

# The SCAT

The Official Publication Of  
The St. Catharines & Area Aquarium Society  
Since 1958  
Volume 25 Number 2  
November, 2012

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# About The St. Catharines & Area Aquarium Society

Meetings of the St. Catharines & Area Aquarium Society are held on the first Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m at the Seafarers & Teamster's Union Hall, 70 St. Davids Rd. E. Thorold, Ontario. Meetings are not held on holidays; if the first Monday of the month is a holiday, the meeting will be held on the second Monday of the month. There are no meetings held in July or August.

The Society was established in 1958 and is a non-profit, educational organization that is dedicated to the task of promoting interest in the breeding, raising, maintenance and study of aquatic life, 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](http://www.caoac.ca)). The St. Catharines & Area Aquarium Society is also a member of the Federation of American Aquarium Societies (FAAS – [www.faas.info](http://www.faas.info)). More news and information about the St. Catharines & Area Aquarium Society can be found at – [www.scaas.info](http://www.scaas.info).

Our next meeting will be held on Monday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at the Seafarers & Teamster's Union Hall, 70 St. Davids Rd. E. Thorold, Ontario. Meetings start at 7:30 but feel free to arrive early to enter items for the auction or to "talk fish". All are welcome!

November's Speaker will be Marc Ouellette who will be representing Little Res Q, A Turtle Rescue Group.

## Upcoming CAOAC Events:

Sunday, November 4 - Tropical Fish Club of Erie County Auction  
Peel Region Aquarium Club Auction

## 2012-2013 Executive

President	Tom Hillier	(905) 227-5008	<a href="mailto:tom.hillier@hotmail.com">tom.hillier@hotmail.com</a>
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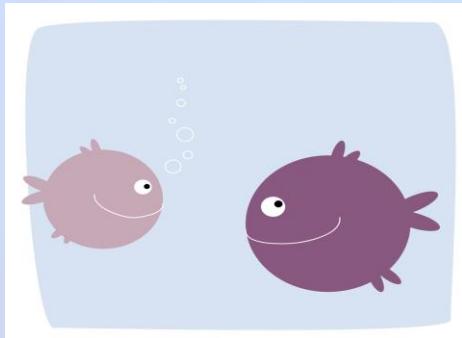
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Cover Photo Of Apple Snail  
Courtesy Of Pam Danyluk

**Jar Shows**  
**November**  
Rift Lake Cichlids  
**December**  
Swords, Platys &  
Mollies



## Membership Fees

Family - \$25  
Single - \$20  
Junior (Under 16) - \$10  
Student (With I.D) - \$10  
Senior (Over 65) - \$10  
Senior Couple (Both Over 65) - \$15

## Temporary Editor's Note

Thank you to everyone who has been submitting articles for the SCAT and for your kind words. In order to make sure that your pictures & articles make it in the next edition of the SCAT, please submit them by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. Anything submitted after this date will be used in the following month's edition. Questions, comments, suggestions for additions? Feel free to contact me! [hkrawchuk@yahoo.com](mailto:hkrawchuk@yahoo.com)

Heather Krawchuk

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# Community Liaison's Message

By Heather Krawchuk

It has been my great pleasure to step into the role of community liaison for the club. Since becoming a member more than two years ago now, I have really come to look forward to the first Monday of each month. I think that the club has a lot to offer – not just aquarium knowledge, but also friendships with so many nice people.

Our club brings together a group of people from all walks of life. I've learned so much about the hobby and keeping a variety of fish and consider myself very fortunate. For these reasons, I've been trying my best to spread the word about the club. I'd ask that all of you consider doing the same – maybe you'll be at an aquarium store and hear someone asking about a certain breed of fish, or someone visiting your home will admire one of your tanks – do what I do and use that as an opportunity to tell them about the club. New members create new opportunities for knowledge and friendship.

On October 1<sup>st</sup>, we had the privilege of hearing from Al Ridley about pelviachromis species. Al is from the Kitchener/Waterloo club, and while he no longer keeps this type of cichlid, he obviously has a passion for them.

While I was familiar with kribensis due to the fact that my brother, Joe, keeps them, I had no idea as to the variety available. I think that I can speak for everyone in attendance at the meeting when I say that we learned a great deal about this type of fish from Al. It was a great presentation and we have what promises to be another in November. We will be hearing from Marc Ouellette, a member of a turtle rescue group. Hopefully everyone will be able to make it!

## SCAT Re-Print Policy

Any not-for-profit organization may re-print articles from the SCAT provided that credit is given to the author of the article and to the St. Catharines & Area Aquarium Society (SCAAS) and that two copies of the re-printed publication are sent to: Exchange Editor,

Pat Bridges at 4 Crescent Dr. Welland, ON, Canada L3B 2W5. Opinions or endorsements expressed in any article do not necessarily reflect the views of the SCAAS.



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# **Monthly Meeting Minutes**

October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012

~Meeting called to order at 7:34 pm.

~The meeting started with a moment of silence for one of our long time members and editor of the SCAT, Dave Unruh.

## **New Members and Visitors**

~No visitors joined us at this meeting.

## **Announcements By John Verhage**

~Our Auction is on October 21st, the show has been cancelled.

~Thanks to Heather for doing the SCAT this month, and doing a great job.

~Raffle tickets for sale.

~In need of new librarians.

## **Treasure's Report Given By Roman Haljkevic**

~Float \$ 856                      Bank \$1492

## **New Business**

~One of the members mentioned that she had not received notification of executive meeting. John mentioned that we have not had any lately. She would like us to announce them in the future.

## **BAP & HAP**

~None were presented at this meeting.

## **PROGRAM**

~Our program for this evening was on Pelvicachromis species, by Al Ridley from Kitchener/Waterloo Club. There are quite a few of different species of these colourful small cichlids. Most of them can be kept easily, and love planted tanks.

## **BREAK**

~Refreshments provided by Shaun and Shirley

## **DOOR PRIZE**

## **EVENING RAFFLE**

#### **JAR SHOW AWARD**

~Was presented by Pat Shriner to: Joe Krawchuk x 2

#### **EVENING AUCTION**

Meeting adjourned at 9:32 pm.

## **Executive Meeting Minutes**

October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012 – After Regular Meeting

In attendance: Ken Brady, Tom Bridges, John Verhage, Roman Haljkevic, Tom & Pat Bridges, Heather and Joe Krawchuk, Lindsey, Emma and Pam Danyluk

#### **Auction**

- ~Auction meeting and set up at 1:00 on Saturday 20th.
- ~John will bring stage.
- ~Need buckets for chits.
- ~Ken will get new batteries for microphone.
- ~We will be keeping a copy of the seller's receipts for our records.
- ~It was suggested that maybe we should look into getting a better computer program for future auctions.
- ~Tom and Pat Bridges purchased extra fish bags.
- ~Heather has been advertising the auction wherever she can and will do a paid ad for Kijiji.
- ~Pam has been advertising on the forums.
- ~Heather will remove Finatics advertising as company no longer exists.

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 pm.

## **Executive Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup>

The secretary was not in attendance at this meeting, therefore there are no minutes to report this month. However, the focus of the meeting was preparing for October's auction.

# **October Auction**

## **Going Once, Going Twice, Sold For A Huge Success!**

By Heather Krawchuk

On Sunday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, my morning started off running around Thorold with my brother, hanging up signs advertising the auction. Having already plastered the internet and other places with news of the event, it was the last step in trying to attract a crowd.

Due to advertising and word of mouth from club members, the St. Catharines & Area Aquarium Society hosted a very successful day-long auction. The event attracted visitors from as far away as Quebec and Buffalo. While we are still waiting for the official results (details to follow in next month's issue!), it is clear that the auction was a huge success. Not only will the club benefit from the split of the sales, but, more importantly, we will likely gain new members as a result of the event.

A great deal of thanks goes out to all the club members who played a role in the day's success. From those who worked tirelessly in the days leading up to the auction, to the people who ran the snack bar and bbq and those who were runners, the help was greatly appreciated. Our members have a lot of heart and it really shows at events like this.

There were some great deals to be had by buyers and some profit to be made by sellers. I myself happily acquired some new aquatic friends and had a great time helping out. Please stay tuned to next month's SCAT for more details about the results of this wonderful event. My thanks to Pam Danyluk for taking the following pictures for me when I couldn't get away from the auction table!



## A Very Successful Auction Thanks To Club Member Volunteers!



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# My Aquatic Passion

## Apple Snails

by Pam Danyluk



### How Did They Become Part Of The Pet Trade?

In the 1980's, the Pomacea cana was introduced in Taiwan to start an escargot industry to provide protein for the locals. Farmers at that time mainly lived on a rice diet. Unfortunately, these snails did not go over well. Some of these species were able to transfer the rat lungworm parasite if not cooked properly. So, instead of becoming a household meat staple, they were let go into the wild or escaped and became serious pests. In some cultures they did become a delicacy and are often sold in Asian markets.

Throughout the 1980's the canas rapidly spread to Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Hong Kong, southern China, Japan and the Philippines; there are even indications that they invaded Australia. In 1989 Canas were brought into Hawaii to serve

as a food and aquarium pets. It was here where they again escaped and became a devastating pest in the taro and rice fields.

Pomecea snails such as the cana and those of the cana complex have continued to cause major destruction to rice fields and wetlands. Many countries now have very strict regulations when it comes to importing/keeping foreign animals like apple snails. A few years back the United States banned these snails in some states. It is illegal to ship them from state to state. Even diffusa snails, which are not plant eaters, require a permit to be shipped within the U.S.

Apple Snails became popular in the pet trade due to their attractive colors, appearance and sizes. Some of the larger species are the biggest living freshwater snails on earth. The most common snail that can be found in the pet trade today are the mystery snail, or Pomacea diffusa.

## **What Makes Them An Apple Snail?**

Apple Snails are tropical, freshwater invertebrates and are extremely well adapted to the tropics with alternating periods of drought and rain in that region. Their lifestyle reflects their adaption, such as being able to live on land and in the water.

They are also equipped with a shell door, allowing it to close up completely. This prevents drying out while hiding in the mud during droughts. Another adaptation is the combination of a lung and a respiration system which is similar to gills on a fish; their gills are on the right side and the lung on the left side. These snails need both a male and a female for reproduction. Another defensive adaptation is the siphon on their left side, used to breathe air while they stay underwater, which makes them less vulnerable to birds that like to eat snails. These characteristics are what makes them an Apple Snail.



Many of these snails lay their eggs above the water line; this protects them from being devoured by underwater creatures. Some do lay their eggs underwater, such as the Marisa and the Spixi.

They spend most of their time in ponds, swamps and rivers, but they do occasionally venture onto dry land. Their average life span is two years, but I have had a cana that lived almost five years.

They are nocturnal, but they do, however, spend some time roaming during the day. Their population can be controlled by removing the clutch either from above the water line or from the water. It is recommended that you freeze the clutch before discarding.

## Species That Have Been Kept In Aquariums

**Diffusa** - can be found in pet stores. They will not eat plants unless they are rotting plant matter and come in a variety of colors both with stripes and without. Blacks (wild type) yellow, purple, blue, jade, ivory and pink are the colors they can come in. They are not dyed, they have been bred to get these colors. They also have both light and dark flesh, which gives them coloring through the shell. These guys are about the size of a golf ball when full grown.



**Spixi** - not usually found in the pet stores but rather through breeders. They will nibble on plants but not devour, which seems to be a trait of the young ones. Unless crossed with a Marisa, they are yellow with brown stripes and are smaller than a ping pong ball.



Picture courtesy of Mystery@applesnail.net

**Cana** - can occasionally be found in pet stores, but used to be more available. These guys are big plant eaters. They also came in bright yellow with white flesh, but since the crackdown in the U.S. it is only the wild caramel colors that can occasionally be found in stores. Some hobbyists still keep these. Canas can grow to the size of a peach.



**Marisa** - again usually not available in stores. These look like giant ramshorns coming in brown and gold striped or plain gold. These are definitely plant eaters.



**Haustrums and Saltos** - have not been around for a while that I am aware of. Pomecea wild types were in the hobby a few years back and I had the opportunity to keep them. These guys will clean out a planted tank quickly. These are also large apple snails, and can be the size of a peach.

Someone who has been in the hobby for a long time had a simple way to describe aquatic snails in terms of whether they are plant eaters or not:  
“If they are as big as your fist, they will eat your plants”



## Breeding Trichogaster Trichopterus - The Blue Gourami

By Dave Furness



This nice, four-inch fish is from Southeast Asian locations, such as Malaysia, Thailand, Burma, and Vietnam. This is a peaceful species that can be kept safely with other species and families of livebearers, tetras, and small and peaceful cichlids and catfish. The Gourami will eat all kinds of food, such as flake, frozen and small insects. They can be kept comfortable with their tank's temperature set anywhere between 72 and 82 degrees, and a PH between 6.0 and 8.8.

I had three blue gouramis; two females and one male. The male has a long and pointed dorsal fin. I decided to place the trio into a small pond in my backyard for the summer. The pond had some pond plants and a handful of floating plants from the aquarium. Since these fish are bubble nest builders, I placed a Styrofoam container upside down upon the water's surface. The gourami, if they decided to spawn, would blow bubbles on top of the floating plants. This is where the eggs will be kept for incubation.

The Styrofoam could be placed over the bubble nest to protect it from the elements if they have not already decided to use it in the first place. A ripe and willing female is then encouraged to spawn under the nest, where the male embraces her to expel her eggs. The eggs are then gathered by the male and then spit into the bubble nest. The male will then continue to reinforce the nest by blowing more bubbles into it while he protects the eggs and then the fry. The female should be removed after the spawning, for she will eat the fry. I left the fry to feed on what nature provided, infusoria.

If you spawn them in an aquarium, set your heater to 82 degrees, and lower your water level down to six or eight inches. Keep your tank covered to keep the humidity in the air above the water's surface. The fry need the humidity in the air when they take a breath at the surface. This humidity helps them with the development of their labyrinth organ. The tank should be furnished with floating plants and one half of a Styrofoam cup. The male will probably make his nest under the cup and in the plants. Remove the female after spawning.



## Breeding Cynotilapia sp. “Blue Reef”

By Bob Hayslip



Photo Courtesy of [www.freshwatercichlids.com](http://www.freshwatercichlids.com)

This beautiful Malawian cichlid, which commonly goes by the names Blue Reef, or Gallireya Reef, is relatively new to the hobby within the last few years. This species is predominantly blue in color, with black vertical lines on the sides of the body, and a small hint of white travelling along the very top of the dorsal fin. I found mine to be semi-aggressive within their territories and during breeding, but not to the point where they couldn't be with other mbuna species.

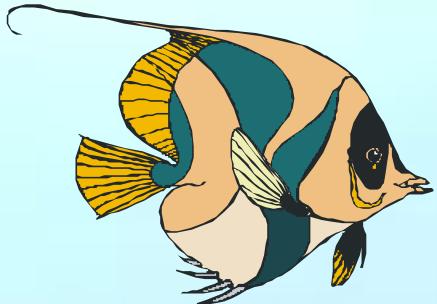
I kept them with other Malawi cichlids in a 55 gallon aquarium, decorated with a large quantity of rocks arranged in a reef-type setup with a lot of spaces to act as caves for hiding. As with all of my tanks, I used sand as substrate, as I believe this gives tanks a more natural look. I did not use any plants for this aquarium, as the fish being kept in it naturally dig up the sand bottom, and I don't like having to stick my hands into the water all the time to re-plant anything uprooted. Tank filtration was kept very simple. I used two 125 gallon rated sponge filters being powered by a Rena 400 air pump, which at times would also be used as cover. These fish are like other Malawi cichlids, which like a temperature in the mid 70's – low 80's F, mine were kept at 77 F, pH was based on the city water.

Gallireyas will eat almost anything thrown in the tank. Frequently, they would dine on flakes, cichlid pellets, zucchini, beef heart, a variety of frozen foods, frozen peas, different live worms, and of course, the occasional missed spawning that wasn't removed. Conditioning was fairly simple; I mainly increased the frozen meats and live foods.

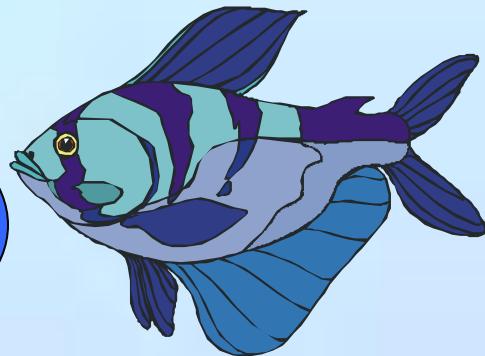
This fish is not difficult to spawn, and was done in the community tank, at regular conditions. Spawning is done in the typical mbuna style, with the male displaying to the female. Upon holding, I removed the female from the 55 gal and placed her into a bare 10 gallon tank by herself. After 21 days, 40-50 free-swimming fry were accompanying her. She was then removed from the 10 gallon and placed back inside the 55 gallon tank with the rest of the cichlids. The fry started out on flake food crushed down to almost a powder, and were fed anywhere from 2-6 times a day (mainly when I walked by the aquarium and felt like throwing them some food!). As the fry grew, they were introduced to more of a variety of foods that matched the parents.

# Sick Fish

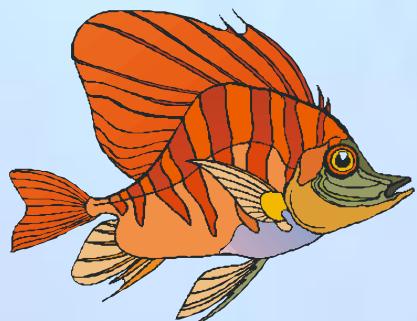
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The fish in our aquarium  
are looking rather ill,  
and most of them are turning  
kind of green around the gill.



I might have fed them too  
much food,  
forgot to clean their tank,  
or maybe they're allergic to  
the toys and junk I sank.



Perhaps I broke the thermostat.  
I could have cut their air.  
What's certain is they're sickly  
from my downright lack of care.

But even though they're  
looking ill  
I still have cause to gloat;  
they're obviously talented--  
they're learning how to float!



# **Homemade Paste Food for Your Fish**

By Pat Bridges

This is just one of many of Pat's homemade recipes!

## **Ingredients:**

1 lb beef liver

3 cans clams

1 lb inexpensive fish (frozen is o.k.)

AND/OR 1 lb shrimp. Salad shrimp, or broken bits, can usually be found in most supermarkets – frozen is o.k.

1 can of green beans or spinach

1 pear, 1 apple and 1 banana

1 can each of beets and carrots

3 eggs

5 envelopes of plain gelatin powder

1 large package of frozen beef heart, from pet stores. The recipe is better with it, but o.k.

without it.

3 cloves of garlic, minced (optional)

About 12 handfuls of inexpensive, regular flake food.

## **Directions:**

Defrost package of beef heart. Put the flake food in a **large** bowl. The flake food is **essential** to hold the paste mixture together. In a **large** saucepan, bring a couple of quarts of water to a rolling boil. Turn off heat and add liver, clams, white fish, and shrimp, if used. Put the saucepan, with contents, aside until later in the recipe. Drain all cans and **keep the liquid**.

In food processor, begin to puree, in reasonably sized batches, the contents of all the cans, the pear apple and banana. If you need some liquid, use the liquid that was drained from the cans. Add the gelatin, eggs, garlic and defrosted beef heart, if used, to one of the batches of puree in the food processor.

As each batch is pureed, pour it into the large bowl with the flake food. **Puree thoroughly** so there are no lumps. Remove contents of saucepan, put them in the food processor, saving liquid in case you need some more, and puree thoroughly. Add to the bowl with the other ingredients. Add as much of the rest of the drained liquid from the cans as you need to, so that the mixture is a stiff but stirrable paste.

Put this mixture into two bowls, approximately the same size, that fit in the oven.

Put these bowls into containers that are also fit in the oven and are big enough to put hot water in, so that it comes about half-way up the sides of the bowls containing the food. (Called a 'water bath'.) Put these in a 250°F oven for 2 hours, no lids. Cool to room temperature, **with lids on**.

**Stir very well** and spoon into plastic bags. Press the contents as flat as possible and put the bags in a container in the freezer. This may be a strong smelling (garlic) recipe, so make sure the bags are in a closable plastic box.

When you want to defrost some for feeding, just break off what you need and put it on a plate to defrost. Use a teaspoon and feed **small** amounts. This recipe makes quite a few bags of food and depending on the amount of fish you are feeding, it will last quite a while.

Other recipes use beef or turkey hearts and the ingredients vary quite a bit from recipe to recipe. This one is reasonably easy to prepare. The liver, eggs, beef heart and fish are for protein, the vegetables and fruit are for vitamins, fibre and colour, the garlic is supposed to keep parasites from proliferating and the gelatin is necessary to keep the food in a lump, long enough for the fish to eat it. Have fun!!

If fish lived on land, which country would they live in?  
**Finland.**

What did the boy octopus say to the girl octopus?  
**I want to hold your hand hand hand hand hand hand hand hand.**

What type of fish is most valuable?  
**A goldfish.**

Why is it so easy to weigh fish?  
**They have their own scales.**

Why are fish so smart?  
**Because they live in schools.**

Where do fish keep their money?  
**In the river bank.**

## Breeding *Nimbochromis venustus*

By Bob Hayslip



Photo Courtesy of - [freshaquarium.about.com](http://freshaquarium.about.com)

This interesting Malawian cichlid, which commonly goes by the names Giraffe Hap, or Giraffe cichlid, is quite common throughout the hobby. This species gets its common names from the coloration of the body, as it very closely resembles the markings of a giraffe. Females display a series of large, dark brown spots on a brownish yellow body and face. Males tend to display close to the same patterns, but they also have a bluish hint to the body and more blue in the face. This color on the male is enhanced during the mating rituals, and is very spectacular to see. I found mine to be semi-aggressive within their territories and during breeding, but not to the point of where they couldn't be with other cichlid species.

In the wild, this Haplochromine species has developed an interesting hunting style. It is an ambush predator; once it has spotted a prey item, it will often plow itself into the lake's sand bottom, acting as a dead fish. When the unsuspecting smaller animal comes in to investigate, the Haplochromine "awakens" and takes its meal.

As mentioned, I kept them with other Malawi cichlids in a 55 gallon aquarium. This is not recommended, as this species can grow to be quite large at 10-12" in length. Therefore, giraffes should be kept in an aquarium at least twice this size, preferably 125 gallons. The tank was decorated with a large quantity of rocks arranged in a reef type set-up with a lot of spaces to act as caves for hiding. As with all of my tanks, I used sand as substrate, as I believe this gives the tank a more nature look. I did not use any plants for this aquarium, as the fish being kept naturally dig up the sand bottom, and I don't like having to stick my hands into the water all of the time to re-plant anything uprooted.

Tank filtration was kept very simple. I used two, 125 gallon rated sponge filters being powered by a Rena 400 air pump, which at times, were also used as cover. These fish are like other Malawi cichlids, which like a temperature in the mid 70's – low 80's F, mine were kept at 77 F. pH was based on the city water.

*Venustus* will eat almost anything thrown in the tank. Frequently, they would dine on flakes, cichlid pellets, zucchini, beef heart, a variety of frozen foods, frozen peas, different live worms, and of course, the occasional missed spawning that wasn't removed.

Conditioning was fairly simple, I mainly increased the amount of frozen meats and live foods. This fish is not difficult to spawn, and was done in the community tank, at regular conditions. Spawning is done in the typical mbuna style, with the male displaying to the female. Upon holding, I removed the female from the 55 gallon tank and placed her into a bare 10 gallon tank by herself. After 21 days, 40-50 free swimming fry were accompanying her. She was then removed from the 10 gallon and placed back inside the 55 gallon tank with the rest of the cichlids. The fry started out on flake food crushed down to almost a powder, and were fed anywhere from 2-6 times a day (mainly when I walk by the aquarium and felt like throwing them some food!). The fry grow fast, and need to be relocated into tanks large enough to accommodate their size as soon as possible. As the fry grew, they were introduced to more of a variety of foods that matched the parents.



Photo Courtesy of [www.cichlids.com](http://www.cichlids.com)

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# Let's Have A Little Fun!

## October's Answers:

- 1.) "Shelldwellers", the "desktop cichlids", are miniature cichlids that defend a small territory based on an empty snail shell in Africa's Lake Tanganyika.
- 2.) The phrase "balanced aquarium" is about a hundred and fifty years old. It refers to the balance between carbon dioxide and oxygen production.
3. The world's first public aquarium opened in 1853, prominently located in London.
- 4.) The sensitive "feelers" of Pearl Gouramis and Three-Spot or Blue Gouramis, and of Dwarf Gouramis too, are actually highly developed Ventral fins.
- 5.) If you maintained a separate "species" aquarium for each and every genuine species of fish scientifically described so far, both in freshwater and in the seas, how many tanks would you need? About 26,000 or so.



## November Questions

Courtesy of [www.funtrivua.com](http://www.funtrivua.com)

- 1.) This fish is known as being an effective insectivore in areas known for disease spread by mosquitoes.

- Guppy
- Tinfoil Barb
- Swordfish
- Corydoras Panda

2.) These suckers are well known by aquarists with algae ridden tanks; especially brown algae. They spend a considerable amount of time on the bottom of the tank and love wood.

- Blue Ram
- Otocinclus
- Shubunkin
- Oscar

3.) Four of the barbels stem from the base on the upper lip. They have three vertical stripes - one across the head and the other two across the body. Some species are active at dusk, others are nocturnal and they are extremely difficult to sex.

- Tiger Barb
- Clown Loach
- Panda Cory
- Khuli

4.) These fish are used in 'fighting' contests in Thailand and can wrestle for up to an hour. The mouth can be used to steer and balance and they are excellent jumpers.

- African Butterfly
- Silver Dollar
- Banjo Catfish
- Halfbeak

5.) This disc-shaped Amazonian fish has two long ventral fins. It is striped and is very difficult to sex. Probably one of the most easily recognizable fish by non-aquarium owners.

- Blue cichlid
- Dwarf gourami
- Angelfish
- Spiny eel

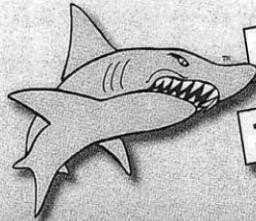
### Did You Know!?

The smallest fish is the Philippine goby that is less than 1/3 of an inch when fully grown.



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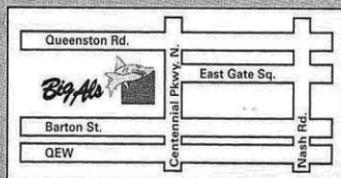
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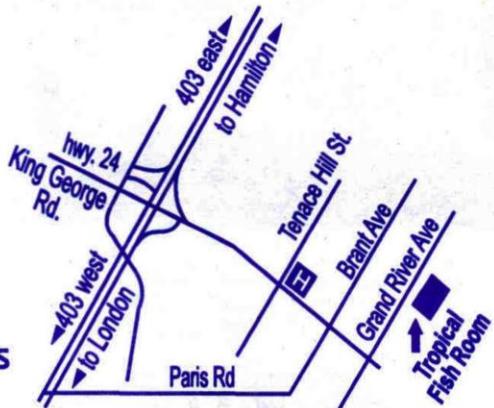
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