

Buckeye Bulletin

November 2015

**Social Gathering:
November 6th, 2015**



**Ohio Cichlid
Association**



The Extravaganza is Almost Here!
Bleher, Dignall, Konings, Judy, & YOU.

Welcome to the Buckeye Bulletin...

As you turn these pages, you enter the digital archives of the Ohio Cichlid Association. Take a look around and please enjoy.

Monthly Features include:

**President's Message
Editor's Message
Bowl Show Results
Cichlid BAP Results
Catfish BAP Results
Program Previews
This Month in OCA History
Exchange Article
And more...**

Special thanks to
CARL OLSZEWSKI
for this month's cover
photo.

As a member, you are more than welcome to submit pieces for publication in the bulletin. Please contact Editor, Jon "Jombie" Dietrich at jdietric@mail.bw.edu

If you are interested in all things "exchange," please contact Exchange Editor, Eric Sorensen at Eeleven@aol.com

The Fine Print:

The Ohio Cichlid Associations Buckeye Bulletin is produced monthly by the Ohio Cichlid Association. All articles and photographs contained within this publication are being used with consent of the authors.

When submitting articles for publication in this bulletin, please remember to include any photographs or art for the article. The Ohio Cichlid Association is not responsible for any fact checking or spelling correction in submitted material. Articles will be edited for space and content. All information in this bulletin is for the sole use of The Ohio Cichlid Association and the personal use of its members. Articles, photographs, illustrations, and any other printed material may not be used in any way without the written consent of The Ohio Cichlid Association.

Meet Your OCA Board...

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Apparel, Promotions – Kyle May

Extravaganza, Raffles,
Manufacturer Liaison: Marc DeWerth

C.A.R.E.S. Liaison: Andrew Schock

At Large: Marilyn Danko, Eric Sorensen, Scott Myers

The OCA Mission Statement...

The OCA is an organization dedicated to the advancement and dissemination of information relating to all aspects of the biology of cichlids and related aquatic life. Our purpose is to promote the interest, keeping, study, breeding, and the educational exhibition of Cichlids. Additionally, the exchange of ideas, meeting new people, and distribution of information concerning Cichlids is of primary interest.

There are many ways to get involved with the club!

Attend Meetings
Contribute to the Buckeye Bulletin
Participate in the monthly Bowl Show
Volunteer to “run” at an auction
Persuade non-members to attend a meeting
Attend the Extravaganza
Participate in the Breeder Awards Program
Enter fish into an auction
Join the Board – elections are held in December
Like/Share an OCA Facebook post
Post a thread on the OCA Forum
Visit Ohiocichlid.com

Get involved in all things OCA!

A Word from the Editor...

Jon "Jombie" Dietrich,
Buckeye Bulletin

Greetings!

Well, well, well... It's finally our favorite month over here at OCA headquarters. A month that contains the best Cichlid event in the entire world! It's almost here and we couldn't be more excited to bring you three days of Cichlid-madness. Our speaker lineup is LEGENDARY. Our auctions will be INCREDIBLE. The hotel is completely BOOKED. This year is shaping up to be a monumental event. If you haven't registered yet, DO IT NOW! Take advantage of all the benefits of being a register attendee. You won't regret it.

This month I reached out to Sam Garcia. Sam is someone all of us cichlid-hobbyists need to know. He one of the very few artists who dedicates his passion and talent to create masterpieces featuring Cichlids. Sam has a wonderful collection of art for sale, and new pieces are available all the time. It's my hope that featuring him this month will give him full exposure to the OCA. I have a few prints in my fish room and a new one, *Theraps wesseli*, being delivered as I type. If you have a place an empty place on your wall, I encourage you to peruse his collection. There is sure to be something that will catch your eye.

See you on Friday for our meeting and in a few weeks at the 'Ganza.

Take care friends,
Jom

The Ohio Cichlid Association
 Presents
Extravaganza

November 20-22nd 2015

HOLIDAY INN IS COMPLETELY SOLD OUT - BOOK ROOMS ACROSS THE PARKING LOT AT SUPER 8 - Reserve your **CALL 440-238-8800** out the hotel.

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- Giant Swap Meet
- Kids Stuff
- Manufacturers Auction
- World Class Speakers
- Huge Cichlid/Catfish Auction
- Raffle Tanks
- Vendors Room

EVENT REGISTRATION IS OPEN NOW AT:
OhioCichlid.com/Extravaganza/Registration

*You must be registered for the Extravaganza to receive the discounted show rate.

2015 Extravaganza Speakers A World Class Lineup

Ad Konings: "*Tanganyikan Cichlids*"

www.cichlidpress.com

Ted Judy: "Peru Pipeline – From the River to Your Aquarium"

www.tedsfishroom.com

Julian Dignall: "*Introduction to L-numbers/L-number Interactive,*" "*Collecting Catfishes in India*"

www.planetcatfish.com

Heiko Bleher: "*Cichlids of India, the Middle East and North Africa,*" "*Angelfish and Discus in the Wild*"

www.aquapress-bleher.com

Heiko Bleher

*"Cichlids of India, the Middle East and North Africa,"
"Angelfish and Discus in the Wild"*

*Nov. 20 – 8:30 PM
Nov. 21 – 10:30 AM*



During the final months of World War II, Heiko Bleher was born in a bunker in Frankfurt am Main, a city that had been, by then, severely bombed by the Allies. By the time he was about five, he began accompanying his mother, as she traveled around Europe, and then Africa, in search of aquatic plants for her father's ornamental fish and plant farm. At age seven, Heiko accompanied her into the largely unexplored rain forests of South America, and they lived among the native people, learning their ways and absorbing their knowledge of the land and its wildlife.

They moved to Brazil in 1959, and opened a fish and plant nursery near Rio de Janeiro. After studying ichthyology at the University of South Florida for 2 years in the early 1960s, he moved back to Brazil to open his own business, Aquarium Rio. He acquired livestock by making collecting trips into the interior. The business was moved to Germany in 1967, but Heiko continued to take frequent collecting trips to Brazil and other South and Central American locations.

During the 1970s, he started expanding his explorations to include Africa, Asia, Australia and many Pacific islands. By the early 1980s, he was giving lectures worldwide, making TV appearances, publishing books and making documentaries. His résumé, by 2011, included visiting 875 habitats in 176 countries, and the discovery, or rediscovery, of over 7000 species of freshwater fish. He has received many awards and honors, from both scientific and hobby organizations. His wilderness expeditions continue; he is heading to Ecuador immediately after the Extravaganza.

Heiko currently lives near Milan, Italy. His travels and discoveries are well documented on his fascinating website, Aquapress-Bleher.com.

Heiko will give an extended talk entitled **"Discus and Angelfish in Nature"**, beginning at 8:30 PM Friday. **"The Cichlidae of India and the Middle East"** is the title of his 10:30 AM Saturday presentation.

Julian Dignall

*"Introduction to L-numbers/L-number Interactive,"
"Collecting Catfishes in India"*

Nov. 20 – 6:00 PM

Nov. 21 – 9:00 AM



As a fishkeeping boy I began thinking about where fish came from. One of the guys that worked in a local fish store in Leith, Edinburgh, sparingly told tales of his visit to Colombia in the 1970 how vast it was and how dangerous a place it seemed. As I grew up, and my fish hobby grew with me, I never forgot these memories. They were exciting but it I thought it also a shame only a few heard these tales.

Late in 1996 I started a small web-page about the catfishes I kept, in a short time this led to many, many other catfish fans coming out of the dark places they had been hiding in and we all started communicating in a way that had not previously been available. The internet had enabled this conversation and it also made me realize that the same tales I'd found so interesting were being devoured by other readers. Before I knew it, it was the year 2000, I had a much bigger website on my hands and also airplane tickets for Peru.

Over a decade later I've built my second fishroom, collected catfishes in eleven countries and given talks on them in ten. PlanetCatfish.com has grown into the largest catfish website in the world and is recognized as one of the big fish sites. It is one of a very few hobby sites mentioned in scientific literature. A species has been written up in detail every month since late 1997; there are over 18,000 catfish photographs and over 30,000 populations of catfish being tracked by the site. I also started and have been running a much more low-key "all freshwater fishes" website called AquaticRepublic.com – primarily to innovate and trial information sharing technologies which I think may be useful to fishkeepers in the years to come.

More importantly, I've started a family and my interest also now stretches to what fishkeeping might be like for my children as they grow. I hold a dear conviction that the art and science of fishkeeping is a wonderful teacher for anyone interested in learning. Especially those with younger brain cells than I. I am hoping to shape the fish web sites I run to address the next generation of fishkeepers too. So much of fishkeeping is still trial and error, something which may not be sustainable for future generations. Freely documenting and sharing what we know for this and future generations is hugely important to me.

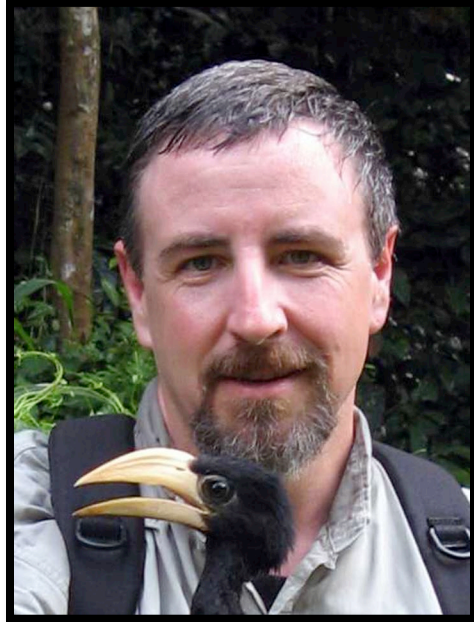
South American fishes have dominated the ornamental fish export trade in recent decades; since the late 1980's the catfish hobby has been transformed by the influx of new species of Loricariids and many other species of catfishes hitherto never kept.

Travelling to the countries of origin of many of the popular and obscure aquarium fishes has given me some insight into how fishes live in the wild and their journey to our aquaria. I'm delighted to be asked to speak at the Extravaganza and that will hopefully allow me to share some of this experience with you all.

Ted Judy

“Peru Pipeline – From the River to Your Aquarium”

Nov. 20 – 7:00 PM



Ted Judy has been keeping and breeding fish for over 30 years. He is a generalist who works with just about any family of freshwater fish available in the hobby. He has a special interest in fish from West Africa, with a focus on dwarf Cichlids.

By profession, Ted is a high school science teacher, but is currently a full-time stay-at-home father.

Ted is extremely active in the organized hobby. He has served on the ACA Board of Trustees, and as Convention Chairman when the Milwaukee Aquarium Society hosted the ACA convention in 2010. For that event, he was obliged to hold things together when a tornado passed above the convention hotel, disrupting Thursday's activities. In addition, he is on the boards of the MAS and the Madison Area Aquatic Hobbyists.

On-line, Ted manages two websites. www.tedsfishroom.com is his personal blog, and www.apistogramma.com is a community site dedicated to dwarf Cichlids.

Ted shares his knowledge and experience other ways, also. He is a much-in-demand speaker, with a wide variety of presentations that he is prepared to give. He is also a writer and photographer, whose works are frequently published by national and international aquarium periodicals. Readers of TFH are familiar with his mind-boggling fish breeding competition with Mike Helwig and with his contributions through his “Cichlid World” column.

Ted's presentation, **“Peru Pipeline – From the River to Your Aquarium”**, will follow the path traveled by wild-caught fish, from the waters of the Amazon River basin to your fishroom.

Ad Konings

“News and Views from Lake Tanganyika”

Nov. 21 – 12:00 PM



Ad Konings, born and raised in the Netherlands, started keeping cichlids at age 14. While he wanted to be an ichthyologist, he felt his economic future would be more secure if he studied medical biology. As a young adult, he did human DNA research in Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

In 1980, Ad worked part time for Dirk Verduijn, the top tropical fish importer in the Netherlands. The wealth of rare African cichlids available to him at this time greatly increased his fascination with these animals, especially after taking a trip with Verduijn to Malawi to visit Stuart Grant’s collecting and exporting operation. He has traveled there many times since.

He moved to Germany in 1986, and around this time, began working with veteran ichthyologist Ethlwyn Trewavas. As his knowledge grew, he began writing books about cichlids. In 1991, he started his own publishing company, Cichlid Press. He got married in 1996 and the couple moved to sunny El Paso, Texas, taking Cichlid Press with them. The publishing company grew rapidly, and he now publishes books by other fish experts, besides his own. In addition, he writes and publishes books about his second passion, cacti.

Today, Ad continues to travel several times a year to study and photograph cichlids and their habitats, and remains active in cichlid research, often working with Dr. Jay Stauffer of Penn State. He shares his knowledge not only by writing books and articles, but also by maintaining a busy speaking schedule. He has over 20 talks about cichlids he can give, along with 13 about cacti. He has appeared at events in at least 24 countries.

Ad Konings is a long-time friend of the OCA. He was the main attraction of the first Extravaganza, in 1995, and therefore had a big part in the early success of this yearly event. He has spoken at all but one or two Extravaganzas since then.

Ad’s talk this year, scheduled for 12:00 Noon on Saturday, is entitled **“News and Views from Lake Tanganyika”**. This is a brand new talk in which he shares knowledge and photos obtained from his recent expeditions to that lake.

EXTRAVAGANZA 2015 SCHEDULE

Friday, November 20

2:00 PM Registration, Show Room (including Manufacturer/Vendor area) open.

6:00 PM **Julian Dignall**: "Introduction to L-Number Plecos" *

7:00 PM **Ted Judy**: "Peru Pipeline-From the River to Your Aquarium" *

8:30 PM **Heiko Bleher**: "Discus and Angelfish in Nature" *

10:00 PM Registration Closes, Hospitality Room Opens*

11:00 PM Show Room closes

Saturday, November 21

8:00 AM Morning Mixer*

9:00 AM Show Room Opens

9:00 AM **Julian Dignall**: "Collecting Catfishes in India" *

10:00 AM Registration Opens

10:30 AM **Heiko Bleher**: "The Cichlidae of India and the Middle East" *

12:00 PM **Ad Konings**: "News and Views from Lake Tanganyika" *

2:00-3:00 PM Swap Meet (Main Room)

2:00-2:30 PM Speaker Meet and Greet (Main Room)

2:00 PM Registration Closes

3:30-4:30 PM Kids' Tank Decorating Exhibition (One tank per family*)

4:00 PM Show Room Closes for Judging

6:00 PM Pizza Party*

7:00 PM Awards, followed by Manufacturers Dry Goods Auction

10:00 PM Show Room, Hospitality Room Open*

11:00 PM Show Room Closes

Sunday, November 24

8:00 AM Morning Mixer*

9:00 AM Auction Registration Opens

10:00 AM Auction Begins, Show Room Opens for Tear-Down

12:00 PM Auction Registration Closes

*Registered attendees only. All other activities are open to the public.



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Attention! It's Time to Gather...

The next OCA Social Gathering is
November 6th, 2015 – 8:00 PM

Meeting location is
Old Oak Bible Church
7575 Old Oak Blvd.
Middleburg Heights, Ohio

Here's what to expect...

- President's Welcome
- Speaker Introduction
- Amazing Speaker
- Social Time
- BAP Certificate Presentation
- Membership Raffle
- Fish Auction
- Huge Raffle

Enjoy a great time with great people and everyone's favorite topic, CICHLIDS!



November Program Preview

David Chapman

Cleveland Museum of Natural History
“Famous Fossil Fish of North-Eastern Ohio”

Our guest speaker for this month's meeting, **David Chapman**, is the Fossil Preparator in Vertebrate Paleontology at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. His job, as his title suggests, is to manage the preparation of fossils for study and display.

We are able to bring David in because he participates in the CMNH Speakers Bureau program. Here is the Speakers Bureau's description of the presentation:

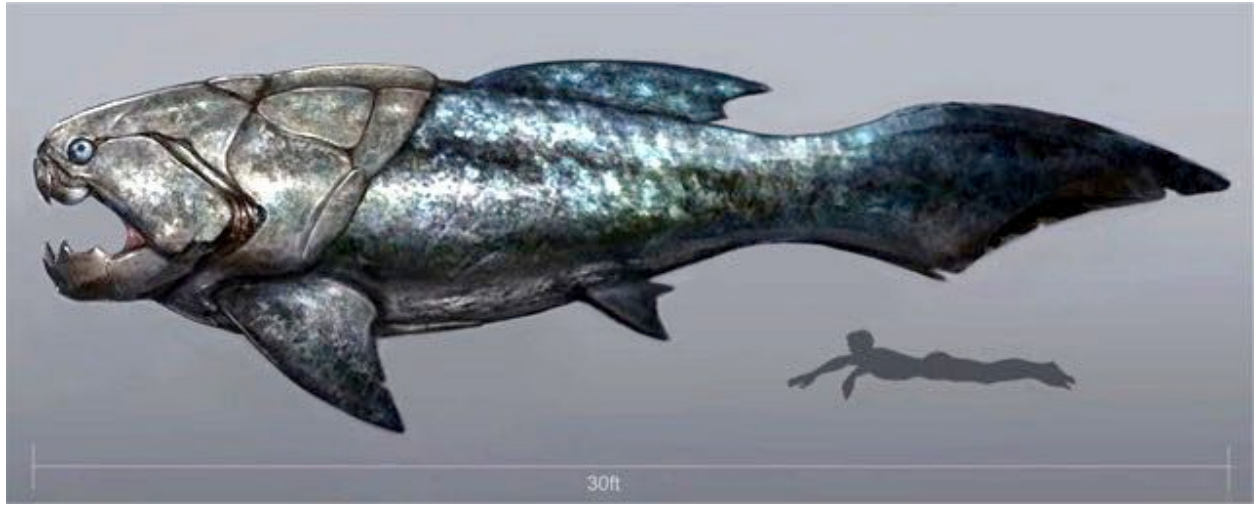
Northeast Ohio produces some of the finest fossils in the world from the Upper Devonian Period (363 million years ago). Chapman describes the history and method of collecting fossils and reviews some of the outstanding fish fossils found in the Cleveland area, such as sharks and armored fish.

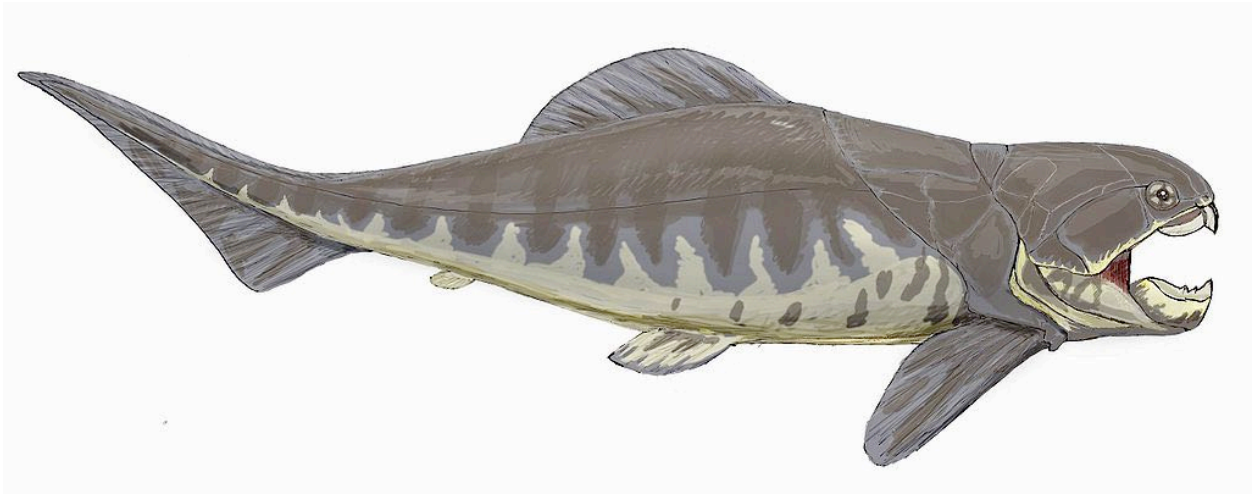
During the Upper Devonian, an inland sea covered this area, and at the bottom was a thick layer of muddy ooze. Because of the anoxic chemistry of that sludge, dead animals would sink into it but not decay. Millions of years of intense pressure compacted the mud into shale. Eventually, the shale was cut into by the flow of rivers into Lake Erie, exposing the fossils. (The Rocky and Vermilion Rivers are especially known for the steep shale cliffs along their banks.)

One genus of the armored fish mentioned above is Dunkleosteus. “Dunks” were large predators that have left no living descendants. The CMNH has most complete fossilized skeleton of *D. terrelli* yet discovered. Images of the skeleton and of artists' renderings of what the creature looked like can be found on the next page.

David's presentation will include casts of fossils for your inspection.

Next Month: The OCA Christmas Party!







A Year of Great Presentations...

2015

November 6

David Chapman

Cleveland Museum of Natural History

“Famous Fossil Fish of North-Eastern Ohio”

December 4

Christmas Party

2016

January 8

Joint Meeting with MCAS

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

Steve Heinbaugh

Catfish

February 5

Dr. Ron Oldfield

Case-Western Reserve University

“Salinity Tolerance of Herichthys Cichlids Introduced in the US”

March 2

Sam Borstein

The Lake Victoria Extinction

April 1

Old World Exotic Fish

Laif DeMason (tentative)

June 3

Larry Johnson

Lake Malawi

**Note venue change
for this event!
This will be a special
night!**



May 6

Chris Biggs

August 5

Mark Soberman

Cory Cats

January 2016 Meeting will be held in Medina

We will be permanently moving our meetings to another location as of January 1st, 2016. We can't get into our new place until February, so the Medina club has offered to help us out.

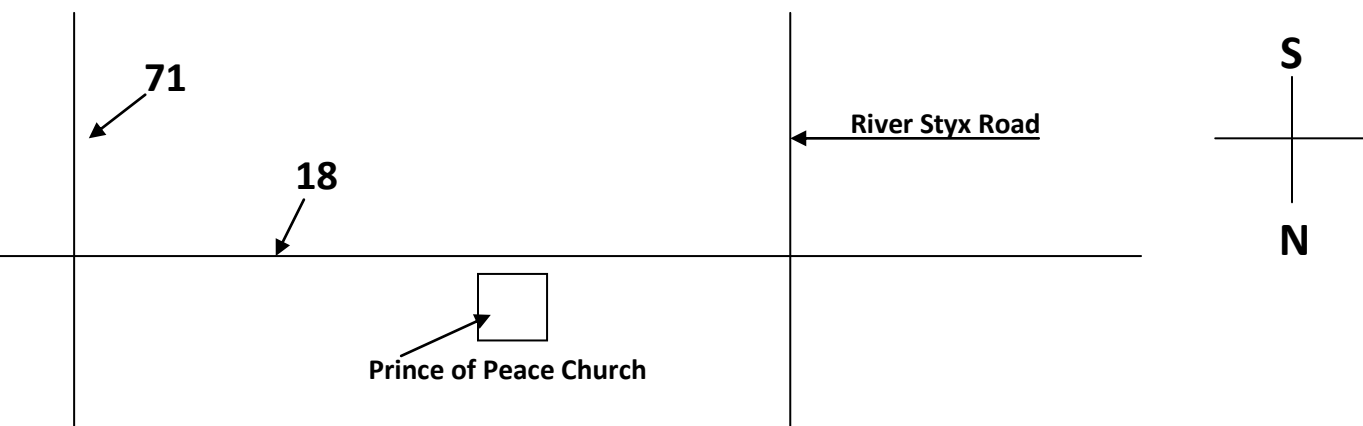
We will have a shared meeting with the Medina club at their location, The Prince of Peace Church. All BAP's, Auctions, Bowl Show, etc, will be the same as they are for all of our meetings.

It's going to be a cool meeting because the Medina club members have some excellent fish that you don't see at our meetings. After this meeting you'll want to join their club too!!

Here's the meeting location:

Prince of Peace Church
3355 Medina Rd, (route 18 west of 71)
Medina, OH 44256

Meeting time is the same as always.





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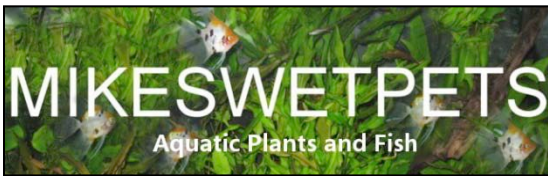
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Cichlid BAP... November 2015

Listed below are the Cichlid BAP submissions for November 2015. Members successfully bred these cichlids and raised a minimum of 6 fry to a minimum of 1". Varying point values determined by spawn difficulty were given to members' total Cichlid BAP points.

Congratulations on these spawns and thank you for your participation.

George Anagnostopoulos

Altolamprologus calvus "black Congo" 20

Aulonocara sp. "red top Lwanda" 10

Cyrtocara moorii 10

John Griffith

Neolamprologus pulcher 10

David Hearn

Otopharynx tetrastigma 10

Denis Rozmus

Protomelas taeniolatus "OB red empress" 10

Andrew Schock

Altolamprologus compressiceps "Kipili" 20

Cyprichromis microlepidotus "Bulu Point" 15

Julidochromis regani 15

Metriaclima sp. "lanisticola" 10

Greg Senn

Pundamilia nyererei "Makobe Island" 10

Eric & Rhonda Sorensen

Amatitlania nigrofasciata "black convict" 10

OCA BAP Breed, Raise, Share

Cichlid BAP Totals... November 2015

Listed below are the Cichlid BAP grand totals. The information is maintained by Mark Chaloupka, OCA Board. See Mark at monthly meetings for more information about the Cichlid Breeders Award Program.

Thank you for your participation.

MASTER BREEDER 1000 POINT LEVEL

Lew Carbone	90	2790
Don Danko	15	2395
Dan Woodland	-	2070
Bryan Davis	140	1410
Bill Loudermilk	-	1200
Linda Wallrath	-	1130
Josh Cunningham	135	1065
Rich & Maggie Schoeffel	-	1065
Mark Chaloupka	15	1045
John Tesar	-	1020

900 POINT LEVEL

Dennis Tomazin	-	965
Tom Swiderski	-	905

800 POINT LEVEL

Dustin Brummitt	-	840
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700 POINT LEVEL

Ken & Sue Galaska	50	770
Gary Mendez	-	770
Hilary & Antonio Lacerda	85	740
Jeff Yadlovsky	-	740

600 POINT LEVEL

Jeff Natterer	-	690
Bill Schwartz	20	615
Jonathan Strazinsky	95	615
Charlie & Cathy Suk	-	615
Steve Zarzeczny	-	600

500 POINT LEVEL

Tim Craig	-	540
Bob Blazek	20	535
George Anagnostopoulos	85	515
Ron Georgeone	-	510

400 POINT LEVEL

Rick Hallis	-	495
Phil Hypes	-	475
Kyle May	-	445
Tyler Toncler	30	420
Bob Bina	-	415

300 POINT LEVEL

Eric & Rhonda Sorensen	30	365
David Hale	-	335
Tony Poth	-	335
Gary Zalewski	-	325
Ken & Karen Grimmett	30	300

Cichlid BAP Totals... November 2015

The points list for the Breeders Award Program has been updated to include only current members. If you are a current member and your name has been omitted, please see the B.A.P. Chairman at the social meeting so we can correct any errors.

Please remember: You may only turn in a species or strain of fish for B.A.P. points one time. If you need a list of what you have been credited with, see the BAP chairman at the social meeting.

200 POINT LEVEL

Andrew Schock	210	280
James Shakour	-	275
Greg Senn	45	260
Dennis Kuehn	60	255
Dave Esner	-	240
Tom & Carolyn Evers	40	240
Ken Walker	20	240
Jonathan Dietrich	50	230
Paul Collander	-	205
Justin Way	75	200

100 POINT LEVEL

Marc & Dawn DeWerth	-	195
Ozeal Hunter	-	190
Chuck Carroll	-	185
Andrew Subotnik	-	180
Jason Mylnar	25	170
Frank Mueller	-	160
Bob Evers	-	155
Steve Heinbaugh	-	150
David Ayers	-	145
Greg Seith	-	145
Bill & Janice Bilski	-	135
Charles Nowakowski	125	125
Dan Ogrizek	-	125
Joe Ring	-	120
Mark Kazanoff	115	115
Peter Nario-Redmond	-	115
Aaron Stevens	-	115
David Toth	-	115
Raymond Langer	-	110
John Griffith	75	105
David Hearn	105	105
Denis Rozmus	20	100

BREEDER LEVEL

Mark Huntington	-	95
Pete Gembka	-	80
Steve Olander	30	80
Carl Olszewski	15	80
Rick Wood	-	75
Dolores Bacisin	10	70
Bob Tillman	-	70
Matt Urbin	-	70
Dave Dimond	15	65
Paul Palisin	20	60
Chris Jaskolka	-	55
Dave Dimond	-	50
John Kahl	-	50
Nicholas Zarzeczny	-	50
Alex Gorges	-	45
Jim Jensen	-	45
John Kaminski	-	40
Anthony Scarton	30	40
Ethan Wiley	-	40
Christopher Sooy	-	35
Tom Tansey	-	35
Jason Gorges	-	30
Paul Hutnyak	-	30
Wayne Corman	-	25
Fred Roberts	-	25
Andy Lacerda	-	20
Scott Meyers	-	20
Bill Sensor	-	20
Jason Webb	20	20
Jim & Amy Damm	-	10
Ron Drungil	-	10
Ben Jensen	-	10
Mike Trader	-	10

Congratulations!
John Griffith
David Hearn
Denis Rozmus
100 Point Level
Cichlid BAP Program

Breed...

Share....

Enjoy...

Cichlid and Catfish BAP



Catfish BAP... November 2015

Listed below are the Catfish BAP submissions for October 2015. Members successfully bred these catfish and raised a minimum of 6 fry to a minimum of 1". Varying point values determined by spawn difficulty were given to members' total Catfish BAP points.

Congratulations on these spawns and thank you for your participation.

Dan Ogreizek	Ancistrus sp. L144 Blue Eye	10
	Corydoras CW009 "Green Laser"	10
Steve Heinbaugh	Corydoras julii	10



Catfish BAP Totals... November 2015

Listed below are the Catfish BAP grand totals. The information is maintained by Steve Heinbaugh, OCA Board. See Steve at monthly meetings for more information about the Catfish Breeders Award Program.

Thank you for your participation.

NAME	2015	TOTAL
Dan Ogrizek	45	365
Steve Heinbaugh	35	325
Dave Ayres	30	250
Phil Ayres	20	210
Don & Marilyn Danko	10	205
Ken Walker	10	120
Dan Woodland		100
Matt Urbin		90
Eric & Rhonda Sorensen		75
Bryan Davis		60
Phil Hypes		60
Hilary Lacerda		60
Tom & Carolyn Evers	10	60
Ken Galaska		45
Tyler Toncler		45
Justin Way	10	40
John Kaminski		40
Kyle May		40
George Aganostopoulos	10	40
Karen & Ken Grimmett		30

Catfish BAP Totals... October 2015

Listed below are more Catfish BAP grand totals. The information is maintained by Steve Heinbaugh, OCA Board. See Steve at monthly meetings for more information about the Catfish Breeders Award Program.

NAME	2015	TOTAL
Lew Carbone	30	
Andrew Schock		30
Bob Evers	20	30
Tony Poth		20
Josh Cunningham		20
Gary Mendez		20
John Tesar		20
David Toth		20
Paul Palisin	10	20
Jason Mlynar	15	15
John Griffith	10	10
Carl Olszewski	10	10
Anthony Scranton		10
Jon Dietrich		10
Richard Shamray		10
William Zarzeczny		10
Wayne Corman		10
Mark Chaloupka		10
David Hale		10
Jonathan Strazinsky		10
Bob & Jennifer Tillman		10

Bowl Show – November 2015

Listed below is information about the monthly meeting Bowl Show. The Bowl Show is your opportunity to show off your fish. Each month different categories of Cichlids and Catfish will be judged. Points will be given and prizes will be awarded. All members are welcome to participate. This is great practice for our yearly Extravaganza show! See Carl Olszewski, OCA Board, at a meeting or contact him at carlolszewski@yahoo.com for more information.

1 entry was submitted for judging in October
David Hearn's *Otopharynx tetrastigma*

2015 OCA FISH BOWL STANDINGS

MEMBER	PTS.	QUARTER	2015
SCOTT MYERS	0	39	71
JUSTIN WAY	0	7	39
NICK ZARZECZNY	0	0	15
LEW CARBONE	0	0	15
DAVID HEARN	10	10	10
TONY POTH	0	0	7
GALVINNORMAN	0	7	7
JASON WEBB	0	0	5
PAUL PALISAN	0	0	1

Novembers's Bowl Show Categories

Female Cichlids – Limit 3
Telmatochromis / Chalinochromis
Loaches and Botias

Thanks for your participation!



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Aquarium Society

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Cincinnati, Ohio



Greater Cleveland
Aquarium

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Cleveland, OH 44113

216-862-8803

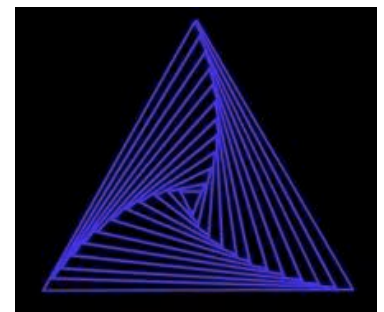
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Getting to Know Sam Scalz

An interview with Sam Garcia Jr., Artist



Sam Garcia is attracting attention all over Cichlid-related social media and deservedly so. His talent in art coupled with his passion for Cichlids has led Sam to a career creating artwork designed for hobbyists like us. Through Sam's artwork, we are able capture our favorite species in their natural habitats and display them at their best yearlong. To gain more exposure to the OCA, the Buckeye Bulletin asked Sam a few questions about his art, Cichlids, and the future of Sam Scalz.

1. We all have our own personal story. How did your interest in Cichlids begin?

I began keeping aquariums as a young child when I first kept Swordtails, Platys and Zebra Danios at the age of 6. My parents were very supportive of my interest in nature. For the next 5 years, I regularly went to the local stores with my Dad and bought new fish whenever my others died. I upgraded my undergravel filter to a hang-on power filter and added a fluorescent lamp to replace the incandescent fixture the tank originally came with. I then upgraded and added a 20 gallon aquarium at 10 years old that was given to me by a friend. I moved my community fish there and started raising wild Guppies in the smaller tank. I was determined to learn all about the natural history of the fish that I kept and started doing research in books and magazines that my parents bought for me whenever they could. One was the Simon & Schuster Complete Guide to Freshwater and Marine Aquarium Fishes. This was a well illustrated book that I carried everywhere and even brought to school with me. I was so intrigued with the array of species that I had never seen before! I wanted to keep something different than the "community" fish in my 10 gallon aquarium. I carefully researched what I could about some of the other fishes and was drawn to the Cichlid section of the book. I was determined to keep a few. When I turned 12, my Dad took me to a fairly new store that had quite a selection of interesting fish, plants and even saltwater. They had a new section under construction that I was curious about but I came home with a Texas Cichlid (*Herichthys cyanoguttatus*) and using a coupon that allowed me to get a second fish of equal value, I also purchased a Pike Cichlid (*Crenicichla* sp.). I eagerly returned home and placed them in the 20 gallon and moved all the community fish to the 10, a decision that today's internet junkies would criticize and frown upon today! That was when my Cichlid keeping began. The new section of the store turned out to be an African Rift Lake Cichlid section. After seeing the juvenile *Tropheus duboisi* and *Julidochromis marksmithi*, then called *Julidochromis regani* "Kipili", I knew I was hooked! There has been no turning back!

2. Outsiders have a hard time identifying with the life of an artist. "Most" know how to enjoy the final product, but the life of the artist behind the art is often under-appreciated and overlooked. What keeps you going? Especially in the sense that you are creating art that has a generally smaller targeted audience when creating prints for Cichlid hobbyists.



It is not easy surviving financially as a full-time artist. While doing it part time compromised my creative abilities due to exhaustion, it was easier to get a paycheck. Now, I often struggle to main a consistent income. Support from the aquarium community is appreciated but a lot of time is invested to make sure that people see what I have to offer. I am lucky that the wildlife art genre is not saturated with artists who focus on painting or drawing aquarium fishes. I am constantly striving to improve my craft and produce images that appeal to hobbyists and collectors while not compromising my passion for the subjects. My current challenge is to find a harmony between scientific accuracy and artistic creativity and freedom. While many fish keepers would rather spend their money on the living fish, the artwork is timeless and celebrates our love for the animals we love. I want everyone who owns my art to be proud to own it.

3. What are your short-term and long-term goals for your craft?

I currently sell and display at trade shows and galleries but continue to do commissions for private collectors and companies. While this allows me to survive as an artist, it is far from my ultimate goal. I am working on creating an identity that the aquarium industry and community is familiar with but this requires that I develop and hone my skills as a fine artist and illustrator. I always want my artwork to evoke a sense of wonder and reveal a little bit of the fascination I have for each species I paint. I also do as much as I can to help conservation causes. If the plight of a species is exposed through my images, I feel that it brings awareness to the viewer that the fish is vulnerable and perhaps facing extinction. I am creating a calendar of rare and endangered species that many are not so familiar with and might otherwise go unnoticed. My prints will be available either through a publisher, directly from me, or through conservation organizations.

Eventually, as funding permits, I have a vision to build an "Aquarium and Vivarium Gallery" which is more akin to a furniture showroom than a traditional fish and exotic pet store. I feel that the current retail market, particularly in the US, falls short of exhibit quality and often paints a picture of chaos and hypocrisy in regard to how we should keep our fish and animals at home. The artistry of aquarium keeping should be composed of multiple elements of design, form and function. Healthy husbandry should be paramount. The whole atmosphere of a retail store should include the aspect of fine art from a perspective of an interior designer.

Apart from that, I am developing a clothing line that features my images in modern style. I am certain that hobbyists would be excited to wear apparel that celebrates their love for Cichlids and other aquarium fish.

4. We often see the hobby treated differently by various fish keepers. It's obvious you treat the hobby in a special and pure way. You respect it and you work to preserve it. How did you acquire such an admiration for the hobby? Do you have any role models that have imprinted that in you?

I gained my respect for aquatic life by being exposed at a very young age. I did not follow trends or learn about aquariums through the internet. I was never financially motivated by promises of wealth through breeding or selling fish but rather, I chose to do that to be close to the hobby. While I occasionally did other work part-time such as gallery art framing and DJing, I spent 27 years working in the aquarium hobby, dedicated to learning and passing on the information I gained. In my off time, I would explore the coastline and interior biomes of Southern California, collecting and observing as many species of fish, reptiles, amphibians, birds, invertebrates and plants as I could.

I do as much as I can to help conservation causes. If the plight of a species is exposed through my images, I feel that it brings awareness to the viewer that the fish is vulnerable and perhaps facing extinction. I am creating a calendar of rare and endangered species that many are not so familiar with and might otherwise go unnoticed. My fish and wildlife prints will be available either through a publisher, directly from me, or through conservation organizations. I also continue to be active on social networking sites. Contributing my images to magazines and websites, such as The Cichlid Room Companion, is very rewarding to me.

I have been most impressed in my life by other artists and conservationists. I was inspired to create freely by my late mentor, Michael Schnorr. I was motivated to push forward as an artist by my art peers, Lee Kromschroeder and Gamini Ratnivara. Being reminded of the importance of conscientiousness in aquarium keeping by my good friend Bob Fenner has really helped me to become a dedicated steward of nature. The great library references of Ad Konings, Anton Lamboj, Hans Georg Evers, Hans Baensch, Heiko Bleher and too many others that I wish I could name are all great inspirations. There are many people in the hobby that tirelessly support conservation and I applaud them all.



5. What is your favorite cichlid and why?

I always tell everyone that my favorite species of Cichlid is the one I am painting at the time. I immerse myself into every subject and often learn new things about them when I am asked to paint or draw them. That being said, a few species are always dear to my heart. I love the Dwarf Butterfly Cichlid (*Mikrogeophagus ramirezi*) from South America for its incredible appeal as a community species. The colors are magnificent and the iridescence is captivating! I also love the newly named Yellow-striped Julie (*Julidochromis marksmithi*) for its brilliant contrast and highlights of blue on the dorsal and caudal fins.

6. If you were able to create one statement that would be used to describe your legacy, what would it be?

I am not certain that I have left a legacy as of yet. If I was to be proud of something in my life to this point, it is that I have imprinted a passion for nature and art on my son, Jaykob. He is developing into quite a naturalist. I have a long way to go before I can feel that I have joined the ranks of the great ones. For now, I will admire the great photography references and literature that has allowed us all to continue enjoying the Cichlid Hobby! It would be an honor if one day, people could look at my artwork and say "That is a painting by Sam Scalz. He is a passionate conservationist and has helped to bring awareness of the plight of this species."

On behalf of the OCA, we thank Sam for his time and energy in answering our questions. If you are interested in obtaining Sam's work, check out his Etsy account at <https://www.etsy.com/shop/ScalzFineArt>, "Like" Scalz Nature Artist on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/ScalzNatureArtist/>), or email Sam directly at scalz@scalz.com





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Ray "Kingfish" Lucas

Thanks for 25 years and 500 shows!

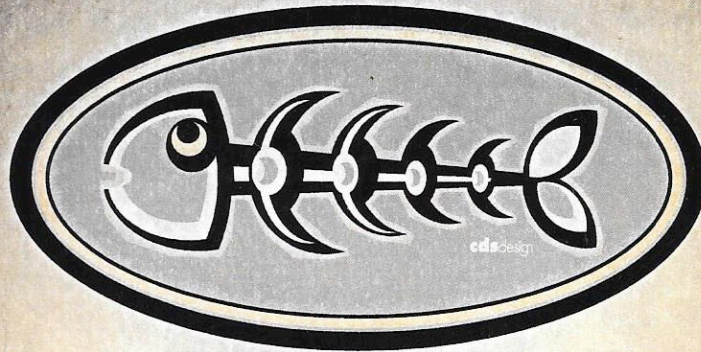
This Month in OCA History

Lew Carbone,
OCA Historian

1984: The OCA holds its first “Mini-Auction” at a social meeting. The auction, which is for fish, plants and live foods, comes immediately after the BAP auction, and features a 50/50 split.

1993: At this month’s board meeting, a proposal was made to publish the BCLB only on odd-numbered months. Post cards announcing the social meetings and containing other info would be sent to members for the even-numbered months. The vote was unanimously in favor, but, being a constitutional matter, it would have to be approved by the membership at the December social meeting. *See next month’s “This Month in OCA History” for the results.*

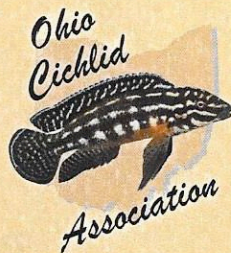
2005: For this, the 11th Extravaganza, the OCA squeezes 7 talks, by 5 speakers, into the schedule. The speakers were Ad Konings, Ingo Seidel, Jay Stauffer, Chuck Rambo, and our own Dan Woodland. There were 272 registrants, and a 1400-bag Sunday fish Auction that lasted until 11:00 PM. *Not long after this, the OCA board initiated a \$1/item charge that virtually eliminated low-value bags and slimmed the auction down to a much more efficient 800 lots. The cover of the 2005 event program is reproduced on the following page.*



ohio cichlid association

November 18, 19 & 20, 2005
Holiday Inn - Strongsville,
Cleveland, Ohio

EVENTPROGRAM



EXTRAVAGANZA2005

Exchange Article

Collecting Fish in the Brazilian Amazon

by Vinny Kutty

First published on Kutty's website "Mostly Cichlids"

Article maintained at Aquarticles.com

It is a humbling experience, and surely a healthy one, to enter a landscape that man has not been able to alter, to dominate, to twist to his own purposes. - Marston Bates/
WHERE WINTER NEVER COMES

Birth of an Idea

It began decades ago. It was during my early years in the tropical fish hobby. I'd see these marvelous, brightly colored fish in pet shops and in the tanks of other aquarists. They went by names like Tetras and Angelfish, beautiful creatures from far away land. Not yet a teenager, but already living in Africa with my parents, I'd had a taste of travel and cross-cultural experiences, traits that would later define my adulthood. Some of my fondest memories are of me sitting on a rock by a riverside pool, in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria, watching the fish swim below and the birds fly above. I'd sit for hours on the rock, oblivious of the equatorial sun beating down on my shirtless back. There is endless joy in nature, brief glimpses of which can be had for Tampa Bay residents in lush forested parks like Lettuce Lake Park on the Hillsborough River. Florida wilderness is the closest thing us Americans can get to African and Amazonian rainforests. So, having harbored an intense bond with tropical aquatic life, it was only a matter of time before I visited the ultimate in habitats - the mighty Amazon basin.

As a subscriber to Tropical Fish Hobbyist magazine in the 80s, I'd sit and read Heiko Bleher articles about adventures and collecting over and over again. I'd fantasize about running around in the woods and streams of the Amazon, like Heiko, except not in my Speedos. Enjoying the aquarium hobby is, for me, only a tease compared to the real joy of observing aquatic life in the wild. I knew I was going to visit the Amazon someday, but just didn't know when. In 1994, Jeff Cardwell, a friend and a Tetra-sponsored speaker, visited Tampa to give a lecture on his adventures in the Amazon, collecting tropical fish. Jeff visits the Amazon on a yearly basis. After listening to his talk, I decided to go with him on one of his trips. Then came reality. How much was it going to cost me? When can I take two weeks off work? The hows, whens and wheres bothered me for a while, but I decided to go. I see Jeff every year at the American Cichlid Assoc. conventions and the next time I saw him, I said to him. I wanna go to the Amazon with you, I don't care about bothersome details, all I know is I'm going to the Amazon! And I did. The following is a rather detailed journal of my trip to the Amazon, specifically to Rio Uatuma and Rio Jatapu in central Amazon, in the Brazilian State of Amazonas.

Preparation

I'd been thinking about the trip everyday for about a year. The closer the trip got, the more I obsessed about it. It meant so much to me that I must have sounded like a first-time mother, constantly talking about her baby. I certainly had something to say when people asked me What's new with you? I talked so much about it that now, my dental hygienist and my chiropractor insist on my bringing in pictures from the trip. I stopped short of yakking to the checkout girls at the grocery store about my trip. I swear people at work were avoiding me. People had polar reactions to the idea - they either belonged to the I'm-jealous-I-wish-I-could-go or to the What-are-you? -A-lunatic? schools of thought. My parents, being globetrotters themselves, were very supportive, except I sensed some nervousness in my mother's voice the day before I left. My dad called it field work ; a term often used in his profession - aquaculture. It certainly was fieldwork because I brought back a lot of water measurements like pH, conductivity, temperature etc.

Jeff was the leader of the trip and he organized everything. This was fine with me, as I just wanted to have a good time. We'd initially planned on going to Rio Tefe in remote western Amazon, near the Peruvian border but that would have involved a domestic flight within Brazil, from Manaus to the little town of Tefe. This would have made the trip shorter and more expensive, regardless of the size of the group traveling. Fortunately, this decision was made for us when one by one, individuals who'd originally showed interest in going, cancelled their plans. So, a location closer to Manaus was chosen for exploration. Jeff arranged the flight tickets, travel in Brazil (both bus and boat) and the meals while on the boat. All this came up to about \$2000. Of course, we were responsible for all the gear, immunizations and getting ourselves to Miami before the international flight. If you decide to go, you'll need the following: sunscreen, wide-brim hat, a wear-n-give-away T-shirt for everyday there, swim trunks, wading shoes, hiking boots, insect repellent, first-aid kit, flash light, large dip-nets for fishing, plastic bags to ship fish back in, 100-quart coolers to hold and ship fish back in, duct tape, camera and photo equipment, snacks (chocolates melt!) and of course, your passport and proof of Yellow Fever immunizations. You'll probably get what fellow traveler Fred Krauss described as "soup ass" after eating and drinking some things down there, so pack some Immodium-AD or the like.

As far as immunizations, the only one you must have is a Yellow Fever shot - I believe one shot is effective for ten years. I also got a Tetanus booster and a shot for Hepatitis B. Hepatitis B requires two shots with a 6-month interval or so between shots. The first one gives you 85% immunity to the mosquito-transmitted disease and the second improves it to over 95%. I took a gamble on 85%. I also asked my doctor for a prescription for Malaria pills. Total cost of immunizations was about \$250 - stiff but most of them are a one time expense.

It was now time to get ready, get all the gear purchased and wait. The few days before the trip seemed like a waste of time, like waiting for your doctor in that boring little room. I was at time's mercy. All I could do was get a few 55-gal tanks ready to receive all the fish I could bring back. I knew I was going to be in Blackwater rivers, a kind of water found in the Amazon with no discernable hardness and a very acidic pH. So, I borrowed Darin Gasperson's Reverse Osmosis unit and went about making blackwater at home. I first filled the tanks up with pure R.O. water and then added Tetra Blackwater Extract and drops of very dilute sulfuric acid to get the pH down to about 5.0.

I'd mail ordered a 12-foot seine and a 6-foot radius cast net for collecting, through the Florida Tropical Fish Farmers Assoc. (FTFFA) and had to learn the art of castnetting. I practiced casting on my lawn outside my apartment. To cast a net in a perfect circle, you need to bite down on the outer perimeter of the net and using both hands and twisting at the waist, cast it at a 45 angle. Of course, you release your bite on the net as you cast. On my very first cast, I was late releasing the bite, so the net cut my lip a bit and there was blood around my mouth. A neighbor walked by eyeing me quizzically. "Grass", I said to her "I'm catchin' grass". My neighbors don't talk to me anymore.

Larium Trips

Mefloquine. It is the new drug of choice for tropical travelers for Malaria prevention. Other quinine-based forms of anti-malarials that worked well while I was in Africa 15 years ago are apparently ineffective today. Enter Mefloquine. Reputed to be partially effective at best and at \$8 a pop, it was the best protection I had. I was instructed to take a pill every week for two weeks prior to the trip, during the trip and for a few weeks after the trip. Be close to a restroom, warned the pharmacist as she handed me the prescription. No problemo, I thought, I got guts of steel.

I'd taken two pills and the night before the journey, I took the third one. My stomach had no problem handling it. I wanted to be rested, so I went to bed early. I lay in bed, in semi-sleep and I began seeing images in my mind's eye. In the beginning, they were not anything special, but after a few minutes, the images became clearer. I was having visions. Wondrous, color-coordinated, dali-esque images. I saw no melted clocks but the wild and surreal scenes were beautiful and frightening at the same time. I was enjoying it. It was like being in a museum but I was in bed, trying to fall asleep. I'd have a different image every ten seconds. Some of them were spectacular...a little too spectacular for me to conjure up spontaneously. This lasted for almost thirty minutes and then the images began to dim, until it stopped. I then became quite awake and alert. I felt someone was going to burglarize my apartment while I was away. So, I jumped out of bed, dressed up and drove to K-mart. I returned with three light bulb timers. After hooking up all the lamps in the house to timers, I began worrying about Darin. Damn him! He's a lazy bum and he's going to forget to pick me up to go to the airport tomorrow morning. He's jealous of me. He doesn't want me to go because I'm living his dream. I knew it! I'll just take a taxi to the airport. I fell asleep angry and paranoid. Darin knocked on the door promptly as planned and happily drove me to the airport.

Something was wrong with me. I thought I'd enjoy this moment more, but I was tense and irritable. I got on a little plane in Tampa and arrived at Miami. I sat at the Varig (Brazilian airline) counter for three hours next to a burly guy, watching CNN's round-the-clock coverage of Princess Di's death.

The burly guy might steal my coolers full of fish collecting stuff, I thought. Then, burly guy turns to me with a warm smile and says, Are you going to Brazil with Jeff Cardwell? Ah! He's one of us; he won't steal my things...or will he? Burly guy turned out to be Paul Thoms of Carlyle, Illinois, going on his fifth trip to the Amazon.

I'd tried to call him the day before but his number was unlisted - his wife works in a mental institution and they did not want paranoid people on medication calling them. How paranoid of them, I thought. Sheesh!

So we went to lunch. While talking over lunch, Paul asked how I was doing with my Malaria medication. "Fine..." I said. "Really? That thing does a number on me...the last time I took it before our last trip to Brazil, I had all kinds of irrational fears and paranoia...I thought my boss was going to fire me!"

Wait a minute...may be...nah...OH MY GOD!! It all made sense to me now. The Dali slide show in my head, imaginary burglars, fear and anger towards friends...it all made sense.

The Characters

The day finally arrived. It was September 1st, 1997. I'd waited a very long time for this. As mentioned above, I wasn't enjoying the first leg of the trip. Of course, I met Paul at the airport. Paul is a happy, content, incisor-challenged guy who knows the first few verses to a million songs. And he sings them all. Some would consider him a teddy bear. No matter how tough the jungle got, he always smiled and said, "Isn't this great?" Soon, Bob and Laura Matthews, who were going with us on their honeymoon, joined us. I am sure people who prefer malls to parks called their sanity into question but they're not the kind to care. I'd known Laura for a few years, being a fellow cichlidiot and photographer. It was going to be nice to catch up with her.

Fred Krauss, recovering from treatments for thyroid cancer, was able to make it. Fred is an unpretentious guy with a heart of gold. He'd been deported from a few South American countries for illegally entering and collecting fish in - he sports a braided mustache in his passport photo. I bet he has a tattoo somewhere I care not to see. Fred's talent at transporting and keeping fish alive is uncanny.

Steve Davis of Utah and Rob Schreiman of Chicago rounded out the fish people. Our two surprise travelers were Veronica "Ronnie" DeNardo from Arlington, VA and Cathy Hamlin from Atlanta. Ronnie just wanted to see the Amazon, having already been to places like Africa. Cathy is a student of Tropical Ecology. She'd spent a year working in a Costa Rican national forest park and wanted to experience the Amazon before going back to grad. school. I'm glad they came along because a bunch of fish guys together would have concentrated on fish and missed out on all the other marvels of the rain forest. Besides, as I got to know them personally, they turned out to be wonderful human beings.

Just before the flight, we all went atop the Miami airport to have dinner. We ordered fried alligator. I was afraid that was a harbinger of things to come. Varig was a decent airline but we certainly didn't get to Manaus at a decent time. As the plane descended towards the airport, I caught a glimmering reflection of the city lights on the Rio Negro. WOW! We were greeted by Miguel Rocha da Silva and Eduardo aka Doo-doo. Miguel was the Captain of the boat we were going to be on for the duration of the trip. Doo-doo, whose photograph often appears in Tropical Fish Hobbyist magazine, was a friend of Jeff and some of the others and was going to join us to help us catch fish. They had rented a bus for us and we immediately got out of Manaus. It was 3 a.m. when we boarded the bus - the air was still, humid and warm, the kind of climate that promotes the proliferation of life.

As the bus left sleeping Manaus, some of us fell back to sleep. The excitement was too much to bear. I was wide awake at 5 a.m. and waiting for the sunrise. Cathy Hamlin was sitting next to me, writing in her diary about everything that she saw. We were on the only road in that part of the country, connecting Manaus to Itacotiara (pronounced ee-ta-kwa-shah). Itacotiara is closer to Rio Jatapu and Uatuma and taking the bus there would save us two days of river travel. By now, the sun was starting to rise and I could discern silhouettes of incredibly tall trees along the road. The landscape and village architecture was reminiscent of other isolated tropical areas in Africa and Asia. The reality of it all started to dawn with the sun. Most of us were silenced by the seemingly unending sprawl of dense jungle. Imagine the number and variety of creatures that lived within a few feet of the bus.

I saw a creek and I wanted to beg the bus driver to stop, so I could begin collecting! We finally stopped in a little village to get some breakfast the nocturnal insects and creatures were in retreat and we ran around photographing some of the strange insects. Our breakfast consisted of strong coffee and a few varieties of Manioc-based starchy pastries. Just before we were about to board the bus, a troop of army trucks pulled up and spilled a couple of dozen soldiers. Oh-oh! Images of military atrocities as seen on TV crossed my mind. Our Brazilian counterparts assured us that the soldiers were there to fix the roads. Hmmm. Now there's an idea ready for America.

The Amazon

After four hours, we finally reached Itacotiara and the banks of the Amazon, where our boat was docked. It was a little town almost entirely dependent on the river and the forest. It was only 10 a.m. and we were already drenched in sweat. But we didn't care - we headed straight for the markets, to check out the fish for sale. It was a great photo opportunity. Oscars, Peacock Basses, Pacus, Arowana and even the giant Pirarucu (*Arapima gigas*). We finally walked the plank on to our boat, our home for the next week or so. It was a 38-foot boat with three levels, bunk beds for each person, a kitchen and two bathrooms. All in all, more than I expected.

Once the boat was moving, we were very comfortable in the breeze. Those of us who had been to the Amazon before, didn't seem as excited as I was. We had a few hours to settle down, have a few drinks, watch the river go by and get to know the crew. An hour or so into the down river journey, we came upon a sight that put the actual size of the river in perspective. Apparently, the banks that we were seeing were only islands. We then reached a gap between the islands and were able to see the real banks the other bank was barely visible! An hour before sunset, we arrived at the mouth of Rio Uatuma, a white water river, small compared to the mighty Amazon. This is where I saw my first Pink River Dolphin; they seem to relish fishing near the confluence of rivers. Although not as acrobatic and curious as the Atlantic Bottlenose in Florida, these near-blind creatures were just as interesting. The riverbanks were densely forested and a tree with large red pods, called Mungubu fascinated me. We saw numerous Parrolets and Parakeets, Kingfishers, Fish Eagles and a few Cara Caras and a large Toucan hopping from tree to tree. We were to spend sometime collecting in this area before dark, so I knew we would anchor soon. And we did, a few miles up the river, past the town of Itapiranga.

It was barely 30 seconds after we had stopped when we were all casting hooks and lines into the water almost all of us instantly hooked Red Bellied Piranha! It was the very first fish I ever caught in the Amazon. These juvenile Piranhas were so numerous and easy to catch that we were quickly bored. So we left the boat and made our way to the banks using a 16-foot motor boat. As we were about to make a landing and get into the water, Steve Davis, who was still on the big boat, reeled in an 18 inch Black Piranha. We all looked at each other nervously and hesitated a bit. The excitement of collecting fish in the Amazon outweighed any fear, so I stepped out on to the bank. My leg immediately sank knee-deep into the mud. So did the other leg. When I pulled the first leg out of the mud, I found my shoe missing at the bottom of the leg hole. I reached my hand in and fetched my shoes and took another step. Now my other shoe was missing, and I was only 3 feet away from the boat! Was I ever going to catch any fish if I spent all my time retrieving my lost shoes? Jeff Warned me not to walk around without shoes, so I fought with the mud till we got to a little stream.

Mental note: next time, bring wading shoes with laces and tie them TIGHT!

The water was warm near the shores and cool at spots deeper in the stream. The stream emptied a vast marsh that was treeless, possibly from deforestation for cattle grazing. We could see hundreds of wading birds; some of them were quite upset by our presence but not as much as the Howler Monkeys at the edge of the marsh, who protested our presence audibly. The pH of the water was 6.3 with a conductivity of 70µS. As we caught fish, mostly Characins and catfish, we bagged them and floated them near the shore, to be retrieved on our way back to the boat. After we collected for almost an hour, we were returning back to the boat and found that all our plastic bags that we'd stored fish in had been ransacked! There were circular holes in the bags and there were no fish to be found in the bags. The Piranhas had sensed the distressed fish and bit through the bags to get at the hapless fish. The Piranhas were absolutely merciless with the less than healthy members of the aquatic kingdom. Only the healthy and robust specimens get to survive in this habitat.

We were all still in the water while this was going on and none of us were hurt or bit by Piranhas. We were, however, repeatedly warned by Miguel, our Captain and Jeff to shuffle our feet as much as we could to scare off Stingrays - the real menace in the water. We were soon in our little boat, headed out of the stream, when we decided to cast net. After just one cast, we found it was easier to just sit and wait for the fish to jump into the boat because that is just what they did. Schools of yellow and white striped *Schizodon schizodon* leapt up 5 feet in the air and landed in the boat! How convenient! We wanted some bait for catching catfish and possibly get some fish for dinner.

The Fish

Among the fish we caught there were:

Acaronia nassa (Basketmouth cichlid)
Aphyocharax albus
Farlowella acus
Sorubim lima (Shovelnose catfish)
Hoplias malabaricus (Wolf Fish)
Bumble bee cat
Hypoptopoma sp. (Giant Otocinclus)
Pygocentrus nattereri (Redbellied Piranha)
Serrasalmus rhombeus (Black Piranha)
Serrasalmus elongatus (Elongate Piranha)
Spotside Piranha
Triportheus albus (Yellow Hatchetfish)
Raphiodon vulpinus (Dog Fish)
Mesonauta cf. insignis
Cichlasoma cf. amazonarum
Apistogramma sp. regani complex
Geophagus cf. surinamensis
Laetacara curviceps
Phractocephalus hemioliopus
Mylossoma sp. (Pacu-type)
Corydoras sp. Spotted
Triportheus sp.
Leporinus fasciatus
Unifasciatus Pencilfish
Crenicichla regani
Spotted Moenkhausia Tetra
Loricaria sp.
Charax gibbosus
Charax sp. Spotside
Leporinus cf. fredericki
Tetragonopterus argenteus
Carnegiella marthae
Lyretail Brown Pleco
Silver Spilurus Tetra
Laetacara curviceps

I am sure there were other fish that I could not identify or collect. This was certainly one of the most productive fish collecting spots we encountered.

On our return to Manaus, we stopped here briefly and to our surprise, we caught a lot of *Crenicichla reticulata* using cast nets. They were hiding in the Loricariid caves (Pleco holes) along the mud banks and the vibration of the lead weights on the net scared them out into the net and we caught up to 4 of these typically solitary fish per cast. Some of the larger females were very colorful, with bright orange bands above the lateral bands. This was such a rich habitat for fish and, unfortunately, mosquitoes as well, so we were forced to get back in the boat and ride around for an hour during dusk until the throngs of pests had dissipated. This is an expensive but effective way to avoid mosquito bites. After 8 PM, mosquitoes are not as numerous as they are between 6:30 and 7 PM. Since handling live, sensitive fish is a priority, the use of mosquito repellents, however well stocked we were, was not ideal.

After acclimation and a quick shower, we were served dinner we had a chef onboard and were quite thankful about it. "Caboclas Delicias", said the plates. Caboclas are the people who live by the river in the Amazon, they are of mixed ancestry, usually Portuguese and native, and speak a Portuguese dialect. Rice, beans and catfish. Miguel knew us well - he had stocked his ice chest with 500 cans of beer, all of which was consumed by the end of the trip. Afraid of dehydration, I never had more than two a day. This would point to Fred Krauss as the culprit since he seemed to be the happiest guy on the trip.

We had luckily timed our trip a week or so after the full moon and as a result, we had clear and dark skies to observe the stars. Having originated from highly light-polluted areas of the United States, we were awestruck by the numbers of stars, their intensity and grandeur. We spotted orbiting satellites, shooting stars and a heart-shaped constellation that I dubbed Constellation Corazon.

The next morning, we anchored near the confluence of Uatuma and Jatapu. Rio Jatapu, which became the focus of our attention for the next week, is a black water river that originates in Northern Brazil and drains the forests. Rivers that drain the Andes are typically white water; rivers that drain ancient rocky highlands are usually clear water and those that empty forests are black water. After a breakfast of highly astringent Cashew juice and toast, we began exploring a riverside lake with a pH of 5.4 and 100µS conductivity. Here, I was able to observe numerous cichlids in their natural habitat, interacting with each other and feeding. This is why I was in the Amazon - to observe nature the way it was supposed to function. A few *Acarichthys heckelli*, *Mesonauta festivum* and some *Biotodoma cupido* shared a few square feet of shallow lakeside with clear, still water and lot of fallen tree logs. The water here was very warm, about 90°F in the shallows and 88°F in deeper areas.

We also collected the following:

Fluviphylax pygmaeus
Crenicichla lugubris
Laetacara curviceps
Cichla intermedia
Cichla temensis
Heros severus
Hypselecara coryphaenoides
numerous Knifefishes
Hoplias malabaricus
Uaru amphiacanthoides
Crenicichla regani
Apistogramma agassizi
A. cf. regani
A. cf. meinkenii
A. cf. paucisquamis
Boulengerella maculata
Pinktail Chalceus
Geophagus cf. surinamensis
Satanoperca cf. jurupari
Satanoperca lilith
Satanoperca acuticeps
Acaronia nassa

Fluviphylax pygmaeus is a tiny livebearing fish that mimics surface air bubbles with its eyes. This place is obviously a paradise for cichlidophiles. I wish I could have stayed there for a year instead of a week.

The lake we fished in was fairly large and had a healthy population of *Cichla* species. These large cichlids are pursuit predators and often chase schools of Hatchet fishes to the surface and gulp a few. Being winged, Hatchet fishes all take to the air and hover a foot or so above the water for a couple of seconds while beating their pectoral fins rapidly. This unique escape mechanism is fascinating to watch and probably saves many of them from being devoured by the chasing *Cichla*. The gape and suck of a *Cichla* can be heard as a loud pop similar to the sound that Bass and Snook fishermen are familiar with.

Black water areas are remarkably devoid of minerals and this reduces the diversity and density of animal life compared to white water areas a little but the insects, particularly a species of wasp and bees were the first to find a new source of minerals - our sweat! At first when they began landing on me, I was quite nervous but they were not interested in stinging, just my salts. They were using me as a salt lick and would not take No for an answer. I complied and eventually began perversely enjoying my new friends. My new friends were in for a feast as the daytime temperatures were usually above 100°F with a humidity of about 85%, and we were all sweating profusely. It cooled down to a balmy 85°F at night. Fortunately, black water areas are free of mosquitoes at night. We weren't that lucky after all, as there was a highly aggressive Night Wasp species that stung most of us at least once.

The crew had caught a few very large Uaru amphiacanthoids which were dead by the time we saw them. They were going to be our lunch. I had never eaten a South American cichlid before. I'd eaten Tilapia but that doesn't count. So, I watched the crew descale and fry a 12-inch Uaru! It was sad but we had to eat something. I must admit that it tasted very good with rice and beans.

The next day, we woke up early to go Cichla fishing. That morning was so peaceful and quiet that I wanted it to go on forever. On our way to a prime spot, we saw some Spider Monkeys in the trees again, my first. The technique for Cichla fishing was cast-far-and-reel-in. We caught a few this way but we also got a lot of Boulengerella species.

That afternoon, we went to another lake, Lago Leandro, a riverside lake with white sandy beaches. Perfect Surinamensoid habitat. I thought. I was right. That night, we caught two species of Surinamensoids, one was about 5 times as common as the other was. Of course, the rare one was the most brilliantly colored with a lot of red markings, even on juveniles. There were thousands of large bats all over this area and a very loud tree frog that we could hear a mile away. Jeff and I tracked down one of these and caught it to take pictures it was quite large, almost the size of a toad, with a lime green color. Sandy beaches are ideal spots for Stingrays, so we were very careful. Jeff saw a large Stingray.

The next day, I would learn something fascinating about cichlid ecology: during the heat of the midday, I took a nap while Jeff and the others were catching *Taeniacara candidi*. Wanting to collect it, I set out at about 4 PM to collect some along the lakeshore, but the fish fauna had changed like shift change at a factory. There were no *Taeniacara candidi* at all to be found anywhere near the shore, which was apparently their habitat during midday. Now, all we could catch were *Laetacara curviceps*, which were relatively scarce during midday. Where did the *Taeniacara* go at dusk? If they are not near the shore, where can they go to hide from large predatory catfish during the night? Where were the *curviceps* during the midday? I would like to have stayed there for a few more days to study this phenomena more thoroughly but we had to move on to other sites. The next day, we saw a dead young river dolphin floating on the river and two magnificent and rarely seen King Vultures waiting for us to leave before they came down to feed. The common Black Vultures were already there at the carcass but most vultures in the Amazon rely on the heavy beaks of King Vultures to help break through the skin or hide. These are large birds with a red and yellow head and large black and white wings that span more than 8 feet. It was truly impressive.

That day, we caught a few large *Laetacara thayeri* and a beautiful yellow tetra that reminded me of the African Congo Tetra. Unfortunately, the tetra was impossible to keep alive. That afternoon, some of the group, including all the women, went into the jungle, exploring. They made a hasty retreat after they ran into fresh Jaguar tracks it had just rained heavily an hour ago. We were almost 100 miles upriver now and were finally beginning to see the wildlife. Constantly raucous parrots and Macaws were everywhere.

A dwarf pike cichlid (*Crenicichla* sp.) that I caught and thought was *C. regani*, the commonly caught species, turned out to be *C. notophthalmus*! *C. notophthalmus* was believed to be a Rio Negro endemic. What was it doing over 200 miles from its supposed habitat? I knew they were *C. notophthalmus* after 6 months when the males developed long freestanding dorsal fin spines (only the first few spines.) We also found many other fish that we thought were Rio Negro endemics there must be a rainy season connection between the two rivers in its upper courses.

So, we came to the end of our collecting trip. We bagged our fish, put them in our coolers and headed out to Manaus. We spent a day touring Prestige, a tropical fish exporter. That was as much fun as collecting. We gathered a lot of fishes that we could not have collected. Discus and Angels were hard to find. So were Oscars. The adult Angels were \$0.50 each and the Discus were \$5 for any size or color. Healthy Cardinal Tetras could be had by the thousands for mere pennies each. We rebagged our fish with oxygen and got our export permits and were on our way to explore Manaus. Miguel was kind to invite us to his house and use his pool to cool off. We ate dinner at a place where everything was skewered and grilled - it is all-you-can-eat and the servers shave off little pieces of everything onto your plate.

Having spent the last week on a boat, our equilibrium was off kilter. We all felt that the restaurant and the airport were wobbly. The wobbliness stayed with me for more than a week after returning home. It was sad to return home after such a wonderful trip but all good things come to an end. We went down there as strangers but came back best of friends. Most of our fish made it back alive and their progeny is being spread around the country.

It is just a matter of time before we all get together and do it again.

A Special Thanks to Vinny Kutty and Aquarticles.com

If you belong to another club and want to share past articles, please contact Eric Sorensen, Exchange Editor, at eeleven@aol.com

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Membership Reminder...

Membership dues are important in maintaining the quality of the club. OCA membership dues are cycled yearly beginning and ending in November. Dues are currently \$15 for one year or \$25 for two years.

There are three ways to sign up!

1. Sign up through the OCA website, Ohiocichlid.com, and pay with PayPal,
2. Email OCAmember@gmail.com
3. See Hilary LaCerde at a monthly meeting

If you know someone on the fence about the whole “club scene,” bring that someone to a monthly meeting or auction and let him/her have an OCA experience. We are confident the environment will *hook* that person into taking the next step into the hobby. The OCA thrives on its membership and we look for all the possible opportunities to make membership worth your time and money.

We do it all for YOU!

If you have any questions about membership, please direct them to Hilary Lacerda, OCA Board.



OCA Monthly Raffle...

The OCA conducts a huge dry goods raffle at the close of every meeting. Marc DeWerth (sometimes with extra help – see below) runs this fast-paced and entertaining event. Bring a few extra bucks and you could walk away with some serious prizes.



BAP Success...

Hypsophrys nicaraguensis were really popular when I started getting consumed with the hobby. It became one of my first Cichlids spawns and it's no surprise this species captivated me and the club as a whole. We have plenty of names for our cichlids; most know this particular one as the Macaw Cichlid. It's beauty, personality, and ease makes it a great addition to anyone's tank, beginner to expert. Recently at an OCA meeting, Ron Coleman enlightened the crowd by some cool behaviors these fish exhibit in the wild. Currently, his students are investigating this behavior in the wild and experimenting in the lab to get this fish to replicate the behavior. Nicaraguensis are still available around the Cleveland area. I hope everyone has the chance to raise and spawn this wonderful Central American Cichlid.

Jombie



Got a BAP story to share? Take ten minute, write it out, and send it to jdietric@mail.bw.edu
We'd love to hear it!

What's Important?...

CLEANING YOUR FILTERS can be a messy and time consuming project, but it is VERY important. Some of us find it useful to build a schedule for cleaning filters. Others find it easier to do it when it becomes visually obvious. Each type of filter requires unique attention. Canister filters are super efficient; however, it's too easy to ignore a cleaning when the media is tucked away in a case under your tank. Find a routine that works for you, but don't let it go. Your fish need clean filters and they won't clean themselves! Remember, it's always easier to do regular maintenance than to let things go.

This filter needed to be cleaned weeks ago!



**Don't miss the
Extravaganza.**

See you *all* there!