

**FOTAS**

# ***Fish Tales***

***Volume 10 Issue 1***

***How has Covid  
changed Fish Clubs?***

***January - March***

***The Show Must Go On!  
Online Betta Shows  
In the Covid Era***



***Breeding the Red Lizard  
Whiptail Catfish***

***Planted Tank  
Lighting Truths  
and Myths!***

## **In this issue:**

**3 President's Messages**  
**Clay Trachtman**

**4 Editor's Corner**  
**Gerald Griffin**

**5 Planted Tank Lighting Truths and Myths!**  
**Alex Brown**

**7 "Breeding the Red Lizard Whiptail Catfish  
(*Rineloricaria* sp. L10A) or Why I Travel  
Far and Wide For A Tropical Fish Auc  
tion"**  
**Barbara Romero**

**10 'Haplochromis' cyaneus**  
**Greg Steeves**

**15 The Show Must Go On! Online Betta  
Shows in the Covid Era**  
**Gerald Griffin**

**17 COVID-eo 2020 Betta Show**  
**Christina Simpson**

**19 Covid and Canadian Fish Clubs**  
**Morgan Ruttle**

**22 Brazil Betta Show**  
**Paulo Faria**

**29 Let the Show Begin**  
**Lorena Burgueno**

**31 How has Covid Changed Fish Clubs**  
**Gerald Griffin**

**34 Great Things come in Tiny Packages**  
**Riccardo Camera**

**On the Cover: Metallic Silver Betta, Picture by**  
**Alejandro Hernandez Martinez**

**Design and Layout**  
**Gerald Griffin**



**We are looking for a new Logo, we are tak-  
ing submissions until August 1st 2020.**

Volume 10 Issue 1

The FOTAS Fish Tales is a quarterly publication of the Federation of Texas Aquarium Societies, a non-profit organization. The views and opinions contained within are not necessarily those of the editors and/or the officers and members of the Federation of Texas Aquarium Societies.

FOTAS Fish Tales Editor:  
Gerald Griffin [herpchat@yahoo.com](mailto:herpchat@yahoo.com)

Fish Tales Submission Guidelines

Articles and Art Submissions:

Please submit all articles, photos and art in electronic form. We can accept most popular software formats and fonts. Email to [herpchat@yahoo.com](mailto:herpchat@yahoo.com). Photos and graphics are encouraged with your articles! Please remember to include the photo/graphic credits. Graphics and photo files may be submitted in any format, however uncompressed TIFF, JPEG or vector format is preferred, at the highest resolution/file size possible. If you need help with graphics files or your file is too large to email, please contact me for alternative submission info.

Next deadline.....  
April 1st 2020

### **COPYRIGHT NOTICE**

All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted, distributed, sold or publicly displayed in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, except for fair use, without the explicit permission of the Federation of Texas Aquarium Societies.

# President's Message

Another few months have passed since my last writing, and boy has a lot changed. We are living in a changed world due to the COVID-19 virus. I am lucky, I do not personally know anyone that has passed away due to the virus; however, I know of coworkers and friends that have lost loved ones to the virus.

As a fish keeper, one of the small joys that I had during the quarantine was still being able to go to the local fish stores. The stores were considered “essential” in Louisiana and were allowed to remain open. The reasoning for this was that people would need food and supplies for their pets. One of the stores I frequent remained completely open, the other only allowed for customers to call in orders and then pick them up (one of the perks of being the president of a local aquarium society is that I was let in). I have always said (and tried) to support local fish stores. It is now more important than ever as they are struggling due to the quarantine.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 has claimed another victim, although this time it is not a person. With a heavy heart, the very difficult decision was made to cancel FOTAS 2020 in Austin. This decision was not made in haste as much deliberation was put into the decision by both the local host club as well as the leaders of the other FOTAS clubs. I know that Riccardo Camera and his team members from the Greater Austin Aquarium Society (GAAS) had spent many hours planning for this event and were really excited to be hosting FOTAS 2020. I want to thank the GAAS club members for their efforts.

So now we must wait an even longer time before we can get together again. FOTAS 2021 will be hosted by the Texas Cichlid Association (TCA). From conversations that I have had with TCA president Jose Hernandez, it sounds like FOTAS 2021 will be huge, dwarfing FOTAS 2019 and will be spectacular!!! I know that TCA has already been planning this for a few a few months and I can't wait!

Happy fishkeeping,

**Clay**

# Editor's Corner

Originally this issue was going to be about CARES species and have an article about the program and how everyone can become involved. Then a whole series of articles about CARES fish. That did not happen. Instead the world we know got turned upside down and most of our normal activities came to a screeching halt. We were left in a world where there were no fish meetings, no auctions and no fish shows. After a few weeks we began to come to terms with this new reality and how we could cope as a fish hobbyist. I personally was greatly affected as not only did I contract this virus, it left me in a situation where I was barely able to function for a month. I also had a lot of work duties to perform as my job shifted from in person to online.

On top of that I had to deal with several world situations. For those that do not know I am also the Chair of the Judging Board of the International Betta Congress. So, I had to examine this Pandemic from not only the position in the United States but World-Wide. This meant that I had to consult with my delegates from other countries and decide on closing the worldwide Betta Show Circuit. After much debate we decided it was in the best interest of the IBC and its members to close the entire show circuit worldwide. So how were we going to handle that? Well the Betta crowd is a very innovative bunch and right away they started having their wheels turn. We had just started having "Virtual Fish Meetings" so why not try to have an "Online Betta Show". As I was finishing up the previous issue of Fish Tales Magazine I thought, we are in a Pandemic, why not do an entire issue dealing with the Pandemic and how various fish clubs were responding to this change. So, I put out a poll and wrote a few articles about this Pandemic and invited my friends that were conducting "Online Fish Shows" to submit articles about their regions of the world and their fish shows. The result was four articles on this topic from people all over the Americas. I hope you find them as interesting as I have. I am also going to note that for two of the articles, English is not the native language of the authors.

Next issue of Fish Tales will go back to the CARES and will have our first article of the year in the FOTAS CARES Program. I do hope as you read this, you are thinking about your CARES fish and hoping that you might want to participate in the CARES program. This next issue will spell it out step by step as to how to register your fish and then participate in our program. It would be nice to see FOTAS back in the top position of the CARES program. So seriously consider joining our program.

One last thing is that for our magazine to continue, we do need original content. In my history as FOTAS Fish Tales Editor I have only rejected one article. I will accept anything, and we do have people that would help edit and get the wording where it needs to be. I also must give a shout out to my assistant, Valaree Baker. Without her you would find multiple errors that would affect the quality of this magazine. There is a reason our Fish Tales Magazine was number one in North America and that is all of the hard work our volunteers put into making this the best Magazine.

Thank You for your support of Fish Tales;

***Gerald Griffin***



# Planted Tank Lighting Truths and Myths!

**Article and Photos  
by Alex Brown**

**O**ne thing I read a LOT about when I first started getting into planted tanks was lighting. This is one area of our hobby where there is a lot of science available, and at the same time, surprisingly little that the average hobbyist ever sees. Because there is a lot of useful information on this, I'm not going to rehash it all here. Instead I'll address a few myths I hear repeatedly.

**Myth 1 – You need 6500k Lighting to grow plants.**

**WRONG!** (couldn't resist) This is probably the biggest myth I see spread on the internet in forums, groups and even "informative" YouTube Videos. To understand why this is wrong, you have to understand what "6500k" even means. Ever talked to anyone about home decorating and the terms "cool" and "warm" are used to describe colors and lighting? Welcome to Kelvin temperature. That's the "k" in 6500k. To keep it short, this temperature determines how we, humans, see the light. Warmer temperatures (lower k number) tend to look more yellow/orange, while cooler temps (higher k number) tend to look whiter and bluer. But here's the kicker. Plants don't care!!! OK that's not entirely true. But they don't care as much as we do. Plants will grow quite well under 2700k lighting and just as well under 10,000k lighting. The k temperature is more

about how your tank looks to your eyes, than whether or not it will grow plants. So why the hype over 6500k? It's pretty close to the temperature at which we see natural sunlight. So in theory, it makes your tank look more natural. Personally, I like higher K because it makes the tank look brighter and the fish and shrimp color "pop" more. PAR (Photosynthetically Active Radiation) is the more measurable and important factor for what light will grow plants. This is the intensity of the light as perceived by plants. More on this later.

**Myth 2 – You should use at least 1-2 watts of light per gallon of tank**

This myth is older than I am. I think it was started by cavemen. There are two main issues with this myth. First, it was never actually true, and second, even if it were ever true, it is completely blown out of the water by today's high output, low wattage lighting, namely LED (light emitting diode) lighting. So why was it never true? In the early days of live aquatic plant keeping, it was meant as a general guideline of how much light you should aim for in a tank. BUT, this was only for generally standard size and depth tanks. We now know better than the distance from the light source, and especially the depth of water the light must travel through makes a huge difference in the light.

### Myth 3 – You will need really high PAR to grow THOSE plants

PAR (Photosynthetically Active Radiation) measures the light intensity as seen by the plants. It is measured in micromols (also called umols). Generally speaking, plants and tanks are often considered being a low-light, medium-light or high-light tank. For the sake of learning, we can consider the PAR levels at the substrate for each of these as follows (in umols): low: 15-30, medium: 30-50, high: 50-80, 80+ is very high. If you've spent much time around planted tank forums or groups, you'll see a lot of people and lighting manufacturers talking about 160 PAR lighting being needed for carpeting plants, or hard to grow plants. The truth is, except for a very few plants, between 60-80 PAR will grow almost any plant you can find. Higher lighting will make them grow faster, but it also makes them much more needy for fertilization, faster to have deficiency issues, and as I'm sure you know, will cause more algae problems. So don't get caught up in the PAR races. Proper husbandry and attention to the other needs of your plants will show better results and growth than putting your tank directly under the surface of the sun.

### Myth 4 – Cheap lights won't grow plants

This one cracks me up. It truly demonstrates the American way of getting used to paying for convenience, instead of educating ourselves on the basics and figuring out our own, less expensive solutions. If

you haven't figured it out by now, proper lighting for growing plants is all about giving the plants the light THEY need. This means PAR. Two cheap clip on work lamps with LED bulbs can grow a REALLY nice planted tank on a 20L. I'm talking show quality. Don't believe me? Check out some of Dennis Wong's work. He's grown winning scapes with nothing more than a couple of 2700k bulbs in desk lamps. Will that super cheap AquaNeat or Beamswork LED light grow plants? Sure it will... on the right tank. You can't put a super-low output cheap LED light on a 24" deep 125gal tank and expect growth at the bottom. Remember it's about PAR where the plants live. But put that same light on a 10gal tank and watch your plants grow happily. I grew some really nice lush plants, low tech, in a 19" deep 36gal bowfront with nothing more than a \$45 Beamswork FSPEC light. And they were beautiful (until I had the bright idea of putting a Flowerhorn in there LOL). So don't be afraid to DIY it with those LED work lamps from a big box store, or "cheap out" with an LED from Amazon. Just know what you're getting into and get the right amount of PAR for the plants you have in the tank. Two cheap LEDs brings twice as much light as one!

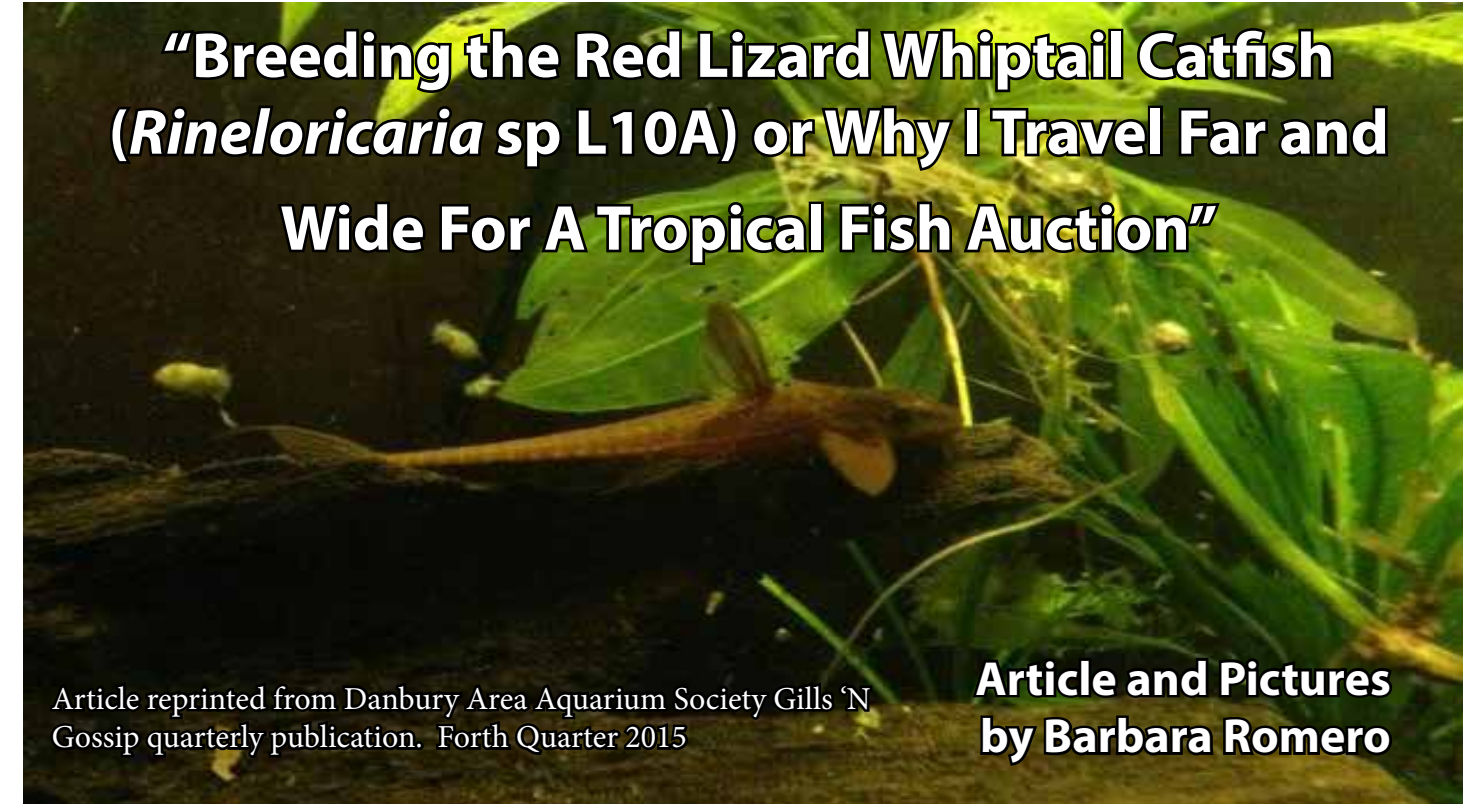
OK this one got long. I'll shut up now. But here are some great links to teach you more:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKHwDfv6ETg&t=>

<https://barrreport.com/threads/ada-lighting-at-aqua-forest-and-nice-low-par-values-who-knew.4865/>







# **“Breeding the Red Lizard Whiptail Catfish (*Rineloricaria* sp L10A) or Why I Travel Far and Wide For A Tropical Fish Auction”**

Article reprinted from Danbury Area Aquarium Society Gills 'N Gossip quarterly publication. Forth Quarter 2015

**Article and Pictures  
by Barbara Romero**

Some of you may know I travel far and wide for a tropical fish auction. I attended the Central New York Aquarium Society (CNYAS) auction in East Syracuse, New York in the spring of 2014. The auction typically is held on a Saturday, which is very fortuitous for me since I can then drive up very early the day of the auction and rent a hotel room if I stay until auction's end. If I stay the night, I go to dinner with friends from the auction and also go on a shop hop before the drive back home on Sunday. Basically it's a whole weekend of tropical fish and friends!

Besides the auction itself, CNYAS in recent years has also held rare / expensive fish raffles (such as L-numbered catfish) on the auction day and one year has even allowed sellers to submit for auction “mystery boxes” of fish &/or plants that the crowd seemed to really enjoy.

For example, the auctioneer tells the crowd that the mystery box is a group of 8 African cichlids, what lake they are from, and who the seller is. Then the bidding starts. If you use how high the bidding went as an indicator of “enjoyment”, then the crowd “loved it”.

I actually took a chance and won the bid on one of the aquatic plant mystery boxes and was very happy I did so. Besides a nice grouping of various aquatic plants,

I even received a group of livebearers as one of the surprises in the box.

In regards to the type of fish at the auction, I never know what will be seen and there is usually a couple of fish that I try to obtain. Besides tropical fish sellers from the area and the local fish stores that give very nice donations of fish and equipment; CNYAS attracts sellers from north and west of Syracuse. Typically I have seen many from Buffalo at the auction.

It was my lucky day when I noticed 5 bags of 4 Red Lizard Whiptail Catfish among the auction bags scattered throughout the various tables. I have never seen this fish before and was quite intrigued. Some were very red while others were rusty brown but they were all odd but beautiful looking fish. I knew nothing about them and conducted a quick Google search on my iPhone before they were auctioned to see if I could maintain them in my soft water.

I learned the following...

1. The origin of the species is controversial. Some believe they are collected from the wild while others believe they were created in the hobby.
2. Favor soft water with a pH range of 6.0-7.5

3. Favor well-planted tanks
4. Very peaceful fish
5. Are paternal cave spawners

I quickly realized I could easily maintain these fish and wanted to try to breed them. So I decided to try to obtain 2 bags to increase the chances of at least 1 pair. I had a bidding war with some hobbyists at the auction but since I counted 5 bags, I was victorious and won the bags for a total of 8 fish.

I then had to figure out where to keep them and quickly decided to dedicate one of my very planted 55-gallon tanks to these fish and only these fish. Therefore I had to move quite a bit of fish from the 55 gallon into other tanks when I got home.

I learned the L10A whiptail is a very peaceful and docile fish most of the day. So I am grateful I moved the other fish from the tank. The L10A usually hangs on the Amazon Sword plants and one of the taller varieties of Anubias plants in the tank. They are omnivores and do “nibble” on the plants but this tank was so packed with mature specimens that it did not cause detrimental damage to the plants. I suspect these fish would harm new growth so that daughter Amazon plants (offshoots from the mother plant) should be moved into another tank to give them a chance to establish.

I mainly fed them a lot of flake food. I made a mixture of different varieties of Ken's flakes foods and added them all together to create a variety of foods at each feeding. I then add the food near the bubbles at the sponge filter or near the power filter so that it gets into the current and makes its way throughout the tank. I realized these fish need this type of food movement or they will allow the food to sink to the tank floor and fungus on the substrate. When they see the flake swirling around the tank, they get excited and begin to feed.

I have tried to feed them live black worm a couple of times but be prepared to “lose” some of the black worm to the substrate. The whiptail so slowly feed that they allow some of the black worms to bury themselves in the Eco-Complete substrate before the whiptails can get to them. The worms began to thrive and have become part of the habitat in the tank. I figured

this was fine since the adults can feast on them as they come across some in the tank.

When I purchased these whiptails I suspected to have to wait at least a year for them to get accustomed to their environment and to more fully mature before I would see mating behavior. I was very wrong. They did not want to wait and in four months time, I saw fry. There were a variety of caves in the tank but the male chose to make his den under a piece of driftwood which had a large Anubias tied to it. This driftwood resided in the back of the tank so I could not see the male when he was lying on eggs. I realized after the second spawn that the only time I could tell he was on eggs is when I did not see him at feeding time. Also we had a very stormy couple of days at the end of July/early August and along with a 50% water change, I surmised one of these triggered the very first spawn.

The fry varied in colors from beautiful reds, to rusty browns, and a couple of greyish-browns. I presume one will get more reds if you breed two very red L10A but I have not attempted this. The fry in my opinion are “stupid”. They hang on the tank glass and I believe did not realize they needed to feed. I counted at least 20 fry but only 8 survived after 7 weeks. The ones that survived learned to move around the tank, hang on the plants and look for food. I did try to move the second spawn of ~ 25 and intended to place them in a small enclosure so that they cannot miss the food but I was





having great difficulty catching them and gave up. I ultimately decided to let them be with the adults as was done with the first spawn. The strongest will and did survive but it was a small group.

I entered a group of 5 after the second spawn to the DAAS Breeders Award Program but kept the rest of the fry to grow out. If you would like to learn more about whiptails, I recommend Norman Behr 's articles in the Jan/Feb 2015 issue of Amazonas magazine.

2014 ended up being one of my best years finding novel fish at local fish auctions. I hope 2016 will be even greater!



# *'Haplochromis' cyaneus*



## Article and Photos by Greg Steeves

Reprinted from the Lateral Line Volume 6 Issue 3, June 2013

**M**akobe Island in the Speke Gulf of Lake Victoria is home to a diverse haplochromine assemblage. Some of the areas most famous residences are *Pundamilia nyererei*, *Neochromis omnicaeruleus*, *Paralabidochromis chilotes*, and *Mbipia lutea*. This species rich area is home to at least 27 haplochromines and two tilapinies; *Oreochromis niloticus* and *Oreochromis leucostictus* (Seehausen & Bouton, 1998), both non-native introductions. It is in this rocky shallow water ecosystem that the beautiful furu (Swahili word meaning small colorful fish) '*Haplochromis' cyaneus* is found.

The coloration of breeding males is bright blue and this is where '*Haplochromis' cyaneus* derives its name. The Greek word for the color blue is "kyaneos" and, with an English modification "cyan", a common adjective for a particular shade of blue, we arrive at the moniker.

Taxonomy within the Lake Victoria cichlid assemblage is a complex struggle. Not only are many of the species closely related, sharing characteristics that can make differentiation difficult, the fish themselves are capable of undergoing rapid morphological and coloration changes (Greenwood, 1982) while adapting to environmental or other stressors that we are not yet fully capable of understanding (Kaufman 2008). Realizing that these animals are part of an explosive radiation

populating a very young lake, it is no wonder a common adjective to describe these furu is "plastic". British ichthyologist P. H. Greenwood spent the last half of the 20th century attempting to classify haplochromines based on similarities and differences within the species flocks. His works form the basis from which most modern taxonomic descriptions are made. The group of haplochromine cichlids known as "rockpickers" has been recognized for sometime. Seehausen and others placed descriptive names, usually based on color, to differentiate the closely related species. When initially presented with these field names, the fish of the rockpicker assemblage were placed in the genus *Paralabidochromis* incertae sedis: the closest fit. Distinctions included both the placement and structure of teeth in the jaw, thickened lips, and the cross hatching of bars marking the flanks. Seehausen concluded that the rockpickers were an intermediate species sharing traits of several overlapping genera mainly *Paralabidochromis* and *Psammochromis*. *Psammochromis* markers include the absence of scales on the pectoral fins, and distinctive scale "granulation". It has been realized for sometime that these two groupings of cichlids are in need of major revisions. A strong case can be made for the splitting of *Paralabidochromis* into at least four distinct genera while there are at least two distinct groups of fish sharing the *Psammochromis* designation. Rather



than add to substantial confusion, Seehausen chose to describe the individual species but not the genus. He assigns the former rockpickers to '*Haplochromis*'. This designation is not 1888 formation of the genus *Haplochromis*, but rather in the generic sense of all furu being referred to as haplochromines in much the same way that we refer to the Malawian aufwuchs grazers as mbuna.

While this might be seen as confusing, until the restructuring of the *Psammochromis-Paralabidochromis* superflock is undertaken, Seehausen's methodology of not wanting to add to any further confusion is quite understandable. For this reason we reference the rockpickers, and other haplochromines lacking a distinctive genus, by '*Haplochromis*' rather than *Haplochromis* followed by the described name. Using this system, Seehausen and company described two rockpickers, '*Haplochromis*' *cyaneus* (blue rockpicker) and '*Haplochromis*' *flavus* (yellow rockpicker) with an additional nine known and distinct species which adhere to this lineage.

'*Haplochromis*' *cyaneus* is known from three locations; Makobe Island, Chamagati Island and Nansio Island, all in the southern portion of Lake Victoria.

Gut samples yield algae, diatoms and fly larvae, all obtained through grazing on large algae encrusted rocks (Seehausen, 1998). Male size at adulthood is 10cm while the female matures to a slightly smaller size of 9cm. In its native habitat, '*Haplochromis*' *cyaneus* is found continuously grazing solitarily or in small groups. Breeding occurs year round.

The female sports a silver or beige colored body with the lightest portion prevalent in the underbelly. A midlateral black bar begins at the eye socket and



Female '*Haplochromis*' *cyaneus* in the aquarium.

continues in a straight line to the edge of the gill plate. Here it gaps slightly only to continue on to the end of the caudal peduncle. Another thin black bar begins beyond the gill plate and proceeds along the flank following the curvature of the back just under the dorsal fin. This bar ends in front of the caudal peduncle. Both paired and unpaired fins are translucent. Slight vertical barring is visible but not nearly as pronounced as the two horizontal bars. Females may sport solitary ocelli on the anal fin but it is not developed as seen in the male, lacking a clear orbit.

Male coloration is much more vibrant. In sexually mature fish, the vertical and horizontal crosshatching is visible albeit faded when in comparison to those of the female. The body is tinged light blue and intensifies



Young male coloring up.





Mature Male

to a solid pastel blue in the dorsal fin. A red edging lines the entire length of the dorsal fin. The caudal fin is solid red while the anal fin is almost white with tinges of red and blue at the base and at the extremities. Up to six ocelli dot the anal fin and cross the fins rays. Pelvic fins generally have a blue tinge to them but when dominance occurs, these fins turn solid black. A face bar begins at the corner of the mouth and continues through the eye socket and stretching around the forehead. A metallic blue blotch is splattered from the top lip to the iris.

We received a small group of fry from an exchange with friends in the French Haplochromis Association in September of 2008. To our good fortune we ended up with a group of four fish, three females and a male. This group was raised in an 80 liter aquarium with an air driven sponge filter, thin sand substrate, and rocks of varying sizes piled along the back side of the aquarium. While still small fry, a daily regiment of crushed spirulina flake and frozen cyclops seemed to be an agreeable combination which resulted in steady growth. At a size or 1.5cm, feeding was cut to every second day. This is generally a good rule of thumb for all haplochromine cichlids as rapid growth results in a shorten life span and reduced

breeding activity at adulthood (personal observation). Other than sporadic water changes of between 50% and 80% bi-monthly, not much else in the way of upkeep was employed. Some small *Anubias* species along with several algae eating snails (*Neritina reclinata*) worked to enhance the nitrogen cycle. This tank was lit by a basic 20 watt florescent aquarium bulb. We generally try to add these snails or small *Anicistrus* species to the fry tanks. These creatures will tend to eat any flake food that is not

consumed by the small fish eliminating the possibility of decaying food matter tainting the water.

Conditions must have been favorable for these fry have developed into wonderful aquarium tenants. As they have progressed to sexually active juveniles, some curious features have presented themselves. The first distinctive characteristic we observed was a thin solid, somewhat thin midlateral line dissecting the body vertically. This same trait is seen on other species from the region in including *Ptyochromis* sp. "salmon", *Platytaeniodus* sp. "red tail sheller" and '*Haplochromis*' sp. "Kenya gold". These former fish are all mollusk eaters. Could it be possible that '*Haplochromis*' *cyaneus* shared a common ancestor with some of these snail eaters and developed the rock picking method of feeding to fill a niche? This one characteristic might in itself not be



Young male developing



enough to sustain this idea, but a close look at the head and jaw structure may just lend itself to further support a common “rockpicker-sheller ancestral tie” theory. Shelling species have a steeply inclined cranial profile. This is present in both ‘*H. cyaneus*’ and ‘*H. flavus*’. Admittedly, this steep cranial slope at the nuchal region is not limited to only shelling species, but is especially prevalent in this assemblage. The mouth of ‘*H. cyaneus*’ is small when compared to all other lineages of haplochromines except for many shellers (*Ptyochromis*, *Platytaeniodus* etc.). The upper and lower jaw forms a formidable appendage very similar in structure as to what we see in the molluscivores. The similarity of physical attributes is undeniable. It would be of immense interest to distinguish the placement of the noted fishes on a phylogenetic tree. This hypothesis warrants further study. Perhaps molecular data will further verify this relationship. At Makobe Island, ‘*Haplochromis*’ *cyaneus* is a resident of the surf zone in shallow water. Here it flows in the rolling waves while picking at the algal growth along the rocky bed. In our aquatic arrangement, it was unnecessary to provide strong water movement to simulate tidal action and the substrate was fine grain sand, a sharp contrast to its natural habitat. This was of no consequence to the fish that continuously forage though the sand strata looking for edible bits. In all probability, ‘*H. cyaneus*’ has adapted to this rather hostile niche at Makobe Island to escape the aggression of other more intimidating inhabitants. This fish has a mild disposition and would undoubtedly not last long with other residents of this location such as the beautiful *Pundamilia nyererei*. In terms of temperament, one should expect a similar character to the shelling species mentioned above.

In observations concerning spawning behavior, a rather typical haplochromine sequence of events transpires. The initial trigger that transforms an individual from the typical juvenile or female-like coloration to the radiant majesty of a dominant hue is generally the maturation of a female; her becoming gravid. The male will alter between shaking to the female and chasing off any trespassers while establishing a loose territory. It is at this time that male coloration is most intense. He digs a small pit in the sand which seems in sharp contrast to what he may be able to do in native waters (over a hard rock substrate). The female eventually reacts positively to his efforts and accepts his spawning location. They circle each other, the female dropping eggs and nipping at the egg dummies on the

male’s anal fin. It is at this time that the male releases milt and fertilization occurs. After the female has spent her compliment of eggs and is gently turning them in her buccal cavity, she swims off to incubate her clutch in relative peacefulness. The male quickly loses interest in the female and returns to foraging. The female will hold her brood for 14 days at 29C. Warmer temperatures will hasten the incubation process while lower temperature will extend it. In the aquarium, the female will tend her brood for a further two weeks after which time they are weaned away from her and left to fend for themselves. In a species only aquarium, it is common for a few fry from each brood to survive. Brood sizes number as high as 30 young.

If a haplochromine community tank is to include ‘*Haplochromis*’ *cyaneus*, one should avoid the sheller species mentioned earlier which have similar markings (especially the females) as well as more aggressive species. A good practice to abide by is to provide as large an aquarium as possible for your colony. Although growth and breeding is possible in a tank of 80 liters, a larger aquarium of 200 liters or more is recommended so one may observe a more relaxed and presumably natural behavior.

‘*Haplochromis*’ *cyaneus* is included on the IUCN Red List as endangered with a decreasing population trend as well as appearing on the CARES preservation listing. We have been informed that captive stocks in Europe have dwindled. In the USA we now have an organized group of people dedicated to the preservation of endangered cichlid species. Efforts are well underway to ensure that healthy captive populations will produce enough fry to ensure ‘*Haplochromis*’ *cyaneus* exists in our aquaria, for many years to come.

#### References:

- Bohner, Axel;** 2010; Die Viktoriaese-Cichliden in Deutschland; pp. 28-29.
- Seehausen, Ole & E. Lippitsch, N. Bouton and H. Zwennes;** 1998; “Mbipi, the rockdwelling cichlids of Lake Victoria: description of three new genera and fifteen new species”; Ichthyological Explorations of Freshwaters; pp. 129-228.
- Seehausen, Ole;** 1996; “Lake Victoria Rock Cichlids”; Verduyn Cichlids; pp. 146-158 .
- Seehausen, Ole & N. Bouton;** 1998 “The Community of Rock-Dwelling Cichlid in Lake Victoria” [http://www.zfmk.de/BZB/B47\\_H3\\_4/BZBB4715.PDF](http://www.zfmk.de/BZB/B47_H3_4/BZBB4715.PDF)
- Steeves, Greg & Hansen, D, and Lamboj, A.** 2010; “Cichlids of Africa Vol I – Haplochromines.” Granda Publishing.



# The Show Must Go On!



## Online Betta Shows in the Covid Era

### Article by Gerald Griffin

**A**s we were prepping for Spring Break, I had a feeling that something was going to be radically different about how we were going to do business. I told my students not to be surprised if we had a three-week spring break. I was looking at what the universities around us were doing and what school districts in other states were doing however, I did think that we might be back in the classroom a few weeks after the break. Well that did not happen. As it turned out my wife ended up getting exposed during my Spring Break to the Covid-19 and I was a few days behind her on this journey. During the mean time I was left dealing with the world situation and the Coronavirus. So, I had to analyze the world shutting down in Pandemic mode and then dealing with the International Betta Congress Show Circuit. I had conducted an Emergency Meeting of the Judging Board to pull in the votes I needed to shut down the World Betta Show Circuit as that was the responsible thing to do. This was a monumental feat as I wanted all the chapters in the countries involved to voluntarily shut down or have their regions shut down. For Area 2 (Europe) this was easy as they closed everything up. Area 3 (Primarily China) was the epicenter of the Pandemic so it was already shut down. Area 7 (Australia and New Zealand) also were totally shut down. That left Areas 1, 4 and 6 to deal with. Area 1 (North America) was pretty much shut down except for Mexico which followed the US lead and did shut down as we were making the decision to cancel the show season. Area 4 (South

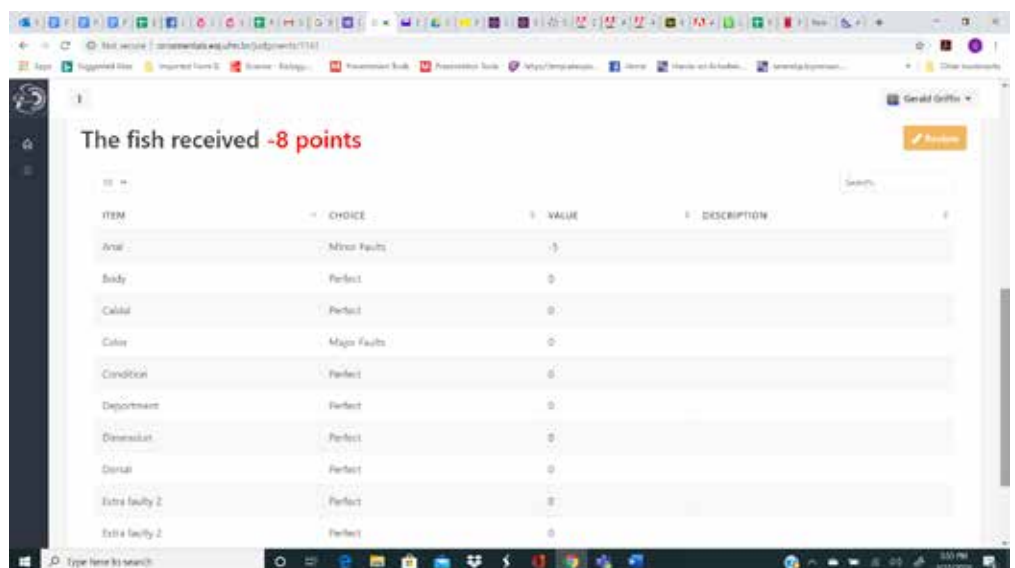
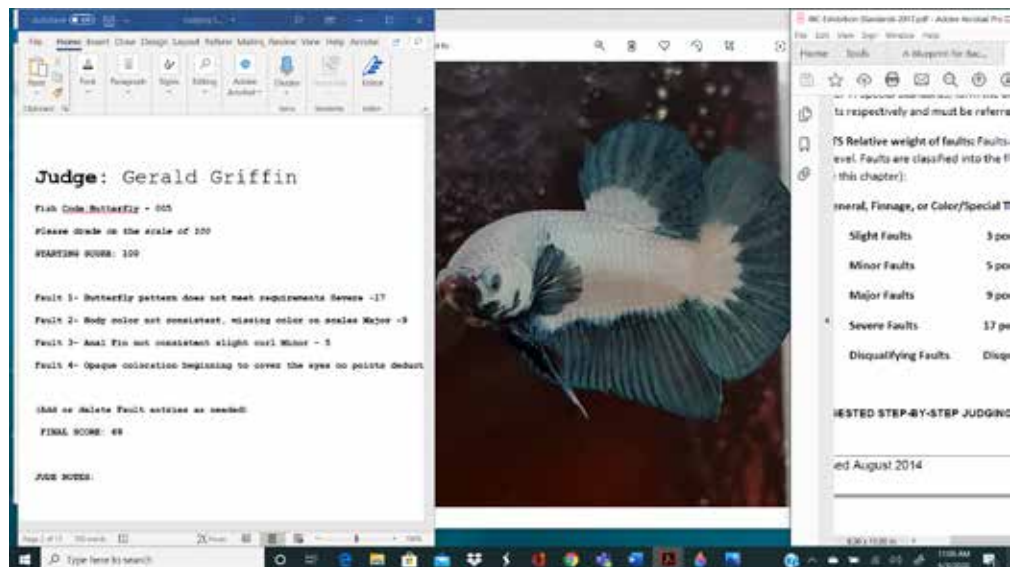
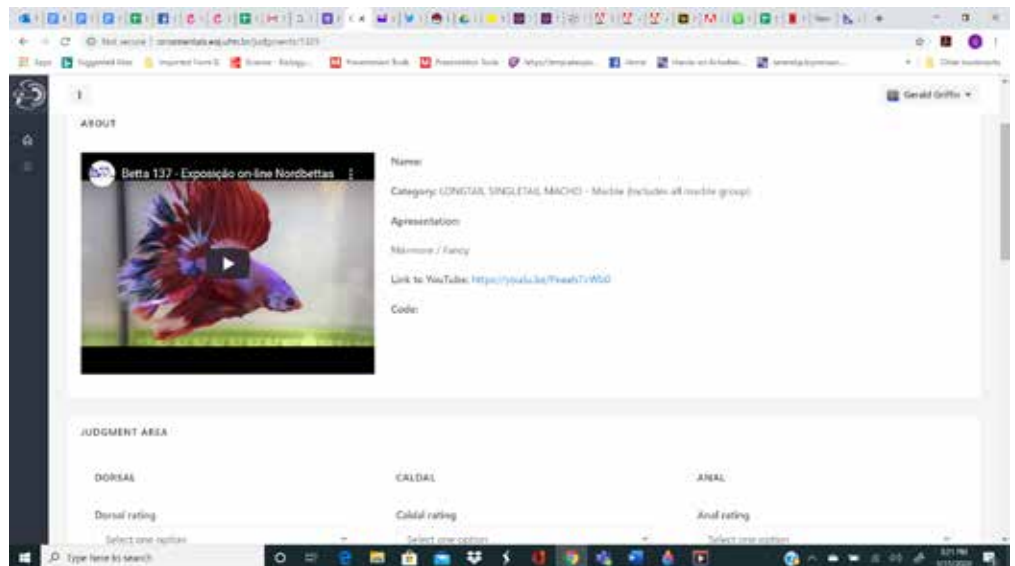
America) also shut down quickly leaving us with Area 6 to deal with. Most of Area 6 (South East Asia) was already shut down but there were a few countries that were still open for business. Thanks to Joty Atmadjaja, he was able to convince the last chapter trying to hold their show to shut down. I then had the votes I needed to declare the 2019=2020 show season over and the points were to be tabulated to calculate the show year winners as they were as of March 2020.

The next problem. Several breeders had been breeding for the second part of the show year and had nothing to do with their fish, how was the IBC going to deal with this? Result, online Betta Shows! The first to conduct one of these shows was the Alpha Betta Chapter in Area 1 and was the brainchild of Rob and Christine Simpson. They used a clever name of the Covid-eo Betta Show. More on this in their article. The second show to go on was Betta Breeders Canada doing a show for their annual show as part of CAOAC (Canadian Association Of Aquarium Clubs). Area 4 then held 2 shows independent of each other, their articles also follow. Area 6 has had a show and has another one in the works at the time of this article. Although not the ideal situation it does allow for the Breeders to show their fish and gives the public fish to look at. After judging four of these shows (and no idea how many more in the future) I can say that they are possible to judge however they are not the ideal situation as we have to contend with a number of issues.

First, the better quality the video, the easier it is to find flaws with the fish. Lower quality video and some faults slide right on by. I was most impressed with the show conducted by Paulo Faria. His show had drop down menus to apply faults to the fish and different areas we typically look at for faults. At the end I looked at the scores that the judges scored, and most Judges had very similar scores. This is a good thing as it shows that our IBC process is giving good results for our Judges.

The rest of this “Article” will be about the shows from the viewpoints of the Organizers of the various shows. I hope you enjoy this montage of “Online Betta Shows”.

Right, various screen shots of different “Online Betta Shows” from the Judging aspect.



## Article and Photos by Christina Simpson



## COVID-eo 2020 Betta Show

**M**arch of 2020 was truly a month like no other for the Alpha Betta Chapter (ABC) of the International Betta Congress (IBC). As COVID-19 became a pandemic and the United States began putting restrictions on social gatherings in place, ABC was in full discussion on the safety and practicality of holding our scheduled Area 1 International IBC show on the weekend of April 4th, 2020. On March 21-22, 2020, the announcement was made that all IBC sanctioned shows would be canceled/postponed through June at the least and Convention 2020 would also be canceled. Many IBC members had fish prepared and everyone had been excited to start the show season after a long winter of conditioning. ABC quickly began considering alternatives to the traditional shows.

On March 24, 2020, thanks to the initiative of Christina Simpson, Jen Cannon, Karen MacAuley, and Kristan Dionne, ABC announced the COVID-eo Betta Fish Show. We had a half a dozen judges volunteer their time to judge videos if we could get the entries. Since this was our first fully online event, we made rules that were simple for video formats and simplified entry classes to encourage everyone to submit (see next page). Jen Cannon made a “how to” example video for participants. Christina Simpson volunteered to make awards for winning participants. Since there would be a physical award in need of being mailed, entry fees of

\$1 per entry were required. Facebook seemed to be the most universal system for participants, so a COVID-eo group was created. Initially, only self-bred betta were allowed; however, we had enough interest, that a collector's class was added. By judging time, we had 146 entries from 14 different participants. The next task for the organizers was grouping the videos for easier judging. This is where Facebook definitely lacked in viable options. Ultimately, all videos were uploaded to individual “Collections” on Facebook that could be shared privately with assigned judges.

Judges: Gerald Griffin, Kayla Griffin, Holly Rutan, Aurelia Ogles, and Kurt Bihlmayer, gathered on April 4, 2020, via Facebook group message to begin judging. Each class collection of videos was assigned to each judge (or judging pair). Enough quality entries were received that most classes were split into solid vs patterned fish or by tail types. This was exciting and also meant a slight change in awards. By that evening, all the winners had been determined. On April 5, 2020, videos began being uploaded for everyone to view on the Facebook group in albums. Judges comments were added later. For fun, a “Popular Vote” occurred as well via “likes” on the COVID-eo group. Probably the most amazing thing was that the Judges BOS male and Female were also recognized in the Popular Vote.

Overall, we had great participation, and much better



than anticipated. ABC ended up awarding each participant a wooden plaque and made electronic certificates for each 1st and 2nd place winner. First place winners received a photo certificate designed from their video submission, while second place winners received an ABC emblem certificate. Despite delays on getting awards made, mailed, and designed; ABC has received nothing but great support from everyone. If you have any questions about more details, please send ABC an email at ABC-BettaChapter@gmail.com.



# Covid and Canadian Fish Clubs

Photo by Steven Tran



Article by  
Morgan Ruttle

I like many fish hobbyists was looking forward to the start of the Spring/summer Auction and Show Season on top of our monthly club meetings. Many of my local clubs in Ontario had their auctions and attached shows almost upon us, amping up for the Canadian Association Of Aquarium Clubs (CAOAC) National Convention in May Hosted by the Durham Region Aquarium Society. This national convention is always a big event for myself and for my Local Chapter of the IBC: Betta Breeders Canada (BBC) as we hold our International Betta Show in conjunction with them each year. Its always a lot of fun to spend 3-4 days listening to speakers, seeing friends and participating in the show. This year I was also planning on traveling to Chicago with a couple of my Betta Club members to the IBC Convention to see all our friends from the states and have a little vacation as the same time. Alas when Covid 19 started to hit the nation all these plans had to be postponed and canceled.

## A Fish Show Online

Depending on where you are located one's Covid-19 experiences are vastly different. While Canada has thankfully been spared compared to some of the world's worst hit areas like our neighbors to the south, it has still affected us and our hobby immensely. In a very short time almost all fish events had to be canceled or postponed. With this news that BBC needed

to cancel our largest show of the year we quickly organized a small chapter members only online Virtual Fish show. Having never done an online show before there were a lot of challenges that we had to overcome. We decided to run the virtual show like a local betta show with 2 classes for purchased and self-bred fish. It was open to club members only and not to the entire IBC so we could work on building club moral during the unprecedented times. We elected to have all videos sent to the show chair who then sorted and renamed the entries like normal show labels to simulate a normal show as much as possible. We used Dropbox to upload videos so that they lost as little quality as possible and allowed both IBC judges, Gerald and Peter to view the videos together at the same time. Like in a normal show judges like to collaborate, and we used ZOOM to video conference both our IBC judges and the show chair. This was a fast, simple, and effective way to judge and was a very enjoyable experience. We tried to make it as much like a normal show as we could using new methods to go online. The BBC Virtual Covid show was Sponsored by Coomara Aquatics and was a lot of fun to both participate in and help organize. This was the first show we have given out monetary top prizes along with our typical show ribbons for placements. It was a good first try at this type of even and we look forward to doing another soon. Feedback from the show was very positive from those who participated. While the quality of the videos



varied making some of the judging harder a short tutorial on how to set up a video tank is in the works for next time to help to show off the fish the best ways. Talk of adding a mandatory top view of the fish was also discussed while judging to help show all sides of the fish. While many Chapters of the IBC are localized to a local area or State/Province the BBC is the only Canadian Chapter of the IBC and as such has members stretching coast to coast. While the majority of members are in Ontario as this is where our in-person shows are typically held we have always accepted mail in entries from our further members. The Virtual show presents as an easy non expensive method for members to show off their fish and still have a sense of club comradery and competition. We are looking forward to progressing with this virtual show format in the future.

### Virtual Meetings:

I am fortunate enough to be a member of both my IBC Chapter Betta Breeders Canada (Canada Wide) along with my local Peel Regional Aquarium Club (PRAC) and all species club. While PRAC meets monthly in person, the BBC has select meetings throughout the year in person that typically rotate locations depending on who is hosting. Because the BBC is Canada Wide it is troublesome to try and hold national meetings online via messenger apps and the last few we had held had poor member turnout to the point we had stopped doing them altogether this last year. With the COVID



Michael Beat talking  
'What about Barbs?'

era came a wonderful application called Zoom. I had never heard of Zoom before the start of Covid and it is an amazing program that lets groups meetup, show documents, Power Point, video etc.. and lends itself to an online Fish Speaking Event quite well. Our Vice President Peter suggested trying to hold a virtual meeting instead of our proposed in person Meeting April 19th. We selected a time slot that was agreeable for all time zones in Canada. There is a 4.5-hour difference coast to coast, so this poses some challenges when planning events like this. Our first Virtual Meeting speaker was our own Club Member Steven Tran speak-

**Betta taeniata** Regan 1909

- Range: Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam
- Size: 8.0 cm
- Water: not critical
- Habitat: Swift-moving water
- Notes: Common Aquarium fish in Europe.

Gerald Griffin giving a talk on Wild Betta Species

ing about his methods of breeding bettas. This event was well received and even being out first-time using zoom for this type of meeting it went smoothly with little issues. We had a good showing of members and the interest to continue meetings was there. Since our first meeting we have since hosted two additional meetings on May 9th and May 31st. We used the opportunity to reach out to Speakers from outside of Canada for these meetings and opened participation to our fellow IBC Members. Sieg Illig joined us from the USA and talked about his line breeding set up as well as his breeding tips and tricks. Sieg was a wealth of knowl-





edge as always and there were a lot of questions and amazing advice given out. Everyone learned something from the new breeder to the experienced. Then Sabrina Dichne joined us all the way from Switzerland, that's a 9-hour difference between British Columbia Canada and Zurich Switzerland. She talked about her Fish Farm Adventures and it was very interesting to see how Bettas are mass produced on farms and how to go about planning a farm tour.

Feedback from the BBC virtual meetings have been outstanding. Many people have messaged saying they are enjoying them immensely, that they have helped to keep themselves sane during the quarantine, A way to not be isolated and engage with friends. The BBC's large online presence via Facebook has helped with this online virtual meeting idea being readily accepted. The BBC is currently planning on our next virtual meeting and looks forward to continuing this onwards after covid for our regular national chapter meetings and looking to work this zoom format into our in person meetings as well so our friends coast to coast can participate as well. On top of hosting these meetings we are able to record the meetings and then edit and upload them online via YouTube for members who missed the meeting or could not participate. We have successfully uploaded one meeting and have plans to continue this going forward as a great resource. Please note that these YouTube uploads are not viewable to the public and you need to be given a direct link. If you're an IBC member or a Member of Oklahoma Betta Breeders Association or Oklahoma Aquarium Association and would like to view these meetings please email [bettabreederscanada@gmail.com](mailto:bettabreederscanada@gmail.com)

PRAC missed two in person meetings before organizing and implementing a Virtual Format for the

rest of its monthly meetings. It has now hosted two meetings in May and June. The first Meeting speaker was our own Club Member Michael Beat talking about 'What about Barbs?'. He runs a YouTube channel called Fishez with a lot of educational videos on different fish. Michael shot 3 short segments on Barbs and shared them over the Zoom application while taking questions after each video. Our Second Speaker was Gerald Griffin talking about 'Wild bettas' and touched base on almost 100 different wild bettas

and answered over an hour of questions afterwards. Many PRAC members had no idea there were so many wild bettas to consider keeping. Feedback was been mostly positive for these meetings and the idea is new and different. Many older members may find this hard to engage with and hesitate to use the new technology. Some may also not have access to technology that works with this online application. But even if not, all membership is able to participate it is still good to keep going and connecting with the ones who can in the interim.



**SABRINA DICHNE  
MAY 31ST  
FISH FARM  
ADVENTURES**

# Brazil Betta Show

## Article and Photos by Paulo Faria

**B**razil is known in the world market of ornamental fish for having numerous native species of commercial interest. Most of these species come from the Amazon Basin, and its export volume makes Brazil stand out in this market.

What the whole world doesn't know is that despite having numerous species of native ornamental fish, Brazilians generally prefer exotic, imported fish, different from those caught in the waters of the national territory.

There is no official statistical data on the best-selling fish in Brazil, but without a doubt, Betta fish is the most commercialized and present fish in the home of Brazilians.

There are regions in Brazil that are major producers of Betta fish. It is important to mention the biggest producer, the State of Minas Gerais, where there is a large pool of ornamental fish farming. In this region alone, more than 600,000 betta units are produced per month. Breeding in this region is characterized by greenhouse cultivation using PET bottles to separate the bettas. Almost all Betta production in the region is sold wholesale and destined for large urban centers in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais.

There are also other major production hubs in Brazil, for example the states of Rio de Janeiro, Paraná and

Ceará as the largest ones.

In addition to this large wholesale betta market, there is still a great demand for show bettas in Brazil. This market is currently very strong in the Northeastern states of Brazil and also in large centers such as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

Betta shows started in Brazil in 2005, and since that date they have been held in various regions of Brazil and are organized by different groups and associations. In recent years, exhibitions have taken on greater proportions and the number of participants, aquariums and quality fish has greatly increased.

Betta shows have grown so much in some regions of Brazil that, in addition to being a hobby, today it is considered a business, generating a lot of jobs and income for several breeders.

In 2018 there was a stage of the World Guppy Contest in Brazil and the breeders of Betta mobilized themselves to also perform an international Betta show. For that to happen, the first chapter of the IBC in Brazil was created. At the time, the 2018 IBC President (Gerald Griffin) was contacted and he gave us the guidelines to hold the first IBC show in Brazil. It was the first time that an international Bettas show was held in Brazil, with an IBC judgement and the presence of official judges.





After this achievement, IBC started to be recognized by several breeders in Brazil, however, it was also not well accepted by many. There was a certain difference in the IBC's way of judging from the other judgments that took place in Brazil.

Despite the resistance of some breeders, most of the organizers and producers realized that, in order to have a worldwide standardization, it was necessary to adopt the IBC in all exhibitions in Brazil.

In 2019 I was invited to participate in the CIPS - China International Pet Show, to participate in the Plecos judging and I could not miss the opportunity to take the Brazilian Bettas. For the first time, fish produced in Brazil were taken to participate in an IBC competition outside the country. In all, 29 fish from different breeders were sent to participate in the Betta exhibitions in Singapore, CHINA and Indonesia. A massive thank you to Frank Chang, Rodrigo Ziviani, Wind Wang, Betta Leong and Hermanus Harianto for making our participation possible.

In all, there were 9 awards won by the Brazilian breed-

## World Betta Contest






**SEPTEMBER 19-23**



**PLACE:  
CONVENTION CENTER**  
VIA COSTEIRA, PONTA NEGRA, NATAL, RN, BRAZIL.

SEP 19TH - OPENING CEREMONY | SEP 20TH - FISH ENTRY | SEP 21ST - FISH JUDGING  
SEP 22ND - ANNOUNCEMENT OF SHOW RESULTS | SEP 23RD - AWARDS, AUCTION, CLOSING CEREMONY







**The Speakers for Aquirismo 2018**

ers, which gave Brazilians the hope of always being able to participate in these competitions. The lack of knowledge of some breeders about the IBC standards meant that the fish were not better placed in the competition.

At the beginning of 2020, a plan was made to leverage once and for all the creation and realization of the betta show in Brazil:

#### **1st - Translation of the standard IBC;**

It is in the final stage of translation (It is estimated to be published in August 2020);

#### **2nd - Creation of a National Betta Circuit;**

It was proposed to create a National Betta Circuit. This circuit involves the main producers' associations in the country and envisions the realization of 10 stages carried out in various regions of Brazil.

As the breeders in Brazil were not accustomed to the IBC Standards, It was proposed to have a training program for each stage, showing each breeder the rules used by IBC.

To support these breeders, the creation of the IBC-

BRASILBETTAS chapter was proposed at IBC.

#### **3rd - Participation in the IBC - USA - June convention;**

The proposal would be to participate in the IBC Convention, allowing Brazil to have one more IBC judge and a second participation in an international show with Brazilian fish.

#### **4th - Award**

To further encourage producers to study and use the IBC standards, a major award was proposed for the end of the year's exhibitions. The great champion would be awarded a round trip ticket, with accommodation, to Shanghai during CIPS 2021, where Brazilian fish would participate.

#### **COVID-19**

In March 2020, while the second stage of the circuit was happening, encouraging more and more creators to participate in the IBC shows, the great villain appeared: COVID-19. The entire proposed schedule had to be canceled, but the proposal to adopt IBC in the face-to-face exhibitions in Brazil was only postponed.



Gerald Griffin



Luis Navarro



Sabrina LJ Dichne



Jamie King



Betta Leong

Above: The Judging Panel for the Online Brazil Betta Show.

Right: Larissa Williams is training the new Brazilian Judges.

Bottom: An Ad for the Online Brazil Betta Show.



[www.nordbettas.blogspot.com.br](http://www.nordbettas.blogspot.com.br)

**TA CANSADO DA QUARENTENA?  
VAMOS MUDAR ESSA  
SITUAÇÃO?  
PARTICIPE DA EXPOSIÇÃO  
ON-LINE VIA VÍDEO.**

**PREMIAÇÃO  
EM DINHEIRO  
PARA OS 06  
MELHORES  
BETTAS**

**I EXPOSIÇÃO ON-LINE DE BETTAS DE LINHAGEM NORDBETTAS**  
**INFORMAÇÕES: [www.nordbettas.blogspot.com](http://www.nordbettas.blogspot.com)**

REALIZAÇÃO:

APÊNDICE:



Social isolation and the lack of face-to-face exhibitions was the stimulus that was needed to think about something different. Even though it was far from ideal, it was necessary to innovate so that breeders were not left without a show. They were all in social isolation in their homes, taking care of their fish, with the possibility of increasing and improving their fish. Those producers who live on betta production had no sales, since it is during the shows that they most commercialize their fish.

## ONLINE BETTA SHOW

With the impossibility of having an on-site (face-to-face) show of the National Bettas Circuit, NORDBETTAS, together with the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN), and, through IBCBRASIL-BETTA, proposed to hold the Bettas' Online Exhibition.

It was needed to do more than just have an online show through photos and videos. It was necessary that each breeder learned about the judging standards that are required all around the world.

The first step was to invite judges who could collaborate with the proposal. The idea was to invite judges from other countries, to show each breeder how their

fish could be judged in an exhibition outside Brazil.

The IBC judges listed above, kindly accepted the challenge and represented the American, European and Asian continents at the judging phase. More important than selecting the first three places in each class, it was necessary to explain to the Brazilian breeders the reasons why their fish was awarded or not at the show.

This took some hours for the judges to do, since every fish had a complete assessment, with a description of each failure. The participation of each one was deeply grateful and appreciated

To make the judges' work possible, an online platform was created, allowing each judge to view individually the fish in the competition.

In the page, the visitor and the judges had access to the different categories. To facilitate access, it was created an image for each category, with the aim of showing the varieties to the experienced public, as well as the inexpert public, helping them to identify the categories more easily.

The website also briefly explains how the judgment is made and directs the most interested participants to the IBC website for more information.



### Exposição online de Bettas de Linhagem

#### NORDBETTAS - I EXPOSIÇÃO ON-LINE DE BETTAS DE LINHAGEM

O NORDBETTAS (Circuito Nacional de Bettas de Linhagem) no ano de 2020 fez uma programação de 10 etapas de exposições de Bettas de Linhagem em diferentes estados do Brasil em parceria com diversos grupos e associações. As duas primeiras etapas aconteceram na Paraíba e Minas Gerais, porém, teve as etapas seguintes adiadas por tempo indeterminado.

A EXPOSIÇÃO ON-LINE DE BETTAS DE LINHAGEM teve sua idealização em função da impossibilidade de realização destes... (continua)

43

Categorias

30

Expositores

121

Peixes



Entrar na Exposição

Conheça os campeões do evento



When accessing the categories, it is possible for the visitor to watch the videos of each of the entries, as well as monitor the exhibition and simultaneously visualize competitors, making evaluations and comparisons, as in the image to the right.

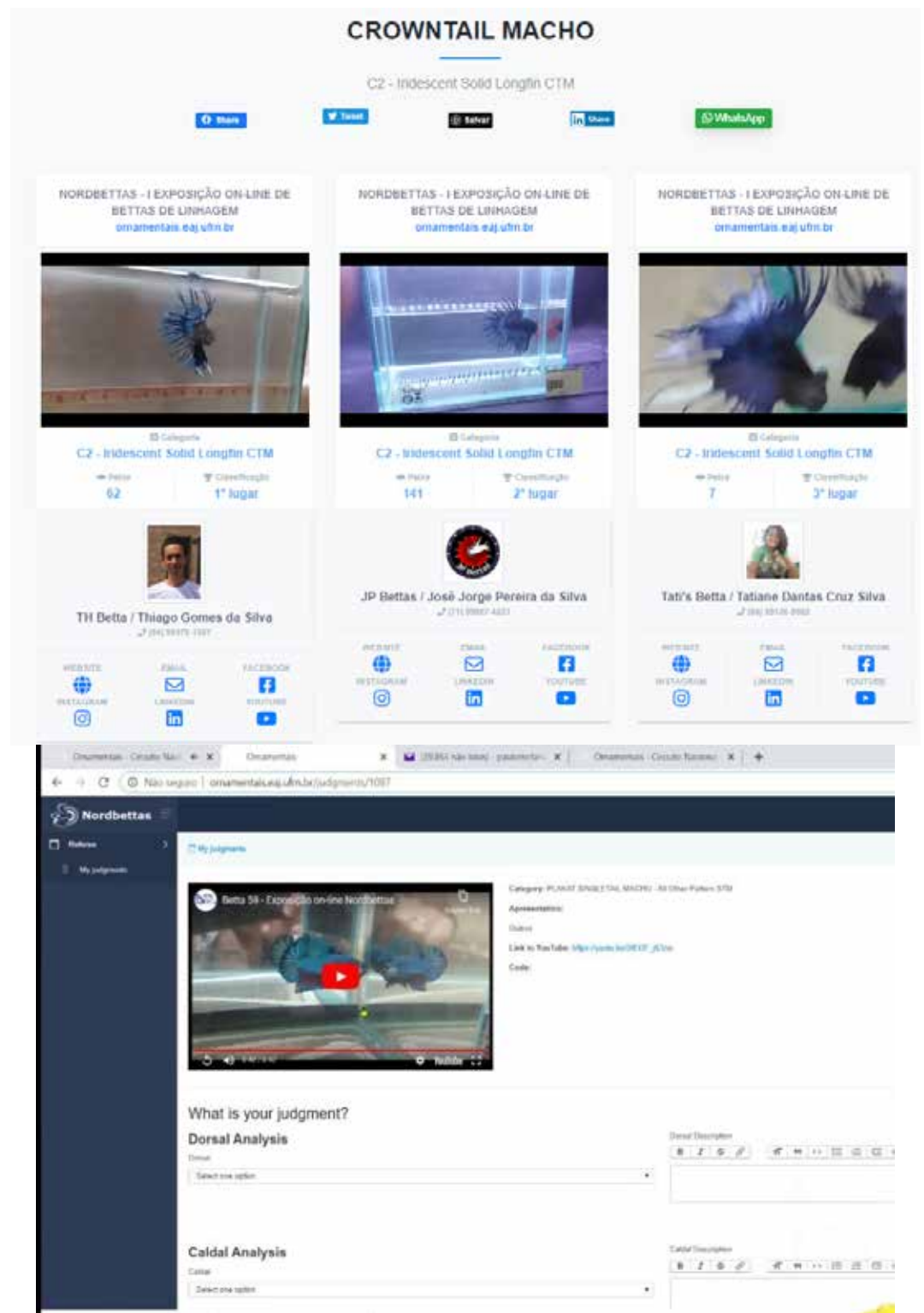
For the judging phase, it was created a space for the judges. Each judge identified the faults related to: dorsal, caudal, anal, ventral, pectoral, dimension, deportment, head, body, color, video faults and extra faults. The scoring system used was the same as for the IBC: -17, -9, -5 and -3 points.

After identifying the faults, the judge wrote comments on each one. Thus, the breeder received the evaluation and can improve his fish in the next generation, and also choose better in an upcoming show.

At the end of the trial, the classification of each fish already appeared automatically on the website

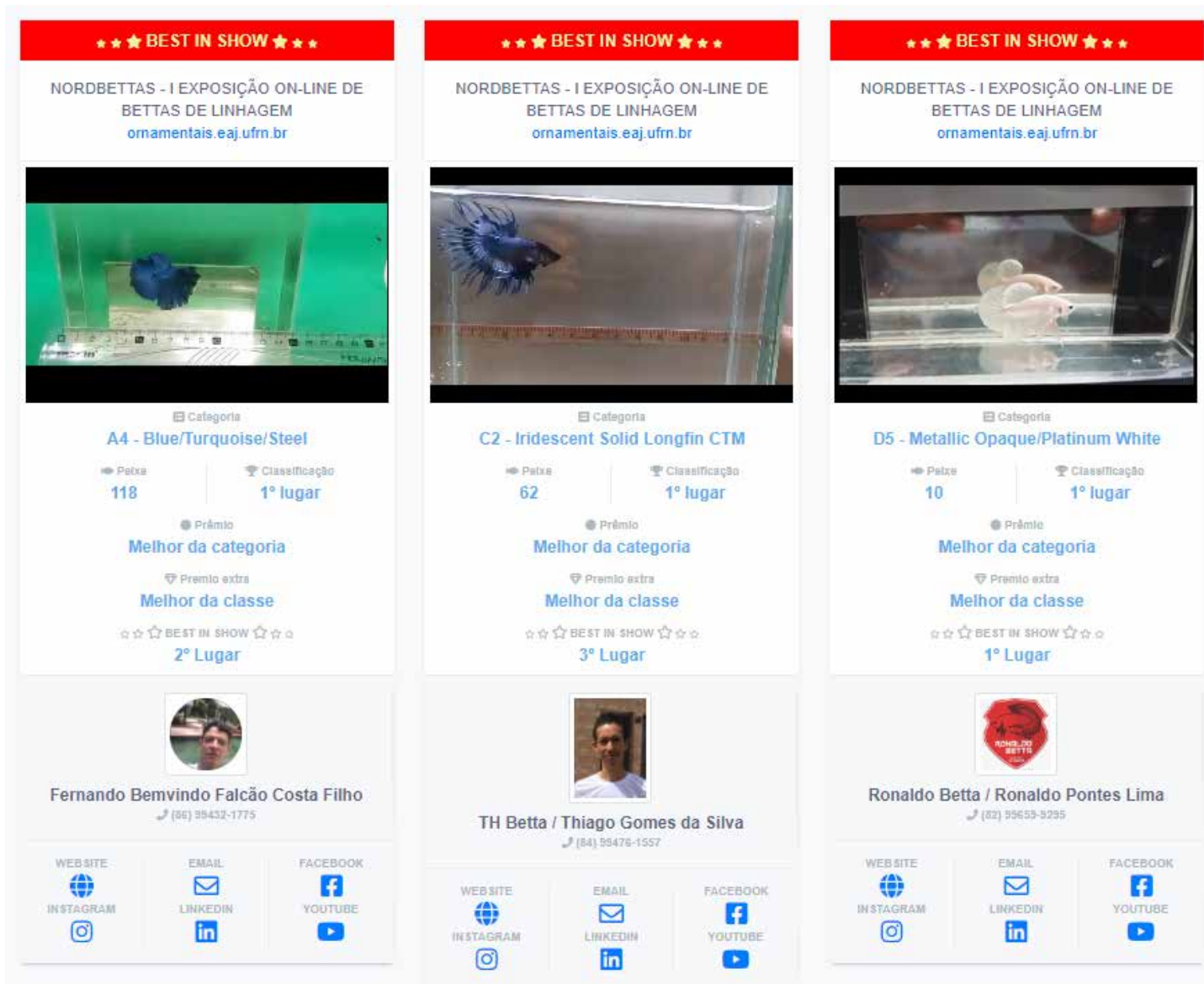
and it was possible for the public to follow the awards, the fish, the breeder, get in touch with them through social media, make purchases and enjoy the event.

The best fish in each category were judged again, to choose the Best of Show male and female. A webpage was created showing all the fish at the same time. Each judge was able to choose the best fish and after the decision of Best of show, the platform presented the



event's champions, always with sharing options for the breeders.

The best thing about the platform is that from now on, it will be used even in face-to-face exhibitions. With the website, it will be possible, even without leaving home, to follow any exhibition, as long as someone in person is filling the page with videos of the exposed fish.



It was the first online exhibition using this platform, and another one will soon happen. The first version met our expectations, but improvements are coming to the platform.

The next step is to adapt the site for smartphones and tablets. With this, the face-to-face judgment can also be made using the platform, and with a simple touch on the screen, failures of the fish can be indicated and the first placed can be identified; without, however, using several spreadsheets that demand much more time.

There is a preview of the champions of the event below. In addition to the certificates, there was prize money and trophies. For the champions of each class, the award was the annual fee of the IBC. With this, the IBCBRASILBETTA chapter of the IBC reaches 15 effective members.

A sincere thank you for the participation of the following judges:

Gerald Griffin, Luiz Navarro, Jamie King, Sabrina Dichne and Betta Leong. Without any of you the success of the event would not have been possible. COVID-19 has brought incalculable damage to people all over the world and in the betta market this is no different.

The realization of the online Betta show brought hope to the creators of Betta of Brazil, since it brought a lot of learning to everyone involved and also considerably helped the local commercialization of fish.

# Let the Show Begin

Article by  
Lorena  
Burgueno

Shows through the virtual modality are a growing trend. It is not something new as they have existed for several years, but it is in these periods of pandemic where people resort to technologies in order to unite in different areas, aquarophilia has not been the exception.

For several years, bettas' IBC shows have been recurring in Area 1, but in Area 4 the economic and/or information difficulties on IBC have served as an obstacle to expanding activity throughout South America and part of countries from Central America. Many Spanish-speaking people were frustrated at not being able to understand the articles and even Flare magazine, but the age of technology and social media have destroyed language barriers.

América Virtual betta Show aims to unify all the concepts that kept us apart. The idea of doing virtual shows was being implemented at IBC for the cause of Covid-19, but the idea of doing an event at the American level is unprecedented. Mr. Luis Navarro, together with the Argentine Scientific Federation and the Bettas Cuba Association, planned this dream, but we knew that such an ambitious plan required a staff that could work in coordination in various areas such as planning, multimedia and broadcasting. Carlos Muñoz and

Evrando Mistrelo joined the staff on behalf of their chapters, Carlos president of Ecuador betta Breeders and Evrando president of Aquabras Brazil. Once the staff was formed and the organization of the event was carried out, the Broadcasting Staff Bettas Guadalajara and the OBM (Organization Bettas Mexico) joined, together with them. The first dissemination of work was carried out together with our main financier Biobloo and CROA (Club Rosarino de Acuarismo in Argentina). More and more chapters from all over America are joining the broadcast team, as an event that is not broadcast is doomed to failure. Our goal is to bring IBC Shows closer to each of the 37 American countries and that each person whether they are a member or not, can have this wonderful experience.

In order to have fluent communication with each country, we have created a web page that allows reading in several languages. For us, the inclusion of each region is the priority and the language has been a barrier for members for years, with new technologies and available translators no longer pose communication impediments. On the page we can find vital information about the dates of each stage of the event, information about the standards and a blog that allows you to read informative articles about our judges and members who stand out for their work within IBC. In



this way, people know more about our beloved organization and those who are part of it.

Our final conclusion will be appreciated in the month of October where we can see the results obtained. We will be able to make statistics to compare the success of these shows and how to apply them more efficiently in the future, training the judges to adapt to online formats where the perspective of observation in digital format is very different from the observation of a live fish. All organizers, broadcasters, multimedia and collaborators are thanked for this unique opportunity. Let the show begin!



**Judge: Gerald Griffin**

Fish Code: Butterfly - 014

Please Grade on the scale of 100

STARTING SCORE: 100

Fault 1- Dorsal curling Minor - 5


Fault 2- Color not consistent on body Slight - 3

Fault 3- Color not complete on ventrals Slight - 3

(Add or delete fault entries as needed)

FINAL SCORE: 89

JUDGE NOTES: Very Nice Betta



IBCB Exhibition Standards 2017.pdf - Adobe Acrobat Pro C

Home Tools A Blueprint for Bac...

ts respectively and must be referre

IS Relative weight of faults: Faults  
evel. Faults are classified into the fi  
this chapter):

General, Finnage, or Color/Special T	
Slight Faults	3 po
Minor Faults	5 po
Major Faults	9 po
Severe Faults	17 po
Disqualifying Faults	Disqu

TESTED STEP-BY-STEP JUDGING

ed August 2014

# How has Covid Changed Fish Clubs?

**Article by  
Gerald Griffin**



When the Pandemic struck a lot of people were wondering what is going to be next with the lockdown. Hobbies took a back seat to immediate survival but once that was squared away people began to wonder as to how they would occupy their time. Now the fish hobby was beginning to come back but in a new way. In person meetings had become a thing of the past and yet people still wanted connection with their hobby. Thanks to the Zoom corporation and a number of similar type of companies, fish people were not able to get back into their hobby in the traditional way but in a new hybrid way.

The first of these people to take notice was Mark Denaro. He founded the Facebook Group Online Fish Club Meetings. In it people posted what their clubs were doing with online speakers. Some clubs went above and beyond having speakers every week however the majority went to a standard once a month format. I found that with all of the Fish Stuff I actually have to do each month, I could only do one meeting a month. I have also found myself presenting at a number of other clubs during this time as well. My typical "Fish Month" includes two online meetings with the two International Betta Congress Boards, doing my two Fish Club meetings (typically jointly) and then speaking where I was asked too to speak. Also included in that were four online Betta Shows that I judged in. This actually takes up a lot of time. In addition, I also work on Fish Tales Magazine (the one you are reading now) plus I also had to virtually teach as that is my typical job. More about Online Betta Shows can be found in the other article.

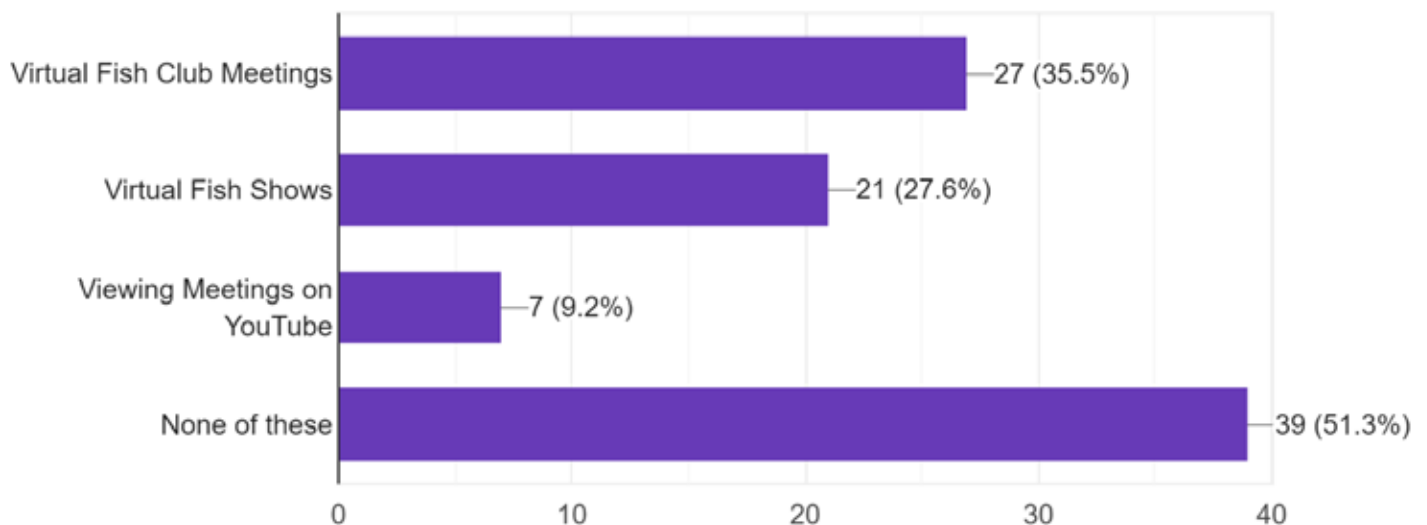
We are still in some uncertain times however the one thing this Pandemic has revealed is that "Fish Clubs" can actually have online presenters and while it might have the excitement of a real life person to actually talk to before and after the presentation, it is still a viable option for clubs that are on a limited budget. So, I would expect in the future that more clubs will have online meetings after this Pandemic is far behind us.



So, I sent out a questioner to see how others were handling this “Quarantine” and to see how many were adapting to the new online format for Fish Club Meetings. As an officer in the Oklahoma Aquarium Association I am no stranger to the online format as we had Mo Devlin as a virtual speaker previously before the lockdown, years before! The results of the questioner were as follows.

### Have you done any of the following since the Covid-19 lockdowns?

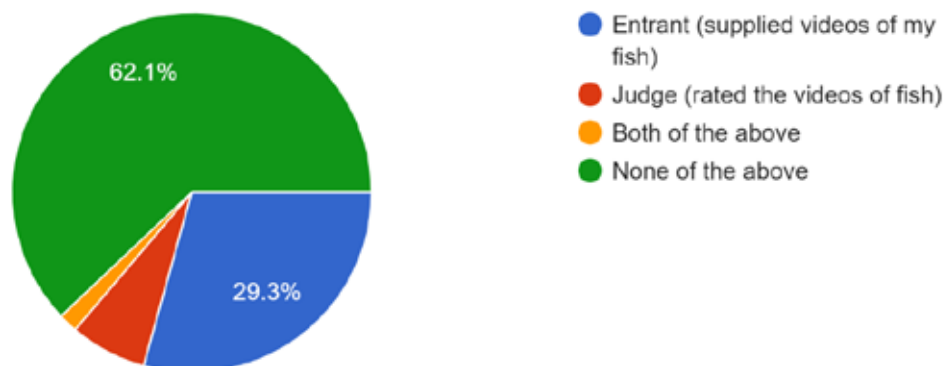
76 responses



As you see over half of the respondents have not even done anything related to the online format of the Fish Hobby. Over one third participated in virtual meetings and over one quarter participated in a virtual Fish show.

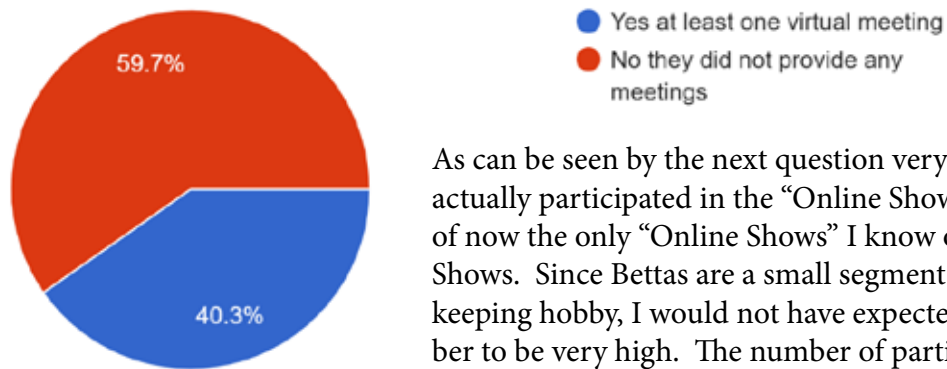
### If you participated in an "Online Fish Show" what was your participation level?

58 responses



### My local club(s) provided Online Meetings during these Covid-19 Lockdown times.

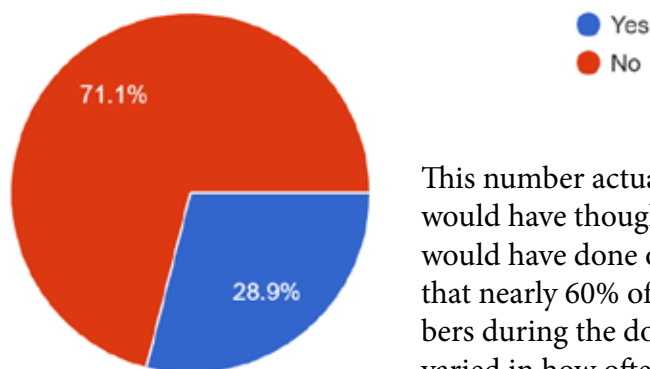
72 responses



As can be seen by the next question very few people actually participated in the “Online Shows” and as of now the only “Online Shows” I know of are Betta Shows. Since Bettas are a small segment of the fish keeping hobby, I would not have expected that number to be very high. The number of participants that judged came in at 6.9% and 1.7% both Judged and Participated in these shows.

### I attended other clubs Online Meetings

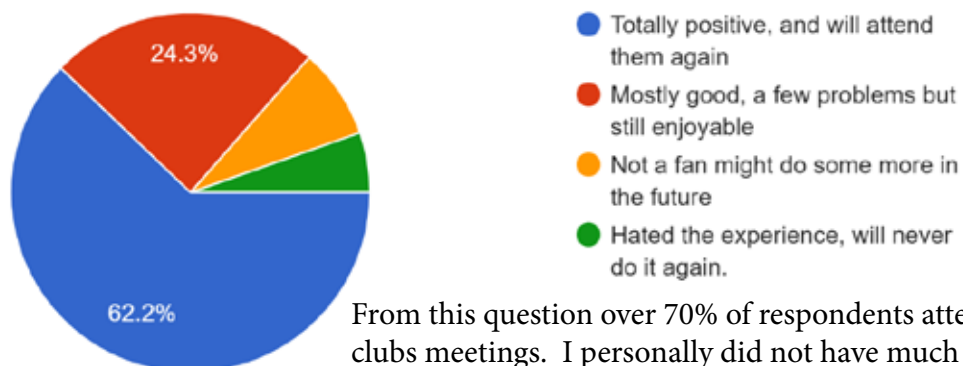
76 responses



This number actually surprised me a bit because I would have thought that the majority of “Fish Clubs” would have done online meetings. The survey shows that nearly 60% of clubs had no activities for its members during the downtime. The 40 percent that did varied in how often they had their meetings.

### For those that attended Online Fish Club Meetings what was your opinion of them?

37 responses



From this question over 70% of respondents attended other clubs meetings. I personally did not have much opportunity to visit other clubs’ meetings however I did attend the ones I was invited too when I was not the speaker.





## Great Things come in Tiny Packages



## Story and Photos by Riccardo Camera

GAAS Board Member Gary Brandt

**O**n January 4th, 2020, while most of Texas was knee deep in football and beer, I was up to my usual fish geekery. I was at a fish store. You might be wondering if this is really article worthy, I mean we go to fish stores weekly, that is what we do. This day however was something special. This day was the grand opening of a brand new fish store in Austin, Texas. Technically it's in Round Rock, but I think even the fine citizens of Round Rock realize they live in Austin.

Sorry, let me get back on track. New fish store. Late Christmas. I was at Tiny Aquatics a new venture by sister/brother team Don Nguyen and Tran Pham. They've been shrimp dabblers for the past 10 years. Hustling colorful little invertebrates online, breeding them, learning their ways. For full transparency, Don has been a semi-active member of the Greater Austin Aquarium Society, he even hosted a meeting once at some studio space. For further transparency, I'm not really a shrimp dude. This being said, I've been privileged enough, despite my anti-shrimp ways, to see a few iterations of this shop. I got some sneak peaks and progress pics, and all I can say is that Don and Tran are super hard workers, extremely dedicated to making something special for the local community. They have been building their own systems, adapting furniture, giving careful thought to how to make Tiny Aquatics feel like a big deal.

The grand opening was well attended, so much so that I delayed my entrance because there was a group of people outside and I thought the place was already at capacity, (one in one out). As it turns out they were just hanging out, talking fish (how cool is that?). I took my not-so- tiny self into the shop for a look. Yes it's a small shop. That's kind of the point. Well it actually is THE point. Tiny Aquatics is a niche store designed to service those of us that like to keep smaller tanks. You've probably noticed big box stores and even your local fish stores sprint to try to reach this market because it's quite plain to see the nano. Europe has long been a leader in the nano market, Asia too. The US has been



behind because we've got a lot of space. Higher rents around the world mean smaller places, and that means smaller tanks. Part of the reason that the Shrimp market has exploded and that nano fish are becoming so popular again. Guppies have seen a resurgence, rasboras, pencilfish are all getting a look. Everything except Killis (sorry Killifish keepers). So yeah these days it seems like you either keep 180s or you keep 18s... everything in between is unwanted.

First thing I noticed when I walked in was how great the fish looked. There are three rooms of racks, two house fish all around their walls and one is the lobby (with shrimp). There's also a nice sized plant tank. The fish selection was nice and colorful. Lots of community fish with nice colors, all looking healthy and happy. Tanks of course were spotless. There were a few Apistogrammas. There was also a nice sized plant tank which seemed to be very popular. The store was stocked with everything you might need to make a beautiful tank, starting with great low-iron UNS nano tanks, and Fluval Flex all in ones. More shrimp and plant products than you could shake a shrimp at too. So I would definitely call the store full service, despite its size. The real stars of the store are the shrimp. Gorgeous shrimp that the owners have bred themselves. Definitely the best shrimp selection in Austin currently. Cap that off with a great hardscape



selection and I can see why I saw so many smiling faces at the opening.

Local fish stores really are such an important part of our fishkeeping community. As the President of the Greater Austin Aquarium Society I was extremely happy to see so many of our club members there right when the doors opened. I think the LFS and the Fish Club need to work together as much as possible. It is true that sometimes our interests may diverge. The clubs need fish dollars at the auctions in order to raise funds and the stores need people at their stores spending money too. Sometimes we get ahead of ourselves and start to worry about who is getting the biggest piece of the pie, but seeing our club members in there helping out and making purchases, I was once again reminded that we really are all in this together. Tiny

Aquatics and really all the local stores have been really supportive of the club. I wish continued success for us all.

If you are in the Austin metro make sure you visit Tiny Aquatics. I guarantee that Don and Tran will make you feel like you are at home (Except they have better shrimp than we have at home).

Tiny Aquatics is located 1100 Sam Bass Road, Suite 101, Round Rock, Texas.



**Tiny Aquatics Co-owner Don Nguyen**





**It's a Saints Bye Week Tradition...**



# **SELAS FALL AUCTION**

**Sunday October 18, 2020**

**Knights of Columbus Hall**

**4021 Trenton St. • Metairie, LA • 70002**

**Doors Open at Noon**

**\$3 Cover Charge or \$5 Bidder Card**

**Bidder Card Necessary to Bid**

**Final Value Fees: 1st Dollar Goes to SELAS, then**

**80% of Final Selling Price Goes to Seller / 20% to SELAS**

**Auction Starts Promptly at 1 PM**

**Pizza and Soft Drinks will be Provided**

**Visit [www.selas.us](http://www.selas.us) for Official Rules and Forms**



# **Texas Cichlid Association**

*Presents*



# **FOTAS 2021 DALLAS, TX**





# AREA 1 INTERNATIONAL BETTA SHOW

INTERNATIONAL BETTA CONGRESS SANCTIONED

HOSTED BY: ALPHA BETTA CHAPTER

JUDGING AUGUST 1, 2020

ONLINE AUCTION AUGUST 1ST -2ND

DULUTH, GEORGIA USA

Shipping Address:

Christina Simpson

Planned PetHood of Georgia

2860 Buford Highway

Building F, Suite 2

Duluth, GA 30096

Show Chair: Christina Simpson

Judges: Aurelia Ogles, Paul Ogles, Heidi Burkle

Benching:

Friday July 31, 2020 3pm to 6pm (Preferred)

Saturday August 1, 2020 by 9am

Recommend Shipping of All Entries

Please contact Show Chair for In Person Benching Requests

IBC Member Entry Fees:

Domestic Single Entries - \$3USD

Domestic Pair Entries - \$5USD

All Class E "Wild" Entries (Pairs/Singles) - \$3USD



# First Coast Bettas

## Chapter of the International Betta Congress Area 1 International Sanctioned Betta Show



Moccasin Lake Environmental Education Center  
2750 Park Trail Ln.  
Clearwater, FL 33759-2602

For park information & directions to facility go to:  
<http://www.clearwater-fl.com/gov/depts/parksrec/facilities/mlnp.asp>

**Mail-ins must arrive by Thursday, October 15, 2019**

Mail to: Bill Little  
3079 Branch Dr  
Clearwater 33760-1741  
Tel. 727-530-0928

Email tracking number to: [blittle1942@gmail.com](mailto:blittle1942@gmail.com)

Members: Show Entry fee \$3. per entry (Regular & Wild Type)  
\$5. per D4 pairs entry

Non-Members \$4.5 per entry (Reg. & WT) , \$7.5 for D-4 Pairs

PayPal: [aureliaogles@gmail.com](mailto:aureliaogles@gmail.com)

or Make checks out to: Aurelia Ogles

**Friday, October 16, 2020**

4PM-9PM Show set-up

**Saturday, October 17, 2020**

Walk-ins entries welcome until 10AM

12PM Judging Begins.

**2PM-5PM Show open to the  
Public for FREE**

**Breeders Cup Raffle -  
pick your favorite pair to win.**

**Sunday, October 18, 2020**

**Auction begins by 11 A.M.: No entrance fee  
Visitors will be able to acquire show quality Bettas at  
very reasonable prices. (Open to public from 10-5 PM)  
Breakdown of show follows auction**

Recommended hotel: Clarion Inn and Suites,  
20967 US Highway 19 N, Clearwater FL 33765  
1-727-799-1181

To help the show committee please  
send a copy of your registration as  
an attachment to  
[JNFerrigno@gmail.com](mailto:JNFerrigno@gmail.com) by  
**Wednesday, October 14.**

Forms for walk-in entries will be  
available at the show site.



**Awards: Plaques for  
BOS, RBOS, Rosettes  
for Best of Variety and  
certificates for classes.**



**Previous Issue of Fish Tales**

**What would you like to see in the next Fish Tales Magazine?**

**Contact the Editor if you have story ideas or would like to contribute to Fish Tales!**

# FOTAS *Fish Tales*

*Volume 9 Issue 4*

*September - December 2019*

Hello Hydra

*Amatitlania nanolutea*

Three Easy Steps  
to Breeding Bettas



My Black Beauty  
Schools of Fish

My Experience with  
*Synodontis angelicus*