

The Lateral Line

Volume 2, Issue 16

October 2006



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Upcoming Events:

- Christmas Party Dec. 16th

Cover Photo:
Katria katria
by Dave Hansen

BAP Report

The entries for September cooled down from the last two hot months for the BAP. The month did start out with a class "C" spawn of *Cyphotilapia frontosa* submitted by David (Dockusan). And the last entry of the month was also submitted by David with the entry of *Neolamprologus brichardi*. David donated the *frontosa* offspring and the parents of the *brichardi* to Aqua Bid. Congratulations on the spawning and for donating to the FOTAS Fund.

Two entries, both 1st of species, were submitted by Charles (Tangfish23). The spawns consisted of the *Herichthys cyanoguttatus* and *Ptyochromis salmon*. Congratulations Charles especially on the Brackenridge FO Texas Cichlid (*Herichthys cyanoguttatus*). You'll have to write an article on breeding them, because I always thought



they were hard to breed and you could share your secret watering hole for catching them. Congratulations Charles.

Diane (Gryhouse) also entered September with an entry of *Cynotilapia afra* "Lumbila". Congratulations Diane, keep up the good work. The *Cynotilapia afra* species seems to be one of the favorites of club members. (Nick A just posted some pictures of his *Afras* and I see why they are a favorite, pretty fish.)

Just a reminder that October 31st marks the end of the BAP year. So get your last entries submitted before the end of the month.

■ *Jim Beck*

BAP standings on Page 11

HCCC Monthly Photo Contest



First Place
Diane Tennison
Heros efasciatus (Turquoise)



Second Place
Lisa Boorman
Apistogramma viejita



Third Place
Duc Nguyen
Neetroplus nematopus pair

Judging by Bob Nuchols

HCCC Event: Fall Auction 2006

The annual fall auction held at the Brackenridge Methodist Church on September 2, 2006 was a tremendous success this year. You would believe I would suggest the success was due to the amount of money the club collected. The club did fare well in the money category; however the success I lead to is the support the club received.

The church supports our function by offering us the use of reception hall at a very reasonable rate. This year the fee was donated by Dave's Rare Aquarium Fish which is owned and operated by Dave (DS1196). Thanks Dave for the support.



Photo by Jennifer Prince

Our auction would not be the same if Dave (Mullet) did not add his commentary to his auctioneering skills. You did a great job again,

Dave, thanks. Also thanks to Charles Jones for donating his auctioneer talents again and driv-



Photo by Jennifer Prince

ing from Houston to help the club. They make it look easy, but take it from me, first hand, it is not. Thanks again, Dave and Charles. And if it was not for Greg (GAS) donating the audio equipment, the auctioneer's voices would have not lasted long. Thanks Greg for the use of the equipment.

Setting at the table just to the left of the podium, was Diane (Gryhouse) and Yvonne (Lemurtx). They were the two ladies who never take a break and keep up with the mundane task of entering all the data on the fish being sold. This task is not only boring but a tedious one, making sure all the information is kept up to date. Thanks Diane and Yvonne for donating your time to help out at the auction again.

When you first enter the church you encounter our registration table. Here is where all the seller and bidder cards are issued, along with raffle tickets. This is also where the money is



Photo by Jennifer Prince

collected during the auction. This year Duc (Bassic) had assistance from Jennifer (Princer7). They did a great job, thanks Duc and Jennifer and thanks to Nick (Nick A) who was at the table for relief. He also helped Jennifer and Stacy, giving some relief to Lisa, by entertaining her children while she participated in the auction. Also thanks to Robert (Ripple) who keeps up with all the supplies: paper, pens and colored tags, and the registration sheets. He makes new bidder cards every year because the old ones don't make it back. Robert not only takes care of all of the club's printing needs but also maintains our website.

This year there were two new "venders"

supporting our auction and you may have seen them after passing the registration table. A tray load of "Specialty Chocolate Candy Fish" was available for samples and was made by Melody and Marty James. They were great and I only had one (not!). Also at the table for sale were monogrammed HCCC shirts, made available by Doc (Dockusan) and his mother, Virginia Dockwiller, the seamstress. Thanks for the support.

This year Nathan (Vaderjedi) took over the task of re-bagging all the leaking bags that take place during the day. Thanks Nathan for your support and a special thanks to you from Dave (DS1196), who did not have to "man the tank" this year. The oxygen tank and fish bags were donated again this year by Jeff (JJOilrig). He also brought bags of fish for the auction, so thanks Jeff for your support again this year.

There were numerous members who brought fish to sell and among those were others who brought bags and bags and bags of fish to be

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auctioned and helped make the auction a success. Marvin England and John Hansen not only brought a huge amount of fish but traveled from a great distance to get here. Marvin is from Texarkana and John is from Percey Ar-

(Tangfish23) and I (Bristlenose) who participated in the bag transportation. Thanks to all who helped with this labor.

I saved a very special group of people for last to give my thanks and the thanks of the club.

You couldn't miss them, even though they were not as tall as the podium. These were the boys and girls who presented the fish for viewing. They traveled up and down the center aisle, showing the fish and then presenting the fish to the lucky winner. They were relentless and never tired and even though I tried to give some a break, they wouldn't hear of it. Thanks to the parents for allowing your children to participate and let them know how much we appreciate their help.

Thanks to all who support the club during the year and a special thanks to each and everyone who participated in any manner to help make the auction a success.

■ *Jim Beck*



Photo by Jennifer Prince

kansas. Not only the gas money and lodging involved but because of the time involved in traveling, the fish were given a resting spot at DRAF. Then the next morning the fish were bagged again for the auction. Thanks to both of you for your time and support. Also Dave's Rare Aquarium Fish (San Antonio) and River City Aquatics (Austin) made large quantities of fish available.

Appreciation to the members who transported the fish from the preview tables to the auction table. There were many who helped with this and most likely I will forget some. However, thanks to Greg (GAS), and his daughter, Karli, to Charles

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HCCC Dialogue:**Interview with Les Kaufman**

It is with great pleasure that I present this dialogue I conducted with my mentor Dr. Les Kaufman in September of 2006. As my interest in the cichlid flock of Lake Victoria evolved, it became evident that there were very few people who could provide a first hand account on native aspects of these fish. I first approached Dr. Kaufman in the late 90's with what I now realize were most mundane questions. He graciously took the time to answer all my queries and has continued to present. Much of my education in regards to these fish, has come directly from Dr. Kaufman. The time he has spent relaying his knowledge to me can never be repaid or forgotten. I hope you enjoy reading this interview with one of the nicest people in all fishdom.

Greg: I first began corresponding with you during your tenure at the New England Aquarium. Could you touch on your life and influences before this time?

Les: I was born in Brooklyn New York where my dad, a machine tool and die guy and plant manager, brought a stream of tiny frogs and turtles home from vacant lots and pet stores. We moved to southeast Queens when I was 8, and there I became a marsh rat in the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge gathering snakes, plants, and other stuff for mysterious and unknown purposes. Did music. Got into birds and butterflies then continued with snakes and lizards. At 12 I got my first freshwater aquarium. Cichlids came soon after and bit hard. I began



working in the pet department of JJ Newberry's in Valley Stream, NY at 16, then graduated to high-end pet store running salt water section at around 17. I centered high school science projects on cichlids. In the late summer and fall I would snorkel Far Rockaway for marine tropicals.

I attended college at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore where I was introduced to orchid culture, protozoology, astronomy, and lacrosse. These all seemed to be legitimate reasons to ignore classes. I began hanging out in woods eating nuts and berries, tending my advisor's orchid collection, and staying up all night doing 19th century astronomy on a magnificent Alvan Clark 9.5" refractor telescope with a brass, mechanical governor. I taught astronomy for walking around money, while specializing in evolutionary ecology in the Earth and Planetary Sciences Department.

I was turned onto Lake Victoria haps by Steve Stanley, one of my profs. I fell in love, then made deal with Jeremy Jackson to whip my academic ass into gear in return for going to Jamaica and did so. I spent two summers as a plant geographer helping to map trees of Maryland. I then got invited on 5-month exploration of algal and coral reefs in eastern Caribbean with Walter Adey of the Smithsonian. This evoked some life changing experience. Jeremy made good on his promise in spades, and I entered grad school at Johns Hopkins beginning my thesis work in Jamaica on determinants of coral reef fish community structure. I finished my thesis on damselfish-coral interactions. From there I spent 2 years in Baltimore (while finishing up my Ph.D.) as a Research Scientist with the Chesapeake Bay Institute, leading benthic surveys in Chesapeake Bay using SCUBA.

I shacked up with a medical student (not first true love, that's another story) who wanted to move to Boston. Meanwhile I'd met Karel Liem, the cichlid guy of Harvard. We agreed to collaborate. My wife got placed in Boston residency, but Karel and I did not get our grant. Karel offered me a post-doctoral research coverage office, Harvard appointment though no salary. We moved to Boston in 1980. I spent 3 lovely years immersed in cichlid-dom and became friendly with Humphry Greenwood who visited Cambridge regularly. I married the medical student; Karel and Humphry danced at our wedding. Humphry taught me about Lake Victoria haps.

A large hurricane hit Jamaica devastating reef structures and Jeremy called the Discovery Bay regulars back to study hurricane effects. I began to get small grants which led to the first saturation mission Hydrolab in 1981, studying reef fish community structure. I continued cichlid research with Karel and we published a few papers. My career hit overdrive but my marriage hit the rocks because I was not making money. I had begun consulting for the New England Aquarium in 1980. I entered a dark period of continued post-doctoral work while teaching part-time at four universities (up to 3 at one time) and got a part-time position at UMass in Boston. I separated from my first wife in 1981. In 1982 I met my current (hopefully last) wife through a bizarre connection. I began doing nature cinema with Peace River Films in Cambridge, under contract to WGBH Television (NOVA). This continued through 1983, when I was hired full-time at the New England Aquarium as Curator of Education and Senior Scientist. I started working with Lake Victoria cichlids again in 1987. I moved through several positions at Aquarium until becoming Chief Scientist in 1989, same year as Lake Vic cichlid program

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became an official studbook, and later an SSP (species survival program). 1989 was my first expedition to Lake Victoria.

Greg: Many of us have enjoyed your articles that have graced the pages of National Geographic over the years. It is evident that you are passionate regarding the ecology of the planets coral reefs. You have widely noted the decline of these complex eco-systems in many areas but especially the Caribbean. Most recently it would seem that the exploration of Fijian reefs have captivated you. How did your relationship with The National Geographic Society come about and can we expect further writings from you in this prestigious publication?

Les: Tim Laman, a renowned National Geographic photographer, happens to be a friend of mine. We met in western Uganda, when his wife Cheryl Knott, a famous primatologist, was working on reproductive cycles in chimpanzees (catching piss from the trees). I was at the camp in Kibale National Forest with my colleagues Lauren and Colin Chapman, where we had a project together called "Fish and Chimps". It was really just an excuse to work and to help each other with our respective studies of haplochromines (me originally, now all of us), swamp fishes (Lauren and Karel), chimps, monkeys and parrots (Colin), and tropical trees (Colin and my obsession, for different reasons). Tim and Cheryl were visiting for Cheryl's



work, and Tim I think was after hornbills.

Some time later, Tim and Cheryl came over the house to show my wife Jackie and me some underwater pictures that Tim had taken. I'd worked with a couple of the world's finest underwater photographers, and Tim's work was their equal, really fantastic! I told Tim he absolutely had to expand out from rainforests to coral reefs in his National Geographic work. I'm sure he'd already thought of that. Tim kindly insisted that he would only do it if

I wrote to his pictures. Now, that is not how National Geographic works; normally they do not sanction photographer-writer teams. Tim writes beautifully himself, and is an accomplished scientist, an expert on strangler figs and birds-of-paradise, among other things. Tim went to bat for me at Geographic, with the idea that I would help him out on a story about biodiversity hot-spots in the Pacific. By that time, I was already being

called on occasion to help out the story researchers and editors at Geographic, and my colleague Greg Stone had featured my work in

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a story he wrote about the Aquarius undersea habitat. Tim must have been very persuasive, because the story was approved and I was assigned as the writer. At the time I was in chemotherapy and although it at first appeared that I could go on the Fiji trip, I wound up in the hospital for a respiratory infection just before



everybody had to leave. So Tim went off with his photography partner Zafer Kizilkaya (a well-known Turkish photographer), and boarded the dive vessel *Nai'a* for a terrific trip. I recovered, and amazingly, our editors at National Geographic approved a second trip to Fiji in October, which allowed me to go at last. That was when Tim, Zafer and I became a team. While in Fiji we quietly began on another possible story about why coral reef organisms were so brightly colored.

Tim pitched a couple of new stories including our color story, it was approved, and we were off to Indonesia together on another adventure. We worked in Bali, Flores, and Komodo, mostly. We really fell hard for Komodo and

hope to go back there to do some more work.

I hope to do more work for National Geographic, especially with Tim and Zafer, but this is up to my editors and the magazine, not me! I seem to be entering a good remission from my bone marrow transplant, and if that holds, I look forward to being back in the water and writing for Geographic again. Like so many of us, I grew up with the magazine and think of it as one of America's great institutions.

Greg: While at the New England Aquarium you invoked the Lake Victoria Species Survival Plan. This involves various institutions around the country housing founder stocks of cichlids. It is my understanding that many species collected for this program may now be extinct in their native waters. You also initiated the traveling "Nyanja" exhibit displaying the animals from Lake Victoria. How did these programs evolve and can you measure their success?

Les: You are giving me too much credit. I did launch the effort at AZA (American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquaria) to establish SSP's for fishes, but I had the very good company of Paul Loiselle, Doug Warmoltz of the Columbus Zoo, Roger Klocek of the Shedd Aquarium, and many other fine colleagues and advanced hobbyists, all of whom played equal and crucial roles in the birth of that program. Some of the top priority species in the program have no recent records from Lake Victoria. The zooplanktivore *Yssichromis argens* is one of those, although

there is a chance it may have been spotted again in Tanzanian waters. Another is *Platytaeniodus degeni*. A few have reappeared since the program began, such as *Macrolepurodus bicolor*, now apparently regular along the Tanzanian-Kenyan border. Some we found close relatives of in satellite lake refugia; a species very like *Lipochromis parvidens*, from the Lake Kyoga system, is one. We now have permission to begin reintroduction experiments in reservoirs and some naturally species-poor satellite lakes, but at the moment the funding is not there to continue much biodiversity work in the Lake Victoria region. Our hopes are with our students, such as Dr. William Ojwang, who is heading out of my lab and back to Kenya at the end of this week.

Although I frequently stir the pot at New England Aquarium, it is the staff there who initiates new exhibits. The "Nyanja!" effort was spearheaded by Dr. Mark Chandler, who is now with Earthwatch. There is some good news about "Nyanja!". Cynthia Lee of Toronto Metro Zoo has succeeded in leading the joint LV-SSP effort to secure funding to reproduce the exhibit for our African partner institutions. We have waited a long time to bring it all home!

The news from Lake Victoria itself is not entirely good. Despite massive expenditures by the EU and the World Bank, the several hundred million dollars a year generated by the Nile perch

fishery, and the Lake Victoria Environmental Project that my colleagues and I helped the World Bank to fashion in order to address local problems in lake ecology, economy, and public welfare, are still doing very little- not nothing, but little to help in alleviating poverty, malnutrition, and suffering around the lakeshore. Anybody who is interested in this problem should see Hubert Sauper's award-winning film, "Darwin's Nightmare". The film has been lambasted by the Tanzanian Government and the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization for being one-sided and untruthful. Well, it is entirely and almost only about the grave regional problems aggravated by globalization of the Nile perch fishery. So the one-sided part is true. But the stuff about the film showing untruths about that side of the situation, are way, way, way off base. It is always easier to deny unpleasant realities than it is to do anything about them.

Current BAP Standings		Current Standings (cont)	
Name		Name	YTD
Greg S.	360	Dave H.	50
Charles	350	Greg W.	50
David D.	165	Robert	50
Jim	120	Greg W.	30
Diane	120	Eric	40
Nick A.	105	Duc	25
Jennifer	90	Walter	20
Lisa Bo.	55	Lisa Bl.	15

Greg: As of late you have been involved in a project dubbed "MMAS". What exactly is this all about and is there a possible relation with the African Lakes?

Les: During the time that I have worked around Lake Victoria, it's been in varied capacities. On my first trip I was just sort of a science tourist. When one of our lead scientists, Peter Kilham of the University of Michigan, died in Kisumu on that expedition, I was asked by Peter's close friend from Michigan State, Dr. Bill Cooper, to take over for him as leader of Lake Victoria Research Team, then under NOAA funding. We were all very shook up, but I did eventually do as Bill suggested. In 1992, the National Science Foundation funded me to lead a lake-wide workshop on what was happening to Victoria, its fishes and fisheries, and that got a lot of attention from the scientific community, the media, and The World Bank. The Bank asked me if I would be willing to assist in putting together, on behalf of the east African region, a request for support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). These things work in slightly odd ways, yes. I spent several months of visits to Africa over about a year and a half moving about the lake and soliciting the assistance of my scientific colleagues and government ministers, to put this proposal together. In this task, I was lead for "Biodiversity, Fisheries, and Exotic Species", and my colleague Bob Hecky held a similar role for "Limnology and Water Quality".

What the scientific community collectively wanted for Lake Victoria was a system of

adaptive management. Adaptive management is a term whose meaning was formalized by the great senior ecologist "Buzz" Holling. It draws heavily upon the philosophies put forward by Aldo Leopold. The basic idea is that we really never will fully understand nature, and certainly can not imagine that we are in control of it. However, things that people do to the environment are now promulgated on such a huge scale that they have very great impacts, not only on nature, but on all of the people dependent upon it. Due to all this uncertainty, our activities that impact the environment should be conducted as experiments. That is, in a controlled fashion and beginning on a small scale. If they work, great, scale up. If they do more harm than good, then we should obviously abandon that particular gambit.

Adaptive management became the primary objective of the Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project (the GEF project). We conceived a program with all the necessary components: an education and outreach effort to promote a vision for the ecological and economic health of Lake Victoria, a monitoring capability in the lake for both native and introduced species and water quality, water-

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shed restoration and monitoring, and fisheries restoration and monitoring. We also advanced the notion of protected areas, to serve as indicators of what the lake ecosystem might look like if a particular management action were not carried out. Many of the specific ideas for investment came from stakeholder groups who met all around the lake during the preparatory phase of the grant. I was greatly emboldened in all this work when I was honored with a special award from the Pew Charitable Trusts for my work in Lake Victoria. This was called the "Pew Scholarship in Conservation and the Environment", and I was the first aquatic biologist to get one, in the first class of Pew Fellows (in 1990). However, the award has since become a marine program and is now known as the Pew Fellowship in Marine Conservation.

LVEMP was funded to the tune of about \$77 million US to the three east African nations, and it went on to do many good things. However, nearly every scientifically important provision in the original plan was ignored, and what exists now can hardly be considered adaptive management. It is more like a fisheries mining enterprise.

I was very disappointed and frustrated by this experience. Apparently it would take time to make all this work in Africa. However, that didn't stop me from trying elsewhere. I feel strongly that environmental science has an important role to play in society, specifically to help society go gently on our life support system, and to anticipate and adapt to changes beyond our control.

So, as one step I started working in earnest in the Gulf of Maine, right at home around Boston. With two close colleagues, I established a new graduate training program called "The Seasing Eye". Students in this program are required to craft a thesis that is equal parts theory and modeling, experiment, and undersea (or underlake) exploration. The other requirement, the most important, was that these students would join me in working side by side with local fishermen, whenever possible on their own fishing boats. I also became active on several committees of the New England Fishery Management Council and the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, always trying to advance the principles of adaptive management, here in the New England region.

I'm still active in that, but that hasn't gone very quickly or well either. Lately there is much greater hope around the Gulf of Maine because there are new policy initiatives afoot that are very promising.

So, I shifted my most enthusiastic energies to California, where it seemed things were a bit more progressive. There we have had some real success, or at least the beginnings of success, but once again as part of a very large team. Out of nowhere in 2000 I lucked out when colleagues from the University of California at Davis dubbed me "Distinguished Research Fellow", and my family and I took off for a summer stay at the Bodega Marine Laboratory north of San Francisco. While there I studied up about rockfishes (which have a lot in common with cichlids, actually).

After that, along with my fellow Pew Fellows Burr Heneman, a policy expert, and Rod Fujita, a vocal marine conservationist and Boston University alum, we worked with Tom Barnes of the California Department of Fish and Game under funds from the David and Lucille Packard Foundation, to create a management plan for California's near-shore fisheries that would be in compliance with a new law called the Marine Life Management Act. The MLMA gave us the authority needed to create a new kind of fishery management plan, one based on the entire ecosystem and not just one species at a time. We also wrote into the regulations that estimates of the numbers of fish that could be caught must eventually be based upon monitoring that compares otherwise similar habitat that is under protection, versus open to exploitation. The struggle in California has had its ups and downs, but incredibly, our movie star Governor Schwarzenegger has gone whole hog for ocean conservation and has been one of our biggest allies. So there is great hope for California.

With California moving along, I wanted to get back and try this same stuff out on coral reefs. A few years ago I was asked to help Conservation International to organize a conference called "Defying Ocean's End". I co-chaired a working group for this conference with my old graduate advisor, Jeremy Jackson. The workshop was called "Restoring and Maintaining Marine Ecosystem Function". We published a book out of the DOE conference, and our working group has a chapter in that book if anybody is curious. To anybody who had followed my peregrinations from Africa to New

England to California, it would all look very, very familiar. We basically advocated adaptive management of near shore tropical ecosystems as the best way to ensure marine conservation.

After the DOE conference, friends from Conservation International approached me to help in writing a grant proposal to actually do some of the stuff that we talked about in the workshop. So I did. Thus, we created the Marine Management Area Science program proposal (MMAS). The proposal was put before the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, and it was funded for about half of what we requested, still a great deal of money. I became Senior Principal Investigator, and we hired a Senior Director, Dr. Leah Bunce (formerly of NOAA), to administer the project.

With a lot of help from our ten-member Science Advisory Committee, MMAS has now been planned out and it is now ramping up about 30 different projects or "activities" as they are called. But the bottom line, right across the board, is science for adaptive management. The project is basically in two parts. One is to set up a global observatory of sites where MMA's have been established. At each site, the MMA system is turned into a sort of ecological telescope to observe human impacts on the marine system, and to find out how well management and conservation efforts are working. The four initial nodes are in Brazil, Belize, the eastern Pacific, and Fiji.

The other half of MMAS is to do basic research in natural and social science that allows

us to run the global observatory better. We are investigating new monitoring methods, information technology for decision tools to help managers, deep sea exploration to better understand how marine habitats are linked, and studies in biotechnology to develop new ways to diagnose the health of coral reef, sea grass and mangrove creatures and their communities. Our hope is to know when things are going wrong long before the corals, sea grass, or mangrove trees turn sick and die, by which time it is often too late for this generation.

I am working very hard on this project now. Meanwhile, I am hoping to return to Lake Victoria and help to put adaptive management into place there, at last, for the benefit of everybody living around the lake.

Greg: What can Joe Q. Hobbyist do to further conservation efforts involving their favorite animals?

Les: There are several things that all of us can do to promote conservation of our charges in their wild homes.

The first, and the easiest, would be to work together to reshape the tropical fish industry so that the benefits of our purchases in wealthy countries flow maximally to the peoples who are the environmental stewards of aquarium organisms in the wild.

There are many ways to do this. First, we can insist that a significant percentage of every fish and piece of related gear that is sold, go to a special conservation fund. PJAC could organize this, or it could be done any number of

other ways, closer to the grass roots. But to work big, it must ultimately scale up to the full extent of the aquarium industry. The fund could also attract philanthropic donations from a variety of publicly shared companies and private sources. These funds should be large enough to establish an endowment. The interest from the endowment should go to improving the lot of local communities designated as partner environmental stewards. The expenditures could be on anything, from education, to health, to setting up protections for local reserves. Imagine turning the Lake Kyoga Satellites into a national park to protect remnants of the Lake Victoria haplochromine fauna! Imagine new schools and public health clinics going up, with a haplochromine as their insignia! Imagine locals having great pride in their tiny, colorful fishes, and becoming the guardians of clear, healthy waters. This kind of project could work very well as a partnership on the US side between the aquarium industry and the public aquariums, but I would recommend that rank and file hobbyists remain front and center in the effort, to keep it close to the heart. Want inspiration? Look up Project Piaba, and its effort to turn the Amazon cardinal fish trade into something good for local residents in Brazil.

Want to do something just as an individual? Become a pen pal to a schoolchild in Uganda, Kenya, or Tanzania. Help that kid get through school, meanwhile learning all he or she can about Lake Victoria, its treasures, and how to ensure that he or she can continue to depend upon the lake. Remember, even at worst, the kid will eventually know more than you will,

especially once he or she has the benefit of connectivity and information that you can provide. That kid will eventually become an influential citizen or leader at lakeside, holding and promoting a vision of health for the lake and its peoples.

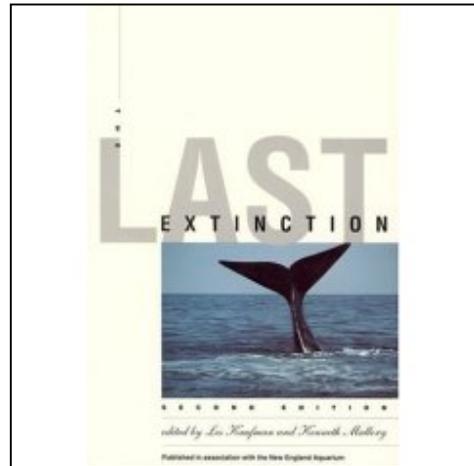
You can also simply support an organization doing good work around Lake Victoria. Check out Partners for Health, and see what they are doing in the Great Lakes region- the countries of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, Malawi, Burundi, Rwanda. Find out what the human health problems are out there. If you want the fishes to survive, the people must be secure first.

My recommendation is to make the first thing happen. It would take a lot of work and commitment. But....you asked!

Greg: You have mentioned William Ojwang with immense respect many times. Now that he is returning to Kenya, what is he working on that has held him in such esteem? Are there contemporaries to William in Uganda and Tanzania?

Les: Ask William for yourself. He is here for a few more days. Also, Mbabazi Dismas and Wilson Mwanja in Uganda. There are others. All students or beneficiaries of LVEMP's training program. I suggest William as your first stop.

Greg: You have collaborated with Ken Mallory on a wonderful book titled "The Last Extinction. You have countless scientific publications to your credit along with various



magazine articles. What projects are you presently involved in and what lies in wait?

Les: "The Last Extinction" was actually an anthology, so in reality we collaborated with five other authors, as well. And my publications are hardly countless- I haven't counted them lately but they're rather average for somebody at my stage of career. What is odd, but I seem to have gotten away with it, has been my range of interests and strong center in natural history. My current research projects include continued work on cichlids and studies of food webs and forage fishes in the Gulf of Maine. I'm continuing my collaborations tracking fishes in and out of protected areas on the Florida reefs using acoustic telemetry. Most of my time, though, is dedicated to the MMAS program, with my sleeves rolled up on several of the research activities. I'm also working with my National Geographic buddies on a popular book about coral reefs and if I'm lucky will get to do more articles for the magazine. I love to teach and

look forward to returning from medical leave to a new course on the ecology of Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, and a revamped graduate course, called "Biological Design for Sustainable Development" featuring African case studies, among others. Above all else, however, I'm getting more interested in the links between the health of marine ecosystems, and human health and welfare. I'm deeply entertained by the study of nature, but am feeling the shortness of time, and wish to translate my knowledge into wisdom that can help people lead better lives. And personally I'd like to get back to having fun as an explorer again, though I think I can pull off both in one stroke.

Greg: Recently you were rediagnosed with the CLL form of leukemia. I can imagine that this year has been trying for you and your family. Would you update your condition? Do you have any thoughts to share with others that are battling similar foes?

Les: It's called CLL (chronic lymphocytic leukemia), and I was first diagnosed back in 1997 and given five to seven years to live. It's nine and one half years now. As a statistically inclined biologist, I knew that it was hard to apply that statistic to me as an individual, but it was still a shocker. I was treated once with chemotherapy and monoclonal antibodies, and got more than two years of freedom from illness, but then the disease came back (as indeed expected) and I went through chemo again beginning last October. This time, it was recommended that I go for the bone marrow transplant, which I did, with my sister as a perfect

match. I am now more than two months out and feeling well, though of course out of crowds, trains, planes, buses, sushi, kids, dogs, teaching, and alas, Africa and the tropical ocean, for about a year. It is a miracle and a gift that I can do so much of my work from a computer now.

It was strange to be diagnosed with this cancer that was thought more typical of folks twenty or thirty years my senior. But a few years later, my mom was diagnosed with it, and two years after that, it killed her. I've benefited from several advances in treatment that probably just saved me, and being in Boston, a center for CLL research, is fortunate as well. My advice to anybody facing the same kind of challenge is to read my colleague Stephen Schneider's book, "The Patient From Hell", and to be a strong and knowledgeable advocate for themselves. A powerful spirit and strong will to live, which I happen to have, can only help. A loving and dedicated spouse or friend may not be essential, but I could not imagine going through this without my wife and lover, Jackie Liederman, by my side, and regret the impact that this has had on her and on my 19-year-old son, Justin. Along the way, I've been greatly comforted by family, students, by other friends and colleagues including several from Africa and Europe, members of my department at BU, and especially my associates of more than a quarter century from the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology and the New England Aquarium. I've received many kind words from acquaintances in the aquarium hobby and appreciate them all. It is important not to

feel singled out or persecuted. We all have problems, we are all mortal, and we can help each other through it until that moment when neither personal pain nor gains are issues any longer. Fortunately the problems of this world and lately our own political leadership are highly distracting.

Greg: I really appreciate your time. Your life thus far has been a fascinating ride and I thank you for sharing. The Hill Country Cichlid Club membership is very hopeful that circumstances will allow you to be our feature speaker when we host FOTAS in September of 2007. We have been honored by your judging of our photo contests and insightful comments. Per-

haps our club could take the lead in implementing some of the suggestions you have made in regards to cichlid conservation. You have truly been a bridge between science and the aquarium hobby and on behalf of all cichlid hobbyists, thank you for your devotion to the fish we all love.

Les: I hope so too!

Photo credits:

Mike Ratunamasa - NAI'A - DIVE FIJI & BEYOND - PACIFIC ISLANDS TRAVEL
The Pacific experts. explore@naia.com.fj

Boston University - http://www.bu.edu/biology/Faculty_Staff/lesk.html

Special Events: F.O.T.A.S. 2006

The Houston Aquarium Society proudly brings you F.O.T.A.S. 2006. The event will take place October 22nd—24th. The host hotel will be:

The HOTEL SOFITEL
425 North Sam Houston Parkway East
Houston, Texas 77060
281-445-9000

Speakers for this year's convention will include:

Heiko Bleher
Rusty Wessel
Jeff Senske

Schedule of Events

Friday October 20th:

3:00 p.m. Registration Opens

4:00 p.m. Show Room Opens
10:00 p.m. Registration Closes
11:00 p.m. Mystery Speaker
MIDNIGHT Fish Trivia

Saturday October 21st :

8:00 a.m. Registration Opens
9:00 a.m. Speaker #1 - Brett Rowley
10:30 a.m. Speaker #2 - ADG's Jeff Senske
12:00 p.m. Lunch - on your own
2:00 p.m. Speaker #3 - Heiko Bleher
3:30 p.m. Speaker #4 - Rusty Wessel
7:30 p.m. Awards Banquet - Heiko Bleher presentation

Sunday October 22nd:

9:00 a.m. Auction Check In
10:00 a.m. Auction Begins

Event Calendar:**Upcoming Events in Texas**

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

October:

October 20-22nd

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

December:

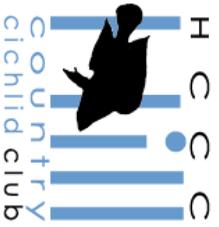
December 16th

Time: 5 P.M.— 9 P.M.

Hill Country Cichlid Club Christmas Party. Our year end bash. We will be holding it at the same place as last year (Bracken United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall). Open to club members and their families only. Additional

details to be worked out.

With the upcoming events like F.O.T.A.S. 2006, the Hill Country Cichlid Club Christmas party and the recent Texas Cichlid Association Fall Workshop, event listings are short. Hopefully in the next few months we will see things pick up.



The Lateral Line

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Hill Country Cichlid Club