

# **The Cichlid Chronicles**

## **January, February, March 2023 edition**



**Located in Central Pennsylvania.**

**A love for the hobby and the growth of the hobbyist.**

**Celebrating 10 years and beyond.**

## **Editor's Message**

Welcome to the 1<sup>st</sup> Cichlid Chronicles published since 2017! Hopefully, we will put out a new Chronicles once every calendar quarter (or 4 times a year). This publication is our member's newsletter. So if you want to write an article on keeping fish or your favorite cichlid or whatever, please contact us through our facebook or band pages.

For this issue we cobbled together a bunch of articles that are mostly from back issues of the Cichlid Chronicles. First we have an article by Blake Stevens about everyone's favorite yellow mbuna. Which happens to be a great starter cichlid for your African tanks in 'Beginner's Mbuna'. Then Lonny Langione talks about how some cichlids communicate and how aggression can happen when these fish miscommunicate in 'Signals'. William Chance Peragine reminisces about when he despised cichlids and how these fish charmed him in 'I Hated Cichlids'. Next, we have Christina Smith talk about the upside of algae in 'The Truth About Algae'. Finally, Karen Haas has an interesting article about the Mexican Jumping Bean Cichlid. Curious about that? Read her article.

This is our 1<sup>st</sup> crack at this in quite awhile and if there is anything you want to see here, please let us know.

Keep on fish keeping,

Glenn 'Aqua' Davies

## **President's Message (from Blake Stevens)**

Well what do we have here? Could this be the revival of the famous Cichlid Chronicles? I haven't read one of these in years and now I'm writing a president's message for one! I just want to start this message off by thanking the members of this club for making me so proud to be the president. I just finished out my third year and am starting my fourth and I can't wait to see what this year has in store!

Our winter swap was a huge success, not only for the club, but for all of our vendors as well. Make sure to check back with us later in the year for our summer swap that also features a cookout!

In other news, the Keystone Clash website is fully operational and the activity is off the charts! Registrations are pouring in, the vendor room is filling up, and sponsorships are coming in left and right. Please make sure you take advantage of the discounted registration before the end of January. You can also reach out to me if you need any help with signing up for a vendor space and/or sponsorships. More importantly, **BOOK THOSE HOTEL ROOMS!** We sold out last year, so don't wait. We also have our annual challenge going on where we will award one lucky member with a full package to the clash if all of the cichlid classes get sponsored by our meeting on February 4th so make sure your memberships are current.

Coming up, we have a familiar face to the CCY, William Peragine, coming to talk to us about filtration systems and then we have a whole line up of other great speakers for the rest of the year. I believe that is all of the news I have for now. Let's keep going strong with more new members joining us and more current members getting more involved with the different aspects of the club!

Thank you for being members of this great little club!

# Beginner's Mbuna

By Blake Stevens



The Yellow Lab (*Labidochromis caeruleus*) is hands down the most popular African cichlid on the market, and why wouldn't it be? They are available everywhere, breed like rabbits, have one of the most peaceful temperaments you can find in an African cichlid, can eat pretty much anything without getting the infamous "Malawi bloat" that other species get from eating too much protein, and just look at that yellow coloring! Speaking of the yellow coloring, there are actually two naturally occurring color variants of this fish.



Yellow labs are endemic to Lake Malawi in Africa which is one of the three big rift lakes. The yellow color you see in my picture was mostly collected from an area of the lake called "Lion's Cove" but, on the western part of the lake in "Nkhata Bay," you'll find the same species with a white and blue color to it which I personally find more appealing. Like most African cichlids, they are maternal mouthbrooders which means that the mother keeps the eggs and fry in her mouth until they are able to fend for themselves. Yellow labs belong to a group of fish in Lake Malawi called "Mbuna" which translates to "Rockfish" in the native tongue. This is because mbuna are found in

big rock formations in the lake rather than in open water. Some people will say African cichlids aren't a beginner fish, but I personally believe some of them, like the yellow lab, make a great starter species if you have the tank space for them. The nice thing with African cichlids is that you are encouraged to overcrowd them. They can be very aggressive, especially when you have multiple males in a tank with females. Overcrowding helps to spread out the aggression so not just a single fish gets picked on. You'll definitely want a lot of filtration for them though. They like very clean water and with the large number of fish you'll have, you'll need the extra filtration. If you're willing to supply a large enough tank and the extra filtration, I'd say there aren't many display tanks that can compare to a tank filled with colored up African cichlids. They don't typically do well with plants, so hardscape is definitely the best way to go. The last picture posted in here is our old 110 gallon Lake Malawi tank just to give you an idea of how they should be set up. I still had plenty of room for more fish, but you get the idea.



**CCY- 2022 Keystone Clash Club Fish Show Champions!**





The Cichlid Club of York Presents:

# **WILLIAM CHANCE PERAGINE**

## **Advanced Filtration and Water Changes**

**SATURDAY, FEB 4TH 2023 1PM**

**Auction, raffles and food!**  
Spring Grove Lions Club  
5507 York Rd, Spring Grove, PA 17362



**Come on down and hear a great talk by an entertaining speaker. Come on down!**

**Plus, we always have raffles for some really nice aquarium stuff donated by our vendors!**

**Plus, we always have delicious food!**

**Finally, we cap it off with an auction filled with nice fish and aquarium supplies straight from our member's fish rooms!**

**There will always be a bunch of fish folk there to talk about your passion.**

**We'd love to see you there.**

**Support our sponsors:**



# "Signals"

☞ ① ㊦ ③ ① ㊦ ㊦ ㊦

**Why you shouldn't mix cichlids of various locations.**

**by Lonny Langione- photos by Scott McLaughlin**



**A tank such as the one above mixed with African and South/Central American cichlids can be a recipe for trouble.**

**I cringe every time I see a picture of a *Geophagus* in the same tank as a *Haplochromis*. And I will quickly try to explain why. It isn't so much that they require different water conditions, which they do. It isn't so much that they both get big for the most part. It is they send different signals with their coloration to their tank mates. Fish can't talk, but they can send signals to each other. Central American, South American, Asian and African Riverine fish show these color changes more so than African Lake fish.**



**I can walk by one of my Central American tanks and see a female and tell you before looking with a flashlight that there are eggs in the tank somewhere, just by her coloration. The same goes for most of the African Riverine fish, the females color really intensifies. Those females are sending a signal to the other fish that she has eggs or fry in the tank. The males will show lots of color as well. If you take the time to watch a pair of Central American cichlids while they have fry in the tank you can pick up on these signals. The male may be out swimming in the tank, out of the corner of his eye he will see a slight change in the female's color that means to him, "come watch the kids, I want to swim around for a while". He will swim over to her usually in a jerking motion and she will swim away while he watches the kids.**



**These signals are also picked up by other Central American fish in the tank, and they know to stay away.**

**This "signaling" is only done mostly by substrate spawning fish. Most mouth brooders you will not see the drastic changes in color. You will see it when they are courting. A male Malawi mbuna and a male African Riverine cichlid will turn on the colors to attract the female. A female may also become more colorful. They will pick a spot to breed in and they will drive all the other fish away. When they show those colors, it is a signal to the other fish in the tank to stay away as well as attracting their mate.**

**Another way fish send signals is "posturing". A lot of Tanganyikan cichlids do this. When they have eggs or fry in their tank they will tend to swim at different angles, thus letting their tank mates know what is going on. Apistogrammas do this as well. Tangs will swim at this angle towards a tank mate. Usually the tank mate will retreat, if they don't, they will get a swift ram or bite from the dominate / breeding fish.**

**This signaling is also a reason not to mix cichlids from different locations. When a male Mbuna is showing his dominance in an aquarium he will turn on the colors, especially the bars in his coloration. If you have Mbuna you know what I mean. You may have 3 Mbuna males and one shows the barred pattern while the other two will show a washed out coloration representing sub-dominance. The same goes for Haplochromine species as well. If they don't have a barred pattern, the dominant males will show their adult coloration while sub-dominant male of the same species will show some coloration of the juvenile pattern, or the colors are not as bright. So, when African Lake fish show dominance the turn on the colors.**



**When a lot of American cichlids show a subdominant coloration, they will go into a fright pattern and depending on the species this fright pattern means showing a barred pattern. When an American cichlid shows dominance they will lose the barred pattern. I hope you see where this is going. This is why so many times African Lake fish get a reputation of being extra mean when kept in a mixed community.**

**A male Mbuna showing his dominate barred coloration sees an American cichlids barred fright pattern and thinks the fish is challenging them for dominance. So, the American cichlid gets the crap beat out of it. African Riverine cichlids tend to carry the same signaling that American cichlids do. So, their fate is also sealed when mixed with species on African Lake fish.**

If you are not sure of the origin of the cichlids you keep, here are some websites to use to find out more information on them.

[www.fishbase.com](http://www.fishbase.com)

[www.eol.com](http://www.eol.com)

<http://research.calacademy.org/ichthyology/catalog/fishcatmain.asp>

The third website is known in the hobby as "Eschmeyers List". You will need the taxonomic name of the fish, another reason I preach that you need to learn the taxonomic names. You will not need locations, just the taxonomic name. If the name is outdated, it will still come up showing you the most accepted name at the time of the search.

This isn't an in-depth article on this subject. It would take me a month to write that article. I haven't covered all location of cichlids but tried to concentrate on the most popular. We have a lot of new hobbyists in the CCY and I wanted to write an article on this subject that a new hobbyist could understand. Hopefully this article will encourage you to learn more about the fish you keep.

In closing, take the time to watch your fish. To me it is the most amazing part of this hobby when you learn your fish's "signals".



Put in the correct conditions and with the right tank mates your cichlids will thrive!

This article was originally published in volume 1, issue 3 of the Cichlid Chronicles back in September 2013.



**Come on down to one of the biggest fish shows around in the world!**

**Plus, it's presented by our club!**

**There's still time to get the package deal discount too!**

**Get a 25% discount if you register on or before 1/31/23.**



FOLLOW US ON:



**ONE OF THE LARGEST  
HOBBYIST-RUN ALL-SPECIES  
AQUARIUM CONVENTIONS IN  
THE US!**

# KEYSTONE CLASH



**SEPTEMBER 22-24, 2023**

Holiday Inn Morgantown, PA  
6170 Morgantown Rd.

## **2023 SPEAKER LINE-UP**

- Andreas Tanke
- Jennifer Williams
- Bentley Pascoe
- Jason Adams
- Dan Hodnett
- Kelley Foreman
- Panel Discussions

## **WHAT TO EXPECT:**

**ALL-SPECIES FISH  
SHOW INCLUDING  
PLANTS, ART, AND  
CRAFTS**

**AWARDS  
CEREMONY**

**VENDOR ROOM**

**ALL-DAY AUCTION**

**GIVE A KID A TANK**

**AQUASCAPING  
COMPETITION**

**HOSPITALITY ROOM**

# **I Hated Cichlids**

**By William Chance Peragine**



**I used to hate cichlids. I thought they were big, stupid, aggressive fish who would prefer to kill each other rather than get along in my nicely aquascaped, planted tanks. To compound the issue, they would dig up plants, move rocks, and even eat my freaking plants. The Amphilophus genus is; in my humble opinion, the king of all jerk cichlids. You know that big red hump headed idiot that slams his face into the glass when you near the tank?**

**-Yeah, those fish. They're real charmers-**

**I still remember when I first decided I would re-visit keeping a freshwater tank. I used to keep freshwater fish when I was young, but as an adult, I moved into keeping saltwater species. Eventually my career took priority and I was on the road more often than home. I decided I needed to give up keeping fish all together. A few years later, my life settled down and my girlfriend and I decided to get a small freshwater tank for fun. We had a killer tank; it was a 15 gallon column tank, decked out with this awesome neon pink/green/yellow gravel that we added a bunch of black gravel to. We then switched gears and went the complete OPPOSITE direction, trying to make the tank look all natural with live plants, driftwood, and rocks. It was like our own little slice of disco in nature and we loved it.**

**We started going to fish stores around Philadelphia, looking for some new, cool looking fish to put in our tank. The hunt for a pretty, eye-catching freshwater fish**

**was on. As we cruised through the store, there was always one aisle I would steer my girlfriend away from the cichlids. I would say, "Look sweetie, there is no point going down there. Those are the a\*\*hole fish." She would say, "But they are really colorful and pretty!" I'd counter with, "Yes, they are pretty, but they are all huge freaking jerks. We are not getting cichlids." The search went on for many months until I came across pictures of Apistos. I started doing some research and although it pains me to admit, I was wrong!**



**Not "ALL" cichlids are jerks! The genus Apistogramma is known for its intelligence and personable nature. Imagine my girl-friend's surprise when I told her I wanted to get a pair of dwarf cichlids! She immediately quoted my "all cichlids are a\*\*holes" lecture. Yeah, she never let me forget that. In the end, I still got my Apistos though, a beautiful pair of triple reds. Apistogramma checked off all the boxes on my list: Calm demeanor, check; doesn't eat plants, check; small size, does well with other fish, doesn't dig very much, interesting behavior, colorful, check, check, check, check and check!**

**Apistogramma are excellent fish for a community tank. They stand out as a very strong center piece for any tank, with their bold colors and striking fins. My standard recommendation is to get only one male per tank, and if you want more Apistos, add a female or two.**





**I really see no reason to add more and your fish will be less stressed this way. If you have a large enough tank (at least 4 foot by 1 foot), you can mix two males. Watch them defend their territory from each other and strut their stuff for the ladies!**



**Support our sponsors:**

**AQUEON**  
it's all about the fish.

**Oase**  
LIVING WATER

**In this same size tank, you can also attempt an all-male fraternity type tank; however, I only recommend this to the more experienced Apisto keeper. The males will establish a hierarchy and hopefully one single fish will not be constantly bullied. It is important to include enough males, around five, in this type of tank. Attention should be given to ensure that all males are properly cared for and fed.**

**Despite how great they are most fish keepers like to keep a variety of fish in their tanks. This leads to another great thing about Apistos; they prefer to eat small crustaceans and insect larvae, not other fish (even small ones)! It is important to note the use of the word PREFER; some individuals will eat other fish, but many do not. I have noticed that breeding males and females generally do not ever eat fish. They even seem to think twice before going after small prey.**

**Males from an all-male tank are a different story though. They will gladly eat anything they consider prey. Fish newly introduced to the aquarium are at the most risk. The male Apistos will take advantage of those first seconds of confusion and quickly gobble up the new fish. If the new fish manage to survive those first few moments, they have a pretty good chance of survival and thrive in the community tank, living side-by-side with your Apistos. Typically, the Apistos will realize they move slower than the other fish species and quickly lose interest trying to catch them.**

**I have a group of males that will eat any fish I introduce into the tank within the first few seconds, but once the new fish gain their bearings, my Apistos never glance their way again. My advice is to add fish with care. I suggest rearranging the décor right before introducing the new fish. This will temporarily confuse the Apistos, giving the new fish an even playing field. Once you get some nice tetras or other suitable tank mates in, you normally have nothing to worry about. Each fish is an individual though, so nothing is guaranteed. I do feel the need to once again urge you to keep one male per tank, with perhaps a female or two if you want to breed. A single lone male is perfectly fine in a community tank. Adding more males only draws the focus away from each individual's beauty.**

**A planted tank is where your Apistos can truly shine. I would like to give a note of caution though. If you are planning on dosing with fertilizers, a tank strain of Apistogramma is best. If you are more interested in rare, and generally wild caught species, you should consider a low tech tank with soft water. Wild caught fish tend to be more susceptible to high TDS, salts, minerals, and other parameters necessary for medium to high tech planted tanks. In either instance, planted tanks are ideal for Apistos. Planted tanks typically have a low KH, which Apistos thrive in. The pH of a planted tank should be kept fairly low; guess who also loves low pH water? Dense vegetation provides excellent cover for Apistos, allowing them to feel comfortable and display their colors to their full potential. With plentiful vegetation comes the advantage of numerous hiding places, which will make your Apistos more adventurous. Knowing you can escape death by diving into the plants at any time gives a lot for the confidence of these little fish. The common inhabitants to planted tanks, tetra, discus, angel fish and shrimp will all do well, when kept with Apistos.**

**Young shrimp will likely be eaten by Apistos, but adult shrimp are usually too large for them and will be left alone.**





**Many types of cichlids can be quite detrimental to a planted tank for a few reasons.**



**Digging can be a frustrating experience for any planted tank keeper. Coming home every day to see all your plants floating around the tank can make you want to toss your fish right out the window. I won't try to lie to you here; when**



**you have a freshly planted tank where the roots have not taken hold yet, Apistos do sometimes jar them loose. Apistos do enjoy sifting the sand and will move around the top layer, but they do not dig into it. Once your plants have a bit of a root system built, you will have nothing to worry about. What can be even more devastating to your plants is some cichlids have a taste for plants! Imagine going out and spending 50 to 100 bucks on plants, then getting them home and spending hours planting them all meticulously. Now you lay your head down for the night and when you wake it looks like someone ran every plant through a paper shredder. That's what it's like to have rift lake cichlids! (Notice: the use of rift lake, and not African. There is a lot more than just mbuna in Africa!) Not to worry though, Apistos prefer the taste of baby shrimp over plants any day. You won't come home to find a massive plant homicide in your tank. Last but certainly not least, Apistos are actually quite well adapted to low oxygen levels in their water. In the wild they are often found in stagnant pools with little flow or surface turbulence to oxygenate the water, and therefore they adapt quickly to the high carbon dioxide conditions most planted tanks are kept in. This doesn't mean they don't need any oxygen; they do not have the labyrinth organ as Anabantoids do, but they can adapt to lower levels easily.**

**As you can see Apistos make a great choice for both the casual fish keeper wanting a nice community tank and the serious fish keeper looking to try and keep many different species in a multiple tank breeding setup. Their small maximum size makes having multiple tanks far easier and less expensive, but they still retain that awesome personality and sense of individuality you expect from cichlids. So where do you begin? An excellent and hardy choice is A. cacatuoides. The tank strain of these fish comes in several color variants, and it is the fish I always recommend for beginning Apisto keepers. There is no species better suited to begin with, but there are a few other good candidates, unlike our current presidential race! (ZING) A. macmasteri (often mislabeled viejita), A. agassizii, or A. Borelli. These species all have several tank raised variants but can also be wild caught. For beginners, be sure to choose a tank variant and not a wild caught fish. They are more accustomed to life in our tanks. As a rule of thumb, I generally tell people to provide Apistos with 12 inches x 12 inches of tank floor space per fish. Be sure to create large visual barriers so an aggressive male cannot see another Apisto from the opposite side of the tank. I generally use a large piece of wood to somewhat divide the tank in half visually. At this point you are all set up and ready to go. Start breeding your Apistos and be sure to spread the love of these wonderful fish through the hobby!**

**Originally published in The Cichlid Chronicles/King and Queen July Newsletter in July 2016.**

**Support our sponsors:**



# **The Truth about Algae**

**By Christina Smith**

**So you buy a new cichlid and you go to add him to your tank and realize it is full of algae. Panic sets in as you think of all the horror stories you have heard over the years from aquarium lovers. But before you run to your local pet store looking for a miracle cure for algae, I'll share some info with you.**

## **ALGAE IS GOOD!**

**That's right, I said it. Dun, dun, dun..... No, I am not crazy. Think about it. All the fish we keep come from the wild at one point or another, and what's in the wild? Algae. Believe it or not fish are not kept in the sanitary pampered aquariums that they live in now when they are wild.**



**There is Algae everywhere! In rivers & streams, on rocks & driftwood, even on the plants. If you go to large public Aquariums or even the local Bass Pro Shop you will notice the algae in every tank, and lots of it. Somewhere along the lines, aquarium hobbyists have raced to have the cleanest and most sterile aquariums in their homes, giving algae a bad rep. Believe it or not, algae is not dirt as most people think it is, but it is a microscopic plant. And plants are good for aquariums, right? So, to make things clear we want algae in our tanks. I know, you're still thinking I'm nuts and my train ran off the tracks...I'll give you a second to catch up to me. So the next question you'd probably ask would be why is algae beneficial to my tank? Well, because it turns your byproducts of fish waste into oxygen using photosynthesis. (Feel like your back in biology class yet?) Photosynthesis is the process plants use to convert light energy into oxygen. Fish hate waste and love oxygen so this is a win/win, situation! Plus, many fish benefit from adding algae into their diets. African cichlids are one of those fish who thrive on having algae in their environment. And lastly algae looks good in an aquarium, for those trying to aquascape their aquarium into looking like a Cichlids natural environment what better to have then algae. This may sound weird and some people may argue on if algae really looks good in a tank, but keep in mind this is natural to the fish, they have algae everywhere in the wild.**

**There are many different types of algae that can be grown in an aquarium, some more beneficial than others.**

**1. Blue-Green Algae This is actually not algae. It is now believed to be a type of bacteria that uses light. It is seen as a bluish slime or web coating your plants and rocks. Usually this type of algae is an indicator of poor water quality in an aquarium. So step up on those water changes, and this algae will disappear itself.**

**2. Brown Algae This algae is usually seen in either brand new aquariums or aquariums with really old fluorescent lamps. As a fluorescent lamp ages, the light output falls (50% after the first 6 months) and the spectrum of the light itself changes. This is why hobbyists who grow aquatic plants replace their lamps twice a year. A new light bulb will benefit the green algae more than the brown and allow the green to "take over". Another way to grow an incredible amount of brown algae is to use a "cool white" or "shop-light" bulb instead of a bulb made for aquariums. The spectrum of these hardware store bulbs favors brown algae and can make quite a difference in just a few days.**

**3. Hair Algae This can be grown in both long and short forms. It usually anchors itself to rocks and wood and can sometimes grow in clumps over 12 inches long. African cichlids love to dine on this stuff. Some hobbyists go as far as to transfer rocks from outdoor "kiddy pools" to their aquariums covered with this algae. To start a culture of hair algae, attach a clump to a piece of wood or rock with a rubber band somewhere near the top of the aquarium. In a few weeks, after it "takes root" you can remove the rubber band. If you find at first that your fish are eating it all before it can spread, you may have to start it in another aquarium, windowsill or kiddy pool. Once you grow enough to reach critical mass, you will have a great source of constant nutrition for your fish.**



4. **Disc Algae** This found in aquariums with lots of light and calcium. It is a green, hard type of algae usually found on the glass, although in a really well-lit tank it can be found actually growing on plants. Not many fish eat this algae, so you usually end up scraping it off the front sheets of glass with a single edge razor blade.
5. **Beard Algae** A short, all one length, algae that looks like a fur coat. It comes in a few different colors like black, green/gray, and red. It requires fast moving water, so it is often found around the outlet of filters, power heads, anywhere there is plenty of water flow. A flat piece of slate covered with this algae looks incredible with water flowing over it. Common Plecos seem to not have a taste for Beard Algae, but it is enjoyed by African cichlids and the Siamese algae eater (*Crossocheilus siamensis*).
6. **Green Water Algae** This a free-floating type of algae, which if left unchecked, will turn your aquarium into "pea soup". The most common occurrence of this algae is when somebody leaves their aquarium light on 24 hours a day, or when an outdoor pond is first set up. These tiny one-celled algae are so small that they pass right through a regular filter cartridge. Hobbyists raising their own Rotifers (Water Fleas) or Brine Shrimp use Green Water Algae as a prized food source. Control of this algae is as simple as only leaving the light on 8-12 hours a day. If you are in a hurry, a diatom filter (Magnum350 or Vortex) can filter down to 1 micron, thus easily capturing these tiny plants in about 3 hours. In an outdoor pond, the only realistic method of control is to use an Ultraviolet Filter to kill these free-floating algae with radiation.

There are however, some instances where you do not want algae. The front of your glass for instance. This is where Pleco's come in handy. Plecos are lazy and would rather clean algae from the easy to clean glass surface than the rough surface of rocks. This works out rather well for us. Now some Pleco's are better than others for this job. Take the Bushy Nose Pleco, they are a family that does a great job! Then you have the soon to be extinct Zebra Pleco, who would favor protein pellet over algae so would be a poor choice for algae control.

Another instance of not wanting algae is in a planted aquarium. But that is a whole other article.

So, to sum things up. Algae is good, and not the mean green monster set out to destroy your tank like the Petco employee made him out to be. And two, I'm not as crazy as some people think.

This article was originally published in volume 1, issue 2 of the Cichlid Chronicles back in July 2013.

Support our sponsors:



# The Mexican Jumping Bean Cichlid

*Herichthys tamasopoensis*

By Karen Haas

Photos by Karen Haas

Why do I call these the Mexican jumping bean cichlids? Because these fish can jump! Every time I had to catch the juveniles; they would usually launch themselves out of the aquarium just before I could scoop them out with the net. Even little half inch fry in a specimen container with an inch of water would jump up and stick themselves to the sides of the container above the water line. This made it a struggle to get them into the net so that I could transfer them to the breather bag for shipping. After about 4 or 5 jumps in a row, they seem to tire which makes it easier to catch them. So, if you need to catch these from your aquarium lower the water level a couple of inches before you put the net in.





If you like the look of Texas Cichlids, but avoided acquiring one because of how big they get, this is a smaller alternative. They can reach a maximum size of 7". Although they don't possess the blue-green spots of their larger cousin, they still have a nice dotted appearance when not spawning. However, it's obvious when they have fry because the black spots on their sides become black bars and the throat becomes solid black.

This fish was first discovered by Juan Miguel Artigaz Azaz in the late 1980's. He formally described it in 1993 with the type locality being the Rio Tamasopo, Mexico. It is also found in the Rio Aqua Buenz, Rio Ojo Frio and the Rio Gallinas. Vegetation is not plentiful, but the fish is found grazing on algae on the rocks and detritus. If you're looking to create an accurate biotope with other fish these would be appropriate: *Xiphophorus montezume*, *X. continens*, *Poecilia Mexicana*, *Gambusia cf. panuco*, *Tampichthys rasconis*, *T. catostomops*, *Ictalurus mexicanus*, and *Astyanax mexicanus*. Other cichlids that can be present are *Herichthys steindachneri* and *H. pame*. The rivers near the town of Tamosopo are known for their waterfalls. Decorating the aquarium with rocks, gravel, driftwood are appropriate but there are slower moving waters that contain leaf litter and aquatic plants.

I bought my first *H. tamasopoensis* from Mike's Cichlids when he made his first trip to the Keystone Clash in 2016. I kept two breeding pairs in a 125 gallon aquarium with some adult convicts and *Goodea atripinnis*. There isn't much to visually distinguish males from females. Females are usually slightly smaller. They started spawning around the 3 to 4 inch size. They would secretively lay their eggs on a rock or on the outside back of a cave. The wrigglers would be moved after hatching and hidden in a small pit in the gravel close by. About a week after laying the eggs, a couple hundred fry would become free swimming and the parents would herd them around the tank in order to find food.



Support our sponsors:





I found this beautiful species easy to keep and accepting of all types of food, making sure that algae tablets or flakes were also given. I didn't need to make any adjustments to the hard city water except for chlorine removal. Temperature was maintained between 70 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit. The fry stayed with the parents for a few weeks before I removed them to rear in their own tank. There were a couple that evaded the net and grew to an inch in size before I could catch them as well. I used vinegar eels and microworms to supplement their grazing on biofilms in the tank.

Even though they are not currently considered endangered, their habitat is suffering from the introduction of invasive species, agriculture run off, and garbage left by tourists to the beautiful falls. I hope this species does not disappear from our hobby in the future.

This article was originally published in the Aquarium Club of Lancaster County.

#### References:

Artigas Azas, Juan Miguel. (October 22, 2011). "Herichthys tamasopoensis Artigas Azas, 1993". Cichlid Room Companion, internet.

"Herichthys tamasopoensis in the Wild", Practical Fishkeeping Magazine, September 2009, internet.

Miller, Robert Rush. Freshwater Fishes of Mexico. University of Chicago Press, 2005. Print.

Azas, Juan Miguel Artigas, Konings, Ad (editor), The Cichlids Yearbook Vol. 3., Cichlid

Support our sponsors:



Dave's Rare  
Aquarium Fish

Segrest



Farms

## **CCY Breeders Award Program (BAP)**

The purpose of the Breeders Award Program is to encourage the captive breeding of cichlid species. It is intended as an educational program for members to share their breeding successes and make different species available to CCY members. The BAP also encourages camaraderie among the members.

If you enjoy breeding cichlids or catfish, then the BAP is for you. Breed your fish, collect your fry and submit them to our BAP chairperson and earn BAP points. Winners may receive an award and prizes each year.

If you like, you can donate the fry to the monthly auction so someone else have the opportunity to breed those fish.

### **CCY 2022 Final Breeder Awards Standings:**

**Glenn Davies 180**

**Karen Haas 145**

**Blake Stevens 75**

### **CCY 2023 speaker schedule:**

- January 1/7/23-Swap meet**
- February 2/4/23- William Garden Peragine- Filtration systems**
- March 3/4/23 Roy Allen- Native Fish for a 20 gallon long**
- April 4/1/23 Sue Harkey- Summer Tubbing**
- May 5/6/23 Jessica Bullock-Apistos or Scientific Advances in Cichlids**
- June 6/3/23 Chris Carpenter**
- July 7/1/23- Cook Out/Fish Swap**
- August -no meeting**
- September is the Keystone Clash, no club meeting.**
- October 10/7/23-Carlos C. Martinez Rivera- American Cichlids**
- November 11/4/23- Lonny Langione- More Latin fish names**
- December 12/2/23- Xmas Party**

**Support our sponsors:**



**Support our sponsors:**



**Good times at the CCY Christmas Party!**

