



The Lateral Line

Volume 2, Issue 31

March-April 2008

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Haplochromis sp. "line bar scraper"

Cynotilapia sp. "Jalo" — Jalo Reef

E.O.T.A.S. 2007





BAP Report

February can not be titled as a "Slow" month in the BAP. A better one is "No Show". I presume that several reasons took place in the last couple of months to produce "No Entries". Maybe the updating and enlarging of "fish rooms" created too much distraction for the fish. Several members have really expanded with multiple tanks in new and larger fish rooms. But even though there are 3 or 4 members that have this set up working, there are more members introducing one or two extra tanks to their ever growing "endeavors". To my knowledge more members are preparing outside ponds and tanks to house even more fish this summer than ever before. And though the month of March is not doing any better so far with reports being submitted, do not despair, the outlook for upcoming BAP year looks very promising.

If you are keeping up point totals, they are no changes from last month except 5 extra points for Dan (Dwshcacht) for an article he submitted on previous BAP report. Thanks Dan, I am sure Robert can make use of it.

■ *Jim Beck*

April 18, 2008

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Cover Photo:
Covers from past issues.

| 2008 BAP Standings | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Name | YTD |
| Nick | 115 |
| Dan | 110 |
| Pat | 50 |
| Greg | 45 |

| 2008 BAP Standings cont. | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Name | YTD |
| Evan | 20 |
| Robert | 20 |
| Lisa | 15 |
| Jim | 5 |

DIY Project: Breeder Box

Material List:

- 4 rubber bands (free)
- 2 small zip ties (free, if you don't have these around the house you should)
- 1 64 oz. cheap disposable container (3 for \$6)
- 1 small sheet of quick count (\$0.29 at Wal-Mart)
- 1 sticks of glue for a hot glue gun
- Small pieces of filter floss
- Small pieces of foam

Tool list:

- Scissors
- Hot Glue Gun
- Knife (or soldering iron)

To start, you can use either a knife or a soldering iron to cut/melt holes in the Tupperware container. I prefer the soldering iron since it is easy to slip and cut too far with a knife, but to each his own. I will show both examples in this article.



I started by plugging in the soldering iron. Wet the sponge while you are at it. While the soldering iron heats up, I prepared a few other items that I will need to complete the breeder box.

First I took the rubber bands and tied them together. You only want to tie two of the rubber bands together but for one box you will need 2 sets of 2 rubber bands. I then used a zip tie to secure the other end of the rubber bands together as shown.



The next step was to cut the foam. I used the same pink foam that I use under my tanks on my DIY stands so the foam was also free. I broke off small pieces that would fit on the ends of the container.

Now that the soldering iron was hot, I used it to make the opening in the lid for feeding. I just melted around the existing shape in



Photos by Dan Schacht

the lid.



The next stage was to melt or cut the holes in the sided of the Tupperware so that water can circulate in and out of the breeder box. As you can see, I am not very good at fine controlling a

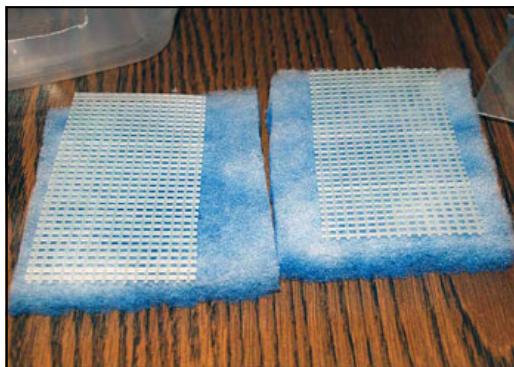


knife so the box done with the knife is not as pretty. If you choose to melt the hole, you can easily break any leftover plastic that remains off with a pair of pliers.

Now, unplug the soldering iron and plug in the Hot Glue Gun.

Next stage is to cut the quick count. You want

the quick count to be large enough to cover the holes plus a little. I then used the quick count as a guide to cut some sheets of filter floss.



I glued the quick count onto the Tupperware next. This task needs patience. You want to make sure that there is no gap between the

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quick count sheet and the Tupperware for fry to escape through. When the quick count is glued on both sides it will look like the picture below.



Now we glue the foam onto the ends of the Tupperware container. Be careful if you use bare hands as the glue is hot and if you press



the inside of the container you can get burned.

Since the quick count is a little too large and will allow small newborn fry to swim through the holes, a temporary filter floss cover is required to keep them in. This filter floss is attached with the rubber bands that we made earlier. I admit, if you get larger rubber bands you don't need to double them, and some might add that with 2 rubber bands doubled like I do it is the same as one, but they tend to be a little easier to pull around the container when doubled. Don't ask me why either... When the fry are larger the filter floss can be removed.



The container is now assembled and ready for the tank. There is virtually no delay before the container can be used. I have 3 of the containers in a 30 long tank. You can adjust the foam

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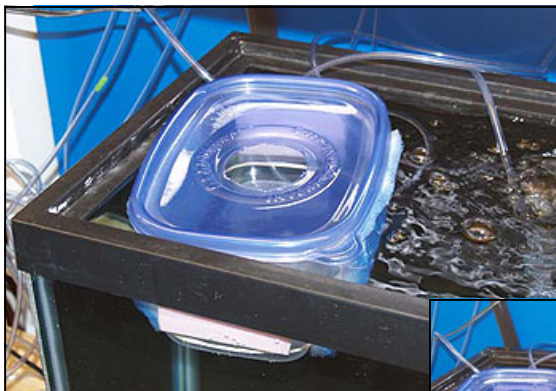
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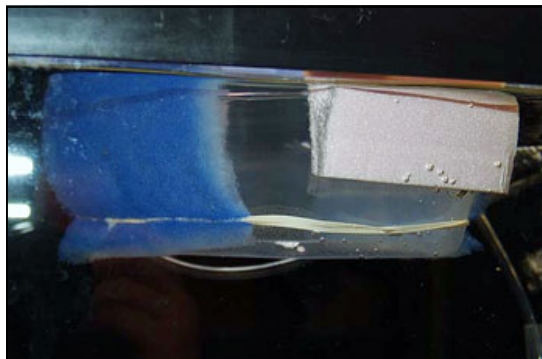
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by cutting chunks out of it to level the container and to lower the level. I would wait a little while before you did that though. Also, if you place them in a tank with a glass top no leveling or adjusting is necessary, the glass top will keep them in place and the extra lift helps keep them from moving around.



Total construction time was about 20 min for 2 of these containers.

■ *Dan Schacht*



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All photos by Dan Schacht

Species Profile:***Haplochromis* sp. "fine bar scraper"**

Seldom seen in the aquatic hobby is the charming little cichlid *Haplochromis* sp. "fine bar scraper". Wild stocks of this fish were placed in the Species Survival Plan involving member institutions of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. Found in Lake Nyamboyo Kenya



Photo by Dave Hansen

(in the Yala Swamp drainage system adjacent to Lake Victoria) *Haplochromis* sp. "fine bar scraper" was entrusted to the Denver Zoo in Colorado. Initial stocks were collected around 1990.

The native waters of *H. sp. "fine bar scraper"* are ecologically threatened. The usual culprits to threaten cichlids in the adjacent Lake Victoria, invasive species, pollution, etc, while a constant concern, are not the overbearing problems in Yala Swamp. The swamp is being drained and claimed for agricultural use. Many of the smaller waterways of the area ten years

ago do not exist today. Some of the plants and animals that once called the area home have since disappeared. Lake Nyamboyo lies on the southern extreme of Yala Swamp.

Male *H. sp. "fine bar scraper"* grow to 8cm while the females are considerably smaller at 6.5 cm. The cranial profile is straight with both jaws extended equally.

Dominant male coloration includes a thick black bar runs from below the mandible, through the eye, across the forehead and back the on the other side of the head. The body is dark (nearly black) with five faint vertical bars running the length of the torso. The lower half of the body has an emerald-green sheen. The pectoral fins are black with no ray extension. One or two well developed ocelli adorn the hyaline anal fin. The base of the anal has black

streaking along the rays while the outer edge is tinged red. The outer extremities of the caudal fin are red with the area nearest the peduncle is streaked with black blotching.

The dorsal fin is turquoise foremost fading to

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a colorless rear portion. A red dot adorns the end of each dorsal fin ray giving the look of a red trim to the fin.

Females are beige-brown with a broken black line running along the top lateral line and a couple black blotches mid way up the flanks. The anal, caudal and dorsal fins are all tinged yellow.

As a true "scraper", the intestines are much longer (3-4 times) than most other haplochromine-type genera. This is to digest plant matter and is seen in other herbivores as well. There is a gap between the front and 3-4 inner rows tooth rows. The teeth are very small of bicuspid and tricuspid structure. The mouth is angled slightly downward. The characteristics of *H. sp. "fine bar scraper"* seem consistent with Greenwood and Gee's 1969 description of the genus *Enterochromis*. *Haplochromis (Enterochromis) sp. "fine bar scraper"* naturally feeds on algal growths associated with the submerged root systems of large papyrus trees.

In the aquarium *Haplochromis sp. "fine bar scraper"* is mildly aggressive and most squabbles are inter-species. This cichlid is easily bullied by more boisterous cichlids such as *Pundamilia nyererei* and *Lithochromis xanthopteryx*. If choosing to keep a community setup, avoid similar colored

species as *Mbipia lutea* (female coloration) and opt for more peaceful fish such as *Haplochromis sp. "ruby"*, a much bigger fish of comparable temperament, or possibly some of the chess board *mbipi* as *Paralabido-*



Photo by Dave Hansen

chromis sp. "rock krib". Quite possibly, the method to best display this beautiful animal is in a "species only" tank.

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Our tank consists of a small grain light sand substrate with large holey rocks on either side. Tank size is 55 gallons with two Aquaclear® 300 power filters. The colony is the only cichlid species in the aquarium and consists of 8 males and 2 females. Multiple males remain fully colored at all times. Sexual maturity occurs at a young age when the fish are 5cm. Our

Haplochromis (Enterochromis) sp. "fine bar scraper" is a charming little cichlid that is very rare within the aquatic hobby. Hopefully the few private breeders working with this species can propagate enough to ensure a lasting captive survival because sadly, the natural habitat of this and many other beautiful species might be gone forever in the very near future.



Photo by Dave Hansen

first broods have been small with 7-10 fry being normal. The clutches should increase as the fish age. Our colony shares the tank with a group of *Synodontis lucipinnis* (dwarf petricola) from Lake Tanganyika. Spawning takes place on the substrate in a shallow pit that is excavated by the male. Reproduction is in the typical haplochromine manner. The feeding regiment is once daily and consists of a home made flake blend high in spirulina. The fry are fed the same food that has been finely crushed.

This may be one of the few Victoria Basin cichlids that could prosper in a smaller tank.

References:

Bauman, Kevin. <http://www.african-cichlid.com/Finebar.htm> 2004

Greenwood, P.H. & P.L. Forey. Species flocks and explosive evolution. Change, Change and Challenge - The evolving biosphere., pp.61-74. Cambridge University Press & British Museum (Natural History) London 1981.

Abila, Romulus. Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of a Tropical Wetland Lake Ecosystem: A Case Study of Lake Kanyaboli, Kenya. 2005.

■ Greg Steeves

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Species Profile:***Cynotilapia* sp. "Jalo" - Jalo Reef**

The purpose of this article is to first bring to light what seems to be an inconsistency in the actual name Jalo vs. Afra vs. Jaro. Lastly, I will give my perspective with breeding these very interesting cichlids. As a novice, I have come to know this little beauty as the *Cynotilapia* sp.



Photo by Dave Schumacher

"Jalo" from Jalo Reef in Lake Malawi (herein referred to as the Jalo Reef after its namesake.) Let me say at the onset this is not meant nor will any claim be given to the article being a treatise of the Jalo Reef, nor am in no way questioning the experts, but rather that I hope that this will stimulate discussion into the actual differences that exist.

Found near the Jalo Reef and according to Ad Konings, also the Mbenji Island, the Jalo Reef has found a home in my 75-gallon tank with

Texas holey-rock and crushed corral for the substrate. I set this tank up with what I could gather of their natural habitat for the most part. Having purchased these from Dave's Rare Fish in San Antonio, my introduction into the hobby was conceived. Other fish in

this community tank are *Pseudotropheus Saulosi*, *Perspicax* Orange Cap, *Synodontis multipunctatus*, *Ancistrus* sp. Red Marble (or Calico) Bristlenose, *Ancistrus* sp. Albino Bristlenose.

First, for the confusion, which came after doing some research on the Jalo Reef for this article, only to be somewhat disappointed or confused about the seemingly harmless inconsistency of calling the Jalo Reef either "Jalo", "Jaro" or "Afra" which neither of the last two

seems accurate. After some research from different books as well as surfing the web, I am no better off as to the specificity of its true

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| Trade Name | Dorsal Fin | Caudal Fin | Body Color | Vertical Stripes |
|-------------|---|---------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Jalo | Yellow with light blue/White edge | Light Blue/ yellow | Light Blue | Dark Blue/ Black (Bleeds into base of Dorsal Fin) |
| Afra | Light Blue with white edge to Light Blue/ Yellow Mid, and white edge | Blue to Light Blue | Light Blue | Dark Blue/ Black (Pictures did not show bleed into dorsal) |

identity. A simple comparison shows some very obvious differences especially in the Jalo and Afra. The following chart will show a few of these differences.

These differences are a bit more confusing in his book on *Back To Nature Guide to Malawi Cichlids 2nd Edition* when Ad Konings lists the *Cynotilapia* sp. "Jalo", Jalo Reef, while in the trade name he lists it as "Jaro Afra." The picture used looks like my Jalo Reef except for the lack of vertical band bleeding into the bottom of the dorsal fin area (page 124). In one web site listing their Master Index of Freshwater Fishes (<http://www.webcityof.com/miff1028.htm>) they list the *Cynotilapia* 'Jalo' followed by "See *Cynotilapia* sp. "Yellow Dorsal"" as well as several different references to Afra. Of these are 'Black Dorsal Mata', 'Chimate', 'Dogtooth Cichlid', and the 'Zwerg-Zebra.'

Dr. Paul V. Loiselle in his book titled The

Cichlid Aquarium states "*Cynotilapia afra* (Gunther 1893) spends much of its time schooling..." Once again, there was no mention of the Jalo Reef cichlid in his section on the Mbuna (page 188). The mega-volume of my autographed copy of *The Most Complete Colored Lexicon of Cichlids* by Dr. Herbert R. Axelrod has a brief section on the Genus *Cynotilapia*. In this section he does list the *Cynotilapia afra* and yet the picture listed as the same name looks exactly like my Jalo Reef (page 212).

Again, these men have worked diligently in

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ichthyology for many years and far be it from me to question the expertise extant. I will not. As I stated clearly in the beginning, I hope this creates a dialogue for clarification for novices like me to become even more excited about the hobby.



Photo by Jerry Hoadley Jr.

Lastly, breeding Malawi cichlids in a community tank has proven to be somewhat challenging. Originally, I had neither thought nor interest in breeding these beautiful freshwater fish. To start with, the Jalo Reef's had other ideas. Once I noticed the first brood being carried, the challenge to extract the female from the holey-rock riddled tank bordered on impossible and time-consuming. I have become better at it, but not without removing some or all of the rocks. This then becomes a bit disruptive and stressful for the rest of its tank mates.

I have had truth thrust upon me in Ad Konings

point that "most Malawi cichlids will... spawn in a community aquarium, but only a few species are able to raise a major part of their offspring to a size of 3-4 cm in the presence of other fish." Ad continues, "Almost all fry are eaten by other tank inhabitants." To try to increase the survival rate, the brooding female

must be isolated. I use a ten-gallon tank setup with a divider as well as a 5.5-gallon tank for my "nursery." It has been a dramatic learning curve as well as a pleasure to have not only the Jalo Reefs reproduce, but also the *Pseudotropheus Saulosi* and the *Perspicax* Orange Cap.

The bit of confusion notwithstanding, learning about the African Cichlids from Lake Malawi has been a privilege and a way for my whole family to come together and enjoy the tranquility of watching these little beauties. It is

also a pleasure to work with and discuss issues as they arise with those in the retail, wholesale and research end of this hobby. My desire is to continue to learn more while meeting the challenge of staying within budget. The latter may prove to be the toughest challenge of all.

■ Jerry Hoadley Jr.

HCCC Event:**FOTAS - San Antonio, TX September 7 - 9, 2007**

Believe it or not there are quite a few fish clubs in Texas, which in turn belong to FOTAS. Texas is huge and this federation allows clubs to share information, announce meetings, and upcoming events. While most participating clubs are general aquarium societies, there are



Photo by Tina Andreola

a few that specifically cater to Cichlids, as well as killies, livebearers and marine. Each year a different club sponsors the FOTAS annual convention. This is an opportunity for the host club to put on a weekend event usually including a show and auction. These annual conventions usually reflect the main interest of the local club itself. I have had the opportunity to attend FOTAS when hosted by a general aquarium society as well as cichlid clubs, and both were fun.

First off we must give a big Congratulations to FOTAS as they are celebrating their 54th year!!!! Secondly we must also send Congratulations to the host; Hill Country Cichlid Club as they are celebrating their 5th Anniversary. HCCC is based in the San Antonio area and while they are a fairly new club, they have become a "mover & shaker" in Texas and across the United States.

They have a strong core of cichlid keepers that understand the responsibility of not only educating their members about the cichlids but also about conservation. Not only do they have a Breeders Award Program but also an Endangered Species Program as well. A few of their members are nationally known for their work with Victorian Cichlids, and their first rate publication

(The Lateral Line) is filled with knowledge and pictures about these fish that can't be found in any book.

I wanted to attend this event for a couple reasons; the speaker line up and because HCCC invited the Babes In The Cichlid Hobby to hold a Silent Auction. I along with Caroline Estes (Austin, TX) and Pam Marsh (Durham, NC) were elated for this opportunity to raise money for cichlid research and cichlid conservation, as well as the chance to have a "girls"

weekend!

It was an international lineup of Cichlid speakers including:

Juan Miguel Artigas Azas, San Luis Potosi, Mexico, well known for his talks on Central American Cichlids and other freshwater fishes from Mexico. He is also the creator and editor of the Cichlid Room Companion.

Anton Lamboj, a West African Cichlid guru who hails from Austria. He has 13 trips to Africa under his belt, which has led to many collaborations with several scientific institutions



Photo by Tina Andreola



Photo by Greg Steeves

Spencer Jack, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, gave a wonderful talk about the cichlids in Uruguay. A true cichlidiot, he keeps Old World and New World cichlids, and his programs reflect his sense of humor and his love of all cichlids.

Dave Hansen, San Antonio, TX, shared his knowledge about photography and how he mixes that with his love of Cichlids. Anyone who has seen his wonderful pictures can clearly see that.

The Babes Auction was a big success, those Texas people know how to kick down some great donations, and we can't thank them enough! The weekend was capped off with a large auction filled with a variety of cichlids. I left around 4:00 PM and it was barely half over. Congrats to the Hill Country Cichlid Club, remember that name, you will hear it again, as they are

bound to have an ACA Convention in their future. Thanks for a great weekend!!!

■ Pam Chin.

**Event Calendar:****Upcoming Events in Texas****April**

April 20th

Time: 2 P.M.

Houston Aquarium Society—Spring Picnic and Hike. We will begin with a stroll (weather permitting) along the Lone Star Hiking Trails in the Sam Houston National Forest. RSVP required. Visit www.houstonaquariumsociety.org for more details.

April 27th

Time: 6 P.M.

Houston Aquarium Society—Monthly meeting and Shop Tour. Annual Elections & Tour of the new Fish Ranch store in Rosenberg. Visit www.houstonaquariumsociety.org for more details.

May

May 1st-4th

American Livebearer Association— 2008 ALA Convention Show and Auction. 4 days of fishy activities. Located in the Hilton San Antonio Inn in San Antonio, TX. For more information visit www.ala2008.info

May 10th

Time: Noon

Hill Country Cichlid Club—May Meeting and Picnic. In Landa Park, New Braunfels. Site #2, same location as last year. Visit www.hillcountrycichlidclub.com/events.php for more information.



The Lateral Line

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