

The Lateral Line

Volume 2, Issue 37

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February 25, 2009

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Cover Photo:

Paretroplus kieneri

By Dave Hansen

BAP Report

BAP year 2009 is underway and has started off with lightning speed. Already we have had participation from members that have never participated and from members who just joined the club.

The BAP program has undergone significant changes in the last few weeks. We want to extend a special thanks to Jim who has helped establish such a strong BAP program in the HCCC. He has served as BAP chair for 3 years running and has put us on the map. I (Dan S.) am replacing Jim and I know I have large shoes to fill (albeit they are 20 out of style...). Thank you Jim and I hope I can build the BAP program to new heights from the foundation you and Greg established.

Along with the new leadership there are changes. Specifically two items are being modified:

1. Payments for fry and parents should be made in one of three ways.
 - A. PayPal to bap.hccc@gmail.com (preferred method, allows for better tracking of payments)
 - B. Check mailed to Dan Schacht (see forum sticky for address)
 - C. Cash paid to Dan
2. Routing of BAP articles: BAP article submissions should be e-mailed to bap.hccc@gmail.com. I will then forward the article on to Robert for publication in the Lateral Line.

Nick started off the BAP year with a series of BAP donations, and they are all first of species. Congrats Nick for *Cynotilapia* sp. "chinyankwazi", *Metriaclima* sp. "patricki", *Placidochromis* sp. "jalo", *Placidochromis electra*, *Cynotilapia* sp. "mbamba", and *Aulonocara* sp. "chitande type north". Nick has also set an example by submitting 4 articles on the six species that he has spawned. He has also promised articles on the remaining two species as well.

(Continued on page 12)

Species Profile:**Raising *Julidochromis marlieri***

I first acquired about six 0.75 inch juvenile *Julidochromis marlieri* from the Hill Country Cichlid Club (HCCC) Breeder Award Program (BAP) about three years ago. These juveniles were placed in a 20 gallon high grow out tank with a sponge filter and fed flake food until



Photo by Robert De Leon

they were just over 1.0 inch long. At this time the young fish were placed in a 125 gallon community tank with numerous Lake Malawi young adult Cichlids and 5 other Lake Tanganyika *Neolamprologus leleupi*. The substrate was white crushed coral. I prefer the look as well as the buffering characteristic of limestone holy rock and I use this abundantly to provide structure for these Cichlids.

Water quality was maintained by performing 50% water changes about every

2-3 weeks. The pH was measured at about 7.8 - 8.0. Filtration is accomplished by using two Eheim 2217 canister filters and one Emperor 400 hang on the back filter with a biowheel. I used twin 3 foot compact fluorescent reflectors with 10K lamps. Temperature was maintained between 76 and 84 degrees F.

While in the 125 gallon tank the fish were fed a variety of flake and sinking pellet foods. After about one year these fish grew to a length of 2.5 to 3.5 inches. The other inhabitants of the tank also grew and matured. Numerous spawns of these Cichlids took place in this community tank. One pair of the *N. leleupi* set up home in a modified clay flower pot. The remaining *N. leleupi* needed to be removed from the tank to prevent excessive violence and possible death. I can report that adults of this species cannot tolerate others of their own kind even in a large tank. Soon after removing the *N. leleupi* from the tank I noticed two of the *J. marlieri* defending one particular piece of holy rock. This piece of rock had many 1-2

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inch holes throughout and provided a great network of small caves for this young pair.

Unfortunately for my fish I had to move to another part of town and all my tanks needed to be taken down and put into storage. When I took down the 125 gallon tank I was surprised to find about six *J. marlieri* fry under that piece of rock. I siphoned these fry out of the large tank and placed them with the parents in my son's 10 gallon tank. These young fish and their parents remained in the 10 gallon tank for about a year. During the year the parents did not spawn again. The young and adults lived peacefully in the 10 gallon tank during this time.

Eventually I set up my 125 gallon tank in my new house and stocked it full of Malawi Peacock Cichlids and some *Synodontis* catfish. I moved the adult *J. marlieri* and one of the young offspring, now 2 inches long, into the 125 gallon tank. Within one month the large adults took over the same piece of holy rock and spawned. The smaller 2 inch offspring has been observed assisting the larger parents in defending this piece of holy rock and the new spawn. These parents have spawned at least 2 times in about 1-2 months. Each spawn appeared to be relatively small. Approximately 10-15 fry have been observed. Currently there are three sets of young *J. marlieri* with their parents in my 125 gallon community tank. The fry appear to feed on left over sinking food as well as the natural growth of bacteria and algae growing on the rocks. This species is a great specimen to display the parenting characteristics of some Cichlids.

According to Loiselle (1988) this species is widely distributed in Lake Tanganyika and inhabits the rocky shores to a depth of 115 feet. These fish are primarily micro predators. The males grow to about 6 inches and females slightly less. The young are mature in 14 months and several pair can occupy a large tank. Spawning can either produce a large



Photo by Robert De Leon

clutch of up to 300 eggs every 4-6 weeks or spawn 12-20 eggs every 7-10 days. I have observed this type of "pulse" spawning. Loiselle also reports that this species may act aggressively towards the closely related *J. regani*.

■ Tony Spinelli

References:

Loiselle, P.V. (1988) A Fishkeeper's Guide To African Cichlids. Tetra Press No. 16037. Morris Plains, N.J. 07950 pg. 82.

Member Profile:**Lisa and Ken Boorman**

I wish to thank Lisa and Ken Boorman for taking the time and allowing for this interview. They are Canadian residents of Chatham Ontario and have been members of HCCC since May 2004. Even though they are roughly 1500 miles away, they have been active members, supporting the Lateral Line with BAP articles and helpful advice on the forum.

Jim: Let me start by asking how long have you been keeping fish? How many tanks/gallons do you presently have?

Lisa: Personally, I've kept fish since approximately 1990. Before that, my parents had a tank when I was young.

Ken: About 42 years - since I was 11. We have 33 tanks - 1,043 gallons.

Jim: Who became interested in the hobby first, you or Ken? Is either one of you more of a "fish geek" than the other?

Lisa: Ken would have, since he's older than I. I think we are both totally "geekified". Fishaholics even.....

Ken: By sheer weight of age - I became interested first : We are both as "geeky" as each other.

Jim: What species are you both keeping now

and which is your favorite?

Lisa: Well, to see the current list of fish, you'd have to go to my website to check out the list. There's way too many to list. As to a favorite



species? Well... that's pretty tough. I think I'll just go with a favorite type for now: *Apistogramma*.

Ken: My favorites are the rainbow fishes and gudgeons/gobies of Australia and New Guinea.

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Jim: Lisa, you and Ken have a web site, Lisa's Lair: <http://users.kent.net/~lisab/> which shows that you are into all species of fish. Is Lisa's Lair a joint venture or a solo project? Can you give us some insight on Lisa's Lair; when, how long?

Lisa: Lisa's Lair is something that I do. I do it to keep track of my fish, and also to hopefully inform others of my successful breeding attempts so that they can be inspired to try to keep and breed fish themselves. It's just something I do to give back to the hobby. You definitely need to keep the newbie's interest or we won't have a hobby anymore. I believe I set Lisa's Lair up initially on a different URL on or about 1997. I guess I'm dating myself!

Jim: I noticed the initials "CRC" by your signature on the forum. What does it stand for and how are you involved?

Lisa: CRC stands for "The Cichlid Room Companion". It's at <http://www.cichlidae.com/>. Personally, I feel it's the "be all and end all" of cichlid sites on the web currently. Juan Miguel Artigas Azas runs the site. We became good friends over the years, and I talked him into doing a forum on his site. He only agreed on the proviso that I ran it.

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Well, I agreed so the forum would be created, and now I'm the administrator of the CRC forum. So, the reason I have CRC on my sig is to promote the forum at the Cichlid Room Companion.

Ken: I help Lisa co-administrate on the forum.

Jim: Do you belong to a local club and if so, which one? Which other organizations do you belong to?

Lisa: We do belong to a local club. The Sarnia Aquarium Society. That meeting is about an hours drive each way when we go. We also belong to many other organizations:

ACA - American Cichlid Association (life member)
ALA - American Livebearer Association
ANGFA - Australia New Guinea Fishes Association
AGA - Aquatic Gardeners Association
NANFA - North American Native Fishes Association
NADA - North American Discus Association
And.... Of course HCCC.

Ken: As well the other organizations we belong to, I am the 1st Vice-President of CAOAC (Canadian Association of Aquarium Clubs).

Jim: I would like to thank you both again for your time and sharing your experiences with the "aquarium hobby".

■ Jim Beck

Species Profile:***Pundamilia macrocephala***

Pundamilia macrocephala (hap. deep water black), is a maternal mouth brooder, native to Lake Victoria, but limited to the Mwanza gulf, Tanzania South Africa. They are usually found off shore on steep slopes however can be found on the shore line among boulders and deep



Photo by Ross Smith

holes. The climate is sub tropical and native waters for this fish are pH of 7.4- 8.2+. I obtained five of these back in October of 2008

from the Czech Republic. I received two males and three females. They were all 3/4 inch long. Males achieve a size of five inches and have a coloration of the entire body and head velvety black. There is a tuft of brilliant turquoise at the very front of the dorsal fading

to black. The dorsal is tipped with bright red. The pectoral fins are also black. The anal fin starts black turning red with five large egg dummys, and the tail is also black turning brilliant red as well. Vertical barring is almost non existent. The body shape resembles that of other *Pundamilia* species. Females reach a size of four inches and are grey brown in color the entire length from head to tail, Turning very light on the underside. Vertical barring is nonexistent in my adults and very light in juveniles.

When in stress display, the female will demonstrate a darkening from the lateral line down to the belly with a vertical line from the

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jaw thru the eye. Female fins are colored the same as the body. Very faint egg dummys are present at three inches.



Photo by Ross Smith

The fish bred in a 75 gallon tank which contained small gravel with crushed oyster shell, with no plants in the spawning tank. The tank was filtered by a two hang on the back power filters, one canister power filter and had a pH of 8.2. I performed weekly water changes equal to 25% of the tank volume. I used fluorescent lighting for duration of 14 hours each day. I fed the fish Cyclop-Eeze and crushed flake while they were still small. At two inches they were fed Dainichi Color Supreme supplemented with freeze dried shrimp.

During spawning there is really no change in color of the male. The female displays a darkening of the body from the lateral line to

the belly, also vertical bar from the jaw extending to the top of the head. The male claimed a flat rock in the corner of the tank, defending it non stop, he would chase any unripe females from the rock and visit all of them in typical haplochromine fashion, shimmying and shaking. Females who were not ripe would chase him off, those who were ready to spawn would follow him to the flat rock and spawning commenced in the typical fashion.

The pair produced approximately 15 eggs. The female picked up and held the eggs. No eggs were lost. Two hours after all spawning activity stopped she was removed to a ten gallon tank. I provided several hide spots. The tank was kept at a temperature of 79F, ph. 8.2. No

lighting was provided. Approximately 15 eggs representing 100% of the total hatch were viable and released after 17 days. The fry, upon release, were free swimming and about 3/16 of an inch. They had no color.

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The fry didn't require any special care on my part. I left them in the ten gallon tank. Due to the small size a screen was placed over the intake of the filter. The tank used a whisper hang on the back for filtration. Once the female released the fry she would only let them out briefly. This continued for three days. There after the female released them and ignored them and was removed. I started the fry off on Cyclop-Eeze and crushed flake. The fry I would say they grow slowly until .25 inches.

The male seems to be a solitary fish avoiding any social interaction except at spawning or to protect his territory. Due to the aggression of the male towards the females, this was challenging. I provided lots of cover and hide spots that decreased his hostility. The addition of dither fish helped this greatly. I would recommend this species to an experienced keeper. This species is not for the novice. I greatly enjoyed this species and will for years to come.

In conclusion i would like to share a little about the plight of this species native habitat. Lake Victoria is quickly becoming a dying giant in

the words of others. This coupled with the affects of the Nile perch on native inhabitants, and the limited availability of these fishes with in the hobby here in the United States, makes this is even a more urgent case for the captive



Photo by Ross Smith

propagation and correct redistributing of not only the *Pundamilia macrocephala*, but all lake Victoria fishes available to us even more compelling.

■ Ross Smith

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Species Profile:***Ancistrus dolichopterus* - L183**

Ancistrus dolichopterus or L183, Starlight Bristlenose Catfish, is a cave spawning native to the black water of the Rio Negro, Brazil. The climate is sub-tropical 73.4 - 82.4°F and native waters for this fish are pH of 6.0 - 7.0. I obtained four 4"+ long wild adult fish from Atlantis Tropical Fish; Peter Rubin. Females and males achieve a size of 4 inches and are the typical stream lined *Loricariidae* sucker mouth ** shape. The major difference is the male has soft tentacles on the snout, sometimes branched, while the female may have just a few soft tentacles on the snout. It has a dark base with small white dots and narrow white seams on the dorsal and caudal fin edges. One hard and nine soft dorsal rays makes this species atypical for the genus *Ancistrus*.

The fish bred in a 10 gallon tank which contained no substrate nor plants. The tank was filtered by a Hydro Sponge III and a WON Dolphin 3 Star diaphragm air pump. The initial dechlorinated tap water initially had a pH of 7.8. I performed Bi-weekly water changes equal to 15% of the tank volume. I used ambient lighting (no direct sun). I fed the fish canned green beans, Cyclop-Eeze, KENS Hi Intensity Color Enhancer Crumble (mfg. by Ziegler), KENS Premium Spirulina Flake and Hikari wafers.

Having water of a higher pH and mineral content, the 10 gallon tank was prepared by soak-

ing a piece of dense African wood with dechlorinated tap water and mulm from a used sponge, then run for a week before the fish were brought home. The water was heated to 81 degrees. Two pair were obtained by Atlantis in Gardener, NY as part of an import shipment from Manaus, Brazil. One male was of



Photo by Evelyn Addams

questionable identity due to absence of any white seams (as pointed out by Peter). I decided to take it anyway. The fish were warmed in the bag in the tank, then placed in the shipping water in a bucket. Because of the sensitivity to my water parameters, the tank water was slowly trickled into the bucket until the volume is doubled. Half the water was dumped out and the process repeated until the ten gallon tank was half empty and the fish and water were transferred into the tank. The odd male was lost in the first 24 hours either

from aggression or inability to acclimate. The tank contained only the wood and the sponge filter. After two months with no breeding, I allowed the wood debris to build up until the water was almost putrid smelling of decayed wood, even with small bi-weekly water changes. I did a very large cool water change and added two clay cone caves. This seemed to spur spawning. Within a week the male was seen to be guarding one cone. A pair laid approximately 30 - 40 orange colored eggs. After spawning, the female retreated to a hiding place under the piece of wood while the male guarded the breeding cone entrance. In a few days the male abandoned that cave to spawn with the second female. Fully formed tiny wigglers appeared soon after with the addition of Cyclops-Eeze. Approximately 25 eggs representing ~80% of the total hatch were viable and hatched after ~5 days.

The fry didn't require any special care. I left them in the 10 gallon tank with the adults. Twenty five fry were counted in the initial spawn. After two more spawns I removed about 40 from the tank at about .5" - 1" with many smaller left in the tank. This collection disrupted the spawning for about a month and triggered some cannibalism. I again eventually induced spawning with meaty foods and a large cool water change. The fry tank used a Hydro Pond sponge & power head for filtration. The adults were left in the breeder tank. I started the fry off on Cyclop-Eeze. After day two I started feeding green beans, KENS Hi Intensity Color Enhancer Crumble, and spirulina flake. The fry grew slowly.

I found several things interesting: that the male guards the eggs; a simulated rainy season (large cool water change) and meaty foods spur spawning. Multiple spawns live together with little cannibalism. Once set up, L183 was very easy to maintain and breed. It was an overall fun experience, even with the loss of one adult fish. The Starlight Bristlenose is one of the most beautiful *Ancistrus* species and a wonderful addition to nearly any tank. *Ancistrus dolichopterus* is a voracious algae eater that really does clean the glass. Great in smaller tank set ups, it does not get much bigger than 4". There are many dark *Loricariidae* with spots or white seams, not many with both. The L183 has the highest contrast with the brightest spots of them all. All though the fish is somewhat delicate and appreciates black water conditions, it can acclimate to water a bit beyond it's parameters in the wild and be bred successfully.

I may attempt to remove the egg clusters from the breeding tubes to hatch in a net. I think I lose some eggs when the male abandons the cave to breed again. The fry are nearly impossible to catch without disturbing the breeding cycle and breeding seems to stop if fry aren't collected for three or four spawns do to crowding. It takes quite a while for the group to resume spawning. Once they do they do though, it is fairly regular.

■ Allen M. Abrahams

Although Nick started us out, JB holds the lead on BAP points with 165 points to date. JB has reached this level by submitting reports on *Xystichromis* sp "dayglow", *Pundamilia nyererei* (Anchor Island,) *Xystichromis phytophagus*, *Ptyochromis* sp. "salmon", *Paralabidochromis* sp. "Uganda fire red", *Protomelas taeniolatus*, *Cynotilapia afra* (Jalo Reef), *Pundamilia nyererei* (Igombe Island), *Mbipia lutea*, *Pundamilia* sp. "blue bar", and *Sciaenochromis fryeri*. Congratulations JB on proliferating such a variety of species.

We have seen first time participation from Barbara with her submissions of *Iodotropheus sprengerae*, *Labidochromis caeruleus*, *Pseudotropheus acei*, and *Neochromis omniceruleus* with an article submission on the *Neochromis omniceruleus*. This is the first time an article on the *Neochromis omniceruleus* has been written for our club. Congratulations Barbara!

Tony has finally joined the BAP program with submissions for *Aulonocara stuartgranti* (Bi-color), *Copadichromis borleyi* (Crocodile Rock) and *Julidochromis marlieri*. He has also contributed articles for the two of the species he spawned.

Our newest participants are Brenda and Allen. Brenda has joined us from Colorado and submitted a report on *Aulonocara stuartgranti*

(Maleri). Allen, from New York, submitted a first of species donation with the L183 *Ancistrus dolichopterus* catfish. Both Brenda and Allen are generously donating articles and shipping fry to Texas as part of their donations. Thanks for the support from across the country!

This BAP year has started out great with a huge increase in the number of articles written. We thank you all for participating. Greg has a saying when it comes to the BAP. "Fry donations are great, but articles are eternal." Thanks everyone for making the BAP eternal.

■ Dan Schacht

2009 BAP Standings	
Name	YTD
JB	165
Nick	160
Greg	120
Dan S.	115
Barbara	70
Tony	70
Evan	65
Jim	65
Matt	50

2009 BAP Standings (cont.)	
Name	YTD
Dan I.	45
Dave S.	40
Allen	35
Dave H.	25
Brenda	15
Mike	15
Robert T.	15
Robert D.	5

Species Profile:***Aulonocara stuartgranti* Maleri**

The sunshine peacock gets its name for obvious reasons. Males when in breeding dress are a brilliant yellow, a real stand out for any aquarium. I came across my pair in a LFS, they were a bit pricey, but the male was so beautiful I could not resist. The female on the other hand is like most females from Lake Malawi...very plain, but she is pretty in her own way.

I had had my pair for almost 2 months, and still had not gotten them to spawn. I thought it was something I was doing wrong as they were both of breeding age. The male was 4" when I purchased him, and the female 3"...So definitely big enough to start spawning. Well, a short time later I found my female was holding. I was excited as these would be my first babies from a mouth brooder and I was so excited to see this whole process. It was such a new experience for me. After she had been holding for about a week, I moved her to a 10 gallon tank, where she could be by herself. She held on to this first batch for nearly a month, which was a little longer than what I had previously read. When she finally did release the fry, it was a rather small brood of only 9. She was a good mom and tended to them for a day or 2. I left her in with the fry for about a week, as I wanted her to be able to recover and eat well before returning her to the main tank. Boy, was my male excited to see her, he was all fired up and such a vibrant yellow within 2 minutes of her return. I guess he missed her!

The 9 little fry were doing well in their 10 gal-

lon. I fed them either frozen Cyclops or I used a super soft krill pellet that crushed up into a very fine powder. They seemed to love this food and acted like they were always hungry. That original group is now 4 months old and



Photo by Brenda Figah

they have grown to about 2". These guys now spawn on a regular basis and the broods have gotten much larger. The last couple of broods have consisted of 25-30+ fry.

All in all, I highly recommend this species; they are beautiful and easy to care for. They are carnivores, but I feed all my fish a good spirulina flake in the morning, and then an assortment of frozen foods in the evening. Another plus is, they are quite peaceful, these guys get along well with other mild mannered cichlids. I would definitely not recommend keeping them with mbuna or other more aggressive fish.

■ *Brenda Figah*

Species Profile:***Aulonocara stuartgranti* (Bi-Color 500)**

Aulonocara stuartgranti "maulana", also known as the Bi-Color 500 peacock, comes from the Chitimba Bay region at the northwest part of Lake Malawi. The geographical variation of *A. stuartgranti* along the western coast of the lake is rather pronounced. There are two populations in Chitimba Bay. The "Maulana"



variety inhabits the shallow intermediate area at a depth of about 5 meters, while the slightly larger "Maison" variety is found at a deeper locality in the same bay offshore. The deep water variety exhibits blue coloration with orange ventral fins. The golden band behind the head as seen in the shallow-water population is completely missing in this variety. (Konings 2001)

In nature where there can be more than 70 different species at a single locality, these cichlids need a means of identification for selecting the

correct mate. The rock dwelling Malawi Cichlids use color and color patterns for identification. The sand-dwelling species identify themselves by the type of spawning site or "sandcastle" they construct in the sand. (Konings 2001)

This species is one of my favorite peacock Cichlids. I would describe the coloring of the male as having an iridescent blue face, body and fins. There is a golden/green band just behind the gill cover from the top of the head/shoulder down to the pectoral fins. This band extends back to end just in front of the anal fin. The dorsal, anal and tail fins are blue with a white outer edge. The leading edge of the pectoral fins is also edged in white. This white on the dorsal fin provides a beautiful contrast to the iridescent blue fin and body. This variety of peacock is relatively peaceful and does well in a community tank with most other peacock Cichlids. I have experienced aggression when two adult males were kept in the same large tank.

Breeding of this species occurred for me in a 125 gallon community tank several times. Like all Malawi Cichlids, these fish are mouthbrooders. The male fans out a depression in the substrate (crushed coral in my tank) and defends his territory. This species

exhibits the classic cichlid mouthbrooding type of spawning behavior. The female releases eggs and picks them up in her mouth. While the female is picking up the eggs the male is releasing milt into the "nest" area where the eggs were laid thus fertilizing the eggs. The female will hold the eggs for 2 to 4 weeks in her "buccal cavity" which can be observed as her throat enlarges. She will usually not eat while she is holding eggs. I observed the "holding" female to hide in the rocks to avoid the more aggressive tank mates. Once the yolk sac has disappeared and the fry are free-swimming she will release them in nature. I usually strip the female of her eggs within three weeks of spawning to improve survival of the young.

I perform 50 percent water changes about every 2-3 weeks. The temperature is maintained between 76 and 84 degrees F. I use crushed coral substrate and limestone holy rock which both provide additional buffering capacity for our already hard alkaline city tap water. I prefer canister filters and use two Eheim 2217 filters on a 125 gallon tank. Twin three foot compact fluorescent reflectors with 10K lamps provide my tank lighting. I do not use light timers and only turn on the tank lights when I want to view my fish. I would estimate the lights are on 2-5 hours per day. This species accepts flake food as well as sinking pellet food.

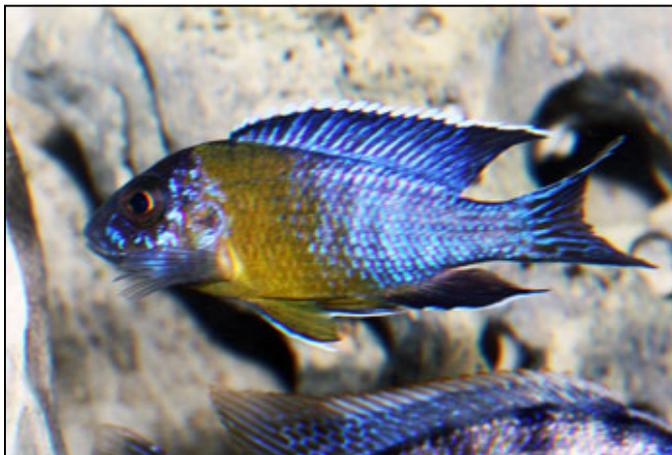
I highly recommend *Aulonocara stuartgranti* "Bi-Color 500" for a community tank with

other peacock cichlids. It is highly colorful, relatively peaceful, spawns in a community tank environment and is readily available in the hobby.

References:

Konings, A. (2001) Malawi Cichlids in their Natural Habitat, 3rd Edition. Cichlid Press, El Paso, Texas 79913

■ Tony Spinelli



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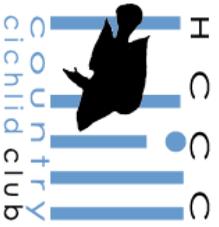
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