

Number 4, July 2010



# Fish Tales

The Official Publication of the Federation of Texas  
Aquarium Societies



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## Editorial

As the Texas summer heats up, many of us spend more time inside tending our aquariums. This is a stark contrast to the north where the sequence of events is reversed. The annual American Cichlid Association convention is coming up in Milwaukee. There will be many FOTAS members attending. The big event in our region is being held in Oklahoma City the first week of September. This of course is the annual FOTAS convention. Not only is the OKAA hosting a big show and auction with a diverse speaker lineup, this is where the largest FOTAS meeting of the year takes place. To give those not accustomed to this tradition, please read Kyle Osterholt's review of Last year's convention in the October 2009 issue of **Fish Tales**.

This year we have two new member clubs to welcome to our family. The North American Discus Association and USA Fish Box joined FOTAS in 2010. Welcome aboard to both!

At the banquet The Braz Walker auction occurs. This is a lot of fun and has to be experienced to be appreciated. It is customary for each club to bring an item to be auctioned off. This year will also mark the second presentation of the Dr. Keith Arnold FOTAS Patron Award.

One of the largest and mostly oblivious happenings to occur at the FOTAS convention is the annual election of officers. Each club sends a representative or delegate to the board meeting (usually taking place Saturday morning). After a business meeting, elections occur. Nominations are made and then

a swift election follows. All elected representatives take office the first of January 2011. It is extremely important to elect those who you feel best represent your club's interests and will move FOTAS forward. The last few years has seen a resurgence in activity within FOTAS which is highly encouraging. Let's all ensure we can lend a hand to keep our organization moving in the right direction. A reminder to clubs that your \$12.00 FOTAS 2011 membership fee is due here and to be presented to the FOTAS treasurer.

There is a lot of work that goes into hosting a convention. Please make sure when you are in Oklahoma City, that you take a moment to thank those crazy okies that put this show together!

In the works is a FOTAS speakers program. Many clubs have members who, we have seen, are capable of presenting fantastic programs related to the aquarium hobby. We are working to create a listing of these people and the programs they give. This will be a great asset to all FOTAS clubs as well as a resource to aquarium clubs across the country looking for a speaker.

Details are still being hammered out on the formation of a judging counsel for FOTAS shows. The details involving standards and knowledge are complex. Hopefully we will see some advancements in this committee by next issue.

That's about all for this quarter. Enjoy the big convention!



**Proudly presents**

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**FOTAS Yearly Conven-**

# **Federation of Texas Aquarium Societies**

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the  
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***Cynotilapia axelrodi* from Nkhata Bay, Malawi**

**- Kory Watkins**



**A beautiful male *Cynotilapia axelrodi* from Nkhata Bay Lake Malawi.  
Photo by Nick Andreola.**

**Quick facts:**

Size (inches): 4-5" max

Temperature (F): 78 - 82

pH: 7.5 - 8.6

GH: 5 - 20

KH: 3 - 10

Sex ratio: 1:4

Diet: carnivore

Temperament: mildly aggressive

Genus: *Cynotilapia*

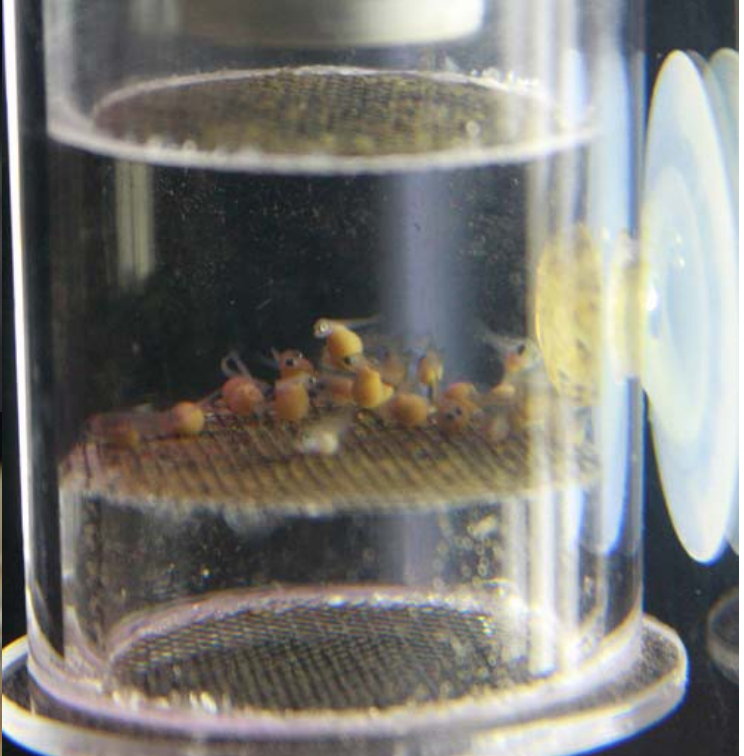
Group: mbuna

Breeding: maternal mouth brooder

This beautiful African Cichlid is from Lake Malawi located in the Nkhata Bay area. This species was first found in 1976 by Burgess. According to Ad Konings, this species occurs from Mundola Point all the way north to Lion's Cove. This mbuna is listed as a VU D2 on the red list.

**A view from Nkhaka Bay Accommodation, a lodge in Nkhaka Bay Lake Malawi.**







This is one of my favorite Africans that I keep. The male has a dazzling sky blue on the majority of his body but his anal fin and pelvic fins are pitch black with his caudal fin having a black outline and a couple of yellow egg spots on his anal fin. He also has a very eye catching mask on his face. The face is a shade darker of a blue color but not much different from the rest of the sky blue body. Near his eyes is very unique, it's almost as if he wears glasses that are sky blue like the rest of his body. During feeding or breeding the darker blue part of his mask almost turns black. The color changes are breath taking.

The male will start breeding as early as one year or around two inches. These guys are very good sand diggers, they also love to have some rock to hide in and call home. The female is a very dull blue color with rusty yellow on the outer parts of the body including the pelvic, anal, caudal and dorsal fins. The females can start breeding very young sometimes as early as one year or at two inches. The first batch will range anywhere from 8-12 fry. Later on they will be able to hold as many as 25.

I have a group of 12 in a standard 55 gallon tank with some *Aulonocara stuartgranti* Maleri Island. Out of the Nkhata Bay cyno's, I have 2 males and 10 females. As for the peacocks I have only one male and four females. They don't seem to mind each other and it does not stop the breeding. I have a handful of hiding spots for everyone and about 2-2.5" of pool filter sand in the bottom for digging and creating more hiding area. I do 40-50% water changes weekly with a monthly filter rinse on my Emperor 400.

I have had this group for about a year. I have got them to breed several times. The first handful of times the females would spit super early (2-3 days after spawning) and then I moved so breeding was slowed and my two main females passed in the move. Now that I have the group settled in and spawning

has taken place several times I should have a bank full soon! Right now I have a few females holding and fry growing out. I could not be any happier with my group that I got from DRAF (Dave's Rare Aquarium Fish) about a year ago.

If you love Mbuna and are looking for something to stare at with a smile, this will more then do the job. I would recommend the *Cynotilapia axelrodi* from Nkhata Bay to any African Cichlid keeper.

***Cynotilapia axelrodi* Nkhata Bay female.**

**FOTAS ON THE WEB!**

**WWW.FOTASWEBSITE.COM**



**Federation of Texas  
Aquarium Societies**



Do these plants have special nutrient needs? The answers to these questions will go a long way in determining, for example, what lighting system we will need.

As far as I am concerned, the aquarist needs to keep three things in mind to raise aquatic plants: high water quality, proper light conditions, and proper nutrients. Remember the aquarium is a closed system in which the water chemistry can change drastically if it does not receive proper attention. The required light will depend upon the plant type(s) kept in the aquarium: deeper tanks require more light than shallow tanks. And nutrients must be added in one of two ways: either by adding one of the many plant supplements on the market or through the feeding of the fish and invertebrates in the tank, resulting in fecal excrements that feed the plants. The tank can have too many fish, but it also can have too few for healthy plant growth without nutrient supplements.

Regular water changes benefit plants as well as the animal inhabitants in that this helps to

maintain the water chemistry at a more-or-less constant level. However, too frequent or too large changes can also reduce available nutrients. I must admit that my water changes tend to be irregular, rather than regular,

but usually of around 10 per cent when I do make these changes. If I make large water changes, then I may add a plant supplement, but this is infrequent. Hazel Hall, a long-time aquarist from San Antonio, used to keep her show plants in plastic tubs; every few months, she would remove these from her tanks and add bone meal to each tub; this did require careful disturbance of the soil in the tub to insert this supplement.

I have raised aquatic plants under both incandescent and fluorescent lighting. Of the latter, I have used the special plant bulbs, but also just the plain bulbs used in the kitchen or bath-

room, all successfully. While I have no doubt that bulbs of various spectrums offer advantages, I don't consider them essential (and they cost significantly more!). The amount of light is more important, particularly for those plants that require high quantities. On tanks where I grow —forests of



***Anubias nana* in a double 15-gallon tank with double 15-watt fluorescents; Green Swordtails and one *Ancistris* sp. catfish**

## Live Plants in Your Aquarium

- Dr. Keith Arnold



### **Anubias sp on the left, Anubias hastifolia on the right, in the same 50-gallon tank**

At a recent fish club meeting where I presented a program, discussion over pizza before the meeting began centered on what size tank and what type of carbon dioxide system should the individual have to grow and maintain aquarium plants. Some seemed surprised when I stated that such systems were not necessarily needed. A few years back a group of aquarists concentrated on what was then known as the —Leiden aquarium in which the fish were secondary to the plants. And this seems to be the starting point of the notion that one needs an elaborate carbon dioxide injector.

Keeping live plants in an aquarium can be a difficult task...or not. As with your fish, one can spend a lot of dollars on special equipment, particularly carbon dioxide injectors

and lighting systems. A careful selection of the fish must exclude fish that eat plants and those that dig up substrate. At the same time, knowledge of aquatic plants and their needs is just as important as it is with aquarium fishes. First, a number of aquatic plants sold in pet stores are not truly aquatics and will die out in a matter of weeks, if not days. Secondly, plants have different needs, just as with fish. Light intensity and water quality are important for healthy growth; not all plants have the same needs, especially in relation to light intensity. Do we consider a plant as low density or high density in selecting them for our tank? Do these plants have special nutrient needs? The answers to these questions will go a long way in determining, for example, what lighting system we will need.





**An *Anubias* flower is a sure sign that your plants are happy.**



***Anubias nana* in a 10-gallon tank with two 10-watt CFL;  
guppies and two dwarf bristlenose catfish**

more!). The amount of light is more important, particularly for those plants that require high quantities. On tanks where I grow forests of val, I use double tubes or one of higher wattage than usual for that size of a tank; this has also worked for Java moss and riccia. I use a similar approach for deeper tanks, because of the rapid loss of light with the deeper water column.

I am firmly convinced that the types and numbers of fishes in a tank can heavily influence success with live plants. Although I have had good growth and reproduction of plants in tanks with a variety of fishes, I find that my most successful tend to be with high populations of guppies! I have no idea why this is, but my forests of val occur in tanks with large numbers of guppies. Similarly, my best success with Amazon swords has been in tanks with guppies or swordtails.

As far as I am concerned, live plants in a tank make the difference in attractiveness. Live plants offer a challenge to the aquarist, but the results are well worth the effort.

### **Your Chance to Own a Piece of Aquatic History!**

Dr. Keith Arnold is parting with some historical and valuable aquarium literature. Ideally, he would like to keep these collections within the FOTAS membership. A chance like this does not happen often. 30% of the proceeds will go to the FOTAS service award named in his honor.

### **For Sale**

#### **Aquarium Digest International:**

Issues 1-53 (all published), including 5 "official" binders: minimum acceptable bid \$175.

#### **Freshwater and Marine Aquarium**

January: 1979 through February 1995 (204 consecutive issues) - includes 13 "official" binders - minimal acceptable bid \$575.

#### **Tropical Fish Hobbyist:**

January 1986 through October 2002 (202 consecutive issues) minimum acceptable bid \$525.

#### **Aquarium Fish International:**

February 1993 through June 2010 (209 consecutive Issues) - minimum acceptable bid \$550. Winning bidder will receive all 2010 issues.

Dr. Arnold will deliver these journals either to the FOTAS convention in September or to a monthly club meeting of H.A.S., H.C.C.C. or T.C.A. He also has many issues of the "small" sized TFH (prior to January 1986); e-mail at [kbarnold2@verizon.net](mailto:kbarnold2@verizon.net) for a list of these issues. Bids on these runs may be sent to the same e-mail address. Bidding will close 31 July 2010.







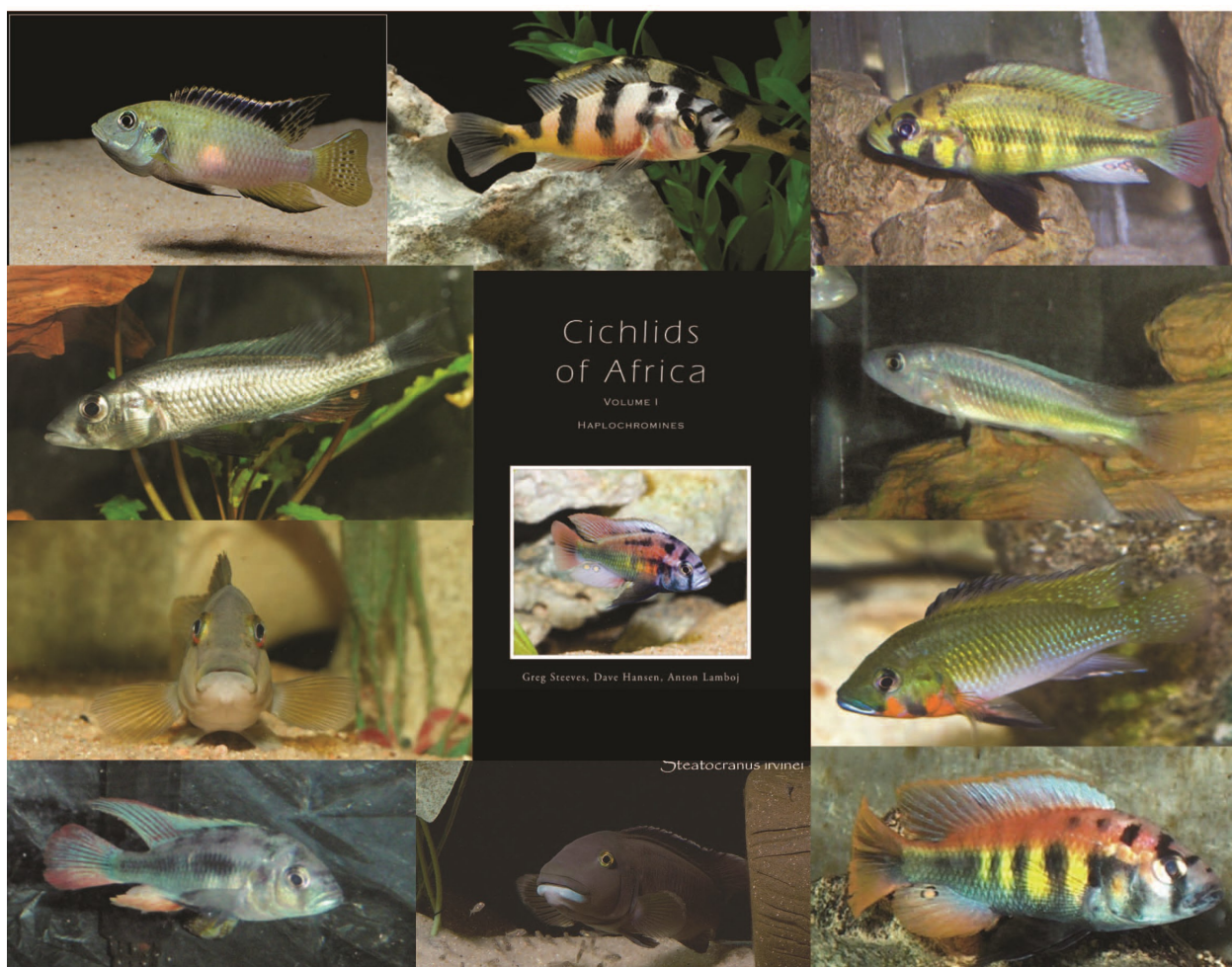
# Amazonia's African Exposition July 31st, 2010

Begins at noon

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Rare Fish Auction!

**Speakers:**  
**Dr. Anton Lamboj**  
**Dave Hansen**  
**Greg Steeves**

Free Refreshments!



## **C.A.R.E.S. Update - Dr. William Ojwang Reports on the Progress Made at the Kenya Marine & Fisheries Institute**



**Dr. William Ojwang (far right) welcomes Prof. M. Ntiba, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries Development, accompanied by heads of research institutions from the East Africa region to the newly rehabilitated facility. The leaders attended a public launch of the project on the development of Lake Victoria Biodiversity Informatics held at KMFRI.**

*This article originally appeared in the American Cichlid Associations Buntbarsche Bulletin # 258, June 2010.*

### **Editors's note**

*Hill Country Cichlid Club members will remember back a couple of years when Dr. Les Kaufman lectured on Lake Victoria. At the end of the presentation, Dr. Kaufman introduced us to Dr. William Ojwang and told of his heroic exploits with providing home made aquariums to schools around the Kenyan shoreline of Lake Victoria and his efforts to rebuild the fisheries building in Kisumu. The HCCC began fundraising to*

*assist Dr. Ojwang in his efforts. When C.A.R.E.S. founder Claudia Dickinson (and HCCC member) learned of this project, she jumped aboard Claudia was instrumental in gathering both equipment and money necessary for Dr. Ojwang to carry on with his efforts. Presented here is a letter to Claudia from William. With the F.O.T.A.S. C.A.R.E.S convention being hosted by the HCCC in 2011, our C.A.R.E.S. exploits will be at the forefront of club activities. Thanks to the OKAA, HCCC and FOTAS for the generous donations allowing to help make all this happen.*

Dear Claudia,

I hope all is well with you. We did receive the boxes in good condition with all the items intact. I guess this is a sign that all is well and you may proceed with shipment of the rest. We plan to ultimately have 'many' tanks, at least 60 (in the Aquarium, the big outdoor tank, plus the outside racks). That would certainly require a bigger pump as you indicated. The notes were great! Thanks for your insight in the Aquarium setup, outlet numbers, etc. The idea of having a back-up air unit is welcome.

On the update, we have continued to receive numerous visitors to the facility, people from all walks of life: students from elemen-

tary to college levels, heads of government ministries, heads of East African research institutions, universities, and notably we were also visited by honorable members of parliament from the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA). All of our visitors have been full of encouragement and appreciation to our dear donors, you in particular, your friends, and other United States based organizations.

We have since moved into the other portion that was hitherto used as storage space. It has been painted and given room for the aquarium expansion.

Aquarium expansion. I talked to Peter in Nairobi on the possibilities of getting a 19



**Dr. Richard Abila and Dr. William Ojwang in the Aquarium prior to the recent Lake Victoria CARES transformation. Please note the lack of any means of filtration in the tanks. Water quality has been monitored by water changes. Due to the enormous generosity of Joe Garglulo of ATI and Hydro Sponge, Lance Reyniers of Python Products, Ray 'Kingfish' Lucas, John Maier of Jehmco, and the Hill Country Cichlid Club, lack of filtration will be in the past.**





**What was once storage space has since been converted into an expansion of the Aquarium under the Lake Victoria CARES Project.**

Aquarium expansion. I talked to Peter in Nairobi on the possibilities of getting a 19mm (.75 in) thick glass from there as I have visited every shop in our town but in vain. I might have to get it from Nairobi as soon as I confirm its availability. As you may also recognize from our pictures, the outer wall of the facility requires new paint. I hope to embark on that shortly!

On another front, we used part of our aquarium setup during the just concluded Kenyan public service week display. This is an annual event held all over the country, mostly at provincial headquarters by public institutions, to update Kenyans on their respective activities which range from conservation efforts to innovations, etc. The displays are usually judged and positions awarded. As you can see from the pictures and trophies, KMFRI, Kisumu took the first position as the best in delivery of services, thanks to YOU, as we could have not done as well without display of items from our improved

Aquarium facility.

Kind regards,  
William



**The manager's office prior to its transformation into an extension of the Aquarium with the removal of the corrugated iron partition.**





**The former storage space is now looking like a prime spot for more tanks!**



**The staff at the KMFRI Aquarium unpacks a treasure trove of gifts donated by Lance Reyniers of Python Products and Joe Garglulo of ATI!**





**Python Water Changers, nets, and airline tubing are met with great enthusiasm! A heartfelt thank you to Lance Reyniers of Python Products for his immense generosity!**



**Storage area cleared, painted, and now part of the 'expansive' Aquarium.**





**Dr. Richard Abila, KMFRI Assistant Director, welcomes members of the East African Legislative Assembly to the renewed Aquarium.**



**Visitors to the Aquarium, including honorable members of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), on tour viewing Lake Victoria Basin research activities.**





**KMFRI staff, led by Drs. Abila and Ojwang, display trophies won at the Public Service Exhibition forum.**

A warm and heartfelt thank you to those of you whose immense generosity in donating funding, equipment, supplies, and assistance have made this noteworthy endeavor possible!

**Special words of heartfelt thanks to...**

**Dr. Dwight R. Smith**

**American Cichlid Association**

**Aqua Havens CARES**

**ATI**

**Federation of Texas Aquarium Societies**

**Hill Country Cichlid Club**

**Jehmco Fish Room Supply House**

**Kingfish Services**

**Michael Hill**

**Python Products**

**Wildlife Conservation Society**

***Together, we can and we are making a difference!***

# Grandā Publishing

## Cichlids of Africa

### Volume I: Haplochromines

*Greg Steeves, Dave Hansen,  
Anton Lamboj*

From the heart of Africa comes a group of fish highly sought after by aquarists around the world. These fish are cichlids and are perfectly suited to life in captive quarters. Remaining relatively small, extraordinarily colorful, and highly adaptable, cichlids provide for endless insight into life under water. It is perhaps their reproductive strategies that we humans find most fascinating.

Due to man-made pressures, many of these fish are threatened or gone from their native waters. How sad it would truly be to lose these treasures forever.

This book brings together a collection of in-depth articles and beautiful photographs of over 50 species, providing the reader with a valuable reference and insight into the captive care and breeding of these vanishing jewels.

## Cichlids of Africa

VOLUME I

HAPLOCHROMINES



Greg Steeves, Dave Hansen, Anton Lamboj

**Paperback:** 141 pages, 165 color photographs

**Release Date:** July 10, 2010

**Language:** English

**ISBN:** 3-85374-399-4

Available at [www.grandapublishing.com](http://www.grandapublishing.com) and [www.lisaslairbookstore.com](http://www.lisaslairbookstore.com) (International)

## Upcoming Events

### JULY

**22-25 ACA** Annual Convention Milwaukee WI

**29 HAS** Meeting with special guest speaker Dr. Anton Lamboj speaking on West African Cichlids. Fish Gallery, 4527 Lomitas St. Houston TX. 7pm

**31-HCCC/Amazonia's African Adventure.** Amazonia International, Austin, TX. Begins at noon with speakers Dave Hansen, Anton Lamboj and Greg Steeves. Rare Fish Auction. Admission free for all.

### AUGUST

**9- B.V.A.S.** Monthly meeting; at the Arnold residence, 3502 Carter Creek Parkway, Bryan TX

**14-USAFishBox** Auction Mansfield TX.

**21 (tent) HCCC** Collecting trip.

**21 TCA** Meeting at The Fish Gallery in Dallas. Jaxine Finnel with United Pet Group speaking on new products

### SEPTEMBER

**3-5 FOTAS** annual Convention Oklahoma City OK hosted by **OKAA**.

**13-B.V.A.S.** monthly meeting; location not yet set.

**18 TCA** Meeting Larry Lampert speaking on the Planted cichlid aquarium.

### OCTOBER

**3 HCCC** Auction. New location - Schertz TX.

**11-B.V.A.S.** monthly meeting; location not yet set.

**HCCC** Quarterly Meeting Ryan's Steakhouse, New Braunfels TX.

**TCA** Fall Workshop and Auction.

**21-24** All Aquarium Catfish Convention Bethesda Maryland.

## Buy-Sell-Trade

David Andrews

(817) 291-4169

[dandrews12@att.net](mailto:dandrews12@att.net)

### FOR SALE:

Albino Dwarf Bristlenose Plecos \$3.00 each  
Dwarf Bristlenose Plecos - Brown \$2.00 each

Neolamprologus Leleupi (Orange) - 1 1/2" \$3.00 each

Endlers Livebearers \$0.50 each

Pseudotropheus Flavus - 1 1/4" - 1 1/2" \$1.00 each

Pseudotropheus Polit - 1 1/4" - 1 1/2" \$2.00 each

Albino Auratus - 1 1/2" - 1 3/4" \$2.00 each

Pundamilia nyererei - 1 1/4" - 1 1/2" \$2.00 each

Telmatochromis Brichardi F1 1 1/4" - 1 1/2" \$2.00 each

Cyphotilapia Frontosa Mpimbwe - 1 3/4" - 2" \$12.00 each

Marvin England

(903) 794-FISH; (903) 244-3993

[marvinengland@hotmail.com](mailto:marvinengland@hotmail.com)

### Will deliver to FOTAS

### FOR SALE:

Synodontis petricola (almost adults) - \$10 each

Microworm cultures (with instructions) - \$5 each

RARE - solid black fancy guppies - 2 pairs for \$25

Altolamprologus calvus "Zaire Black" - nice size - \$7



Randy Rhoades  
(817) 426-0901

**FOR SALE:**

Four 60-gal. tanks . . \$100 each  
Two 75-gal. tanks . . \$100 each  
Two 58-gal. tanks . . \$80 each  
OR ALL FOR \$700  
All on double stack stands.  
Air pump to blow all tanks . . \$50  
240-gal. full setup with everything, including 2 wet-dry filters . . \$1,000

---

Diane Stewart  
1025 Granite Street  
Desoto, Texas  
(972) 223-3735  
[Diane.Stewart@eurocopterususa.com](mailto:Diane.Stewart@eurocopterususa.com)

**FOR SALE:**

One 30 gallon wet-dry filter & pump consisting of: Little Giant Model 2-MD-SC 1/20 HP water pump, 30 gallon sump tank drilled All fittings including overflow box, pvc, etc.. 5 gallon bucket of bio-balls Extra blue filter padding  
\$75 for all of the above  
Two Rubbermaid Roughneck 30 gallon rectangular with lids - \$5 each

---

Mike Palmer  
830-882-0717

**FOR SALE:**

I have about 15 pheudotropheus saulosi (taiwane reef), and about 15 iodotrophens sprengerae (rustys). I have had them for about a year and a half and they were bought at Daves Rare Aquarium Fish. They are proven breeders. They are very nice healthy fish. We have 2 beautiful blue males and 2 beautiful Rustys males. All sizes. Nice females. We would like to sell all of them together.

You would have to pick them up.  
The price is 200.00 firm.

---

Dan Schacht  
PM "Dan" on HCCC forum

**FOR SALE:**

Aquariums:  
40 long aquarium (48" x 12" x 12") This is a shorter 55 gallon aquarium. Great for vertical racks. - \$40  
45 Long aquarium (48" x 12" x 16") Again, not 100%, but the tank is a 55 gallon footprint but shorter. - \$40  
7 -15 gallon aquariums (24" x 12" x 12"), not pretty, but resealed, no leaks, with glass tops that open on the 12" end - \$15 each (there will be 4 more of these eventually if you want to plan for a rack system)

All items are pickup only. I will take store credit for retailers that want to come pick anything also. If you want to barter, send me a PM and maybe we can work something out.

---

Marc Garcia  
PM "BIGGSEXY78" on HCCC forum

**FOR SALE:**

Cyprichromis leptesoma Utinta

I have all sizes from breeders to fry..... I'm open to trades for other tangs too.. Make offer!

**2009-2010 FOTAS Executive****President**

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**2009 FOTAS Member Clubs**

Brazos Valley Aquarium Society

Hill Country Cichlid Club

Houston Aquarium Society

Houston Livebearer Association

North American Discus Association

Oklahoma Aquarium Association

Texas Cichlid Association

USA Fish Box





## BRAZ WALKER ENDOWMENT PROGRAM

Braz Walker, perhaps the best known of Texas' aquarists, set a standard for contributions to this hobby that may never be surpassed. Though paralyzed from the neck down from an accident while a college student, Braz managed to keep, breed, write and photograph a number of aquarium fishes. He published articles in a number of club publications, science journals and aquarium magazines.

Shortly after his death, FOTAS created the Braz Walker Endowment Program in Aquarium Science to honor his accomplishments and as a means to carry forth some of his interests. The program, funded from interest generated by a growing corpus, involves the following:

### • SPECIAL COLLECTION OF AQUARIUM LITERATURE:

One of the earliest efforts of this program focused on accumulating books and magazines that would remain available. This collection, housed at the Sterling A. Evans Library of Texas A&M University, contains a wide variety of books that include simple, introductory ones, those related to a specific topic, and those containing scientific literature. The collection also includes large "runs" of the aquarium magazines, some back to the 1950's.

### • RESEARCH GRANTS:

On a biennial basis, FOTAS has up to \$500.00 for supporting research that enhances the aquarium hobby. Usually these grants go to university students, but eligibility varies, depending upon the proposal. To apply for the research award, submit a two- to three-page description of the project, a budget and a letter of support from an adviser to any FOTAS officer.

Braz Walker Special Collection of  
Aquarium Literature Additions

Donated by Gwen and Steve Butler of Bryan, Texas (former members of BVAS)

- Axelrod, H. R. 1971. *Breeding Aquarium Fishes*. Book 2. T.F.H. Publications, Neptune, N.J. H-941.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1980. *Tropical Fish*. T.F.H. Publications, Neptune, N.J. KW-020.
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The special collections are now in the Cushing Memorial Library at Texas A&M University, adjacent to the Sterling A. Evans Library. Eventually they will be formally moved into the Braz Walker collection. (3-4 weeks from June 25th).



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