

The Lateral Line

Volume 2, Issue 22

May 2007



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DIY Tank Divider

HCCC Crossword Puzzle

TCA Spring Show and Auction





May 15, 2007

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Cover Photo:
*Lamprologus
ocellatus* "Gold"
By Dave Hansen

BAP Report

The apparent slowdown in the spawning habits of our cichlids that took place in January and February are evident with just four reports being submitted.

However, Diane (Gryhouse) made April a productive month for her with a class "C" spawning. Congratulations on the spawning of *Paracyprichromis nigripinnis* and we will be waiting to read your article.

April included two entries from David (Dockusan). One report was on the *Copadichromis* sp. "mloto fireline makonde" and the other was the *Neolamprologus caudopunctatus*. Congratulations David on the two entries.

I was pleased my *Pseudotropheus ace* species, "Yellow" tail" finally reached breeding age. But for those of you who have/had colonies of these fish already know that you don't have to wait long for other fry to come along.

Although the spawning of *Neetroplus nematopus* was reported back early this year, Duc (Bassic) finally parted with some of the fry. Another congrats for you Duc and thanks for spreading the wealth around.

■ *Jim Beck*

Current BAP Standings		Current Standings (cont)	
Name	YTD	Name	YTD
Greg W.	85	Duc	25
Jim	85	Kenneth	25
Diane	55	Eric	25
Dave H.	50	Greg S.	20
Christy	35	Lisa Bl.	20
David D.	30	Robert	20
Paul	30	Nick	5

HCCC Monthly Photo Contest



First Place
Nick Andreola
Cynotilapia "Lions Cove"



Second Place
Diane Tennison
Aulonocara koningsia



Third Place
Diane Tennison
Cynotilapia afra Lumbila

Species Profile:***Paracyprichromis nigripinnis***

Paracyprichromis nigripinnis is found throughout Lake Tanganyika. Some of the popular sites where they are collected include Chituta Bay in Zambia, and Kigoma, and Msambu (Nkove) in Tanzania. The adults range in size from 10 - 14 cm. This is a beautiful fish that looks like the *Cyprichromis* in that it is "sardine-like". However, the 2 fish couldn't be more different in behavior.

Since I first was attracted to the unique "sardine-like" shape of the *Cyprichromis leptosoma*, I really loved the look of the *Paracyprichromis*. This fish, in my experience, has been a difficult find. I was on the lookout for a colony for over a year before I finally had the wonderful fortune of having some appear at an auction! As luck would have it, a fellow HCCC club member was also looking for a colony. We compromised, he bought a bag of 6 and I bought a bag of 4. I brought them home and put them in my 75g Tanganyikan Community tank. Their tankmates included a colony of *Cyprichromis leptosoma*, a colony of Gold *occelatus* and a trio of *Julidochromis regani*. Unfortunately, I lost 1 of the original fish within a few days. The remaining 3 began to thrive. All of the inhabitants of the tank began to spawn, except the Paracyps. I was at a loss! I

gradually accepted the fact that I would just enjoy the simple beauty of these fish without successful spawning. I continued on the lookout for more fish to add to my colony. I thought maybe the problem was that I didn't have enough. I knew that I had at least 1 male. Typically, these fish look very simi-



Photo by Diane Tennison

lar. Males and females are not easy to differentiate. However, the male will usually be a bit darker and I noticed that my dominant male will really darken on the underbelly. With his pelvic and anal fins almost turning black when he is showing off or agitated. For the most part this mild mannered fish sticks to the rock structures in the tank. The male, particularly, hangs out - sometimes upside down - in the crevice of a large rock structure. The females will swim around, but usually hang out near the same rock structure. This is very different behavior than the *Cyprichromis*, who are open water dwellers.

About 6 months ago, while visiting with

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Dave at Dave's Rare Aquarium Fish - he asked if I was still looking for *Paracypis*. I had gotten rid of my Gold Occie colony and my *Juli reganis*. I had also added a group of Moba *frontosa* fry (about 1") to grow out before moving to their permanent home in a 180g. I still had my original 3 so I said, "Sure." He brought me 2 wild-caught females! One was about half the size of the other, but both looked in great condition. I added them to my little group - not expecting much. I was SHOCKED to notice, several weeks later - that the smaller female was holding!! I almost couldn't contain my excitement! Within a week, the larger female was holding. Both of them had large bulging buccal cavities - so I was hoping for the best. I use a timetable of about 14-18 days when dealing with mouth brooders. If I am wanting to salvage the fry - I will pull the female and strip at that interval. I find that this yields an almost fully developed fry with little or no egg sac remaining. Within another week - both females were no longer holding... I was more than a little disappointed. But, my philosophy has always been: "If they did it once, they'll do it again". In the meantime, I mentioned to Dave that they had both been holding but had apparently spit at a very early stage. He said that this is a common problem with *Paracypis*. I went to my fa-

vorite resource, the internet, and found this to be well documented. Apparently, as the get older, the females get better at the process and will hold longer. Having no idea how old my WC females are - I wasn't taking any chances if they held again. Within no time - the smaller female was holding again. I watched her like a hawk! Ready to pull her at a moments notice if I felt that there was a concern. I don't have a tumbler - so I didn't want to



Photo by Diane Tennison

pull them while they were still eggs. I was hoping to have some fry development. Again, the larger female also began holding within a week. By the end of week 1 with the larger female I had decided I would strip. The small female was still holding. I got my floating breeder box ready in my 10g fry tank. For some reason, I didn't do anything Friday night but decided to wait until Saturday, right before water changes. I woke up on Saturday morning to find the large female no longer holding! DAMNIT!! I quickly looked for the smaller female who would hang out on the other side of the tank from the rest of the group. She would hug the vertical face of a tall rock structure. She still had a bulge! I wasn't taking any chances. I was able to net her fairly easily and she quickly spit 5 perfectly formed fry! They were fully formed with just a small bit of egg sac remaining. I

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moved them to the breeder box and within about 5 days they were eating heartily on freeze-dried Cyclopeeze. They had the *Paracyp* shape but were pretty bland looking for several weeks. Then they began to take on the beautiful neon coloring of the adults.

Unfortunately, I have not been able to witness the actual spawning of this fish. However, I did notice the male attempting to lure the large female to his rocky area. I was fascinated by the fact that this fish



Photo by Diane Tennison

does not behave at all like the *Cyprichromis* species when "dancing". The *Cyprichromis* male will meet a female in open water and turn his body almost vertically, vibrating the entire thing madly. He will almost float down through the water column will shaking and bending his body into a curve. The *Paracyp* male behaved quite differently. The female was in the lower portion of the tank, on the open sand bed. The male came out of his rocky area and swam towards the female. As he got close, he turned around so his tail was facing her and stopped briefly. Then he began swimming back to his rocky area but he was swaying his back half in a slow

sweep. If she didn't immediately follow, he would stop, go back to her and start again. I have seen this behavior in my *Ophthalmotilapia ventralis*. I recently attended a talk by my hero Ad Konings. He was talking about Featherfins. He mentioned that they will do this slow sway behavior when they are attracting females. It is believed that they release a scent which they are "swooshing" in the female's direction so she knows he is the right species for her. I continue to watch my small colony and hopefully will get more babies. The 5 fry in the breeder box are growing larger by the day and are not shy (especially when I have the food). I highly recommend this beautiful fish to anyone who is looking for a peaceful addition to a Tang Community tank or a species only tank. Be careful to put them with other fish that are not too aggressive or rambunctious. The *Paracyprichromis nigripinnis* is a calm neighbor who can easily be the last one at the dinner table if your other inhabitants are significantly more aggressive. They like tall rockwork, preferable with open caves. I wouldn't really recommend putting them in a tank smaller than 3ft.

■ Diane Tennison

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DIY Project: Tank Divider

This is a simple and cheap way to do a tank divider. This works well for larger fish, and can be made to work for fry. Fry do tend to maneuver around the edge of the divider, making it trickier for fry application, but it can be done. The example I am giving is for a 55 gallon aquarium, but it can be modified for any size aquarium.

All of the materials were purchased at Wal-Mart for under \$1.

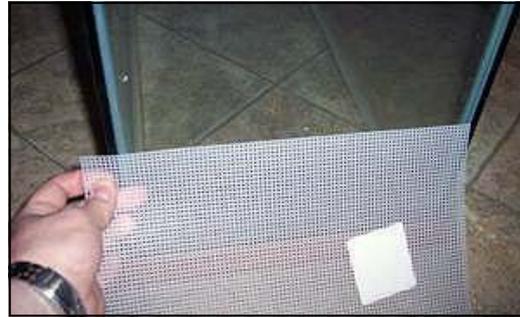
Materials Required:

- QuickCount Sheet - \$0.74
- 4 Small Zip Ties – I had these laying around the house.
- Scissors – Everyone should have a pair of these somewhere.



The first step is to measure the sheet against the width of the tank. This is best done via inspection.

We then cut the quick count sheet along the



measured line so that it will fit inside the tank. I made 2 of these to separate fry, and the first one I thought that I cut it too wide because it bowed inside the tank so I cut the second one one square narrower than the first. When in the tank the first one worked great and all the fry tried to find a way around the divider, but were unable to. The second divider the fry swam around the outside of the divider, making the divider useless for fry. It is better to err on the wide side when cutting this strip for that reason.

The QuickCount sheet is easily cut with a pair of scissors. For your own safety please do not

(Continued on page 10)

AquaTek Tropical Fish

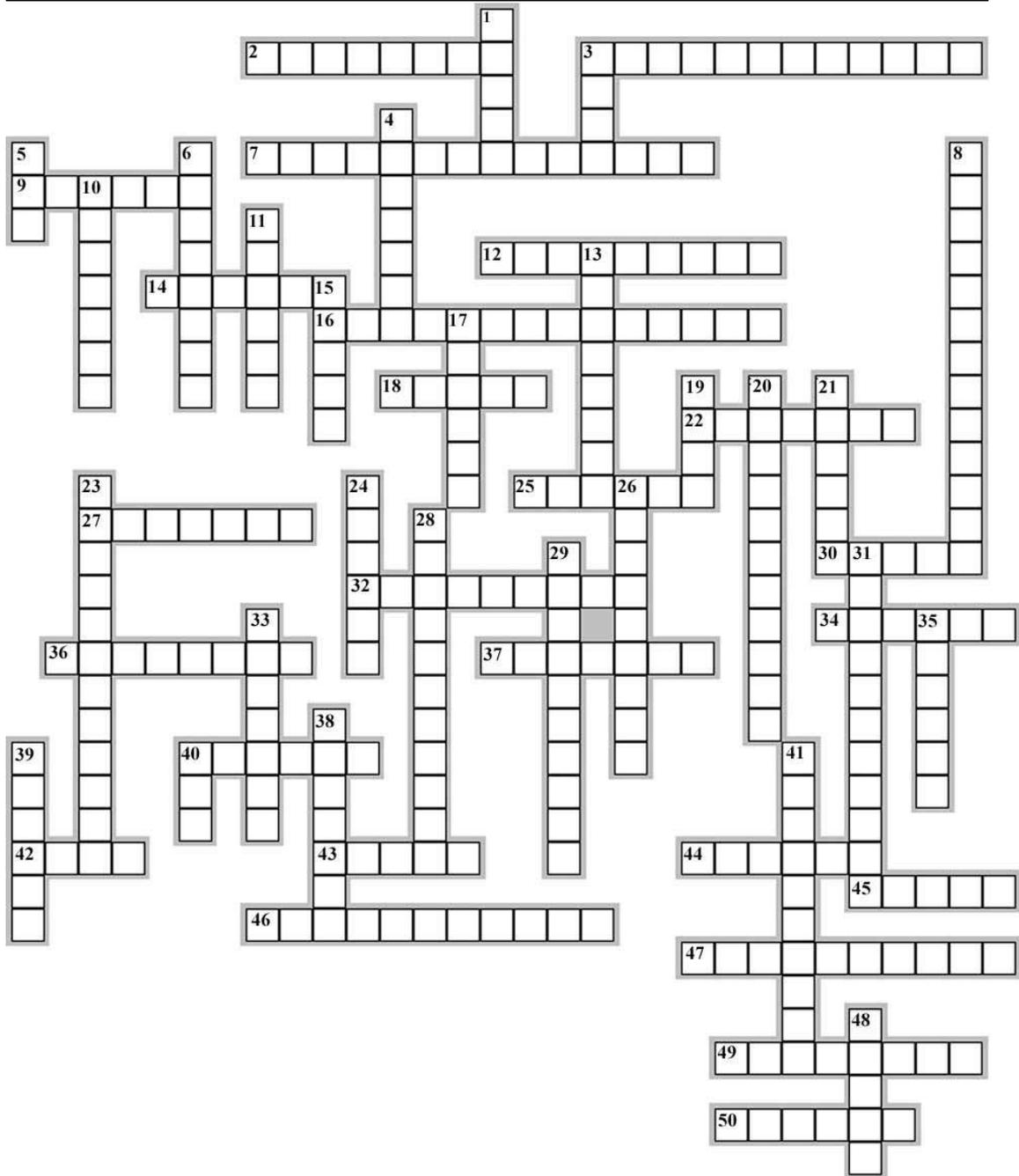
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Across:

2. Paired fins, one on each side of the body located behind the gill covers.
3. South American dwarfs.
7. Smallest *Lamprologus*
9. Genus pl.
12. A small mechanical filter attached to the input to another filter.
14. Delicate, large round flat fish from South America.
16. Large Genus of mbuna.
18. Unique species from Crater Lake, Kenya.
22. Blind *Lamprologus*.
25. ___-Blotched.
27. The study of the relationships between living and non-living things in any environment.
30. *Caeruleus*' cove.
32. Diet consists only of vegetable matter.
34. Third largest lake in Africa
36. Largest African lake.
37. Female sex organs.
40. Device used to clean aquarium water.
42. Refers to sexing of fish by examining the genital pore.
43. Treated with metronidazole.
44. A group of fish that swim together.
45. *Guarani* for "fish of little worth".
46. Cichlid named after a former heavyweight boxing champion.
47. Fish that eat other fish.
49. Collective name for the predatory *Parachromis* Genus.
50. An enlarged hump on the forehead of male Cichlids.

Down:

1. A subdivision of a phylum containing a group of related orders.
3. Dogtooth species.
4. Mildly toxic end product of biological filtration.
5. ___-spot or ocellus.
6. Jaw; one of a pair of mouthparts located behind the upper lip.
8. Tanganyikan pair-bonding egg-layer.
10. It is the middle element of the aquarium nitrogen cycle.
11. *Synodontis multipunctatus* nickname.
13. Tanganyikan species with 6 or 7 stripes.
15. To bring forth a new generation of fish.
17. A microscopic unicellular alga.
19. *Caeruleus* color.
20. Runs Red Zebra Tours.
21. Single fin mounted on top of the fish.
23. Process for filtering tap water before it is added to the aquarium.
24. Makes tank maintenance a easier.
26. Credited with eliminating half of all cichlid species in Lake Victoria.
28. Genus from Madagascar.
29. Feeding on fecal material.
31. Iranian cichlid Genus
33. A family of perchlike freshwater fish.
35. Deficiency in pigmentation.
38. Needs oxygen to survive.
39. Bald *altolamp*.
40. Membranous appendage extending from the body of a fish.
41. Peacock Genus.
48. Colonial animal that secretes a hard outer calcareous skeleton.

Complete this crossword and PM the results to Ripple on the forum. The first person to get all the correct solutions will win a \$25 gift certificate for **Dave's Rare Aquarium Fish**. The gift certificate is good for in stock fish. If no one gets all the answers, the person with the most correct answers will win the prize. Solutions due by May 22nd. Club members only! Questions/problems please PM me.

use your wife's fabric/sewing scissors. She will kill you if she catches you.

The QuickCount sheet is easily cut with a pair of scissors. For your own safety please do not use your wife's fabric/sewing scissors. She will kill you if she catches you.



After the sheet has been cut, it will not fit into the tank well. This is why we need to put it in the tank to measure how high we need to trim the sheet. This is different for every tank. Put it in so the bottom of the divider is on the bottom of the tank. Mark where the tank trim intersects the divider and trim a small section of the divider out so that it fits in place with the trim. It is ok to have the divider a little shorter than the



depth of the tank. It will just hang above the bottom of the tank. Repeat this step for both sides of the divider.



(a picture of the area that I trimmed out on the divider)

Rule of thumb is to never waist material if at all possible. This is why we will cut the strip

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that we trimmed off of the divider in step one in half.



We will then attach this strip to the bottom of the divider to offer better protection from the Cichlids.

I used 4 small zip ties. They fit in the holes for the divider and can be easily trimmed.



With the divider in the tank you can cover this bottom lip that was created on both sides with the substrate. When the fish dig they will not be able to swim underneath the divider. This also helps to anchor the base of the divider and helps it to make a better seal on the sides of the tank.



■ *Photos and Article by:
Dan Schacht*

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Texas Event:**TCA Spring Show and Auction**

I don't normally consider myself a superstitious person... Black cats don't bother me. Ladders don't bother me. Broken mirrors don't bother me. Apparently I need to rethink my strategy and be very afraid of Friday the 13th! The TCA Spring Show and Auction was held in

Irving at the Clarion hotel. I worked from home on Friday and spent the morning doing tank maintenance at my house in preparation of being gone for the whole weekend. Liz (my daughter) was excited to go. Normally she's not that thrilled going to fish events - but we were going out of town, staying in a hotel, spending time with some of her favorite people, and best of all - she was getting out of school early on Friday! I let her miss her last class of the day and we loaded up the car for the 4 1/2 hour drive to Irving. I had checked the weather on the

internet so I would be sure to pack appropriately. The temperature was supposed to be on the cool side - but all in all was looking to be a great weekend. We hit the road at around 3pm. First problem came up in Austin. I was making good time and was pleasantly surprised at the traffic on a Friday afternoon. It was backing up in South Austin, but not too bad. That is until I was rear-ended! The traffic had come to a stop on IH35 when - WHAM - I was hit from

behind. I'm embarrassed to say that more than a few choice words flew from my mouth as my teenage daughter giggled in the seat next to me. She doesn't often hear 4-letter words from me (now before you think that I'm all that nice - I say the words, just not around



Photo by Jennifer Prince

her!). I pulled over to the shoulder and confronted a very apologetic young man. He was mortified that he had not paid attention and smacked into me. Fortunately, there wasn't too much damage (dented and cracked my back bumper) so I took his insurance info and we got back on the road. I called Greg and Lee Ann Steeves to find out where they were. Seems they had left a few hours before me and they were about an hour from the hotel.

They mentioned that the weather was getting a little dicey up there so told me to be careful. We got through Austin with no other problems and it was smooth sailing. Next call from Lee Ann and she's telling me that there are tornado warnings for the Irving area! She is sitting in the hotel restaurant and they are watching hail fall! The sky above me was looking quite nasty. Liz kept asking, "Mom, what does a tornado look like?" It was really creepy! But, we finally made it to the hotel. Check in was great and we went up to the room. Nice room (although the elevator smelled a bit funky) - til I noticed that the A/C didn't work. Liz was elated! I, on the other hand, was not amused! My dad is from Canada (real close to Greg's stomping grounds) and I think I have his blood when it comes to temperatures! I do NOT like to sleep in a room that is above 70 degrees. I called down to the desk and explained my problem. They immediately sent maintenance. While waiting, I called Greg. He informed me that they had moved from their original room because of ants. Apparently you need to request a "non-ant" room when staying at this Clarion... Turns out my A/C is definately on the fritz. I go to room 2. A/C doesn't work in this room either. Room 3 is the charm and we unpacked. We met up with the Steeves family down in the showroom. Ran into Kathy Stearns and a few of the other folks from TCA.

Next morning I'm up bright and early. My hero, Mr. Ad Konings, is speaking on Tanganyikan Sand-Dwellers. My favorite fish, Featherfins, are discussed and beautiful photos rule the day! Mullet arrived from San Antonio

after having a flat tire and having to stop and change it in some pretty blistery winds (hold-over from that Friday the 13th thing...). Duc came over to the event - he doesn't live that far away so not a long trip for him. However, he told us that a tornado had touched down in Haltom City - which is where he lives! It was BLOCKS from his house. And it was less than 5 miles from our hotel (again, the emergence of the Friday the 13th problem...)! Ran into more HCCC folks (Tony was there from Austin, Dan was there from Wichita Falls, Charles was there from Houston, Curtis was there from Alvarado) and I'm sure more that I forgot to mention. Greg Steeves, local and nationally-known Victorian expert, spoke after lunch. Well, I don't know about the nationally-known part... This was his first speaking gig and he did an EXCELLENT job! Lots of beautiful pictures of the amazing fish from in and around the Lake Victoria Basin. Unfortunately, I missed the late afternoon speaker as LeeAnn and I were standing in the hall talking about teenagers (and the trials that they bring...). The banquet was to feature a wonderful menu and another presentation by Ad Konings. Liz and I were in our room getting ready for the evening (well, a nicer HCCC shirt and black pants... REAL dressy... LOL!). My phone rang and I had the most unusual call.... Mullet was looking for mousse! He had worn a hat all day and was looking for something to rid him of the dreaded "hat-hair". You know that we club members are also great friends when we can share hair products!! The evening was topped off with great food, an awards presentation

(from the show) and another stellar presentation from Ad (this time about the amazing sand dwelling fish from Lake Malawi).

Final day of the weekend was the auction. We got in early and had some great seats - right up



Photo by Jennifer Prince

front! There were lots of fish to be had and the prices were good also! I missed out on a few nice Peacocks that I had my eye on - but I guess it wasn't meant to be if they went home with someone else. Charles from Houston and Caroline from Austin helped round out the auctioneers and as always, did a great job. There were some great raffle items, and I bought tickets, but didn't stay for the entire auction. We left out of there around 2pm to start home. Liz was more than ready. She had enough of this weekend of "roughing it"... limited cable TV

and NO internet. She was REALLY ready to get home.

Dispite the tough weekend (car wreck, bad weather, bad hotel, bad teenager with no TV or internet)... it was a great time. TCA did a stellar job working with the issues that came up regarding the hotel, the food was wonderful (and plenty of it), and the event went off without a hitch! If you have never attended one of these events - I highly recommend that you check your calendar for the next one. It is always worth the time and effort to spend the weekend with our fish friends and talk about what we love -

CICHLIDS! Just try to make sure that it doesn't fall on Friday the 13th....

■ Diane Tennison

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

May 17th

Time: 7 P.M.

Houston Aquarium Society—Board and regular monthly meeting. Visit www.houstonaquariumsociety.org for details.

May 19th

Time: 2 P.M.

Hill Country Cichlid Club—Quarterly meeting at Bracken United Methodist Church.

May 19th

Time: 4 P.M.

Texas Cichlid Association—Regular monthly meeting. Check TCA website for details—www.texascichlid.org

May 20th

Time: Contact for time

Amazonia Aquariums Free Lecture Series—Located in Austin, Amazonia will be offering a free lecture at Eric's Pool Hall/Bar next door. Our own Greg Steeves will be giving a talk on Victorian cichlids. The event will be followed by an small auction. For details, contact Amazonia at (512) 451-0958.

June:

June 9th

Time: 1 P.M.

Hill Country Cichlid Club—Annual picnic at Landa Park in New Braunfels. Not sure on

time but check website for more details.

June 10th

Time:

Houston Aquarium Society—Houston Zoo field trip and Tour. Exclusive behind the scenes look. Members only. RSVP at (281) 286-2238.

June 16th

Time: 12:00 (Doors open at 10:00)

Hill Country Cichlid Club—Summer Cichlid Day Auction. At Bracken United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall. Check website for details and map.

July

July 8th

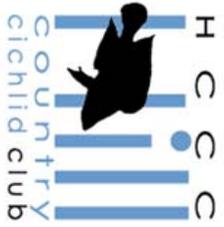
Time: 11 A.M. (Sellers at 10:00)

Houston Aquarium Society—Summer Live Fish Auction in Houston. For details and map, visit: www.houstonaquariumsociety.org

July 15th

Time: 1 P.M.

Hill Country Cichlid Club—Monthly meeting at Pet Frontier. 12315 Wetmore Rd. San Antonio. Visit events page for details and map.



The Lateral Line

Official Publication of the
Hill Country Cichlid Club