

# The Lateral Line

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January 15, 2006

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**Upcoming Events:**

- HCCC January meeting on the 21st. 12 to 4 PM. Austin Public Library.
- HCCC February meeting on the 18th.

Cover Photo:  
Neolamprologus  
brichardi  
by Jennifer Prince

# BAP Report

December BAP included some first in species spawn, and a class "C" spawn. Several members received extra bonus points for second generation spawns. Congratulations to Nick (Nick A) for his "C" class spawning of *Ancistrus temminckii* "Bristle-nose". Jennifer (Princer7) receives congratulations not only on her spawning of *Neolamprologus brichardi* but for her article about them published in the Lateral Line. Charles (Tangfish23) has spawns of *Neolamprologus brevis*, *Haplochromis* sp. "red back scraper", and *Telmatochromis* sp "temporalis shell". Greg picks up 5 extra points for 2nd generation on Charles spawning of the "Red Back Scraper". Charles also received a 5 point bonus on 2nd generation from Diane (Gryhouse) spawning of *Neo. multifaciatus*. Congratulations to Doc (Docusan) for his spawning of a 1st in species of the *Protomelas* similis.



The changes initiated in the BAP hopefully will simplify the process for the BAP Committee and for the participants in the program. Small auctions at the monthly meetings are still in progress and working out the details on possible "Trades" with other clubs is an ongoing project.

Current Standings	
Name	YTD
Charles	50
Diane	30
Greg	25

Current Standings	
Name	YTD
David D.	20
Jennifer	20
Nick	20

■ *Jim Beck*

# HCCC Monthly Photo Contest



**First Place:** Dave Hansen

*Xystichromis phytophagus*

The photo is very well-balanced; the entire fish in focus and it looks like no flash has been used resulting in natural colors. It is not easy to get a colorful male with fins erect, parallel to the lens, and still long enough to take the shot. Great photo!

**Second Place:** Jennifer Prince

*Lamprologus brevis* Mtoto Congo Zebra

Very nice photo. It is difficult to get such a small fish in focus from head to tail. Also very good lighting without hard shadows.



**Third Place:** Jennifer Prince

*Mikrogeophagus ramirezi*

Also a very nice photo. The background, in my opinion very important for the impression of a photo, is perfectly lit and natural.



Judging & Comments by Ad Konings

**Species Profile:****Metriaclima hajomaylandi**

**Other names:** Pseudotropheus hajomaylandi, Pseudotropheus greberi, Maylandia hajomaylandi.

**Common names:** none.

**Origin:** Lake Malawi, Africa.

**Localities/Morphs:** Endemic to Chizumulu Island which is located approximately 15 kms west of Likoma Island.

**Maximum size:** 14cm (males) 10cm (females) but have been known to grow larger in captivity.

**Natural habitat:** Sediment-rich rocky habitat at depths between 5-25 meters.

**Natural foods/prey:** Most feed on plankton in the open water.

**Water chemistry in the wild:** pH 7.5-9, 10-11 dH

**Predators:** larger fish, birds

**Brood size:** 30-40, it is prolific breeder once they start breeding. They normally start to breed from 5cm.

**Breeding method:** maternal mouthbrooder

**Husbandry requirements**

**Minimum tank size:** standard 3ft for a small colony with one male

Sex ratio: 1 male with at least 3 females. A larger tank (i.e. 6ft tank) is able to maintain a ratio of 2 male with at least 6 females. Rock work on eith end of the tank with an open

section in the middle will allow both males to have their own territory.

**Tolerance of conspecifics:** aggressive towards other males of its kind.

**Tolerance of heterospecifics:** they not aggressive towards other cichlids as long as they know who the boss is. The males

will defend their territory whilst breeding.

**Water chemistry in aquaria:** quite tolerant of a range of conditions so long as pH is above neutral. pH 7.0-8.6, carbonate hardness 4-12 dKH

**Temperature range:** 25-28 degrees Celsius.

**Foods accepted:** Main diet should include good quality vegetable based flakes and/or



Male hajomaylandi

Photo by Gerard Delany

pellets. Avoid any food that contains high level of protein such as tubifex, blood worms, etc.

**Special requirements:** none other than water chemistry.

**Notes:** It is a pity that these fishes are not more popular. Females have a nice yellow colouration without any markings whilst the males are also strongly coloured in yellow with blue along the body and yellow-brownish vertical barring. This is more evident when the males are fully coloured during breeding. The males possess egg spots whilst it is uncommon for the females to possess them.



Female hajomaylandi

Mbuna species of a similar temperament. I keep them in a species tank now that are breeding but have kept *Pseudotropheus* sp. "acei" (Msuli Point) juveniles in with them to act as dither fish. I would not keep them in with *Metriaclima aurora* due to the similarity between the two, in particular the males.

Finally *M. hajomaylandi* are active fishes and they are fun to watch. They will greet you when you walk into the room by swimming to the front of the tank.

■ Gerard Delany

Photo by Gerard Delany

The males will secure a small cave amongst the rock work close the substrate. He will then go about enlarging this cave by digging and then will try entice ripe females to join him in this spawning site. Once the female has spawned she will then seek refuge in amongst other caves provided. Males tend not to harass females once they are holding. The females will hold for up to a month producing approximately 40 fry and then return to breeding condition quickly.

*M. hajomaylandi* can be kept with other

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## 2005: HCCC Year in Review

I remember writing a "Year in Review" article for 2004, and thinking "how we could ever hope to improve upon the year we had?" The second full annum of our existence was incredible. Our membership grew considerably. Thankfully, we got some much needed ambitious new members who have already proved to be a huge asset. These people (and you know who you are) will, in all probability, take the Hill Country Cichlid Club to a level not yet realized. I am looking forward to the direction we are headed.

The January Meeting was hosted by Carlos Cardenas, owner of River City Aquatics in Austin. Any active member knows full well what relationship the HCCC has with Carlos. When he hosts a meeting, it's always a full house. Carlos provided lots of goodies on the grill and entertained us with a presentation on "stripping mouth brooders".

Lee Ann and I hosted the February meeting and I gave a presentation on Victorian cichlids. It was really humorous watching the fo-



rum. Everyone caravanned to Canyon Lake and we had a fantastic turnout.

The March meeting was hosted by John Yull at his house in Kyle. John shared pictures of his trip to Lake Tanganyika.



The April meeting took place at the Asian Bamboo in New Braunfels. It was a business meeting where we discussed details concerning the upcoming auction and spring show.

Our spring auction took place at the American Legion in Austin.

May was the biggest event our club has organized to date. It was the Spring Show and Awards Banquet. We managed a fish show

with 80 entrants and a big banquet of Texas BBQ. Awards were presented for the show, BAP, and our monthly photo contest. Caroline Estes of Amazonia sponsored our banquet speaker Pam Chin from California. John Nicholson from Caddo Mills TX presented on his passion, discus. Our own Carlos Cardenas was the hit of the show with his question and answer panel. It was an incredible day.

The June meeting was at Armkes in New Braunfels. Dave Shumacher (10 gallon Dave) treated everyone to a tour of the facility.

The ACA was in Ft. Worth this past summer and one of the speakers was a good friend of our club, Spencer Jack. He and John Sabo, president of the Winnipeg Aquarium Society, staying with Lee Ann and I. Spencer kindly offered to give the club one of his newer tanks on collecting in Bolivia. Ken and Lisa Boorman, HCCC charter members from Ontario also made the trip down to Texas for the ACA. It was great to hang out with them as well.

At the ACA we had a club room where tanks were set up and people hung out. It was a blast to say the least! The HCCC sponsored Spencer as well as a class in the show. John Yull and I both took our first national awards there.

August was an organizational meeting held at the Asian Bamboo in New Braunfels.

Carlos again hosted the September meeting at his shop River City Aquatics in Austin.

September was also The Federation of Texas Aquarium Societies (FOTAS) annual convention in College Station and hosted by the Brazos Valley Aquarium Society. A few club members made the trip and helped out throughout the event. It was a lot of fun.

October was auction month and was held at the Bracken United Methodist Fellowship Hall in San Antonio

In November Lee Ann and I again hosted a meeting where Dr. Hernon Lopez-Fernandez



presented on collecting in Venezuela. Hernon is a renowned scientist specializing in Geophagnine cichlids.

December capped the year off in amazing fashion. We had our annual Christmas party at the Bracken Hall in San Antonio once again. There were lots of give aways, great food and a big surprise. Santa wasn't there but we did one better and had Ad Konings drive in from El Paso to celebrate Christmas with us. He gave a presentation on Malawian cichlid feeding strategies and handed out Cichlid Press posters to all in attendance. The children were given treat bags and were all incredibly well behaved. Everyone at the Christmas party enjoyed a magical evening.

On top of the events of this past year, every month we enjoy our top notch publication "The Lateral Line". Many members submitted outstanding articles this year; so good in fact that more than a few clubs and web sites now look to our organization for material and content for their own publications. Our monthly photo



contest was again judged by the authorities in the related category. The photographic abilities of our members are fantastic. A look



through our photo gallery is testament to this.

We have always been, and will continue to be a family oriented club. Ad Konings commented on how refreshing it was to see a fish club with members encouraged to include their families in club events. Happy New Years everyone and a great 2006 for the Hill Country Cichlid Club!

■ *Greg Steeves*

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## HCCC Christmas Party

Well another year has come and gone for the Hill Country Cichlid Club, and what a year it was. We had 2 auctions, our first show, BAP, photo contest, and a list of speakers that is really pretty impressive. We got to hear Pam Chin, John Nicholson, Carlos Cardenas, Spencer Jack, and Dr Hernon Lopez-Hernandez, and of course Greg's Victorian talk. What better way to cap this great year off than with a Christmas party? The event was held at the Bracken United Methodist Church. This has been a great facility for us and I am glad we can continue to have events at this location.



Of course I arrive early and am not surprised that Carolyn Holtz has the whole thing set-up already and the place looked very nice and festive. As had been hinted at for many months, we had a surprise in store for all the members. Back in the spring, Ad Konings judged one of our photo contests and I had the honor of having some communications with him. Afterwards I was talking to Greg and said wouldn't it be cool to get Ad to speak at our Christmas party? He said that

would be great, but from what he had heard it would take like 17 years notice and \$11,367.89 to get him to speak at one of your events. Can't hurt to ask can it? So a quick email was sent to Ad and by about 11 pm that

night we had it all decided on when and where it would happen. The point of that little story was to fill in what happened next. This guy walks in and kind of looks around and nobody seemed to notice him or say anything to him. I greet him and we decide on some quick deci-

sions about his presentation and where to setup and such. I ran outside to grab something and someone stops me and said something about some guy who looks like Ad.

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Well he might look like him, because it is him!! I walk back in and there is a good pile of people standing around and chitchatting with him. This event was no different than any others of ours: we got started late. After much socializing, we finally get to sit down and get to eat some wonderful food. The club supplied the turkey and ham and the rest was a potluck type of affair with fellow members bringing some excellent dishes. We took our time eating and then moved on to the presentation phase of the night. I got up there and started doing a little recap of the year, but was getting a weird impatience vibe. I am scratching my head thinking to myself; they can't possibly want to hear Ad more than me, can they???? So I did a very brief recap, made my obligatory comment about 10 gallon Dave, etc. We proceeded to hand out the goodie bags via a raffle system. Dave Schumacher did a very good job putting all the bags together and solicited some great prizes. In addition, Ad brought posters for the club and signed a poster for everyone, which was included with the gift bags. The next part involved handing out the BAP awards and there was some great activity this year. The reigns were officially handed over from Greg to Jim Beck, who will be running the BAP now. Jim has been very busy re-writing the guidelines and rules, and for those interested you can find his book on the BAP at Amazon.com for \$19.95. Next we gave out the photo contest awards and Greg and Robert did a great job on the awards, they looked very nice. We also had a very nice plaque made for Carlos Cardenas and River City Aquatics. They

have been a wonderful supporter of the HCCC and make sure you thank him when you see him. Since I could feel the room getting restless, I turned over the mike to Ad who gave a great presentation of the feeding behaviors of Lake Malawi cichlids.

Afterwards it was great to see everyone pitch in and help cleanup. Ad had brought a whole box of books with him and was selling them to the club for ridiculously cheap prices. He also donated some items for us to sell and raise money for the club. He had many positive things to say. He mentioned that it was great to see such a lively bunch and he really appreciated and enjoyed the family atmosphere. He said it was a lot of fun to see the kids running around the room and having a great time. He also liked how we included the kids in the activities during the night.

Overall, everyone who attended had a great time and said it was a perfect way to cap of a great year for the Hill Country Cichlid Club!

■ *Dave Hansen*

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**Species Profile:****Paralabidochromis sp. "Rock Kribensis"****Common Name:** The Rock Krib, Chessboard**Breeding:** Mouthbrooder**Family:** Cichlidae (Cichlids)**Spawn size:** Depends on size of the female, but in general can run from 5-40 fry. At 78°F (25°C) the fry should be released in approximately 18 days.**Synonyms:** Haplochromis sp. "Rock Kribensis"**Distribution:** Africa; Lake Victoria. They are found all over the lake. There are a lot of different variants in the lake. The locale I have is from Kenya.**Habitat:** As per their name, "rock kribis" are found in rocky areas at depths between 16-82 feet (5-25 metres).**Max. Size:** Males top out at about 5-6", with females slightly smaller.**Coloration:** Both sexes have a checkerboard type pattern on their sides. Males are more highly colored than females. Females have a gold-yellow body with the checkerboard pattern, and some females can have an egg spot but not well defined. Males get a red anal fin, and have red in their pelvic and dorsal fins. They also have very well defined egg spots.**Diet:** Omnivorous: filamentous blue-green algae, aufwuchs, chironomids (midges/gnats) and other insect larvae.

Photo by Greg Steeves

**pH:** 7.2-8.6**Water Hardness:** Hard**Temperature:** 76-79°F (24-26°C)

I received these fish originally from Greg Steeves in Texas. He sent me a box full of Victorian

'goodies' (These were Paralabidochromis sp. 'Rock Kribensis' 'Mwanza Gulf', Haplochromis sp. 'blue back', Pundamilia nyererei 'Python Island' and Mbipia lutea 'spotbar'). Most of the fry were quite small yet. These were a smidge larger than the smaller fry so they ended up in a 20 gallon tank. I received

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10 of them. The tank is filtered by a Hydro-sponge filter. There is no décor or substrate in this tank. I fed this tank on assorted flake foods until the fry were large enough to handle the New Life Spectrum pellets that I had. The tank received weekly water changes. These ranged from 25-40% depending on my schedule.

Since this tank is on the bottom row of my tank stand, I did not pay as much attention to the tank as the higher tanks get. One day while doing some filter maintenance on a tank above the Rock Krib tank I discovered that the fish were coloring up nicely. I guess since I had stood there so long, they came out of hiding while I was there. They tend to hide in this tank. I imagine that in a larger tank with some dithers they'd come out of hiding better. I started paying more attention to this tank.

I kept up with the feeding and started adding in any extra brine shrimp I had occasionally. I figured that this could only help the females with egg production. Shortly after this, I noticed a small fish in the group holding. She was the smallest fish in the tank. Not knowing how long she'd been holding, I stripped her. There were 3 little baby Rock Kribs in there that had barely hatched. I finished the fry up in a tumbler.

I ended up placing these 3 little guys in with

some slightly older electric yellows as I am always looking for ways to make space in my fishroom, and 3 baby fish did not justify a whole tank to me. I started looking to see when they'd hold again. It seemed like it took forever! In the meantime, I somehow lost 2 of the original baby Rock Kribs. They were of an age that I did not expect them to die.



Photo by Greg Steeves

After a few more months, I discovered a different female holding babies in her mouth and stripped out a small group. These babies were again finished off in the tumbler. This time all the babies survived.

They were originally fed baby brine shrimp, and are now being fed flake food. They are currently residing in a 10 gallon tank with some clown plecos and a few baby *Synodontis multipunctatus*. The adults are still in the original 20 gallon tank I'd started with. I really don't like keeping them that way, but I had run out of larger tanks to put them into. It seems to have kept the aggression level down a fair ways though. It does mean doing larger water changes now though.

All in all, *Paralabidochromis* sp. "Rock Kribensis" is a very pretty fish that should be easy enough to appeal to most people.

# Aquarium Photography Part 1

I was sitting around admiring the photo contest pictures one evening and commenting to myself that we really have a club that is into photographing their fish. I have been into and around photography for most of my life. My father was an avid picture taker and I caught the bug at an early age. So I thought a series on photography and digital cameras and workflow could be of interest to the club. I asked Robert if this would be of interest to him for the Lateral Line and he said it was a great idea. This will be the first of about 4 articles. In addition, the series could very well continue if there was a demand for more advanced topics. This first one will be a basic introduction to the wonderful world of photography. Many of the principles and thoughts will apply to everyday picture taking, but I will be focusing on our particular passion..FISH!

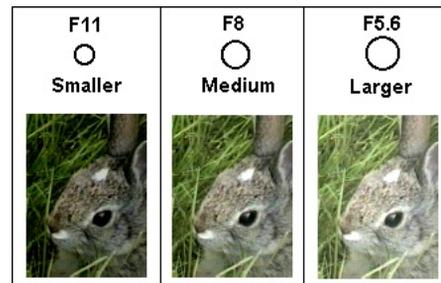
When it comes to aquatic photography there are 2 basic rules I like to preach. First, know your equipment, and second, to know your fish. The first article will focus primarily on the first part. I will address the second part in another article of the series when I discuss setting up and doing a photo session of your fish.

Whether you use a point and click or a DSLR, there are principles that apply at all times. Photography is all about light and knowing your lighting conditions when trying to achieve a properly exposed image. Unfortunately, most people put their camera on auto and fire away and this takes having to learn how film speed, aperture, and shutter speed relate to each other. Of these subjects aperture and shutter speed are the most important. First let's define aperture. The aperture is an opening that changes in size to admit more or less light (similar to the iris of an eye). The numbers on the aperture control are called

F-stops and referred to as F16, F11, F8, and so on. The larger the f-stop numbers the smaller the opening. In addition, each number higher lets in half as much light as one number lower. Here is an example.

An aperture of F5.6 admits twice as much light as F8, while F11 lets in only half as much.

But, aperture doesn't work alone when determining the exposure. Shutter speed plays a large part as well. The shutter speed determines how long the shutter is open thus how much light is reaching the sensor through a given aperture. What does all this mean and how does it work, especially relating to fish photography. Many different combination of setting can be used to achieve the same exposure. The key-determining factor is what effect you are trying to achieve. Here just one example.



Let's analyze this a bit. An aperture of F22 has a very small opening thus not much light is getting in, therefore you have a slow shutter speed. Now at the other end with an aperture of F5.6, which is a much wider opening, you get a fast shutter speed of 1/500 which is great when you are trying to freeze your subject. This is great when snapping shots of our fast moving fish. As a side note, most of my fish pictures are taken with a 50mm 1.8 prime lens.

An f-stop of 1 is the widest opening you can achieve, so you can see a 1.8 is pretty wide and is great for low light conditions or achieving fast shutter speeds. Shutter speeds play another important role when it comes to taking our pictures. Lenses come in all sorts of focal lengths. Zoom lenses are very popular because they cover a wide range of focal lengths and are very versatile. When you start to get into longer focal lengths camera shake starts

<b>Aperture</b>	F22	F16	F11	F8	F5.6
<b>Shutter</b>	1/30	1/60	1/125	1/250	1/500

to become a factor. The basic rule for handholding is the shutter speed is about 1/focal length. So if you are using a lens at 300mm, about the slowest speed you could hand hold at is about 1/300. Anything slower than that and it would be wise to use either a monopod or tripod to keep the camera steady. This is just a general rule. Some people are steadier than others. So if you are using a 300mm lens and you have an aperture of f22, it would be very tough to get a clear shot with a 1/30 shutter speed. For the most part when taking pictures of fish we want clear stop action photos. So your choices are either high shutter speeds or a lot of light.

You can cheat a little bit by changing the ISO setting of your camera. This is basically film speed. You can gain f-stops by using faster settings. An ISO of 100 is slow while 1600 and 3200 would be very fast. Take a given lighting condition. You want to use an f-stop of f8 and a shutter speed of 1/125. At ISO 100 maybe the exposure is fine, but the shutter speed is a little slow and you can see motion blur in the picture. Kick the ISO up to 400 and now you can get that shutter speed up to 1/250 and the fish is perfectly froze. Well, that is great you say, I will just use a high ISO setting all the

time. It doesn't quite work that way. In digital cameras, higher ISO speeds start to introduce digital noise into the picture, which isn't a desirable affect. There are ways around it and that will be discussed in a later article when we talk about the post-processing of pictures. I recommend that you use as low an ISO as the conditions allow. The DSLR's do a wonderful job at keeping the noise to a minimum, but it is something to be aware of anyway. Hopefully now you can see the relationship that aperture, shutter speed, and ISO share with each other.

The next area is more of a compositional subject and it involves Depth-of-field(DOF) DOF is the area or "zone" of a photograph, from front to back, that is in focus. 3 items affect this. These are the focal length of the lens, distance of subject from background, and the aperture of the lens. Let's tackle each part separately. First, we will discuss the focal length. The depth of field is inversely proportional to the focal length of the lens; that is, the smaller the focal length number of the lens, the greater the depth of field. For example, a 28mm lens has the ability to capture more of the picture in sharp focus than a 100mm lens. Next, is the distance of the subject from the background. Depth of field is directly proportional to distance; for example, a subject at a greater distance will have greater depth of field than a close-up subject. Therefore,

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you need not worry as much about a distant subject being out of focus. This one isn't as big a factor for us, because our subject is confined in a limited space and you will be in the area of the tanks. Finally, is the aperture of the lens. Normally changing the aperture will not have a huge effect on the depth of field for a distant subject or a wide-angle lens. But fortunately for us it can make a big deal of difference in a close-up or a photo taken using a telephoto or zoom lens. A wider aperture (small f-stop number) will result in a shallower depth of field. You can use this to keep either the foreground or background out of focus while maintaining the subject in focus. When changing the aperture setting, you will need to also adjust the shutter to maintain the correct exposure. After awhile you can get a good feel for DOF, but for those who desire there are all sorts of DOF calculators you can find online. I have included 2 pictures to show an example. In the photo I took below I have a very shallow depth of field. The subject is sharp and the background is out of focus, even though only a few inches separated the two.



Photo by Dave Hansen

Now the picture taken below by Diane Tennison has a much deeper DOF. Everything is in focus from front to back.

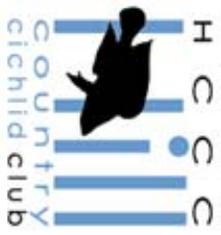


Photo by Diane Tennison

Neither one is right or wrong. It is the photographer's interpretation of what they are trying to accomplish.

That covers some of the basics and understanding these is important to getting the most from your pictures. Thankfully, today's camera's make this much easier than in the past. You can chose to concentrate on one part of the equation and let the camera help you out with the others. Next month, we will discuss all the options you have for cameras, lenses, and flashes (and other external light sources). I will try and give you all the pros and cons and aid you in making a decision on what is the best setup for you. We will follow that up with setting up and executing a photo session, and finally an article involving the post-processing of your images and the various tools that can be used.

■ *Dave Hansen*



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