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The

SCAT



In This Issue:

Anabantids

Bacopa monnieri

Julidochromis transcriptus

December Christmas Party

scaas.info



Club Notes



Our Mission Statement: Meetings of the St. Catharines & Area Aquarium Society are held on the first Monday of each month, 7.30p.m., at the Seafarers & Teamsters Union Hall, 70 St. Davids Rd. E. Thorold, Ont. 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) www.caoac.ca . SCAAS is also a member of the Federation of American Aquarium Societies (FAAS). 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 January 09.12 Start time is 7.30 pm ALL ARE WELCOME
This month's program will be a photographic historical journey of the flora and fauna on the wrecks of the Truk Lagoon Atoll (Micronesia). by one of our members, Natasha Djermanovic

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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

Pg 2 - Club Notes, Executive & BOD
List, Membership Dues
Pg 3- Presidents Notes
Pg 4 – Member bio
Pg 5 – Horticultural highlight
Pg 6 - Importing regulations
Pg 8 - Anabantoidei
Pg-11 - December Christmas party
Pg 13 - Scanning the Exchanges
Pg 14 – Julidochromis transcriptus



Cover photo of a Russell's Lionfish (*Pterois russelli*)
Photo © by DAVE Unruh

Jar Show

The fish of the month will be Anabantids
For February it will be Loaches & Sharks

President's Message!

December was a great month for the club. We had new members join which shows the hobby is doing well. I would like to thank everyone who brought food to the Christmas party which was a great success. Everyone who attended won a prize. I would also like to thank everyone who brought a food item for the food bank, The Tropical Fish room for their \$25.00 gift certificate which we sold tickets on for the food bank and Bruce Hallet for his \$25.00 food card which was greatly appreciated.

The auction was also very good. Our meeting was very well attended by our members and I hope they had a good time. Santa took time out of his busy schedule to join our meeting to meet with the young and the young at heart.

Hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Oh by the way the jar show was great keep up the good work. See everyone in the New Year 2012.

2011 was a great year for the club I would like to thank all the members who volunteered for our show and auction which was a great success, and the members who are there all the time for the club you know who you are and to executive for they do a lot of work behind the scene. Thank you very much. Our members are our greatest asset and thank you all.

Lets have another great Year.

Happy New Year !

Tom, President

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New Member Introduction

by Heather Krawchuk

It has been so great to see all the new faces out at our last couple of meetings! I appreciate the time that several of you took in answering some questions about your fish experiences to share with our other members. Due to the excitement of December's meeting, we didn't have a chance to take pictures of all of our new members – for this reason I will wait to include those introductions until next month so that other members can put faces with names.

This month I am happy to introduce the Gebe family (who did not escape Dave's camera!) – Cindy and her children Megan and Kevin in addition to Megan's fiancé, Victor. Cindy grew up in Hamilton and her interest in fish began at the age of ten. At the moment, the Gebes have five tanks, with most belonging to Megan and Kevin. The tanks consist of live bearers, African cichlids, crayfish and tetras.

Cindy said that once her daughter is married in August of 2012 (luckily it's at the end of the month so they should be back from the honeymoon in time for September's meeting!), she will be taking three tanks with her. To deal with the loss, Cindy will then add one very large tank for herself.



Cindy's children and their enjoyment of the hobby is what sparked a renewed interest in aquariums for the family. This is a great point for all of our members to keep in mind; we have an amazing club that continues to grow – why not tell some of your friends and family members to come and check out a meeting!? Welcome Gebe family and Victor; we're pleased to have you join the club!

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Horticultural Highlight

Bacopa monnieri

By Joe Krawchuk

This month's featured plant is unique in that information about it is not as readily available online as is information about the majority of other aquarium plants. I stumbled upon this plant at Hamilton's auction in the fall and have been really pleased with how well it is doing in my tanks. As you can see from the picture, *Bacopa monnieri* is a stem plant, although mine is a great deal bushier than the example. It requires a temperature of between fifteen and thirty degrees Celsius and a PH of 5.0 to 7.0.

The scientific name for the plant is *Bacopa monnieri* and its common names are Herb of Grace, Water Hyssop and Moneywort. It is found predominantly in Africa and Asia and can grow either outside of the water, in which case it tends to flower more readily, or fully submersed. In its native habitat, it usually grows in boggy or marshy areas.

The *Bacopa monnieri* requires a fair amount of light. While I have found that it can easily be kept under lower-lighting conditions, this produces very little growth.

In my more heavily-lighted tanks it grows quite quickly and in width as well as height. While it is not necessarily the easiest of aquarium plants to keep, it is certainly not the most difficult either. It offers a great

amount of coverage due to its bushy appearance, but be sure to plant it towards the back of the tank because of the height it can attain.

Aside from its aesthetically-pleasing appearance, the *Bacopa monnieri* also has an interesting background as it is used in many countries and cultures for medicinal purposes. Its uses are vast as it is said to do everything from acting as an expectorant to relieving asthma symptoms to helping to improve memory; this is when it is boiled in water, like tea, and used orally. In addition, it has other applications and is often used externally to relieve muscular pains and to heal bruises and contusions. There are many articles online about medicinal uses of the plant, which I would definitely suggest anyone thinking about trying it should read first. While this interests me a great deal, I've seen the water coming out of my tank during water changes – I don't think I'll be ingesting *Bacopa monnieri* any time soon!



Excerpt from Bob Wright's Presidents Notes, December 2011 CAOAC newsletter regarding the new Canadian fish Importing regulations.

December 10, 2011 the new fish importation regulations come into effect. This means that all importations of fish must be declared at the border and need to be accompanied by information regarding, species, point of origin and a declaration that you are importing them for personal use. We were told that the CFIA would be placing forms on their site to help hobbyists deal with this but it does not appear that they have managed to do so as yet, until then hobbyists will need to have the following types of information.

For further info: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/imp/petani/fispoie.shtml>

For fish not on Schedule III, the declaration must include: the name and address of the exporter and importer, the scientific name of the aquatic animal, the life stage it is at, and the number of animals being imported, if more than one

the country in which the aquatic animal originated from or where the germplasm came from and, in the case of an aquatic animal, whether it was born in captivity or in the wild.

Species (including guppies, zebra danios, many gouramis) that are on the Schedule III must have further information that accompany their importation for personal use and are subject to other limitations.

Pet aquatic animal exemption: When importing an aquatic animal, an import permit will not be required when the owner can present proof of their identity and their ownership of the aquatic animal to the inspector at the point of entry into Canada, attest to the fact that the pet animal has not been taken to a show or display outside of Canada, keep the pet animal in their household aquarium ensure the pet animal is not exposed to any aquatic animals other than those kept in the household, for one year following the importation, not import another pet aquatic animal for the period of 90 days after the importation and keep all records of the importation. For further info:

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/imp/petani/fispoie.shtml>

Enforcement is in the hands of Canada Border Services and not any of the professionals who may know anything about fish. So be prepared with the required paperwork or expect to have problems and even be refused entry with fish.

Editors note – these restrictions are quite confusing to the average aquarist, and seem to be from concerns that the restricted fish may carry some sort of disease or could survive in our waters as an invader species. Maybe this would be a good topic for a mini program to help us to understand how the restrictions actually affect us if we bring fish back from the USA.

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Anabantoidei

(Labyrinth fishes)

Class Actinopterygii

Order Perciformes

Suborder Anabantoidei

Number of families 3

Reprinted from the Durham Region Aquarium Society's Sept.2011 newsletter



Reprinted from JIFFYNOTES.COM

Evolution and systematics

The labyrinth fishes were first recognized as a natural assemblage by Cuvier and Valenciennes in 1831, but included the Channidae (snakeheads), in addition to the current family Anabantoidei. Bleeker (1859, 1879) added the luciocephalids (pikeheads) to this group. Jordan (1923) recognized six families, including *Luciocephalus* and Channidae. In 1963, Liem restricted the anabantoids to the families Anabantidae, Helostomatidae, Osphronemidae, and Belontiidae, thus removing *Luciocephalus* and the channids. In 1983 Lauder



Betta splendens

and Liem included *Luciocephalus*, in its own family Luciocephalidae, again in the anabantoids as the sister group to all remaining labyrinth fishes. Britz (1994, 1995), and Britz et al. (1995) demonstrated that there are no differences between Liem's families Belontiidae and Osphronemidae and that *Luciocephalus* is deeply nested within Liem's belontiids. The family name Osphronemidae applies for this monophyletic assemblage. The suborder Anabantoidei is thus divided into three families, Anabantidae, Helostomatidae, and Osphronemidae. The latter family is the sister group of the former two, and it is further subdivided into the subfamilies Belontiinae (only *Belontia*, two spp.); Osphroneminae (only *Osphronemus*, four spp.); Luciocephalinae (*Trichogaster*, four spp.; *Colisa*, four spp.; *Parasphaerichthys*, two spp.; *Ctenops*, one sp.; *Sphaerichthys*, four spp.; *Luciocephalus*, one sp., one undescribed sp.); and Macropodinae (*Macropodus*, five spp.; *Pseudosphromenus*, two spp.; *Malpulutta*, one sp.; *Parosphromenus*, 10 spp., some undescribed; *Trichopsis*, three spp.; *Betta*, 43 spp., some undescribed).

The closest relatives of anabantoids appear to be the Channidae. Based on the shared presence of parasphenoid teeth, both seem to form a larger monophyletic group with the badids and the genera *Nandus* and *Pristolepis*. The only unambiguous fossil anabantoid is a complete articulated skeleton from the Miocene epoch of Sumatra, assigned to *Osphronemus goramy*.

Physical characteristics

Anabantoids are minute (0.78 in; 20 mm) to large (23.6 in; 60 cm) percomorph fishes with a suprabranchial organ as accessory air-breathing organ. This organ consists of the suprabranchial chamber above the gill arches that houses the modified first epibranchial, termed the labyrinth. The labyrinth may have a highly complex three-dimensional shape in some species (*Anabas* and *Osphronemus*). Both the labyrinth and the wall of the suprabranchial chamber are lined with respiratory epithelium. The suprabranchial organ obtains blood from the first two afferent branchial arteries. Blood from the organ is collected in the two anterior efferent arteries that drain into the anterior cardinal vein, not into the dorsal aorta as in other teleosts. Basioccipital with paired articular processes that permit free movement with upper pharyngeal jaws. The last two characters are shared with the channids. In most anabantoids, the lacrimal and preopercular bones bear strong serrations; in anabantids, serrations occur in the subopercle, opercle bones, and sometimes the interopercle. (The

name *anabantids* is vernacular for the family Anabantidae; *anabantoids* is the vernacular name for the suborder Anabantoidei.) All species except African anabantids and *Helostoma* have a exoccipital foramen medial to suprabranchial chamber, greatly enhancing hearing abilities. Most species are parasphenoid toothed, a unique derived character shared with channids, badids, *Nandus*, and *Pristolepis*. The swim bladder branches off posteriorly into two elongate diverticula that reach on either side of the hemal spines to the level of the parhypural. Many species are beautifully colored, with striking sexual dimorphism and dichromatism.

Distribution

Anabantoids occur in fresh waters of sub-Saharan Africa, and south and Southeast Asia. The genera *Ctenopoma*, *Microctenopoma*, and *Sandelia* occur only in Africa. The latter genus is confined to the Cape region and separated by a distributional gap from the other African anabantids. Most Asian species are widely distributed, but some have a greatly restricted distribution, such as *Belontia signata* and *Malpulutta kretseri*, known only from Ceylon, or *Parosphromenus deissneri*, *Betta miniopinna*, *B. schalleri*, *B. burdigala*, and *B. chloropharynx*, restricted to Banka Island in Indonesia. The

northernmost distributed species is *Macropodus ocellatus*, from China and Korea.

Several species have been exported as food fishes or have been released accidentally from aquarium stocks to areas outside their natural ranges.

Habitat

Numerous species of anabantoids prefer still bodies of water with abundant aquatic vegetation that are exposed to the sun, but others also live in cooler, faster, mountain streams. Most anabantoids survive in oxygen-depleted waters because of their suprabranchial organ and therefore have an advantage over most other teleosts.

Behavior

In general, anabantoids differ from most other teleosts in that they rise to the water surface at intervals to exchange the air in their suprabranchial organ. This exchange is mostly achieved by flooding the suprabranchial chamber with water that enters through the gill opening. The water pushes the air out of the chamber and the mouth, either before or upon reaching the water surface. The chamber refills with air breathed in at the surface. In a second mode, air is gulped from the surface without the prior release of air from the chamber. Engulfed air is then pressed into the chamber by swallowing movements and forces some air out of the chamber, which is released from the gill opening. The latter mode is used by adult *Anabas testudineus* in the water and during the overland excursions that gave the species its vernacular name, the climbing perch. In addition to the climbing perch, at least one other anabantid species, the African *Ctenopoma multispinis* actively leaves the water and travels over land to nearby bodies of water.

Species of the genus *Colisa* show a behavior reminiscent of the spitting of the archerfishes (*Toxotes jaculatrix*). At least in captivity, representatives of *Colisa* spit a series of small droplets of water toward prey items, such as small invertebrates, above the water level to wash them down to the surface where they are taken by the fish.

Species of the genus *Trichopsis* are known for their ability to produce croaking sounds, hence their name, croaking gourami. These sounds are produced with their pectoral fins. To create the sounds, enlarged areas of tendons from the pectoral fin musculature are moved across bony knobs on some of the pectoral fin rays. The sound is enhanced by the suprabranchial chambers, which act as resonators.



Colisa lalia

All anabantoid species, except *Sandelia capensis*, show a typical, and for teleosts unusual, spawning clasp in which the male wraps around the female's body. The female is then either turned to the side or upside down when eggs are released. A similar clasp is also found in channids, badids, and *Nandus*, but not other nandids. A reduced clasp without turning of the female is shown by some mouth-brooding anabantoids.

Feeding ecology and diet

Anabantoids are diverse in regard to their feeding ecology and diet. There are extreme filter feeders, such as *Helostoma*, which feeds on small pelagic invertebrates and algae that are either filtered from the water or scraped off the substrate. Other species are omnivorous (*Anabas*, *Osphronemus*, *Trichogaster*, and *Colisa*), or have a diet with an emphasis on small invertebrates (*Microctenopoma*, *Macropodus*, *Betta*, and *Trichopsis*), but others prey on larger invertebrates and small fishes (*Ctenopoma* and *Sandelia*). *Luciocephalus* is a highly specialized predator of small fishes. *Osphronemus exodon* is an exclusively herbivorous species with external jaw teeth, which feeds on leaves of terrestrial plants, grasses, fruits, and flowers.

Reproductive biology

Although anabantoids are a fairly small percomorph group, their members exhibit a great variety of reproductive modes. The primitive mode, which occurs in *Anabas*, *Ctenopoma*, and *Helostoma*, is the absence of parental care with the release of several thousand small (ca. 0.04 in/1 mm), buoyant eggs that float due to a single large oil globule in the egg. After hatching, larvae retain the oil globule, which during development divides into two oil vesicles to the left and right of the chorda and is used as a floating organ. All species of the genus *Microctenopoma* and most osphronemids build bubble nests and guard primitively buoyant eggs and larvae. Bubble nests can consist of only a few bubbles, as in the tiny cave-brooding species of *Parosphromenus*, or be large. Mouth brooding has evolved at least twice among anabantoids, once in the lineage *Ctenops*, *Sphaerichthys*, and *Luciocephalus*, and again within the genus *Betta*.



Trichogaster leeri

Unusually for anabantoids, the two species of the purely South African genus *Sandelia* spawn on a substratum and have adhesive eggs. In groups with parental care, the number of eggs is usually smaller than in those without care, although several thousand eggs may be spawned in some species of *Microctenopoma* and *Trichogaster*. The number of eggs may range from 40 to several hundreds in most bubble nest builders, and from 20 to 200 in the mouth brooders. Egg size ranges from 0.03 in (0.7 mm) in *Microctenopoma* to 0.19 in (3 mm) in *Luciocephalus*.

Conservation status

Three anabantoid species are categorized as Critically Endangered by the IUCN, *Betta miniopinna*, *Betta persephone*, and *Betta spilotogena*. *Sandelia bainsii*, *Parosphromenus harveyi*, and *Betta livida* are categorized as Endangered. Another seven *Betta* species are categorized as Vulnerable, and the two Sri Lankan species *Belontia signata* and *Malpulutta kretseri* are categorized as Lower Risk.

Significance to humans

The larger species of anabantoid fishes are important as food fishes and feature in aquaculture in various parts of Asia. Many of the smaller, colorful anabantoids are very popular hardy ornamental fishes; up to several hundred U.S. dollars have been paid for a breeding pair of the conspicuously colored fighting fish *Betta macrostoma*, known as the Brunei beauty.

December Christmas Party



cutting the draw tickets



Hooray! The tickets are cut!



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Christmas wrasse
Photo © Dave Urah

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GOOD READING...

▶ ... in the Hamilton & District Aquarium Society's monthly bulletin –

December, 2011

*Breeding Norman's Lampeye Killifish
by Charles Drew

*Writing Articles by Adrian Lawler
original to aquarticles.com

*What is the best way to 'cycle' a Reef Tank?
by Robert M. Metelsky

*
December 1991 – In his President's message, Tom Tota reminisced about the club's recent trip to the University of Guelph to view the Axelrod fossil collection, and tour the Zoology building which had been renamed the Axelrod Building. The guest speaker at the December meeting was to be Tom Mason from the Toronto Zoo, speaking on Arachnids. Articles this month included "As Nasty As They Wanna Be" (Snakeheads) by Norm McEvoy, "Keeping and Breeding the Kribensis" by Peter Vanderboom, and the following from Charlie Drew:

*Spawning the Cardinal Tetra by Charles Drew

And a bonus Blast From the Past Article...
Culturing White Worms
(Anonymous)



BAP ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS presented at the December meeting



Joe KrawchukPoecilia reticulata
The guppy.....5 pts.
& Xiphophorus variatus
The Variatus platy..... 5

Congratulations! *Tom Bridges, BAP chair*

Most clubs' newsletters are on their web sites. If they are not available to you, let me know and I'll provide you with the article.
Pat B.

HAPPY NEW YEAR



Julidochromis Transcriptus

by Dave Furness

This small African cichlid is from the rocky shores of Lake Tanganyika. Juli transcriptus looks similar to J. marlieri, but it has a flat head while the marlieri has a small bump on his. Julidochromis transcriptus has two rows of white spots, while Juli marlieri has three. This fish is the smallest of this genus.

The males of the species are around three inches in length, while the female is usually larger, has a longer papilla and a rounder stomach.

I put two pair of Julie's into a thirty gallon tank with rock work on both ends of the tank. They are cave spawners, so this set up suited there needs. They like medium hard water with a PH between 8.5 and 9.2, with a temperature between 76 and 82 degrees F. I kept my tank at 76 degrees. While they prefer a higher pH, mine have spawned several times in a tank with a pH of 7.8.

The transcriptus are less productive compared to the other Julie's. And they may lay only 20 to 30 eggs per spawn. There has never been a problem feeding them, for they will except live and frozen foods along with flake foods. The fry can be started off with microworms, then brine shrimp.



Editors note : These are three photos of Julidochromis that I had in my photo files. Since there is a great variability in a single population and there are many populations of this fish in Lake Tanganyika Dave's fish may look different from these photos..

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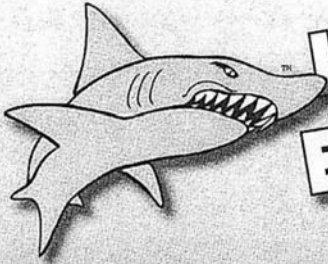




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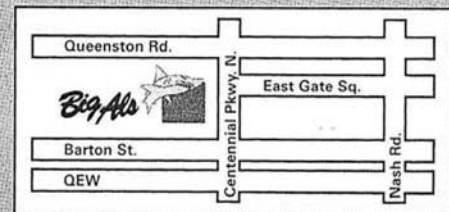
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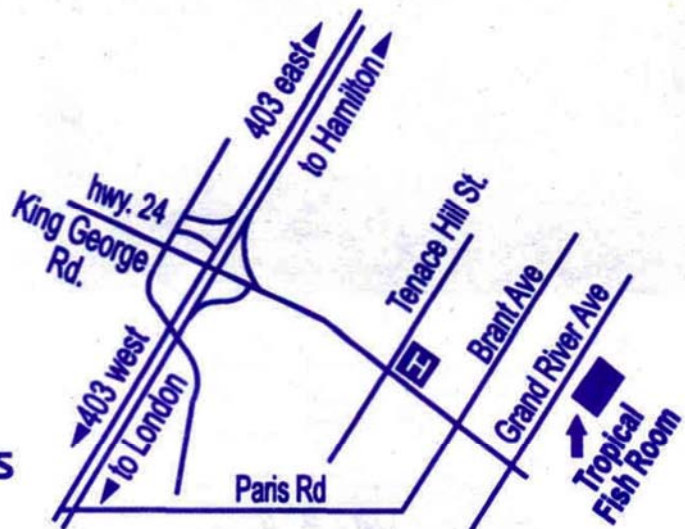
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