

The Lateral Line

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Upcoming Events:

- HCCC May meeting on the 21st.
- HAS spring auction on the 21st.

Cover Photo:

Orthochromis stormsii

by Dave Hansen

BAP Report

April was a very productive month, but before I update you on the entries, I would like to congratulate Greg Steeves on his accomplishment on reaching the level of Master Breeder. His total points to this level are 1045. Congrats to you Greg and for your contributions to the HCCC.

Greg's entries for April consisted of *Paralabidochromis* sp "Uganda fire red", also a "C" class 1st species *Yssichromis* sp "Blue Tipped" and two 1st species which are *Lithochromis xanthopteryx* and *Pundamilia* sp "Blue Bar". A spawn of *Astatotilapia latifasciata* was followed by 3 more species, *Haplochromis* sp All Red Lake Edward, *Paralabidochromis* sp Chromogenys - 1st of species and last but not least an entry of *Platytaeniodus* sp Blue Neon - Class C, 1st of species. The Hap All Red's awarded Dave (Mullet) with 5 extra points for 2nd generation spawn. Congrats Greg for your accomplishment.

Congrats to Jennifer (Princer7) added 3 more entries which included: *Julidochromis transcriptus*, *Neolamprologus multifasciatus* and "C" class entry of *Eretmodus cyanostictus*. She has reached the level of Breeder Award with her total of 5 entries. Diane (Gryhouse) received 5 bonus points for Jennifer's spawn of the Neo Multi's. Congrats also to Diane for the spawn of *Lamprologus ocellatus* "Gold". Congrats Walter (Cedar Tree) on your first entry into the BAP with a 1st species *Paralabidochromis* sp "Uganda fire red". Congrats to Dockusan for his spawning of *Pseudotropheus Zebra* Hara White Top.

■ Jim Beck

Current Standings	
Name	YTD
Greg	260
Charles	250
Jennifer	85
Jim	75
David D.	55
Diane	55

Current Standings (cont)	
Name	YTD
Lisa	40
Eric	35
Dave H.	25
Nick	20
Walter	20
Robert	5

HCCC Monthly Photo Contest



First Place
Dave Hansen
Orthochromis stormsii



Second Place
Donald Davis
Tropheus Mpulungu



Third Place
Diane Tennison
Paralabidochromis sp. "Rock Kribensis"

Judging by Melanie Frasier

Species Profile:***Pseudocrenilabrus nicholsi***

Pseudocrenilabrus nicholsi is a wonderful fish that anyone would be lucky to have in his or her collection. They are peaceful, hardy, and beautiful. Hopefully when you are done reading this you will be ready to add some to one of your tanks.

The genus *Pseudocrenilabrus* consists of 3 species and 5 subspecies. It includes *multicolor multicolor*, *multicolor victoriae*, *philander philander*, *philander disperus*, *philander luebberti*, and *nicholsi*. Their range is very wide, covering Egypt to South Africa. About the only place they don't occur is West Africa and central Africa north of the Congo. In general they are a small fish with a rather deep body. As with most *Haplochromine*, the sexes are dramatically different. The males are larger and are uniquely colored compared to the females. In addition, the males possess longer rays in the unpaired and pelvic fins. In the wild they feed predominately on insects and crustaceans. They are also typical in that they are a mouthbrooding, non-pair bonding fish. The water they inhabit in the wild is all over the board, but most species are found in soft water. Now let's discuss our subject, the *nicholsi* in a greater amount of detail.

Origins and distribution: Originally described as *paratilapia nicholsi* in 1928 by Pellegrin. They live in the Congo region, and are found in-between and including the lakes at Upemba to Ankoro.

Description: Wow!! Looking at one of these

beauties in full coloration is incredible. It is an explosion of color and contrast. They max at about the 4" mark. They are deep bodied like other members of the species. The head is a beautiful golden bronze. The lower lips and some areas under their mouth are a very metallic blue. The body is a stunning red and blue pattern that runs the entire length up to the beginning of the tail fin. The tail is fan shaped and a light red with blue specks throughout.



Photo by Dave Hansen

The dorsal has a lot of red in it and some lines of blue and the front half is black tipped. The pelvic fin is opaque with very black edges. The anal fin has very similar coloring to the dorsal minus the black tips. Often the males will cruise around much like a peacock, fins fully extended looking incredible. Getting the idea that I think these are gorgeous fish? The females are much more subdued. They have many of the patterns of the males, just no

color.

Aquarium life: These are very easy to keep and should present no problems to anyone who has kept cichlids. Due to their smallish size they can be kept in tanks as small as 20 longs quite comfortably. I have had them in a wide variety of sizes and they have done fine in all of them. Tanks had sand bottoms and holey rock for cover. An interesting note is that they can be a



Photo by Dave Hansen

bit shy when kept alone. In an attempt to bring them out I put a few zebra danios in with them. That didn't work out too good for the danios as they were shredded pretty quickly. I stuck a trio of peacocks in with them and they were out constantly. At one point they were in with some Malawi mbuna and did wonderful with them as well. Multiple males did fine together and never had any violence aimed at sub-dominant males. In addition, they are not very hard on the females at all. The diet was a crapshoot. Not a whole lot is known about their natural diet, so I attempted to cover it all with a wide variety. I fed NLS pellets as the staple food and supple-

mented with krill flake, spirilnua, frozen plankton, krill, mysis, and some Cyclopeeze. They ate it all eagerly and maintained splendid coloration.

Breeding: I noticed the activity level picking up in the tank and started paying a little bit more attention. The first item I noticed was the dominant male was doing some landscaping of his own. He cleared all the sand out by the edge of a large rock and kept trying to get the females over in the area. He would rush a female, start dancing, and maintain this as he kind of floated over towards his spot. I didn't witness the actual spawning taking place, but a couple of days later I noticed a female with a mouthful of eggs. I left her alone for a while and she wasn't bothered at all. An odd thing I noticed though was she was eating pretty regularly. She was consuming very small amounts of flake. When the other would eat and expel some small morsels, she would give a quick burst and take some in. I have seen other fish snack occasionally like this, but she did it rather frequently. At about 15 days, I was moving some rocks around and figured it would be a good time to grab her and move her into a different tank. While netting the female, she spit out 8 free-swimming fry to my delight. On a diet of Cyclopeeze and crushed flake, they are doing wonderful.

I can't think of one reason not to have some of these guys in your tanks. They are small, beautiful, and easy to breed. They are not rare, but are not common either. So keep your eyes open and snag some next time you get a chance!!

■ *Dave Hansen*

Species Profile:***Pundamilia* sp. "blue bar"**

Pundamilia is derived from the Kiswahili (Swahili) word for zebra. The correlation refers to the lateral striping pattern found within the genus. Members of this genus are among the most brilliantly colored of all fish. *Pundamilia* are primarily planktivores restricted



Photo by Dave Hansen

exclusively to Lake Victoria. Gut analysis routinely show fragments of insects as well (Fermon, 1998). The cranial profile is straight or incurved. The outer rows of teeth contain pointed cylindrical unicuspid dentition. *Pundamilia* species carry between 2 and 5 rows of inner teeth. Ocelli, (egg spots) are often arranged in a cluster rather than dotted in a single row and do not cross the fin rays. These ocelli are large in comparison with many other *haplochromine* types and the orbiting rings touch each other. Differing *Pundamilia* species are often found cohabitating same

location. These intraspecific relationships are well documented in experimentation regarding water clarity and visual recognition with regards to mate selection. With the exception of *Pundamilia macrocephala* and *Pundamilia* sp. "red head", most *Pundamilia* females dif-

fer very little in coloration from within the species and on the genus level as well. *Pundamilia* individuals normally reach a length of 12cm. Exceptions can be found within this group as well with specific locales known for larger individuals. These exceptions (see below) attain in excess of 15cm. Further revisions of the *Pundamilia* genus will undoubtedly include further species and variants as only a portion are described.

Male *Pundamilia* are brilliantly colored while females are coal black, tan brown or a shade of grey with 5-7 vertical bars adorning the body. There is little sexual dimorphism; the

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male perhaps slightly larger than the female.

Pundamilia species frequent rocky shelves never far from cover. The evasive crevices between this substrate have helped the members of the genus survive the *Lates niloticus* invasion of Lake Victoria.

Pundamilia sp. "blue bar" is found near Hippo Point in Kenya. Hippo Point is renowned for stunning wildlife, birding, and of course a number of cichlids that call this area home. It is common along the rocky shelves near shore. *Pundamilia* sp. "blue bar" resembles *Pundamilia pundamilia* in color and body patterning. *Pundamilia pundamilia* is found in numerous locations south of Hippo Point in Mwanza Gulf. I do not know if this superficial correlation is a valid observation or a case of "look-alike".

Pundamilia sp. "blue bar" attains a size of 14cm for males, 12cm for females. The jaw contains 3-5 rows of teeth. The outer row consists of mostly unicuspid with some bicuspid frontal teeth especially in smaller individuals. The cranial slope is mostly straight with an indentation at eye level giving the impression of a slight nuchal hump. Dominant male body coloration is grey blue fading to a turquoise underbelly. Passive males have a green sheen and lighter body tinge. Seven vertical bars stripe the body. Another bar splits the gill plate and continues on across the head. Another vertical bar begins under the corner of the mouth and in an "s" shape passes through

the eye and on across the forehead. Two horizontal bars cross the snout between the eyes and lips. The pectoral fins are black. The anal fin is blue at the base, streaked blood red at the outer portion and is dotted with 5-11 yellow egg spots. The caudal fin has red trim



Photo by Dave Hansen

with bright blue highlights between rays. The dorsal fin is blue with a thin line of red running along the outer edge. There are black blotches at the base of the dorsal where the body stripping meets. Females are typical of

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other *Pundamilia* types. Seven vertical black bars line a tan brown body. The anal and caudal fins have a yellow tinge to them. Females sometimes carry an egg spot on the anal fin as well.

In a species only tank, *Pundamilia* sp. "blue bar" males are aggressive to each other. The fighting usually leads to torn fins. The fish on the losing side of this hostile behavior covers in a corner or hides somewhere out of sight. Even the females establish a hierarchy amongst themselves and are not above taking a nip at each other as well.

In captivity, *Pundamilia* sp. "blue bar" should be maintained in a large tank. Suitable tank mates include many of the Lake Malawi *Protomeleus*. We have also had good luck housing our colony with *Cyphotilapia gibberosa*. They are not aggressive with other species when given ample room. Our colony is part of a 125 gallon cichlid collection with the two aforementioned species along with *Orthostoma stormsi*, and larger *Synodontis* species.

Nourishing *Pundamilia* sp. "blue bar" is easily done with good commercial flake. Some protein matter such as white worms or brine shrimp supplements the insect matter that is presumably a portion of their wild diet.

Spawning occurs in the typical *haplochromine* manner. Gestation is about 18 days. The fry are easily reared on crushed flake and Cyclop-eeze®.

Pundamilia sp. "blue bar" is a good candidate for populating a summer pond. The larger size of this species and splashes of color make for a delightful outside candidate. So long as there are suitable areas for the fry to inhabit without being eaten, a season in the pond will produce ample individuals for the future of your colony.

References:

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■ Greg Steeves

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Species Profile:***Pseudocrenilabrus multicolor***

Pseudocrenilabrus multicolor or the Egyptian mouthbrooder, is a maternal mouthbrooding species native to Lower Nile, Lake Albert, Lake Victoria and more through to Uganda. The climate is sub-tropical with temperatures in the mid 70's to 80's. Native waters for this fish have pH readings of near neutral.

I obtained three adult fish (one male and two females) from Jennifer Prince. Males reach a size of 5cm. Ps. multicolor are primarily metallic blue in color with ruby-red spotting on the scales. The head region is a beautiful metallic gold color. Females attain a size of 4cm and are unfortunately, like most *Haplochromines*, a drab silver-brown color.

The fish bred in a 20 gallon high tank which contained sandy substrate and was lightly planted with *Anubias barterii* as well as numerous caves for the fish to hide. The tank had sponge filtration and had a pH of 7.5. I performed weekly water changes equal to 20% of the tank volume and used fluorescent lighting for a duration of 14 hours each day. I fed the fish Tetra Cichlid flakes, spirulina flakes, brine shrimp flakes, and live baby brine shrimp. I did not actually see the spawning occur; however, I did notice that the coloration on the male intensified before I saw the female holding. Although she was carrying quite a number of eggs, the male continuously harassed her. I do have some other dither fish

(3 tetras) in there and I think they help spread out the aggression from the male. Personally, I waited about seven days before moving the female out of the community tank into a nursery tank. This was a bare bottom 10 gallon. I am not sure how many eggs were laid, but the extension in the buccal cavity of the female



Photo by Greg Steeves

was quite large. When they were finally free swimming, I counted about 15 fry. The fry were a yellow-tan in color and about 1cm

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long. Once the female released the fry, she still exhibited extremely good care for the fry; she continued to protect them for another three days or so after they were free swimming. After I noticed that she was ignoring the fry, I moved her back into the community tank. The tank used sponge filtration. I started the fry off on freshly hatched brine shrimp. After seven days I started feeding crushed flake food. The fry grew pretty slowly.

This is an extremely easy fish to induce to spawn. When I received my first group, they spawned within the first week. After re-introducing the females to the community tank, it did not take them long to spawn again. The most challenging aspect of raising these fish is

that the fry are very slow growers. Also, behavior wise, *Ps. multicolor* are significantly less aggressive than *Ps. nicholsi*. However, both species are relentless during spawning and will continue to harass any females whether she is ready to spawn or not. This was actually one of the easier mouthbrooders I have had spawn. Typical spawns were about 20-25. *Pseudocrenilabrus multicolor* is an ideal candidate for any community tank setup. They can handle their own in most situations as long as their tankmates are not overly aggressive.

■ *Duc Nguyen*

Species Profile:

Callochromis pleurospilus

Callochromis pleurospilus is a maternal mouth brooder native to the shallow sandy habitat of Lake Tanganyika, Tanzania, Kigoma. It is often found near rocks and in large breeding colonies. The climate is sub-tropical with temperatures in the mid to upper 80's and the native water conditions are hard with pH of 8.0-8.2. I obtained a group of eight 2-2.5 inch fish from a seller on Aquabid. Males achieve a size of 10cm are beige to sand colored body with lots of red and white in the fins. The females are slightly smaller and exhibit the same color pattern as the male but not as intense.

The fish bred in a 20gallon species tank which contained a black/white sand mix and a few

small pieces of holey rock. The tank was filtered by an air driven Hydro 3 sponge filter and a Marineland bio-wheel 200 power filter. The tank has a pH 8.0 and a temperature of 78 degrees. I perform weekly water changes equal to 20% of the tank volume. I also added Seachem Tanganyika buffer and trace elements according to the instructions to replicate the lake conditions. I used fluorescent lighting 16 hours each day. I fed the fish HBH krill pellets, Omega one cichlid flake and live or frozen brine shrimp.

When spawning, the red and white colors of the male are intense. The female colors remained the same. The male constructed a

small pit, 3 inches in diameter, with several small mounds placed around it. He then began to display for the female, which consisted of him swimming around her in head down position and with fins erect. After a day or so she followed him to the pit and began to drop her eggs and took them into her mouth and started to nip at the male's anal fin so that he could fertilize the eggs.



Photo by Jennifer Prince

The pair laid approximately 15 eggs. After spawning the male went back to his pit and began to court the other females and the female went back to the group to brood. Approximately 12 fry representing about 75% of the total hatch were viable and hatched after 18 days. The fry were a light sand color and roughly 1/4th in long.

The fry were placed in a 10gallon tank with lots of algae growth. The tank is filtered by a mature air driven sponge. Once released the

parents did not exhibit any tendency to care for the fry. I started the fry off on Cyclopeeze. After a day or so I added crushed krill pellets to there diet. The fry haven't shown much growth.

Keeping *Callochromis pleurospilus* has been a rewarding experience for me. I usually don't keep sand shifters because of there sensitive nature. But as long as you can provide the proper water condition, keeping them shouldn't be to challenging. Despite that I highly recommend hobbyists to try one of the many sand shifters available to them. You will not be disappointed.

Callochromis pleurospilus, is an attractive, mild mannered, sand shifter that does not grow to large. It can be keep with similar or like species without any of the aggressiveness. If I were to breed this fish again, I would provide a larger tank with more bottom space. So if you thinking of trying sand shifters or just want something give this fish a try.

■ Charles Skillern

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Species Profile:***Astatotilapia latifasciata***

Lake Nawampassa is a small lake that houses remnants of the beautiful cichlids once found in Lake Kyoga. Lake Nawampassa is separated from Lake Kyoga by a small strip of swamp that is disappearing rapidly. It is here that *Astatotilapia latifasciata* is found. Unfortunately it seems that the haplochromine cichlids from the Kyoga lakes region are suffering the same plight as the mbipi from Lake Victoria. So far, a population of *Astatotilapia latifasciata* (as of 1997) still survives in Lake Nawampassa as do somewhere in the range of 23 haplochromines from the Lake Kyoga species flock. It is considered critically endangered.

Astatotilapia latifasciata is commonly sold as *Haplochromis* sp. "zebra obliquidens". Over all body color is yellow with vertical triangular barring throughout. Males turn bright red on the belly. This fish is a beautiful fish and unmistakable in appearance. It is one of the fish from the Lake Victoria region that should be no problem to correctly identify. Males will grow to 15 cm while the females will stay slightly smaller. If one intends to spawn this fish, it is best to have a small group of two or three males and double the number of females. Displaying aggression between males, it is thought, will trigger the hormonal urges geared towards reproduction.

It has been my experience maintaining this species that, despite its size, it is a relatively

peaceful social cichlid. It is robust and distinct enough to be housed with other species from the Victorian basin. It is best kept in small groups with at least double the number of females to males. In captivity feeding is of



Photo by Robert De Leon

no problem. *Astatotilapia latifasciata* will accept all fare offered.

I have been keeping this species for ten years and while everyone I knew was breeding *Astatotilapia latifasciata* with ease, I had not been able to entice a spawn. I'm still uncer-

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tain why these fish wouldn't spawn for me, but just as the curse of the bambino was broken, so was my dry spell with this cichlid.

I maintain my young group in a 55 gallon aquarium with *Neochromis omnicaruleus*, *Xystichromis* sp. "flameback", and *Synodontis nigromaculatus*. The tank is decorated with stones formed into caves, and long leaved artificial plants. Aquarium substrate is small grain earth colored gravel. The tank is cycled with an Aquaclear® filter. Weekly water



changes twenty gallons, help to maintain quality.

Astatotilapia latifasciata are prolific spawners with large brood sizes. The female incubates her fry for 18 days and will tend her offspring for up to two months post release. The fry are easily reared on crushed flake and Cyclop-eeze©. Growth is rapid reaching 3cm in two months.

In the aquarium *Astatotilapia latifasciata* will thrive readily on commercial flake. They are not overly aggressive and can be easily housed

with many of the smaller mbuna and *Aulonocara* from Lake Malawi. For aquarists intending to enter the realm of Lake Victoria cichlids, *Astatotilapia latifasciata* may be an ideal candidate. It is brightly colored, not overly



Photos by Robert De Leon

aggressive and can mix with a variety of other species without problem. It is a great all round aquarium fish.

■ *Greg Steeves*

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Species Profile:***Eretmodus cyanostictus***

Gobies had always caught my attention because of their interesting mouthbrooding behavior and colorful dots. However, it wasn't until I was visiting Greg's fishroom that I saw a particular species I knew I had to have. Not only did it have the trademark blue dots, but it also have vertical barring and a nice orange color.

Eretmodus cyanostictus is one of the Genus/species commonly referred to as gobies, the other Genera being *Spathodus* and *Tanganicodus*. I finally obtained a group of 4 wild *cyanostictus* (supposedly 2 males and 2 females) of a variant called "Kigoma Orange". Since they had to be ordered, I wasn't sure if these were the right ones, but I took a chance. My gamble paid off. Unlike many of the other *cyanostictus* species, these had the fantastic orange coloration and barring I was looking for. The group was placed in a 75 gallon tank with a *Tropheus* colony and 4 *Synodontis petricola*.

While housed with the *Tropheus*, they ate the usual fare of spirulina based flakes, pellets and occasionally New Life Spectrum. Although the *Tropheus* loved it, the gobies weren't very crazy about it.

It soon became obvious that one of the smaller ones (presumably a female) wasn't doing to well. She wasn't very active and was very shy.

Although she did eat, it wasn't long before I found her dead. I hoped a pair would develop from the 3 remaining fish. As time went by, the 3 would just hang out together. I was concerned that it was an indication that they were all the same sex or that none of them were compatible enough to pair up. I happened to sell off my *Tropheus* leaving the 3 gobies and *petricolas* in the 75 gallon tank by themselves.



Photo by Dave Hansen

After a couple weeks I began to notice that two were starting to separate themselves from the third. A short time later it became obvious that the two did not want the third one around them. There wasn't much aggression that I could see, but the single male didn't want to be around the pair except during feeding time. I decided to move the single male but by the time I got around to it, it was dead. I don't know if it was aggression that did him in, but

I presumed it was just stress from the other two.

The two fish remained in the tank. They are not very active fish but were nice to have when the *Tropheus* were in the tank. Their slow movements and substrate hugging behavior were a nice contrast to the hyperactive *Tropheus*.

I guess having the tank to themselves worked because soon after removing the *Tropheus*, I noticed some spawning behavior from the two. They spawned uninterrupted for about 45 minutes in the typical mouthbrooder fashion. I hoped that the female would hold.

Once *E. cyanostictus* spawn, you are treated to the very unusual behavior of this mouthbrooder. About 2 weeks into holding, I noticed that the female was no longer holding. I felt sick to my stomach as I quickly started looking for the male. Once I spotted him, relief swept over me. The male had a mouthful of eggs. *E. cyanostictus* is a bi-parental mouthbrooder. I imagine this helps ensure the survivability of the fry and the mother by letting her eat after only two weeks instead of the usual 3-4 week wait of other mouthbrooders. This probably also intensifies the bond between the pair.

The male held the eggs for about another two weeks before I stripped him (it feels strange typing those two words together). They had 11 fry. The fry were well formed and large with no sign of an egg sack. They were put into another tank and quickly began eating

crushed spirulina flake. Now there is another advantage to sharing the egg holding responsibility. The female will be holding again about a week to ten days after the male is stripped. Since the female only fasts for about 2 weeks, she can recover while the male is holding. Between the pair and the fast turn around, it seems they are in a constant state of holding. Each of the successive spawns have produced more fry than the last one.

The fry are slow growers. I also found that the tank needs lots of rocks for hiding places as younger fry are harassed by older fry. I found this out the hard way and had to remove a few bodies before I started adding cover to what was originally a bare tank.

From what I've read and seen, gobies are very territorial (either as singles or pairs) and will not put up with other gobies, especially when paired. I was lucky enough to be able to give them a 75 gallon tank to themselves and it has paid off. I plan to eventually add more *Tropheus* to that tank. Hopefully they will keep spawning for me since they have established a routine.

Because they appear to be susceptible to stress and can be very aggressive, I would only recommend keeping gobies only if you have adequate tank space for them (except maybe the smaller *Tanganicodus*). Once you have a pair you may be able to get away with housing them in smaller tanks, but I would not want to risk it.

■ Robert De Leon



The Lateral Line

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