

The Lateral Line

Volume 2, Issue 14

August 2006



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BAP Report

Outside temperatures have been warm but July did not start to get hot until the middle of the month for our Breeders Award Program. First of all a huge congratulation goes out to Diane (Gryhouse) for reaching her next level of "Advance Breeder" with 200 points. Diane reached this level with a spawning of *Julidochromis dickfeldi*. Congrats Diane.

August 15, 2006

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Upcoming Events:

- August meeting on the 20th in San Antonio
- HCCC auction September 2nd in San Antonio.

Cover Photo:
Cynotilapia sp.
Mbweca
by Dave Hansen

Lisa (Ikblair) made her "First Entry" in the BAP with a spawning of *Neolamprologus multifasciatus*. Congratulations Lisa with the spawning of the shell dwellers and for your "First Entry". Also thanks for donating the trio to the FOTAS Fund. Jennifer (Princer7) earned 2nd generation points from this spawning.

A 1st of species spawn of *Melanochromis auratus* was the 5th entry into the program by Nathan (Vaderjedi). This entitles Nathan to the "Breeder Award". Wait, later on this month a second spawning entry of *Melanochromis cyaneorhabdos* (Electric blue johannii) was submitted by Nathan. This was 1st of species spawn for Nathan. He was not finished; a 3rd entry of *Labidochromis* sp. "perlmutt" was made just before July was over. Congratulations Nathan on a great BAP month with a total of three entries that included a 1st of species. Again congratulations on reaching the level of "Breeder Award".

A BAP entry of *Cynotilapia* sp. Mbweca earns Dave (Mullet) congratulations and thanks for the donation of the parents to the FOTAS Fund. This spawning also earns Nick (Nick A) his 2nd generation points.

Congratulations to David (Dockusan) for added to the list of BAP's this month with a 1st of species spawn of *Aulonocara hueseri*. Congrats David. I (Bristlenose) was able to separate the parents and save the fry of *Neolamprologus pulcher* "Daffodil" that were in a community tank so they could be entered into the July BAP. But July would not be complete without at least one entry from Greg (GAS), which was a spawning of *Pseudocrenilabrus multicolor*. Congratulations to Greg, David and myself for adding to the entries in July to make it a great month for the BAP.

■ Jim Beck

Current BAP standings on page 14.

HCCC Monthly Photo Contest



First Place
Dave Hansen
Cynotilapia sp. Mbweca



Second Place
Diane Tennison
Cynotilapia afra "Lumbila"



Third Place
Nick Andreola
Tropheops lilac

Judging by Kathy & Marvin England

Species Profile:***Haplochromis* sp. 35 (tomato)**

A source of frustration amongst the aquarium hobby is certainly the lack of new species and wild stock available from Lake Victoria. Not since the mid to late 90's have we seen substantial importation of native cichlids from this region. Political unrest, native restrictions, diseases and other dangers severely hamper collecting in many



Photo by Greg Steeves

areas however; this inland sea supports the planet's largest freshwater fishery. It is sometimes hard for the hobbyist to understand why, with so many beautiful cichlids native to the region, that an ornamental aquatic industry has not been formed here as has with Lakes Tanganyika and Malawi. In 1999, a brief window opened and a couple "new to the hobby" cichlids arrived on the scene. One of the stunning species made available was imported as *Haplochromis* sp. "tomato red" originating from Kome Island. The Kome Islands are an archipelago southeast of Entebbe Uganda. This Island cluster consists of a large main isle known as Kome, and a number of smaller land masses primarily to the north and west. There is

also a large Island called Kome east of Mwanza Gulf in the Tanzanian waters of Lake Victoria. Although I have not been able to pin down which of the Kome Islands that *Haplochromis* sp. "tomato red" originates, I suspect that the collection point is probably in Ugandan waters.

In the time following importation, the common name of this fish has evolved to *Haplochromis* sp. "tomato" or by its numerical designation of *Haplochromis* sp. 35. This is a small species growing to 12cm perfectly suited for a captive aquatic environment. The dominant male is a brilliant splashing of color. The head is blue-grey with a black stripe running from the corners of the mouth, through the eye, and around the forehead. Another more slender crosses the forehead at eye level. An orange blush begins at the rear of the gill plates, and paints the body in a "U" pattern running along the abdomen and along the lateral line. The mid flank is a bright lime-green. The area below the dorsal is dark brown or a smoky-black with black blotches running into the fin. Seven vertical black bars stripe the body varying in intensity according to the mood and dominance of the fish. In the most dominant of males, these bars are barely visible. Subdominant males as well as females constantly display the evenly spaced stripes. The pectoral fins are jet-black. The caudal fin is red along the rays merging out from its base and hyaline along the outer portion. The first three fin rays of the anal are red merging to a white-blue and clear along the rear segment. Two orange ocelli are positioned between the rear fin rays. These egg spots have a clear well devel-

oped orbit. Twenty one fin rays make up the dorsal with the rear sixteen colored red. The forward most rays are grey-blue. Blue tinges of color are positioned between the dorsal rays. The cranial slope is straight or slightly convex with no obvious premaxillary hump. The lips are blue and slightly thickened. The upper and lower jaws protrude evenly. Aside from coloration, *H. sp. 35* shows a close affinity to *Astatotilapia. sp. 44*



Photo by Greg Steeves

(thick skin) processing similar markings and body shape. One might deduce that this species is an insectivore in the wild conforming to the general description of *Astatotilapia*. Presently work is being carried out on the *Astatotilapia* genus which will see a division of members of this distinction between lacustrine and riverine species. *Haplochromis sp. 35*, whether described or not, will, in all probability, adhere to the former grouping.

Like many of the Lake Victoria cichlids, *Haplochromis sp. 35* is a model aquarium candidate. I recommend housing a minimum of eight individuals in a tank of at least 40 gallons. It is possible to keep multiple males together thus a colony of three males to at least five females is ideal. The fish are mildly aggressive and territorial (including the females). Squabbles and jaw lock-

ing struggles are not uncommon in a group of adults. These conflicts rarely result in any physical damage and are used to establish a pecking order. I house this species with a lot of rock-work however; the fish roam at will and do not noticeably fiercely defend a territory. The most dominant fish explore all regions of the aquarium unchallenged. Less dominant fish are chased by the stronger individuals whenever they venture near. I have housed *H. sp. 35* with other *mbipi* as well as *Aulonocara* and *mbuna* species from Lake Malawi. This species mixes well with these other cichlid and while not especially aggressive, are certainly capable of holding their own.

Once the males begin to show the intense adult coloration they are sexually mature. Breeding activity commences with a male noticing a ripening female and his excavating a rudimentary pit. This digging is hap hazard and the degree to which a pit is dug varies between individuals. At this point, a loosely held territory is defended by the male. He dances to his prospective mate attempting to lure her into his area. She eventually succumbs to his efforts and spawns in the manner typical to the furu of Lake Victoria. *Haplochromis sp. 35* is a maternal mouth brooder holding a clutch for 18 days. Brood sizes of 30+ fry are not uncommon. The fry grow rapidly on a diet of Cyclop-eeze® and crushed flake. Adult fish will greedily take all foods offered. A large water change will often trigger a spawn.

The fantastic coloration of *Haplochromis sp. 35*, ease of maintenance, and small adult size is an attraction to grace any cichlid collection.

Species Profile:***Labidochromis* sp. perlmutt**

Labidochromis sp. "perlmutt" or Perlmutt is a maternal mouth brooder native to the Mara and Higga reefs of Mara Bay in Lake Malawi, Africa. The climate is sub-tropical with temperatures in the mid 70's to 80's and native waters for this fish are pH of 7.4. I obtained five 3/4 inch long fish from HCCC'a auction. Males



Photo by Nathan Currie

achieve a size of 5 inches and are pearly white with brown to black vertical bars. The bars vary from faint to dark depending on the mood of the fish. . Females achieve a size of 4 inches and are more yellow toned with brown to black vertical bars.

The fish bred in a 55 gallon tank which contained medium gravel and had no plants. The tank was filtered by a Penguin 400 and an air driven under gravel filter and had a pH of 7.3. I performed bi-weekly water changes equal to 60% of the tank volume. I used fluorescent lighting for a

duration of 14 hours each day. I fed the fish bulk Spirulina from River City Aquatics and Dianichi Small Floating Color Supreme.

When spawning, the bars of the male fade almost completely away and the pearl white color intensifies. Females did not change color. The male digs a depression or nest in the substrate. He then chases and courts the female until she follows him into the nest. After spawning, the female retreated to a hiding place to avoid harassment by the male. I moved the female to a 10 gallon tank. Nine free swimming fry were released after 25 days. The fry were the color of adult females. They were about 1/4 of an inch long.

The fry didn't require any special care on my part. I left them in the 10 gallon tank. The tank used Whisper power filter for

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filtration. After the female released the fry she would suck them back into her mouth if the tank was disturbed. A few days after the fry were released I caught the female during feeding and moved her back to her 55 gallon tank. I started the fry off on Spirulina. After 3 days I started feeding Cyclop-Eeze. The fry grew slowly.



Photo by Nathan Currie

The male always seems to be trying to court one of the females. The fish started breeding when they were still fairly small. This is just the 1st time I have tried to keep the fry. This was an easy fish to breed. It took no special care from me to in-

duce the breeding process. When the male is in full breeding color he is a beautiful pearl color. I would recommend this fish to others.

They are beautiful, but can be an aggressive fish, so be careful about keeping them with similar looking fish.

Since the males can be aggressive breeders and always seem to be ready to breed I would recommend

keeping the fish in trios at a minimum. 1 male to 2 or more females gives the females a chance to hide and carry their eggs with out being harassed by the male.

■ *Nathan Currie*

Species Profile:

Melanochromis cyaneorhabdos "maingano"

Melanochromis cyaneorhabdos "maingano" or Maingano is a maternal mouth brooder native to the northeast shore of Likoma Island from Mbako Point to Membe Point in Lake Malawi, Africa. The climate is sub-tropical with temperatures in the mid 70's to 80's and native waters for this fish are pH of 7.4. I obtained five 1-1 1/2 inches long fish from River City Aquatics. Males achieve a size of 4 inches and have a torpedo like black body with light blues horizontal stripes. Females achieve a size of 4 inches and appear very similar to male but have a lighter belly and shorter pelvic fins.

The fish bred in a 100 gallon tank which contained medium gravel and was not planted. The tank was filtered by a 2 power heads on and under gravel filter and 1 Eheim 2217 can-

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ister filter and had a pH of 7.1. I performed bi-weekly water changes equal to 60% of the tank volume. I used fluorescent lighting for duration of 14 hours each day. I fed the fish bulk spirulina from RCA and Dianichi Small Floating Color Supreme.

I did not observe any change in male or female colors during spawning. I was unable to observe the courtship. I did however notice that courtship type behavior was frequently displayed after water changes.

After spawning, the female retreated to a hiding place to avoid harassment by the male. The female held her eggs in a 100 gallon well stocked tank. I left the female in the 100 gallon tank as I had no free fry/spawning tanks. She held the eggs until I stripped 6 fry after 19 days. The fry had coloring similar to the adults. They were some what lighter but darkened within a week of being stripped.

The fry didn't require any special care on my part. I moved them into a 10 gallon tank with some recent *Labidochromis* sp. "Perlmutter" fry. The tank used an Aquaclear Mini for filtration. Once the female was stripped she was returned to the 100 gallon tank. I started the fry off on Spirulina. After two days I started feeding Cyclop-Eeze. The fry grew slowly.

Due to the similar coloring between the males and females it was difficult to tell if their behavior was courting or fighting. This was an easy fish to breed. I did not do anything in particular to in-

duce them to breed. I would recommend this fish to others. Their coloring is nice and bright and the horizontal stripes make them a nice change from the typical vertical stripes of other Mbuna. They are slightly smaller than some other *Melanochromis* that I have kept and I find them no where near as aggressive.

Overall this is an easy, fun, and nice looking fish to keep. They do not get too large but seem to be able to hold their own in tanks with larger aggressive Mbuna.

■ *Nathan Currie*

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Member Article:**ACA 2006**

We're off to Chicago! Liz and I arrived in Chi-Town on Wednesday afternoon. We were in contact with Rare Dave and Co. because they left around the same time we did. Different airlines, different arrival airports... we were off to a good start! Poor Dave ran in to a bit of a snag. He had contacted his airline and made sure that his carryon of live fish wouldn't be a problem (he was taking a bunch). They assured him all would be okay until he arrived at the airport. Well... looks like you can't carry fish on when you fly certain airlines - even if you call ahead. He had to run the box over to Federal Express and send them to himself in Chicago. Needless to say, he was hoping that his fish bagging skills were on par. On the plane, I pulled out my materials and noticed that we should have flown with Dave and Co. It was going to be a \$50-\$60 cab ride from the airport to the hotel. We could have taken a train - but being the Texas country girls that we are, I didn't want to try (wuss, I know). Plane ride was pretty good and we arrived safe and sound at the hotel. We pretty quickly ran into Dave and Co (which, by the way was fiancé Amanda and her younger sister Victoria). Funny thing was that he had come in to the airport that was much closer to the hotel and his cab ride cost him pretty much what mine did (well, maybe this was funny to me - I'm sure not to him). First stop, registration table to get signed in. Picked up our goodie bags and assorted registration material. One of the items in the goodie bag was a floating log (fish hide-

away) made by Zoo Med. Dave and I looked at each other and said "Oh, this is interesting" (look for this item in the next HCCC auction). The hotel was really nice, but must say that food was a premium. We quickly found the delivery menus and settled in for our first night.



Photo by Diane Tennison

First full day of the convention and not much on tap. They did have "Meet the ACA board" - which none of us attended... I was looking forward to my hero (Ad Konings, of course) doing a talk on Tanganyikan Featherfins. Liz wasn't happy at all, because this presentation wasn't until 7pm. Not much to do all day as the weather was really stormy. Liz spent most of the day in the room watching TV (Karli Steeves where were you??) and I "helped" Dave in the rental tank room. What this really meant was that I stood around while he put his fish up and chatted with folks in the room. His fish made it ok with only a few casualties

(testament to his bagging skills). The Midnight Julies weren't looking so good, but we think it was because of the water temp and not the traveling (man the water was cold). Ad's talk on Featherfins did not disappoint. Just confirmed the reason that I love these fish and wish I had room for several more species! Next up was Juan Miguel Artigas Azas who spoke about Herichthys. He was a hoot and did NOT want to



Photo by Diane Tennison

turn over the podium. He went a good hour and a half over his time! Final event for the night was a talk about collecting in Guatemala by Eric Hanneman, Joe Middleton and Rusty Wessel. Eric and Joe were pretty entertaining, but I didn't make it for Rusty's part of the presentation. It was around 11:30pm and still going strong. Even though the room was worse than a meat locker, I was still falling asleep. End of day one...

Day two of the convention was a trip to the city. Dave and Amanda had tickets to the Shedd (supposedly contained "back stage passes" which apparently

weren't all that). Liz and I went to the Shedd as well - but we were adventurers. While Dave and Amanda sat back in the comfort of the hotel bus (with other ACA'ers to keep them company), Liz and I boarded a shuttle to the train station. The train is a double-decker Amtrak type train. We sat upstairs. It was pretty cool. However, our confidence quickly eroded when we arrived at the train station in downtown Chicago. While our station by the hotel had been a pretty small intimate station, the downtown station was like Grand Central! Very overwhelming!! I was really afraid that we would never get back to the hotel. After a heart-wrenching cab ride to the Shedd, Liz and I enjoyed our day. We also made it safely back to our hotel. I now consider myself a seasoned train rider! Next event was the Babes auction (Babes In The Cichlid Hobby for those who have been to a convention before). Caroline Estes did NOT disappoint! I was enjoying myself, laughing with a group that sat behind me who had never seen Caroline run this auction before... They kept saying "Did she really just say that?!" I also tried by first Dark and Stormy. Again, for those who may not know - this is a Bermudan drink

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which is made with Rum and Ginger Beer. The first sip was a fright, but after that it went down pretty smooth. End of full day two...

Saturday I was up bright and early, ready to hit the day with several speakers. I sat in the arctic



Photo by Diane Tennison

chamber (man, was the main speaker room cold!!) and listened to Dr. Jos Snoeks talk about DNA in Tanganyikan fish. I know that Liz rolled her eyes when I talked about it - but Dave and I were completely geeking out as he talked about the extensive scientific research that he is doing on Lake Tanganyika and Lake Malawi. I must admit that it broke my heart to see his pictures because he showed his "collecting" operations and I swear he was pulling up half of the lake which was ending up in jars of formulin! Next speaker was Juan Miguel Artigas Azas again who discussed some of his favorite Central American species. All I'm saying is that I actually took notes during this one! I have several species that I would really like to try and thanked Juan Miguel profusely afterwards for contributing to

my need for another tank!! The banquet that evening was a huge success. Awards for show fish, great food and Wayne Leibel! Who could ask for more?? Actually Wayne was VERY entertaining. He gave a talk on the hunt for the elusive Wild Flowerhorn. I wouldn't have thought a scholarly individual like Wayne could have been so entertaining! Saturday evening capped off with the Babes Toga/Pajama Party. I didn't attend, but I hear from Ken and Lisa Boorman that these are the "must do" events at the conventions.... next year!

Sunday and it's almost over. The auction was huge! Lots of very cool fish with quite a few actually being donated by the Shedd Aquarium. Lots of Central/South Americans on the block. I was a bit disappointed because I had come looking for some Kapampa Frontosa and there were none to be found. Not a surprise but there were lots of Discus as well. Prices at the auction were pretty good on some things and pretty steep on others. Back to the airport at the end of the day - and the convention is over for another year. Next year the convention will be in Sacramento..... ACA 2007 - HERE I COME!!!

■ Diane Tennison

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Species Profile:**Cyphotilapia frontosa “Karilani”**

On July 4, 2006 I had the pleasure of stripping one of my female *frontosa*'s. Now that I have your attention let me explain. I had to take the fry since I noticed she was carrying less fry in her mouth as the incubation period wore on. I knew that if I did not take the fry soon I would probably not have any by the time the fry were fully formed. So I made the decision to extract the fry. Another club member came by my house to document the process. Jennifer, AKA Princer7, is one of the club's outstanding photographer's and the pictures you see in this article were taken by her. My *Frontosa* was definitely the largest fish I have performed this procedure on, but also one of the easiest in extracting the fry. Once I had her in my grasp she immediately released the fry. Of course, I



Photo by Jennifer Prince

wanted to make sure all fry had been released and took a quick peek inside her mouth to make sure.

After four years I finally had a successful spawn

and hatching of eleven fry. Of course, the successful spawn was a result of obtaining a wild male of the genus. The actual spawn took place in early June after having the wild male



Photo by Jennifer Prince

for approximately three weeks. I noticed after cleaning my tank one of the females was holding. It should be noted that I was not able to observe the spawn to my dismay. However, I was so excited and knew that if she held for greater than three days I felt assured that the eggs had been fertilized. It just so happens that both females have held in the past without a male contributing the necessary requirements of a successful spawn. As of the writing of this article I have ten fry approaching that precious two month mark. I did lose one for unknown reasons. The fry are now housed in a 10 gallon tank along with other fry. After extraction the fry were housed in a refugium. I have found that keeping fry that are not fully formed (yolk sack remaining) in a refugium assists in keeping a constant flow of water

circulating around them preventing fungal attacks much like that of an egg tumbler.

My colony consists of four F1 Frontosa (I know that at least two are females) and a single wild



Photo by Jennifer Prince

male. The colony range in size from 4 inches to 7 inches and are housed in my 240 gallon tank with an assortment of Malawi and Tanganyika Cichlids. Adult wild specimens are a rarity so I jumped at the chance when I noticed Old World Cichlids had recently received a shipment. Two of the original four F1 Frontosa are approximately 4 years old with the remaining two ap-



proximately 2.5 years of age. I acquired them when they were about 2 inches in length from what was formerly known as Armke's Rare African Fish (now known as Dave's Rare Aquarium Fish - located in San Antonio - gave you a plug Dave). For the most part Frontosa are a graceful fish. Their movements are slow and elegant. I have spent many a night in the solitude of my house just watching them swim and dig around the many rocks that are a mainstay of my tank. Times when they are not so graceful are when they are on the hunt for food. They attack with a voracious appetite freeze dried krill, as well as, live ghost shrimp. One would think with their bulky size they would not be able to move as quickly as other African Cichlids, but make no mistake they can generate the necessary speed and power when claiming a prize such as that of live



Photos by Jennifer Prince

ghost shrimp, or when the aroma of krill entices their senses. Woe be to other inhabitants of the tank with a piece of krill hanging out of its mouth. Frontosa will jump at the chance to steal the visible portion of krill emanating from

the mouth of another Cichlid with the zeal of a child running through a toy store searching for that special toy. When not eating, Frontosa are quite relaxed around other inhabitants of the



Photo by Jennifer Prince

tank and are not aggressive. However, I did notice the wild male get into a tangle with one of the large females. I am not for sure why this occurred but it was around the time of the spawn so I conjecture that he was in a territorial phase when spawning with my other large female Frontosa.

This particular species of Frontosa inhabit the northern part of Lake Tanganyika in a location known as Karilani, hence the name. Karilani is part of Tanzania where many types of cichlids are collected. Frontosas are a deep water cichlid and live in

groups. Their cost is great because of their habitat. Catching wild Frontosa can be difficult and dangerous because of their habitat and the decompression that is necessary to secure them in a safe manner. If you have a tank large enough to house a colony of Frontosa I doubt you will be disappointed. In my opinion, they are an easy cichlid to keep with their only requirements being that of a large tank to house them.

■ *David Dockwiller*

Current BAP Standings

Name	YTD
Charles	310
Greg S.	300
Jim	120
Jennifer	90
Diane	90
David D.	75
Nathan	65
Dave H.	50

Current Standings (cont)

Name	YTD
Eric	40
Nick	40
Lisa Bo.	40
Greg W.	30
Robert	25
Duc	25
Walter	20
Lisa Bl.	15

Event Calendar:**Upcoming Events in Texas**

This is a new feature we hope to include periodically in future issues of the Lateral Line. All of the information has been obtained from other club's websites. I have not confirmed any dates and times. Please check with each club if you plan to attend any of their events. This list may not be complete so don't assume every event is included here. If anyone has any input or knows contacts from other cichlid clubs in Texas, please let me know. I would also like to include contact information for each club.

August:

Saturday August 19th:

Texas Cichlid Association monthly meeting. Clarion DFW Airport South in Irving. Program to be announced.

Sunday August 20th:

Time: Noon

Hill Country Cichlid Club August meeting. At Dave's Rare Aquarium Fish, 5121 Crestway Drive Suite 300, San Antonio. Demonstration on how to build egg tumblers. All in attendance will receive a tumbler.

September:

Saturday, September 2nd:

Time: Noon

Hill Country Cichlid Club Fall Cichlid Day auction. Sponsored by Dave's Rare Aquarium Fish. To be held at Bracken United Methodist

Church Fellowship Hall just north of San Antonio on I-35 (20377 FM 2252). Doors will open at 10:00 am. For more information, visit www.xdeleon.com/hccc/events.php

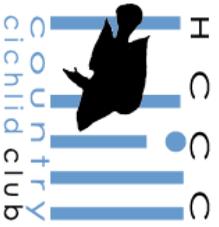
September 15-17th:

Texas Cichlid Association Fall Workshop and Auction. Confirmed speakers to date include Steve Lundblad and Dan Woodland. For more information, visit the TCA website at <http://home.flash.net/~tcichlid/>

October:

October 20-22nd:

The **Houston Aquarium Society** is hosting F.O.T.A.S. 2006. Speakers will include Heiko Bleher, Rusty Wessel and Jeff Senske. The 3 day event will be held at The Hotel Sofitel. For more information visit www.HoustonAquariumSociety.org and www.fotasonline.com. Information has not been updated on these sites, but visit as the event date gets closer for more information.



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