 3.5 in the females reach about 4.5 in. I keep them at 78° F in a planted tank. They will eat many types of algae. They can be used instead of algae eaters. I feed them algae wafers live, frozen and flake food mostly veggie .I found breeding to be fairly easy. Gestation takes 55 to 60 days, 5 to 30 fry are born depending on the size of the female. The fry do not have to be removed as they are seldom bothered. Ameca Splendens are considered critically endangered in the wild but relatively common in the hobby.



*Female Ameca splendens giving birth* Photo © by Tom Hillier

# SCANNING THE EXCHANGES & etc.

with Pat and Tom  
April, 2010



GOOD READING IN THE S.C.A.A.S. LIBRARY . . .

Sorry, there are only two exchange newsletters to list articles from this month. Two days ago, our computer, on its way to compressing our emails, ate dozens of them! Grrrrr! More next time.

▶ ... in the Sarnia Aquarium Society's Newsletter – 'Aqua Antics' – <http://www.angelfire.com/planet/sasnewsletters>

February 2010

- \*Pearls in my Tank by Peter Melady
- \*Culling of Goldfish Goes Unnoticed by Jonathan Shur
- \*Top 10 auctions by Bruce Hart
- \*Snails in the Aquarium from Aquacentris

▶ ... in the Tropical Fish Club of Erie County's newsletter 'Some Things Fishy'

March 2010

- \*Talking Catfish by Tom Heisler
- \*About the striped Raphael Catfish  
Author unknown

The Exchange newsletters without url availability will be in the club library at the meeting.



## BAP ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS presented at the March meeting

Dave Furness  
Girardinus falcatus.....10 pts.  
Xiphorus alvarezi..... 5  
Xiphophorus montezuma..... 5  
Congratulations!  
Tom Bridges  
BAP Chair

## JAR SHOW RULES AND REGULATIONS

will be on display at the jar show table at each meeting



## Members!

Fish bags (10x20 and 8x10) are available for sale at the membership desk in packages of 25

Help save the club's printing and mailing costs!

Receive your newsletter in full colour!

If you are receiving the club newsletter by Canada Post, please try switching to an emailed copy. Thanks! Let me know at the membership desk or at [tp.bridges@sympatico.ca](mailto:tp.bridges@sympatico.ca)



## UPCOMING EVENTS in 2010

- April 11th, 2010 Durham Region Aquarium Society. SHOW & AUCTION. Aquatic Centre, Ajax, ON
  - April 17, 2010 Sarnia Aquarium Society AUCTION ONLY
  - April 18, 2010 10:30 AM CAOAC Executive meeting in Waterdown, ON  
12:00 PM CAOAC General meeting in Waterdown, ON
  - April 22 - 25, 2010 American Livebearers Association 2010 CONVENTION Southfield, Michigan
  - May 1, 2010 Cambridge District Aquarium Society AUCTION ONLY
  - May 2, 2010 London Aquaria Society AUCTION ONLY
  - May 21st – 24th, 2010 **Canadian Association of Aquarium Clubs 51st ANNUAL CONVENTION**  
**At Sheridan College Oakville.**  
**More details at [www.caoac.ca](http://www.caoac.ca) and click on 2010 convention.**
- FOR MORE EVENTS, GO TO**  
<http://www.caoac.ca/calendar.html>

## Member Profile

*By Pam Danyluck*

**This months profile is on Steve Ferrelli**

**He** was born and raised in Thorold Ontario. Steve currently lives in St. Catharines with his wife Karen and their seven month old son Danté. He is employed at the Superstore. Steve became a member of our club this season, but has been interested in fish since he was a kid or as Karen says “forever”. He currently has two tanks, one of those being a one hundred fifty gallon which was the focal point of their living room. Many of his friends and family have enjoyed this tank and usually went right to the living room.

**Unfortunately** Steve woke up one morning recently to find all his fish had died during the night. He kept cichlids which are his favourite fish, but now has to start fresh. Their colours, behaviors and habitats were what attracted Steve to them. He uses a Rena filter on his large tank.

**Karen** and Danté enjoyed the aquarium in their living room. Danté stills goes to the tank looking for the fish. Steve’s son is also getting started young in this hobby with his own Betta tank.



Thanks Steve for letting us get to know you a little better.

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**George Yang**

**is our newest member. Welcome to the club!**

## Bristle Nose Pleco

**By Tom Hillier**

**Bristle** Nose Plecos get to be about 6 in. long and live to be about 12 years old. Males are larger and wider than the females with more and longer bristles. They are very peaceful and can be put in with almost any fish. The fish is from the genus *Ancistrus* that includes more than sixty subspecies.



*Female Bristlenose Pleco*      *Photo by Tom Hillier*

**The** water temperature should be between 72 and 84 degrees. To get the Pleco to breed supply them with some sort of cave. This can be in the form of clay pots, ornaments, rocks, plastic pipe blocked off on one end. I use a large seashell and the bottoms of clay pots glued together and a door cut in them large enough for them to get in. The female lays the eggs in the shell and the male fertilizes them. The male remains in the shell and guards the eggs and aerates them by fanning with its fins. The eggs hatch in about 5 days the fry will become free swimming after another 5 to 10 days.



*Bristlenose pleco fry in shell*      *Photo by Tom Hillier*

## How to Strip Eggs from a Cichlid & Make Your Own Egg Hatcher

By Dave  
Unruh

An updated  
article from years ago

If you are keeping mouthbrooding cichlids, then sooner or later you will need to incubate the eggs artificially. There are three good reasons for taking the eggs away from the female (or male with some species), although watching a parent care for its young is interesting to observe.

1. It is easier on the fish the less time she carries the eggs, as most fish do not eat while they are incubating. Stripping the eggs allows one to get the fish back in breeding condition - important if you are trying to produce quantities of fry.
2. Higher yields. The sooner you remove the eggs the more fry you will have as the fish may spit or eat a few eggs during the two to four weeks (depending on the species) that she carries them.
3. Sometimes you may want to remove the female to a nursery tank so she is not harassed by other fish. During the transfer some fish may spit out some or all of the eggs and then you will also need a hatcher, as many fish will not pick up the eggs again

### Stripping the Fish.

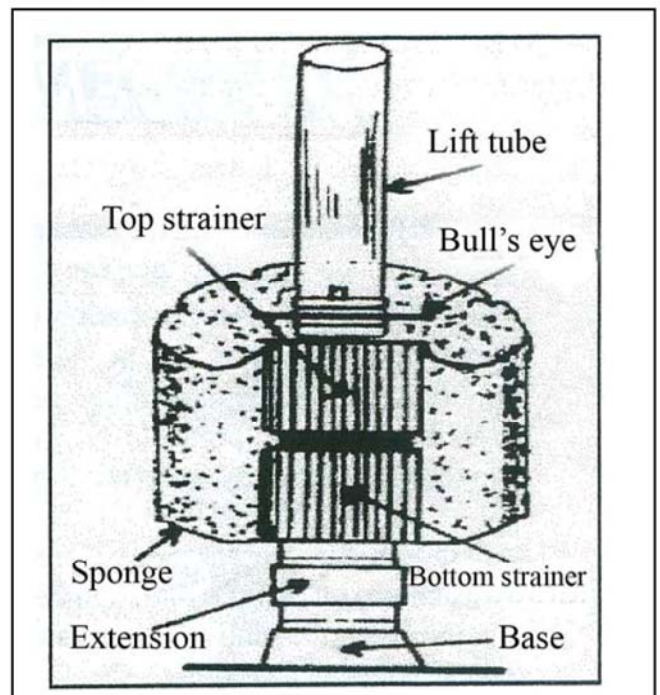
**Sometimes** when you catch a fish that is incubating eggs they will spit out the eggs all on their own. But most of the time this is not the case. Some fish need to be "encouraged" to spit out their eggs. This is called "stripping" the eggs from the mouth of the fish. It is done by holding the fish in one hand, inserting something into the edge of the fish's mouth (like a pencil tip, or thin plastic rod). Then gently open the mouth. Hold the fish's head down over a container of water (water that came from the fish's tank is best so the eggs are not shocked with different water conditions) and the eggs will fall out into the water. At least some do.

**Hold** the fish in your hand until all of the eggs are out of her mouth. If it takes awhile, you may have to hold the fish under water for a bit to give her a chance to breathe. Other females are more stubborn and will not release the eggs. By gently tapping the buccal cavity (the area under the mouth where the eggs are kept) the eggs will fall out. You may have to try this a few times before all the eggs are out. Sometimes nothing you do seems to work, and this practice may be stressful on the fish. Some fish, such as *Cyprichromis* sp. find this very stressful and quite frequently die after stripping, so these fish are best allowed to go full term on their own. However, for most fish it is not hard on them. With practice you will develop your own techniques. I think everyone who has done this a few times has their own favorite methods.

### Hatching the Eggs

**Once** you have the eggs, you need to hatch them by allowing the eggs to gently tumble in the water (trying to duplicate the females care of the eggs). If the eggs were just left in a pile, or simply lying on the bottom of the container they would not hatch but turn into a fungused mass. There are commercially made hatchers available but they tend to be a bit pricey. Or you may just not be able to find one. Years ago I had a need for one and decided to try making my own. I used a sponge filter made by Aquarium Technology Inc. (ATI) called the "HydroSponge Filter. All sizes will work, even the smallest. This is a very simple idea but it works well.

**Remove** the air lift tube and the "Bull's eye" (the part that the airline is attached to). Place a piece of fine clean netting (net from an old fish net will do) over one end of the lift tube and push it into the top strainer. If it won't push in, then you may



have to sand the end of the lift tube or the strainer



with a piece of sandpaper. Some tubes fit tightly, some have a looser fit. This is where the eggs will sit and this is the time to put the eggs in.

At this point the hatcher should be in the nursery tank and covered with water. I use a large mouth turkey baster to pick up the eggs and place them in the lift tube. Next cover the top of the tube with another piece of netting and push the "bull's eye" on the tube. Again, if it won't go, lightly sand the tube and/or the bull's eye. Attach the airline and then adjust the airflow so the eggs are gently moving at the bottom of the tube. If the eggs are being pushed the top of the tube, then the air flow is too high. The top net prevents the eggs or fry from leaving the hatcher and also stops other small fish from entering the hatcher (I keep some of my hatchers in fry tanks).

This hatcher provides the eggs with a steady flow of clean, filtered water, as the hatcher is also a working sponge filter. If you want to use an anti-bacterial agent such as acriflavine (which is the best) or methylene blue then just add it to the tank and it will be pulled into the hatcher as the water flows through. Watch the eggs as they begin to hatch. It is better to keep the eggs in a dimly lit area. You may need a flashlight to check the eggs.

If you see any eggs that are fungusing, they need to be removed, or all the eggs may be infected with the fungus. If some eggs are fungused, you will have to remove all the eggs from the hatcher and remove the bad ones. When you reassemble the hatcher make sure it is clean, particularly the nets as dirt tends to collect on them. Keep the nursery tank as clean as possible by water changes and siphoning any dirt off the bottom. When siphoning, make sure you leave the eggs covered in water. Don't over crowd the eggs. Depending on the size of the eggs, each hatcher can hold 20 to 30 eggs.



*Hydro-Sponge Filter Egg Hatcher  
Photo © by DAVE Unruh*

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### Anagram for April

Example: An anagram for this creature is: alpine alps

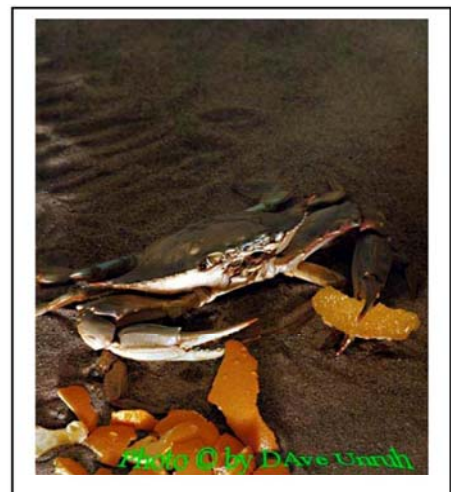
The creature is: applesnail

An anagram for this fish is: Slim Guru Candidacy Trios  
March's answer is: \_\_\_\_\_

Answer will be in the next newsletter.

March's Answer: Micropoecilia picta

Fishy Anagrams provided courtesy of



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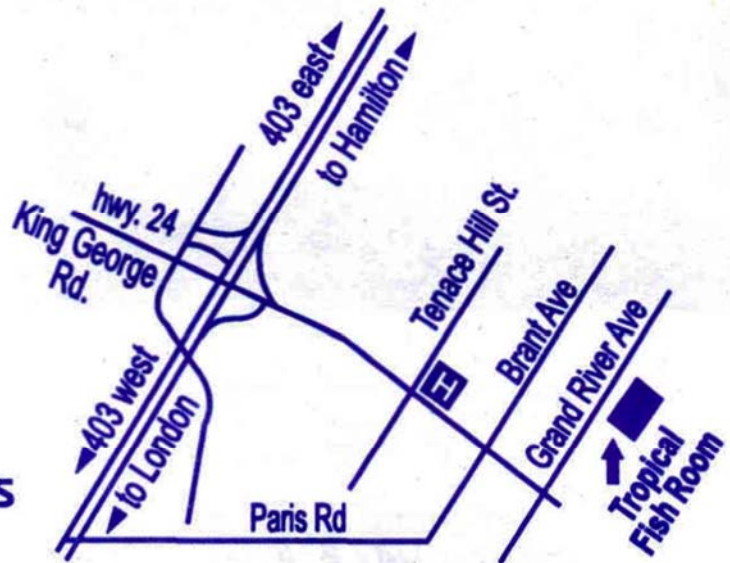
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## Micro-worm Cultures (unattributed)

**Micro-worms** are really small worms approximately 1/8" long and extremely thin. They are an excellent fry food not only because of their size but also because when they are introduced into the tank, they will remain suspended for a considerable time.

**What you will need.** Small container with a lid. .

1. Yellow com meal or oatmeal 2. Dry yeast 3. A starter culture 4. 15 minutes per week

I only got back into micro-worms when I was volunteered (?) to speak on them. I purchased a starter culture from an auction for around \$3.00. I have heard of many different ways of setting them up but here is what works for me. I use the Styrofoam soup bowls from Tim Horton's. It is important to cut a small hole in the lid as the micro-worms will suffocate quickly in an airtight container. I use oatmeal and yellow corn meal. I mix the two together in a 50/50 mix (The starter culture was sold in oatmeal). I add hot water to the mixture and a small amount of dry yeast until it is slightly over saturated, then it is left to cool and any excess water is drained away.

At this stage I have heard of sugar being added however I have never tried this ingredient. The oatmeal and corn meal provides the nutrition for the yeast and the worms feed on the yeast. You might not want to add yeast to your mixture as the micro-worms have yeast on them! Take a teaspoon of an existing culture and place it in the centre of your mixture. Within three days the micro-worms will have grown to millions. I like to start a new culture every ten to twelve days. The old culture is washed down the drain. I keep four cultures rotating so I always have a good strong one available for feeding. If your culture is left and goes bad, you will know almost immediately by the strong, unpleasant odour. The worms will crawl up the sides of the container and can be collected by swiping your finger around the edge and then dip your finger into the fry tank.

## Whiteworm Cultures

**White** worms reach a length of up to 2.5 cm or one inch. They can be raised in small containers and can provide a continuous source of live food. It is said that the whiteworm has up to 290% more protein and 20% more fat than Daphnia or Tubifex Worms. Again, a starter culture was purchased at an auction for around \$3.00.

**What you will need.**

1. A small wooden, 2. Glass or plastic container. 3. Potting soil & peat moss. 4. A starter culture.

I use a small, glass show tank 8" x 8" x 8 h" with approximately 2" of soil. The soil is 75% Hillview potting soil, without additives or fertilizer added, and 25 % peat moss. I have read that some people will bake the soil mixture for 2 1/2 hours to kill any insects and their eggs. This is something I should do. I will explain later. Back to the peat moss, it will hold moisture in the soil as the whiteworms cannot maintain water in their bodies. I mist the culture weekly to keep the moisture level correct. Most beginners keep their cultures too dry. The best temperature for the culture to reproduce is 60 to 70 degrees. I keep mine on the concrete floor of the fish room and it does very well. When I was a younger man, I kept them in the cold cellar at my parents. Temperatures over 80 degrees will kill the culture. I feed the worms' white bread that has been soaked in milk. Friends have fed potatoes, oatmeal and even dog biscuits. Any food that is not eaten after three days must be removed so that it does not get moldy. A day after feeding, I can harvest the worms by lifting the bread and using tweezers to put them into the worm feeders.

All of my fish will eat whiteworms eagerly but a note of caution; they are extremely fatty and will create obese fish. The white worm should be fed every three or four days as part of a well balanced diet. All cultures will have mites. The mites will not harm the worms but they should be considered competition for the bread. I have thousands of them and have tried unsuccessfully to start new cultures but the mites always return. I understand that mites can be kept to a minimum by smearing the sides of the container with Vaseline or kerosene. Another problem you may encounter is low reproduction rates if you disturb the culture too often. The disruption of feeding, harvesting and watering will slow down the reproductive cycle so try to feed only two or three times a week.

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